

Fiddlers Ferry

Response to Inspectors Questions

03/10/2022

Introduction

This statement has been prepared in response to the following questions from the Planning Inspector in relation to the proposed strategic allocation at the former Fiddlers Ferry Power Station (FFPS) (Policy MD3 of the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (UPSVP) relates).

Q1. Ecological Surveys

Council to work with Peel to produce a note identifying both the ecological survey work that has been undertaken and also that proposed, including timescales.

Survey work undertaken

During its lifetime, the FFPS site has been the subject of various ecological studies / impact assessments. The following existing ecological reports have been prepared for the FFPS site and the existing habitat / protected species information has been used to inform the proposed allocation of the site:

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report (Thomson Ecology, 2009)
- Badger and Water Vole Survey report (Peak Ecology, 2012)
- Fiddlers Ferry Ecological Consultancy Reports from 2013 to 2020 (ELM, 2013- 2020)
- University of Salford Monitoring Contract Common Bird Census report (University of Salford, 2016)
- Invasive Plant Survey report (ELM, 2020)
- Ecological Survey report (ELM, 2020), and
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Arcadis Consulting (UK), 2021).

An updated extended Phase 1 habitat survey, UKHAB condition assessment, building and tree assessments for bat potential and a badger survey, have since all been undertaken by Arcadis in 2022. The updated ecology surveys covered all the proposed development phases north of the canal. Wintering bird surveys are also being undertaken covering both the 2022/2023 winter period and are proposed for the 2023/2024 season.

Ecology Strategy

Given the vast existing baseline information available for the site, Peel already has a detailed understanding of the ecological constraints within the site and surrounding area. However, a detailed ecology survey programme has been prepared in line with the proposed development phases. This programme is under constant review by Arcadis to ensure all ecology survey

information is relevant and up to date in line with proposed application dates. Survey updates will be undertaken where necessary to ensure validity and to appropriately inform impact assessments, mitigation strategies and support any necessary future Natural England licence applications. An overview of the programme has been provided in **Appendix 1** to this statement.

A site-wide Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) strategy is currently being prepared, which will consider all future phases of the Fiddlers Ferry proposed development. The overall BNG strategy will aim to consider the cumulative impact on ecology of all phases and therefore enable a site-wide mitigation strategy, to avoid a piecemeal approach. An update of the BNG strategy for each development phase will be supported by a detailed BNG metric, once detailed landscape designs are available.

It is currently uncertain whether a project / phase specific Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be necessary. Should it be determined that a project / phase HRA is needed to support a specific planning application, this assessment will be prepared alongside the relevant ecology reports. Adequate survey information is being collected to ensure a detailed HRA can be delivered should this be necessary.

Q2. Masterplan Delivery Programme

Council to work with Peel to review Masterplan Delivery Programme, and to identify key milestones to include:

- *date for agreement and finalisation of the Development Framework*
- *key dates for completion Phase 1 clearance and remediation*
- *Phase 1 Build Out and completions*

Peel has reviewed the existing Masterplan Delivery Programme¹ produced by SSE. An amended headline delivery programme is provided in **Appendix 1**. The key headlines are as follows:

- The process of application delivery envisaged by Peel is different from SSE. The programme has been amended accordingly. Application delivery now comprises a number of detailed phased planning applications for the employment element and hybrid / outline planning applications for the residential / mixed use element. The scale and extent of the phasing for the employment element can be shown on the emerging concept masterplan at **Appendix 2**. The first phase employment area comprises the former coal stock yard which is the least constrained part of the site.
- The programme reflects the necessary programming of ecological surveys to be undertaken.
- Demolition of the entire FFPS site will be complete by 2026 at the latest.
- The timing and sequence of residential planning applications demonstrate, and the estimated receipt of planning permission would ensure, that housing delivery would be delivered in line with the housing trajectory presented at Appendix 1 of the UPSVLP.

¹ Fiddlers Ferry – Masterplan, Section 5, page 5, April 2021 (document MP2A)

Development Framework

Warrington Borough Council is suggesting a modification to part 6 of Policy MD3 of the UPSVLP as follows:

6. The Development Framework will be agreed with the Council in advance of **the determination of the application for the first part of the employment site and before any further** planning applications ~~being~~ are submitted.

WBC will also include some additional wording in the supporting text as follows:

It is recognised that the first part of the employment site, on the area of the power station's former coal yard, needs to come forward early in the Plan Period to support the deliverability of the wider allocation. The application for this part of the employment site must demonstrate how it integrates with and contributes to delivery of the infrastructure requirements of the wider allocation and will only be determined after the Development Framework has been approved.

Key dates for the preparation and agreement of the Development Framework are included within the programme at **Appendix 1** of this statement. This reflects the Council's proposed modification set out above, and the Council and Peel's commitment to work collaboratively to progress a Development Framework for the allocation.

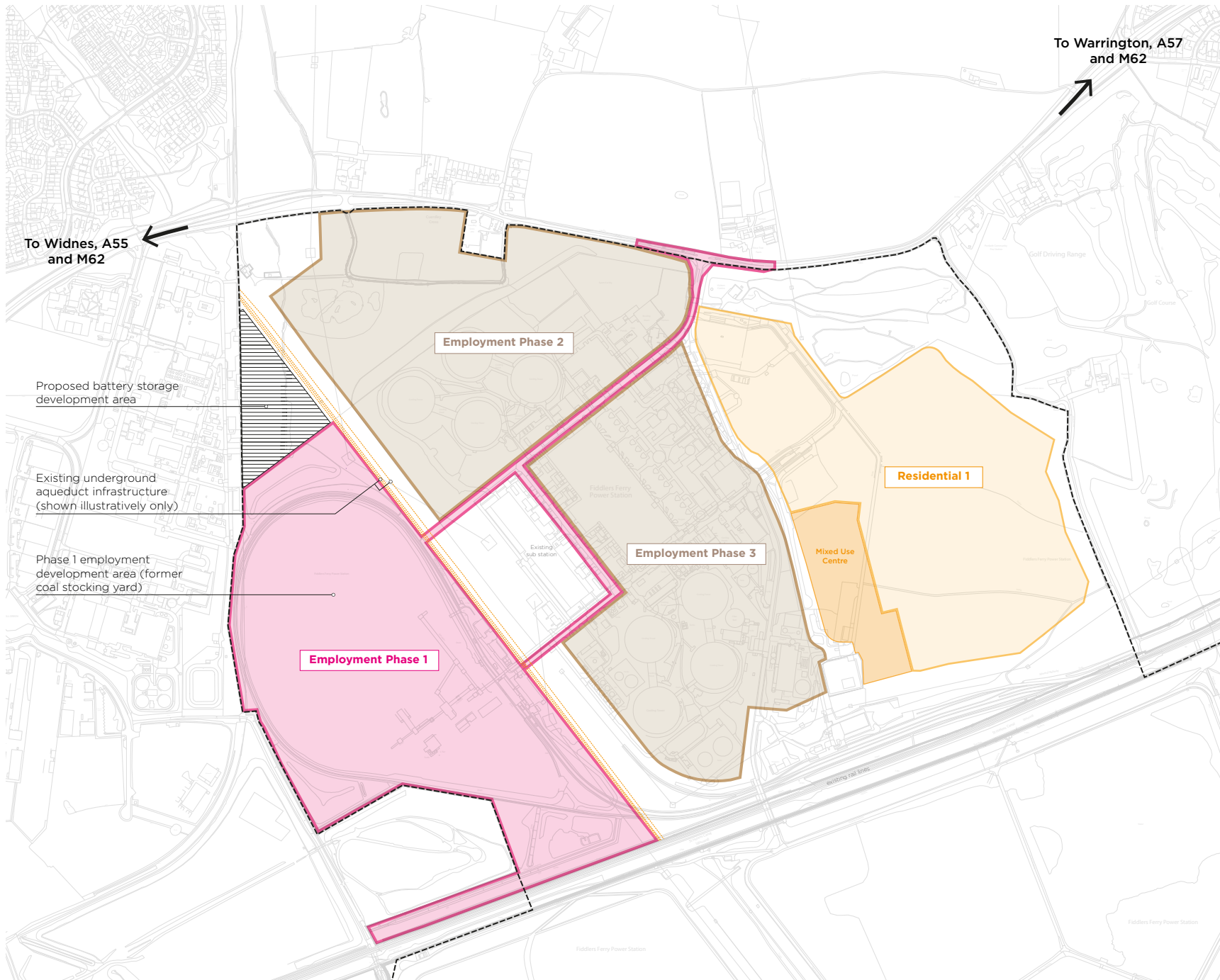
Appendix 1: Site Development Phasing & Ecological Survey Programme

FFPS
Overall programme (Draft)

Print Date: 29-09-2022
Status Dte: 16-09-2022

Activity ID	Activity Name	Start	Finish	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038
				Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q
Peel - Fiddlers Ferry Draft Programme for Review as of 15/09/22		28-Jul-22 A	20-Dec-38																
5. DEMOLITION		28-Jul-22 A	28-Dec-26	28-Dec-26, 5. DEMOLITION															
Demolition Support (Cooling yard and Northern Towers)		28-Jul-22 A	18-Oct-22	18-Oct-22, Demolition Support (Cooling yard and Northern Towers)															
Prior Notification		28-Jul-22 A	18-Oct-22	18-Oct-22, Prior Notification															
FFPS1310	Prior Notification Application Preparation	28-Jul-22 A	19-Sep-22	Prior Notification Application Preparation															
FFPS1320	Prior Notification Application Submission (16Sept'22)	20-Sep-22	18-Oct-22	Prior Notification Application Submission (16Sept'22), 20-Sep-22															
FFPS1330	Prior Notification Application Consideration Period 30 days (calendar da	20-Sep-22	18-Oct-22	Prior Notification Application Consideration Period 30 days (calendar days)															
FFPS1340	Prior Notification Application Approval Received	20-Sep-22	18-Oct-22	Prior Notification Application Approval Received															
Demolition Works (Coal Yard, Northern Towers and Admin Buildings)		06-Dec-22	24-Oct-23	24-Oct-23, Demolition Works (Coal Yard, Northern Towers and Admin Buildings)															
FFPS1940	Demolition Works - Mobilisation	06-Dec-22	10-Jan-23	Demolition Works - Mobilisation															
FFPS1590	Demolition Works - Implementation	11-Jan-23	24-Oct-23	Demolition Works - Implementation															
Demolition (remaining area)		22-Jan-24	28-Dec-26	28-Dec-26, Demolition (remaining area)															
FFPS2720	Demolition (remaining area)	22-Jan-24	28-Dec-26	Demolition (remaining area)															
6. WIDER SITE DEVELOPMENT PHASING		10-Aug-22 A	20-Dec-38																
Local Plan Adoption (est)		03-Jul-23	30-Oct-23	30-Oct-23, Local Plan Adoption (est)															
FFPS2680	Local Plan Adoption	03-Jul-23*	30-Oct-23	Local Plan Adoption															
Development Framework		15-Sep-22	30-Oct-23	30-Oct-23, Development Framework															
FFPS2690	Preparation	15-Sep-22	23-Jun-23	Preparation															
FFPS2700	Consultation	02-Nov-22	31-Aug-23	Consultation															
FFPS2710	Agreed with WBC	26-Sep-23	30-Oct-23	Agreed with WBC															
Phase 1 Employment Application		05-Sep-22 A	24-Sep-26	24-Sep-26, Phase 1 Employment Application															
FFPS3170	Pre-application Preparation and Determination	05-Sep-22 A	30-Nov-23	Pre-application Preparation and Determination															
FFPS2670	Commencement	02-Jan-24*	23-Dec-25	Commencement															
FFPS2730	Completion and Occupation (Phased)	04-Apr-25	24-Sep-26	Completion and Occupation (Phased)															
Phase 2 Employment Application		03-Oct-22	24-Sep-27	24-Sep-27, Phase 2 Employment Application															
FFPS2490	Pre-application Preparation and Determination	03-Oct-22*	28-Mar-24	Pre-application Preparation and Determination															
FFPS2510	Commencement	07-Apr-25*	26-Mar-27	Commencement															
FFPS2520	Completion and Occupation (Phased)	01-Jul-26	24-Sep-27	Completion and Occupation (Phased)															
Phase 3 Employment Application		02-Apr-24	29-Mar-30	29-Mar-30, Phase 3 Employment Application															
FFPS2540	Pre-application Preparation and Determination	02-Apr-24*	24-Dec-25	Pre-application Preparation and Determination															
FFPS2560	Commencement	06-Jul-26*	29-Jun-29	Commencement															
FFPS2570	Completion and Occupation (Phased)	03-Oct-28	29-Mar-30	Completion and Occupation (Phased)															
Phase 4 Delivery of housing		10-Aug-22 A	20-Dec-38																
Residential 1		03-Oct-22	20-Dec-38																
Northern Residential Parcel (Hybrid)		03-Oct-22	28-Jun-24	28-Jun-24, Northern Residential Parcel (Hybrid)															
FFPS2330	Application Preparation and Determination	03-Oct-22*	28-Jun-24	Application Preparation and Determination															
Phase 1 Detail (150 units)		02-Jul-25	01-Jul-30	01-Jul-30, Phase 1 Detail (150 units)															
FFPS2370	Housing Delivery	02-Jul-25	01-Jul-30	Housing Delivery															
Reserved Matters A (235 units)		02-Oct-23	26-Jun-31	26-Jun-31, Reserved Matters A (235 units)															
FFPS2350	Application Preparation and Determination	02-Oct-23*	01-Jul-25	Application Preparation and Determination															
FFPS2400	Housing Delivery	09-Jul-26	26-Jun-31	Housing Delivery															
Reserved Matters (475 units and mixed ancillary uses)		03-Jan-28	20-Dec-38																
FFPS2420	Application Preparation and Determination	03-Jan-28*	26-Jun-30	Application Preparation and Determination															
FFPS2440	Housing Delivery	26-Jun-31	20-Dec-38																
Residential 2		01-Jan-29	20-Dec-38																
Phase 1 - Southern Parcel (450 Units)		01-Jan-29	20-Dec-38																
FFPS2310	Application Preparation and Determination	01-Jan-29*	20-Dec-30	Application Preparation and Determination															
FFPS2320	Housing Delivery	26-Jun-31	20-Dec-38																
Ecological Surveys		10-Aug-22 A	27-Sep-30	27-Sep-30, Ecological Surveys															
Phase 1 - Ecological Survey/s		10-Aug-22 A	27-Oct-22	27-Oct-22, Phase 1 - Ecological Survey/s															
FFPS3150	Ecology Surveys - Perform initial survey/s (complete)	10-Aug-22 A	31-Aug-22 A	Ecology Surveys - Perform initial survey/s (complete)															
Wintering Birds Survey		25-Oct-22	27-Oct-22	27-Oct-22, Wintering Birds Survey															

Appendix 2: Emerging Concept Masterplan – Employment Phasing



Not to scale
Preliminary - for information

- Draft Local Plan allocation boundary (illustrative)
- Proposed employment development - Phase 1
- Proposed employment development - later phases
- Proposed residential development
- Mixed use centre including school and sports pitches

To Widnes, A55 and M62

To Warrington, A57 and M62

Proposed battery storage development area

Existing underground aqueduct infrastructure (shown illustratively only)

Phase 1 employment development area (former coal stocking yard)

Employment Phase 2

Employment Phase 3

Residential 1

Mixed Use Centre

Employment Phase 1

M20423 Fiddlers Ferry Framework Plan

Phasing concept: principal areas (North)

Optimised Environments 221003