

Ribble Valley Borough Council
Development Control
Council Offices Church Walk
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

Our ref: NO/2012/104627/01-L02
Your ref: 3/2012/1044

Date: 21 December 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

**PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STOREY OFFICE
DEVELOPMENT ON REDUNDANT LAND ADJACENT TO THE SPINNEY, CAR
PARK WITH HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING AREAS AND SERVICE
INSTALLATIONS TO SUIT. LAND ADJACENT TO THE SPINNEY,
GRINDLETON, LANCASHIRE, BB7 4QE**

We have assessed the site and regrettably we have sufficient concern to object to the proposal on flood risk and biodiversity grounds.

Flood risk

The River Ribble adjoining the site is designated a main river. The site lies within Flood Zone 3b shown on the Environment Agency flood maps and as defined by the Technical Guide to the National Planning Policy Framework. This means that the site has a high probability of flooding where the risk to life and property within the development from fluvial inundation could be unacceptable if the development were to be allowed.

The proposed development does not have a safe means of access and/or egress in the event of flooding and no alternative option for managing the safety of people has been provided as part of the application. Consequently, there would be an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the occupants in a flood event.

The proposed development will impede flood flow *and* reduce flood storage capacity thereby increasing the risk of flooding to the proposed development and possibly elsewhere by displacing waters.

The River Ribble is subject to the Land Drainage Byelaws meaning that no trees or shrubs may be planted, fences, buildings, pipelines or any other structure erected within 8 metres of the top of the bank of the watercourse without our prior written Consent. In this particular case it is essential that this 8 metre strip is preserved for access purposes. Consequently based on the information available it is likely that the development cannot proceed in its present format.

We have a statutory right of entry onto the land by virtue of Section 172 of the Water Resources Act 1991. This is as part of our duty to reduce flooding by carrying out maintenance and improvement works where necessary. This right is given to us in Section 165 of the same Act. The developer may wish to contact James Jackson on 01772 714134 to discuss our access requirements.

Reason

The proposed development is unacceptable because it involves building works within 8 metres of a Main River and we would be unlikely to give our consent for the works because they would restrict essential maintenance and emergency access to the River Ribble. The permanent retention of a continuous unobstructed area is an essential requirement for future maintenance and / or improvement works.

Ecology & Biodiversity

We object to the proposal because the proposal includes development in close proximity to the River Ribble. The proposal is likely to prejudice the environmental objectives of the Environment Agency and preclude the provision of an adequate buffer zone next to the watercourse.

We would be likely to withdraw our objection if development within 8 metres of the watercourse is omitted from the scheme. We would request provision of a minimum 8 metre vegetated buffer zone to allow the provision of native plant species alongside the River Ribble. Moving the development further back from the channel, will allow the majority of the vegetation along the site boundary to be retained.

Allowing this strip to be retained will conserve the character and wildlife attributes of the watercourse and provide undisturbed refuges for wildlife using the river corridor.

If you or the applicant has any queries, please contact us. We would like to be re-consulted on any revisions to the scheme.

Yours faithfully

Dan Matthewman
Planning Officer - Sustainable Places

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