

Warrington Local Plan 2021-2038: Examination in Public

Hearing Statement by Peel L&P (Holdings) UK
Ltd and Peel Ports (representor no. UPSVLP
0438)

Matter 14: Monitoring and Review

August 2022

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Client

Peel L&P (Holdings) UK Ltd and Peel Ports

Our reference

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1. Matter 14: Monitoring and Review

Q1: How will the implementation and effectiveness of the Local Plan be monitored? Will the monitoring framework in Appendix 2 provide an effective basis to do this?

Employment Land – Review Mechanism

1.1 In respect of employment needs, the previous version of the Local Plan sought to rely upon the expectation that Fiddlers Ferry would likely be decommissioned during the plan period and that this effectively would be utilised as a significant windfall for future employment needs beyond the plan period:

“The Council recognises the potential of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station to contribute to meeting future employment needs with the likelihood that the power station will be decommissioned during the Plan period. Given the uncertainties over the timing of decommissioning and the requirements for extensive site remediation, Fiddlers Ferry has not been included in the Plan’s identified employment land supply at this stage. It will however contribute to meeting Warrington’s longer term employment needs meaning that it is not necessary to consider safeguarding additional land for employment needs beyond the Plan period.¹”

1.2 The submitted UPSVLP adopts an alternative strategy²:

- It allocates Fiddlers Ferry (101.0 ha gross) for a mix of industrial and distribution uses.
- Overall employment supply identified is marginally below the need (316.26 ha) but the Council considers that there is a strong likelihood the balance of employment land need will be met from windfall sites in locations such as Appleton Thorn, Warrington Town Centre and the wider urban area, meeting ongoing needs during, and after the Plan period. It also refers to the western extension of Omega, if approved, could make a further contribution to meeting Warrington’s employment lands over and above the 31.22 ha already agreed through the ‘Duty to Cooperate’ with St Helens Council.
- It acknowledges that there are additional potential sites (such as Port Warrington and Warrington Commercial Park) but cite a number of constraints to their suitability/deliverability. As such, the draft Plan does not identify allocations that would come forward later in the Plan period or provides safeguarded sites.
- Instead, the UPSVLP states that:

“The Council is however committed to undertaking a review into Warrington’s employment land needs before the end of the Plan period to ensure the long-term supply of employment land. At this stage, it is likely that key infrastructure

¹ Paragraph 3.3.29 Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2019

² See paragraphs 3.3.25-26 and 4.2.19-4.4.22 Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan

improvements, including the Western Link and motorway junction improvements, will have been delivered and the impacts of any further required employment allocations can be fully appraised.³

- 1.3 Peel would welcome and support a mechanism for an employment land review but consider the current proposed approach to review employment land needs is wholly inadequate; it is not referenced in any formal policy, just in terms of supporting text. Local Policy M1 (Monitoring Framework) is silent on the commitment, precise timing and any mechanism to trigger/facilitate the review. As a result, the 'commitment' is weak and not supported by a clear monitoring framework (Appendix 2). As a result, the commitment is ineffective and therefore unsound and needs to be rectified.

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