

BNG: Development of Yottenfews Discussion Paper

Issues

1. The site was only agreed as a temporary car parking facility. The policy is to turn it back to green field
2. Parking is an integral part of the use of Sellafield site unit in planning terms
3. Yottenfews car parking represents an extension of that use and one we want to resist unless it arises from increase in economic activities giving rise to employment and economic benefits to the area and meets complies with the councils planning and sustainability policies as set out in the Local Plan. Effectively the movement of vehicles to Yottenfews intensifies the activity within the main site. As such it a major extension to the planning use and represents a significant planning development.
4. Copeland Borough Councils Approved Local Plan and Cumbria and the Lake District Joint Structure Plan contain policies relevant to this situation. Both are very much up to date and received formal approval in 2006 following Public Inquiry.

Policies Include:

a. SUSTAINABLE LOCATIONS:

All new development should take place in sustainable locations
CLP Policies DEV 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7
JSP Policy ST1, 3 and 5

Principles include

- Concentrating new development in Key Service Centres (Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom)
- Ensuring new development reduces the need to travel and that sites are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling
- Priority must be given to using previously developed or “brownfield” land – the land at Yottenfews has the status of “greenfield” because of the planning condition requiring reinstatement
- Care not to increase risk of flooding

b. EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

In line with the requirements of JSP Policy EM13, CLP Policy EMP 1 provides for 89ha of land for employment use. This includes both existing planning permissions and new allocations. However, there are in addition a number of sites within the main urban areas designated in CLP as “Employment Opportunity

Sites” (Policy EMP 3: sites include Pow Beck, Rhodia and Leconfield St) or “Town Centre Opportunity Development Sites” (Policy TCN 12) which may involve mixed or alternative uses. Also, this sizeable land bank doesn’t include Sellafield where there are a variety of alternative sites and scheduled to be vacated accommodation. In other words we have a range of more suitable, more sustainably located sites for this form of development without need to use land in the open countryside at Yottenfews.

(n.b. Regional Spatial Strategy tests suggest we have a basic oversupply of designated employment sites)

JSP Policy EM 15 and CLP Policy RUR 1 allow for small scale developments for employment use in rural areas but these are essentially about protecting rural communities and agriculture – not importing urban features into the countryside.

c. NUCLEAR

CLP Policy NUC 3 identifies preferred options for relocating non radioactive development which only allows for sites at town centre/edge of town centre locations, Westlakes S&TP or existing Local Employment Sites (see also the text of Para 10.3.5 in CLP)

5. Our objectives in relation to the Sellafield Area are set within a context of decommissioning and long term reduction of the facilities. So we seek a reduction of overall site impact .
6. Long term alternative appropriate uses for the site which is not physically associated with existing settlements could only be
 - Large scale hazardous industry not suitable for siting close to settlements.
 - Return to agriculture/forestry etc
 - Nature reserve
 - Self contained tourist facility e.g. Holiday Park such as Centre Parks with some degree of self contained facilities.

The NDA are undertaking an exercise to determine suitable end states for the site in order to inform their clean up programmes. CBC need to be clear about how the Local Development framework should inform that decision given the extraordinarily long timescales involved.

7. We do not believe it is sustainable to continue extending the industrial footprint at Sellafield on site unrelated to population centres/adequate road network etc. when insufficient future demand from hazardous industry justifying such a location has been identified.

8. Where possible new development should be related to existing settlements where long term sustainability and alternative uses of capital assets is more viable.
9. We have previously agreed that the principle that new development related to activities on the Sellafield site, which is not proven to need a Sellafield location due to operational need, should be located in key settlements.
10. If it can be demonstrated that there is a need, accepted by the planning authority, that facilities need to be at Sellafield best endeavours should be undertaken to locate them within the existing site footprint
11. Where there is a requirement to remove car parking or other activities from the licensed site for security reasons and it is accepted that these activities need to stay close to the site, site management must use best endeavours to locate these facilities on the current planning hereditament, although this may mean redesigning the security perimeter to exclude them.
12. If none of these options prove possible and the site footprint is extended contrary to the policy of concentrated activity in settlements, suitable arrangements must be in place to support the long sustainability of the settlements to counter the potential implications of employment sites located away from them.

Car Parking Proposals

13. In the case of proposals to use additional land for car parking, the site operators should first develop for implementation a sustainable Travel Plan to reduce private car transport.

This plan should seek to reduce car parking needs by:

- a) Supporting pedestrian and cycle routes where possible linking nearby villages
- b) Promoting public transport use through Park and Ride/and or supporting rural bus service provision linking the site with existing settlements.
- c) Reduce the need to travel to work by locating as many activities as possible in centres of population
- d) When, after these measures have been put in place, the site operators still wish to proceed with the extension/intensification of the Sellafield site, offset support to economic activity in key settlements will be required at a scale related to the scale of extension of the footprint. Such support will be as set out below.

Offsetting Proposals Growth of Unsustainable Non Conforming Use At
Sellafield

14. The developer will be required to offset the impact of such development by making a contribution, in the form of an endowment, to a trust fund to be established by the Borough Council to provide ongoing support to developing our Copeland's town centres. This fund will be used for a range of activities including marketing and events, building preservation and development, public realm improvement and maintenance.

This requirement would be relevant to all forms of development including car parking and offices

A similar approach is being developed to deal with planning gain for major town centre developments to ensure positive impacts are generated