

PLANNING STATEMENT

**SITES 3 AND 4, BARROW BROOK BUSINESS VILLAGE, CLITHEROE,
LANCASHIRE**

**OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR MIXED
B1, B2 AND B8 INDUSTRIAL USE**

March 2012

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement supports an outline planning application for mixed B1, B2 and B8 use at Sites 3 and 4, Barrow Brook Business Village, Clitheroe.
- 1.2 The primary purpose of this planning statement is to demonstrate that the proposed development complies with national planning guidance and with the statutory development plan. To this end brief reference will be made to the site circumstances and to the planning history of the site, and the proposed scheme will briefly be described.
- 1.3 The main focus of this statement will be an assessment of the proposed development against the requirements of national planning guidance and the development plan policies; it will identify those elements that are of particular relevance to the proposal and describe the on-going changes to the development plan with reference to emerging policy.
- 1.4 Having demonstrated that the proposal complies with government guidance and the development plan, the statement will conclude that outline planning permission should be granted.
- 1.5 In addition to the drawings, this Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement, the following documents are included in the planning submission:
 - Highway Report, Transport Assessment/Travel Plan prepared by DTPC.
 - Ecology Report prepared by Pennine Ecological
 - Phase 1 Land Quality Assessment prepared by PSA Design
 - Arboriculture Impact Assessment prepared by Bowland Tree Consultancy Ltd

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is situated adjacent to the north east edge of the defined settlement boundary of Barrow. It is essentially rectangular in plan, extending to approximately 5.96 ha. The site comprises a number of fields currently down to grass, and accordingly the northern boundary is marked by an existing field boundary. The eastern edge of the site is defined by the A59. Most of the western boundary coincides with residential development but at its southern end this boundary is not currently defined on the ground, with an extension of the field projecting to the west.
- 2.2 The southern boundary of the site abuts the Barrow Brook Business Village. This mixed use development has evolved since 1990 when outline planning permission was first granted for the redevelopment of the whole of the Barrow Print Works site. A succession of planning consents relating to various parts of the Barrow Print Works site has given rise to the Council viewing that whole site as a development commitment for a range of urban land uses including residential, office, light industrial, filling station, fast food restaurant and hotel/conference centre.
- 2.3 Accordingly the western end of the southern boundary of the application site abuts part of the Total Food Services distribution site, and along the eastern end of this boundary there is a petrol filling station with convenience store and a drive through restaurant. The intervening land benefits from extant outline planning permission for a hotel development.
- 2.4 Elsewhere within Barrow Brook Business Village there is extant consent for office development (Hindle and Schofield site), The Printworks provides office accommodation, and two phases of residential development by Rowland Homes have been granted planning permission; the first is nearing completion and partly occupied.
- 2.5 Finally, a parcel of land on the southern side of the Barrow Print Works site (site 2), benefits from extant planning permission for office use and is currently the subject of an

outline planning application for residential use (3/2012/0158). Slightly less than half of that site is the subject of a covenant which restricts the use of the land to B1 use only; B1 use is an industrial activity that can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to the amenity of the area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.

- 2.6 The field boundaries of the application site are a mixture of post and timber fences and hedges, supplemented with trees. The land is down to grass and is currently vacant. Access to the site is from the A59 via a new road with a roundabout junction. A public footpath crosses the site running approximately east-west.
- 2.7 There have been no previous planning applications in respect of the application site. However the southern half of the site (site 3), comprises part of what the Council describe as the Barrow Brook Business Park Extension and which is the Admiral Taverns site identified in the Employment Land and Retail Study (see paragraph 5.3.3 below). The northern half of the application site comprises site 4.
- 2.8 The application site is highly accessible. It is situated close to Clitheroe, one of the Borough's main settlements, which can be accessed by bus. Within Clitheroe a transport interchange facilitates onward journeys by bus and rail to towns including Blackburn and beyond.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Relevant consents within the Barrow Print Works site may be summarised as follows:

- 3/1989/0405 - outline application for the development of the 19 hectare site for offices, light industrial use, hotel/conference centre and housing with associated access roads and car parks approved with conditions 14 May 1990
- 3/1993/0316 - outline application for the development of the 19 hectare site for offices, light industrial use, hotel/conference centre and housing with associated access roads, car parking and landscaping (renewal of application 3/1989/0405) approved with conditions 29 October 1993
- 3/1996/0478 - variation of condition 1 of application 3/93/0316 to extend the period of application for approval of reserved matters to 6 years from 29 October 1993 approved with conditions 8 October 1996
- 3/1997/0410 - reserved matters application (outline applications 3/1993/0316 and 3/1996/0478) for the construction of a new access road and roundabout approved with conditions 11 September 1997
- 3/1998/0612 - reserved matters application (outline applications 3/1993/0316 and 3/1996/0478) for engineering operations incorporating landscaping, drainage and road works approved with conditions 5 November 1998
- 3/1999/0443 - outline application for hotel and non-ancillary A3 use approved with conditions 10 August 1999
- 3/1999/0743 - modification of condition 1 of approval 3/93/0316 to extend the period of approval of reserved matters to nine years approved with conditions 30 November 1999
- 3/2001/0420 - outline application for five acres of roadside services including hotel, A3 use and petrol station approved with conditions 11 January 2002
- 3/2002/0830 - modification of condition 1 of approval 3/93/0316 to extend time limit approved with conditions 19 December 2002
- 3/2004/1163 - modification of condition 1 of approval 3/2001/0420 to extend period of time for approval of reserved matters from 3 to 6 years approved with conditions 6 January 2005

- 3/2006/0643 - construction of two arterial roads approved with conditions 13 March 2003
- 3/2007/0851 - modification of condition 1 of approval 3/2001/0420 to extend period of time for approval of reserved matters from 3 to 9 years approved with conditions 8 November 2007
- 3/2007/0964 - revised reserved matters application for B1 office use approved with conditions 18 June 2008 - site 2
- 3/2007/1065 - revised reserved matters application to 3/2002/0878 approved with conditions 6 February 2008 - undeveloped Hindle and Schofield site
- 3/2010/0568 - proposed erection of 64no. dwellings and associated infrastructure approved with conditions 4 November 2010 - Rowland Homes phase I
- 3/2011/0307 - full application for residential development of 37 dwellings deferred and delegated to the Director of Community Services for approval with conditions subject to the satisfactory completion of a legal Agreement - Rowland Homes phase II
- 3/2012/0158 - outline application for the erection of 73 open market and 31 social housing units not determined - Site 2

4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 This application is an outline application for a mixture of B1 (Business), B2 (General industrial) and B8 (Storage or distribution) use. Only access is for determination at this stage, with all other matters reserved for later determination.
- 4.2 Vehicular access will be from the A59 via the adopted road through Barrow Brook Business Village, but there is an opportunity to upgrade the pedestrian link that already exists between the A59 and Whalley Road in the middle of the village.

5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

5.1.1 Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) describes the governments overall aim of achieving sustainable development, underpinned by a plan-led system.

5.1.2 Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4) sets out the governments policies in respect of economic development.

5.1.3 Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9) ensures that appropriate consideration is given to issues of biodiversity when determining planning applications. In this instance a Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required.

5.1.4 Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (PPS12) describes the key requirements of local spatial plans and how they should be prepared.

5.1.5 Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport (PPG13) promotes the making of sustainable transport choices and accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure and other facilities.

5.1.6 A new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is currently in draft form, with the intention that it will supersede the existing PPG's and PPS's. Consultation has taken place on the document, and at the time of writing it remains the case that publication of the final version is anticipated before 31 March 2012. Some weight can be attributed to the draft version.

5.1.7 Key elements of the draft NPPF are a presumption in favour of approving applications for sustainable development and the promotion of development which supports economic growth, with decisions made with reference to the evidence base that has been assembled. Of particular significance is the perpetuation of the need for local authorities to have plans in place that look forward over a period of at least 15 years.

5.2 REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

5.2.1 The government intended to revoke the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) through the Localism Bill. Whilst this is imminent, at the time of writing the RSS for the North West remains part of the statutory development plan and case law indicates that both the policies contained therein and the work that informed the preparation of the policies should be accorded appropriate weight in the determination of planning applications.

5.2.2 Relevant policies are the following:

- DP1 Spatial Principles
- DP3 Promote Sustainable Economic Development
- W3 Supply of Employment Land

5.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

5.3.1 The Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (RVDLP) was adopted in June 1998. The policies saved from the plan under the terms of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 continue to comprise part of the statutory development plan until such time as they are replaced by Local Development Framework (LDF) or Local Development Document (LDD) policies.

5.3.2 Relevant saved policies are the following:

- G1 Development Control - details a number of development control criteria that may be applicable in the determination of planning applications.
- G5 Outside the Main Settlements - as part of the settlement strategy, details the nature of development appropriate outside the settlement boundaries
- ENV3 Open Countryside - protects the open countryside from inappropriate development
- ENV7 Species Protection - will preclude development that would have an adverse effect on species protected by law, unless arrangements can be made for their protection.
- T1 Development Proposals - details considerations for planning applications in respect of transport and mobility.
- T7 Parking Provision - requires all applications for development to provide adequate car parking and servicing space.

5.3.3 With regard to the LDF, the Council have undertaken detailed research to produce an evidence base that will underpin forthcoming policy. The evidence base includes:

- Employment Land and Retail Study October 2008 (ELRS)
- Employment Land Position Statement June 2011 (ELPS)
- Ribble Valley Economic Strategy 2009-2014 (ES) (background paper)

5.3.4 A draft Core Strategy has been prepared and the Regulation 25 Report has been available for public consultation. Following consultation the Council published Proposed Revisions to Key Statements and Development Management Policies (PRKSDMP) (June 2011). It is a stated aim of the Core Strategy that it will set out what the Sustainable Community Strategy is seeking to achieve in land use and development terms. Amongst the key elements of the Core Strategy is business and employment development. A number of proposals are put forward, together with key statements on a range of subjects.

- 5.3.5 The timetable for the production of the LDF has experienced considerable slippage. Accordingly it is currently anticipated that the Core Strategy will be the subject of an Examination in Public during 2012 and not adopted as part of the strategic planning policy for the Borough until the end of 2012. Nevertheless some weight can be accorded to the Core Strategy and to the proposed revisions, with the balance shifting as time passes.
- 5.3.6 The current LDF timetable does not anticipate adoption of the Housing and Economic Development DPD until October 2013 and at the time of writing a draft is not available to view.

6 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 PRINCIPLE OF B1, B2 AND B8 USE

- 6.1.1 The application site lies outside the defined settlement boundary of Barrow, and accordingly saved policy G5 is applicable. The policy limits development outside the settlement boundaries to small scale development that fulfils one of a number of criteria, including that which is essential to the local economy or social well being of the area.
- 6.1.2 The scale of the application site is such that it does not accord with what has historically been regarded as small scale development. However, although a saved policy it is now out of step with more recent government advice and the direction that the Core Strategy is heading, as demonstrated by the findings of the evidence base.
- 6.1.3 The ELRS was undertaken on behalf of the Council by BE Group. A number of important points can be drawn from the report, which support the current proposal. Significantly, a need is identified for the provision of an additional six hectares of employment land in the Borough "... *in order to facilitate and maintain levels of economic development in the next 10 years*", and crucially, "*The new supply needs to be primarily located adjacent to the A59, provide industrial premises, where possible extend and add value to existing employment areas, and be accessible to key service centres*" (paragraph 11.2).
- 6.1.4 Being located adjacent to both the mixed development that comprises the Barrow Brook Business Village and the A59, the proposed development is ideally placed to fulfil this requirement. There are existing employment sites and the opportunity to live within walking distance, with excellent communications provided by the A59 without the need to compromise the amenity of the historic village itself.

- 6.1.5 The ELRS makes the point that it is essential to understand what the market will support in terms of the location of proposed employment land; developers "*... prefer to acquire prominent, easy to develop, greenfield sites close to arterial roads or motorways because irrespective of sustainable development policies and the need to support Key Service Centres. They naturally want land that is attractive to end-users*" (paragraph 3.70). This is borne out by Table 43 which demonstrates that of the 11 sites identified as available for development in the Borough (at that time), the top five in respect of both market-led scores and total scores are all located at Barrow Brook.
- 6.1.6 Looking to the future, from a trawl of sites included in the 2006 Settlement Audit the ELRS identified ten potential new employment sites; this is on the basis of the possible sites being assessed with regard to their capacity to satisfy market demand and the need to identify sustainable employment solutions (paragraph 11.7). They total 61 hectares, a figure which is far in excess of the current ten year requirement for six hectares of new employment land. However, scoring of the ten sites identified enables the selection of those that are the most attractive to the market, accessible and developable in terms of size, shape, location and constraints.
- 6.1.7 On this basis the Admiral Taverns site, which is described in the ELRS as Barrow Brook Business Park Extension (appendix 1) and comprises approximately half of the application site, is placed in the top three. The recommended end use is industrial, with the 4.2 hectare site having the potential to create 811 office jobs or 510 industrial jobs. Table 84 of the ELRS, which is a summary of the Action Plan, places the Admiral Taverns land equal first in order of priority. The timescale is identified as being short, which applies to only three of the ten sites, and is an indicator of the high likelihood of the site being developed for employment purposes.
- 6.1.8 The ELPS undertakes a similar analysis of employment land required in the Borough to that completed by BE Group for the ERLS: "*In summary the forward prediction in applying the Method 1 calculations results in a further 6 ha (rounded) of land for a ten-year [period] from 2010 – 2020 in addition to those sites that the BE study identified*" (paragraph 4.9). It also notes that Barrow Brook "*... continues its role as the Council's principal strategic employment location*".

- 6.1.9 Again looking to the future, the ELPS (section 5), notes that there are no significant additional sites to those identified by the BE study, and that "... *the location influences and infrastructure position remain the same ... It principally identified both Barrow Brook Business Park and the BAE Samlesbury sites as "Flagships", i.e. sites of a scale, location and setting capable of business park development for investment in the regional/sub-regional marketplace and could host B1, B2 or B8 uses. No local agents disagree with the importance of these sites*".
- 6.1.10 The need for employment land manifests in the Core Strategy as a commitment to release such land as is necessary to support the local economy, but because the requirement is relatively low no sites are specifically identified; the three development options rely on provision through strategic sites across the Borough as well as through less strategic sites.
- 6.1.11 With regard to the choice of location, the key statement advises of a preference for the use of brownfield sites and the re-use of existing employment sites before alternatives are considered. However it also states that "*Opportunities to identify land as part of appropriate mixed-use schemes within any strategic land release will be considered favourably*".
- 6.1.12 Two of the proposed revisions to the Core Strategy are significant for the determination of the application. Firstly, it is proposed that the following is inserted at the start of the Business and Employment Development Key Statement: "*The Council, in line with the evidence it has gathered, will aim to allocate an additional 9 hectares of land for employment purposes in appropriate and sustainable locations during the lifetime of this plan*". This is significant, firstly because the amount of land to be allocated for employment purposes had not previously been specified, and secondly, because it represents a significant (50%) increase over the amount (six hectares) that had been identified as required in both the ERLS and the ELPS.

- 6.1.13 Secondly, in respect of the location of new employment development, it is proposed that the following statement is inserted into paragraph 7.1.4: "*It is recognised that suitable locations that are well related to the A59 corridor will also have the potential to deliver economic growth through the delivery of appropriate sites*". Although Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley are still identified as the preferred locations for new employment development this amendment represents a significant shift, reflecting market forces, and would be in line with the draft NPPF.
- 6.1.14 Furthermore, in the absence of allocated sites new development is not confined to those sites identified for development in the ERLS. The application site therefore, which represents most of the Admiral Taverns site which is identified in the ERLS and an extension to it, is ideally placed to provide the additional employment land that is now required. In terms of accessibility and servicing the application site is comparable with the Barrow Brook Business Park Extension, and without constraints to development is equally likely to be developed in the short term.
- 6.1.15 Pressure to provide new employment land comes not only from the increased requirement per se described above, but also as a consequence of the failure of some sites approved for employment use by the Council to materialise. A case in point is site 2, in respect of which an outline application for residential use is in the process of determination. That site is hampered by two significant constraints on development for employment use, namely its proximity to significant numbers of residential properties and a covenant which precludes B2 and B8 use on part of the land. It is for these reasons that it has never been viable to pursue an employment use.
- 6.1.16 Irrespective of the outcome of the outline application for residential use, site 2 will not provide employment opportunities. In contrast, this site has no such constraints to development and in part is promoted by virtue of being within the Barrow Brook Business Park Extension. As such it provides an alternative and indeed preferable alternative employment site to site 2.

6.2 OTHER MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.2.1 NATURE CONSERVATION is a consideration, with saved policy ENV7 specifically relating to protected species. The Tree Report is a comprehensive survey, which confirms that those trees with the greatest amenity value are to be retained, and those which the development necessitates are removed have the least amenity value.
- 6.2.2 The Phase 1 Habitat Survey has assessed the vegetation, habitats and species and should be referred to for full details. It finds that the trees and hedges are of low value, that there are no habitats of high diversity value, and that the site is principally of low diversity and poor quality.
- 6.2.3 There is no evidence of badgers either on or off the site and therefore they can be considered absent in the immediate locality. The trees potentially provide roost for bats and the site has the potential to facilitate foraging and commuting by bats, but there was no evidence. The site was also considered unfavourable to ground nesting birds. The report concludes that no further survey work in respect of the flora is required.
- 6.2.5 ACCESSIBILITY - The Transport Statement prepared by DTPC makes a detailed assessment of the trip levels associated with vehicle movement to and from the site via the A59 roundabout both in terms of the development implemented and/or underway together with extant consents and projections associated with this development and concludes that the proposal will not result in any capacity issues on the local road network. Equally the site is regarded as being in a sustainable location with footpath links to the main village which has public transport bus connections to Clitheroe and beyond.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 PPS1 paragraph 8 advocates the certainty and predictability that is derived from the plan-led system, and nothing in the emerging development plan would contradict that approach. Accordingly, applications for planning permission should be determined with reference to the development plan where it contains relevant policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. We have detailed the policies of the statutory development plan and emerging policies that are applicable to this proposal, with an indication of the weight that should be attached.
- 7.2 We have demonstrated that the proposal does comply, and accordingly outline planning permission for the mixed B1, B2 and B8 use of the site should be granted.

8 APPENDICES

- 1 Barrow Brook Business Park Extension (Section 11 – Recommendations from the Ribble Valley Employment Land and Retail Study)