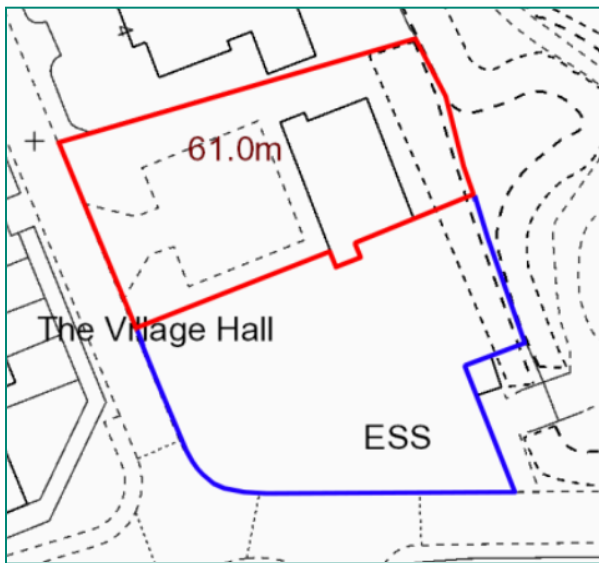


SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING OFFICE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT BUILDING, FOR USE AS OFFICES



The Village Hall, Franklin Hill, Brockhall Village, Old Langho, BB6 8HY

Prepared by MacMarshalls Rural Chartered Surveyors & Planning Consultants on behalf of Mr & Mrs Pickup (Prometheus Group Services Ltd).



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1. THE APPLICATION SITE

- 1.1 The application site extends to an area of approximately 0.9 hectares, located within the heart of the defined settlement of Brockhalls Village, a gated community with more than 400 homes, Blackburn Rovers training ground and local businesses including retail and offices. The site comprises a single storey steel framed, brick clad building in use as offices, with associated hardstanding, used for parking, to its front. The site is close to the junction of Cherry Drive and Chapel Close, and separated by Cherry Drive via a roughly rectangular parcel of open grassed land, bounded by hedging, that is within the ownership and control of the applicant. That parcel of land is currently designated as Existing Open Space within the Development Plan.
- 1.2 Residential properties are located to the north (immediately adjacent), west, and south-west of the site (on the opposite side of the road). To the east of the site is a bowling green and further to the south, beyond the other land within the applicant's ownership and on the other side of Cherry Drive, is a modest parcel of land containing a group of mature trees.
- 1.w Photographs of the site and the surrounding area are shown below.



Figure 1 - Photograph of existing building (front)

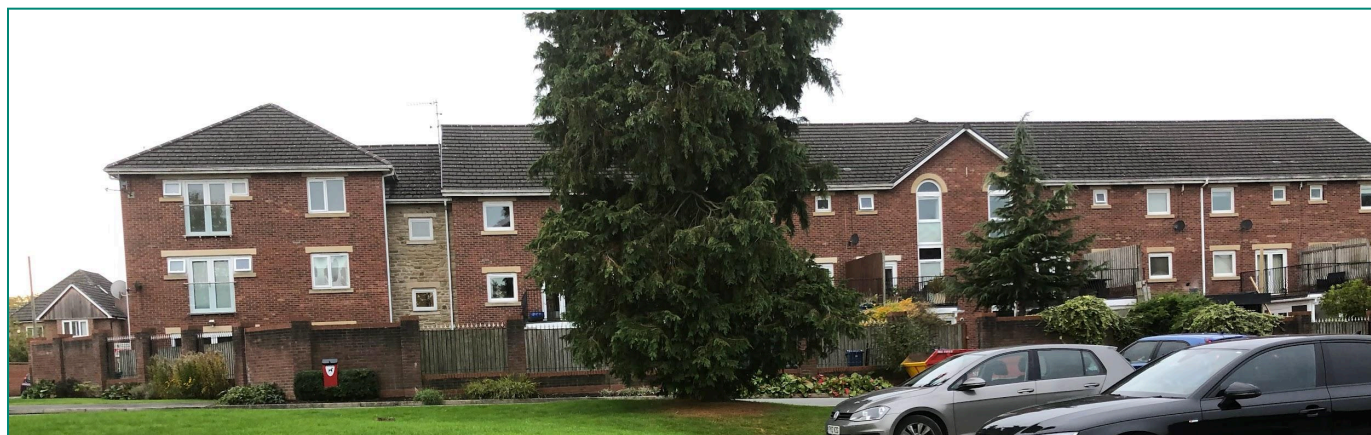


Figure 2 & 3 - Photographs of existing car parking area and apartments opposite



Figure 4 - Photograph of existing car parking area and front of the building with a dwellinghouse in the background to the site's north.



Figure 5 - Looking down Chapel Lane with the existing car parking forming part of the application site to the right of the photo.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. At present, the building on site is used as offices by the applicant's business, Prometheus Group Services. Prometheus undertakes Mechanical and Electrical Installation, Project Management and Engineering Services. They are a trusted supply chain partner for some large organisations, including Marks and Spencer, Royal Mail, Wates Smartspace, Mace, Nexperia and Primark.
- 2.2. They have had their head office based at Brockhall Village for the last fourteen years. As existing, the building does not function well as an office with the low level windows and lack of light.
- 2.3. The applicants have always had a preference to stay in Ribble Valley. They have previously tried to secure alternative development on the site to provide them with some of the funding they would need to relocate to a building that meets their current and future needs, however, the LPA has not granted them the required planning permission(s).
- 2.4. The applicants therefore have little option remaining, and desperately need to redevelop the site to suit their own business needs. If they are not able to expand their offices in this location, they will need to focus on alternative areas and relocate their head offices accordingly. As their other locations are in Doncaster and Norwich, this could lead to them moving outside of the Borough, with associated local job losses that may regrettably result.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.5. It is proposed to demolish the existing building and construct a three storey office building on the land, with associated parking.
- 2.6. The building would be positioned to the north east of the plot, in a similar position to the existing building, with parking in front, and the access and gates the same as that confirmed by the lawful development certificate approval reference 3/2024/0819.



Figure 6 - Proposed Site Layout Plan with hatched red line showing position of existing building

- 2.7. The building will be constructed predominantly in red brick, with some aluminum cladding, under a concrete tile roof, and will have aluminum windows and doors. The windows will be vertically aligned, and the building will include a gable feature to its front.
- 2.8. The building will measure approximately 13.6m x 18.3m. It would have a height to ridge of 10.46m and a height to eaves of 6.7m.
- 2.9. An excerpt of the front elevation is shown below and shows the proposed relationship of the building with the neighbouring property.



Figure 7 - Proposed front elevation showing height relative to neighbouring building

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1. Planning permission (reference 3/2010/0544) was granted in October 2010 for a change of use from D2 (Village Hall) to B1 (office use) and at the same time planning permission was granted for a change of use from D2 (Village Hall) to A1 (retail). The approved application site included the building and land to the

west of the building. The permission for the offices was implemented and therefore its lawful use is an office use.

- 3.2. Outline planning permission was granted in January 2012, with all matters reserved, for the proposed demolition of the existing building and replacement with 1no. detached house (reference 3/2011/0930).

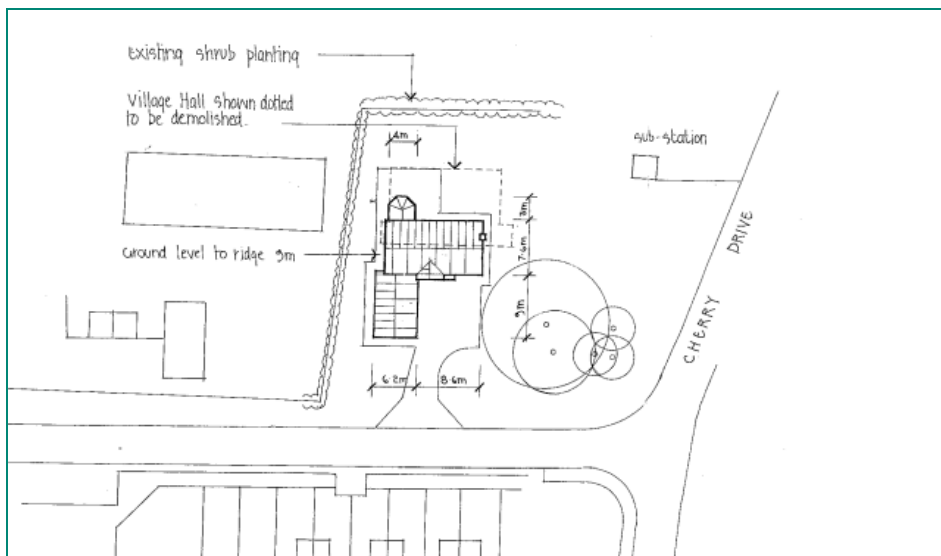


Figure 8 - Plan of previously approved dwelling

- 3.3. On 11th September 2024 application reference 3/2024/0635 was refused for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed 1m high fencing and new entrance gates at vehicular access.

The appeal was allowed on 8th October 2025 and relates to the land edged in red and in blue as shown on the location plan submitted as part of the current planning application. The approved site plan is shown below.

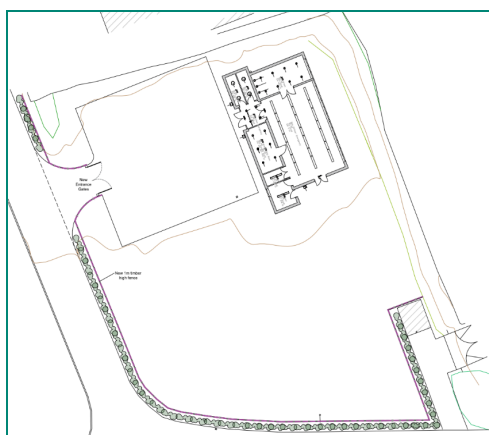


Figure 9 - Approved Site Plan 3/2024/0635

- 3.4. On 26th November 2024 application reference 3/2024/0819 was granted for a Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed 1m high fencing and new entrance gates and vehicular access, in the position shown below.

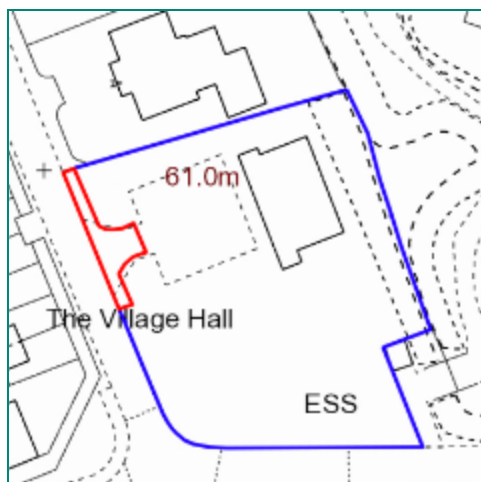


Figure 10 - 3/2024/0819 Approved Fencing and Gates Location

4. PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted 2014) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).
- 4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Also, it states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

It states, inter alia, that “Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”

Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2014

- 4.3. The Core Strategy forms the central document of the Local Development Framework (LDF), establishing the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the area to 2028. The following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this application:

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development
Key Statement EC1 - Business and Employment Development
Key Statement DMI2 - Transport Considerations
Key Statement EN3- Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility
Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
Policy DME6 - Water Management

5. ASSESSMENT

Principle and Economic Development

- 5.1. Policy DMB1 states that proposals to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. It goes on to say that the expansion of existing firms within settlements will be permitted on land within or adjacent to their existing sites, provided no significant environmental problems are caused and the extension conforms to the other plan policies of the LDF.
- 5.2. This is an application by the existing owners and occupiers of the existing building on site, who are looking to redevelop the site for their own continued business use. The land is located within the settlement area of Brockhall Village. The development is therefore acceptable in principle.
- 5.3. Brockhall is a Tier 2 settlement, and Key Statement DS1 states that development will need to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits. The application relates to a local business that has been operating from the site since the building was constructed and that is keen to stay within the Borough. Their expansion is necessary to enable the company to grow and fulfill its economic potential.
- 5.4. The redevelopment of the site will also achieve regeneration benefits as set out in the visual amenity section of this statement. The closing sentence of Key Statement DS1 is; “*Through this strategy, development opportunities will be created for economic, social and environmental well-being and development for future generations.*” That is the case here. Accordingly the development is considered acceptable having regard to Key Statement DS1.

- 5.5. Policy DMG2 states that development within Tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement must meet at least one of a number of considerations; of relevance to this application is criteria 1 - that the development should be essential to the local economy or social well being of the area. The development will ensure that the business can expand and become more efficient, to the benefit of the local economy, directly through new employment opportunities and also indirectly via associated use of local services by those employed there. The development is therefore considered acceptable having regard to Policy DMG2.
- 5.6. Key Statement DS2 states that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the Framework. It goes on to say that Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7. As stated previously, the application site is already in employment use, and in that regard Key Statement EC1 states that; *“In considering the development of land for economic development and in determining where this land will be located, priority will be given to the use of appropriate Brownfield sites to deliver employment-generating uses including a preference for the re-use of existing employment sites before alternatives are considered.”* The development is therefore in accordance with Key Statement EC1.

Visual Amenity

- 5.8. The building has been designed having regard to the design and materials of the surrounding area, including red brick, feature front projecting gables, and vertically aligned fenestration.
- 5.9. The building is reflective of a modern office building whilst integrating local materials. The areas of aluminium cladding serve to break up the red brick with some contrasting detail. The asymmetrical roof seeks to reflect the other pitched roof features in the locality, whilst integrating a design which allows the applicant to maximise the internal space.
- 5.10. The building is of a height that is similar to other buildings within the area, including the apartments opposite and would not be overly imposing or dominating within the street scene and relative to the neighbouring property, owing to its size, materials and set back position.
- 5.11. The building will replace a tired and uninspiring building that fails to contribute positively to the area, and the replacement building will enhance the visual appearance of the site on which it will be located.
- 5.12. The parking area to the front is informal and consistent with the existing building, rather tired in appearance. The parking will be similarly located and improved, and embellished with additional landscaping to soften its appearance. Existing hedgerows to the front and north side of the site will be retained, and the proposed access point will be the same as that approved under permission 3/2024/0819. The development is therefore considered acceptable in visual amenity terms having regard

to Policy DMG1.

Neighbour Amenity

- 5.13. Separation distances from the front of the property to the residential properties opposite will be in the region of 40 metres, ensuring no issues in relation to light, privacy or outlook. There are no properties to the south or to the rear. The building will run parallel with part of the existing house to the north and in part extend beyond it, similar to the existing. The site is at a lower level than the neighbouring property, and owing to the retention of the existing boundary treatments there will be no detriment at ground floor level in terms of privacy. The proposed first and second floor windows would face the neighbour's garage. If considered necessary the windows could be adapted to be obscure glazed.
- 5.14. The submitted plans show the relationship between the proposed building and the adjacent neighbour. By reason of the difference in levels, boundary treatments, separation distances and the garage that has been referred to above, it is considered that the development would not cause undue detriment in respect of light and outlook.
- 5.15. Office uses are not particularly noise generating and can comfortably function in a residential area without causing undue detriment to neighbours. As the use of the site will remain the same there is no reason to conclude there would be any significant impact in this regard. Hours of use would remain unchanged.
- 5.16. The scheme is considered acceptable in neighbour amenity terms.

Highway Safety

- 5.17. At present, parking spaces are not marked out for the offices, however there are spaces for about 10 cars.
- 5.18. The proposal comprises 622 m² of office (Class E) floorspace at Brockhall Village, with associated parking provision of 14 standard spaces and 2 disabled bays, providing a total of 16 parking spaces on site. There is also adequate room to manoeuvre around the site so cars can enter and exit in a forward direction.
- 5.19. Under the Lancashire County Council parking standards, referenced by Policy DMG3 (Transport and Mobility) of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014), a typical requirement for office development is 1 space per 35 m² gross floorspace.
- 5.20. Applying this to the proposal:
- $622 \text{ m}^2 \div 35 = 17.8 \text{ spaces required}$
- 5.21. A strict interpretation would therefore suggest a need for 18 spaces. The development provides 16 spaces, representing a shortfall of only two spaces (c. 11%), which is fully justified by site-specific and operational factors as set out below.

- 5.21.1. Local staff - The company's two Directors and two employees reside within Brockhall Village, within easy walking and cycling distance of the site. These staff members will not routinely require on-site parking.
 - 5.21.2. Car-sharing policy – The business operates an internal car-sharing scheme, significantly reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips.
 - 5.21.3. Mixed-use internal space – Not all of the 622 m² floorspace functions as office accommodation. A proportion of the building will be used as training and amenity space for existing employees, generating lower parking demand than general office use.
 - 5.21.4. Sustainable travel measures – The proposal incorporates covered cycle parking and electric-vehicle charging points, encouraging staff and visitors to adopt sustainable travel modes consistent with NPPF (December 2024, paragraphs 113–116) and the Council's objectives to reduce carbon emissions.
 - 5.21.5. Location within Brockhall Village – The site is well positioned within a sustainable and established settlement, with footpath connections, nearby bus stops and community facilities, allowing travel by means other than the private car.
 - 5.21.6. Occasional on-street capacity – There is limited on-street parking within Brockhall Village, which can accommodate occasional visitor or overflow parking if required. The Council has previously accepted this approach for another office development within Brockhall Village, confirming that such capacity is available and appropriate for infrequent use.
- 5.22. Taking these points together, the proposed parking layout is considered appropriate and sufficient to meet the operational requirements of the development. It achieves a sustainable balance between providing adequate on-site parking and avoiding over-provision that would encourage unnecessary car use. The scheme therefore accords with Policy DMG1 (General Considerations) and Policy DMG3 (Transport and Mobility) of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, together with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) to promote sustainable transport and efficient use of land.

Ecology / Biodiversity

- 5.23. The application is accompanied by a Bat Survey, inclusive of a scoping and emergence survey. The report concludes that no visible evidence or emergence from the building was noted. The emergence survey did not record any flight over the building, and bats would not be displaced by the development.
- 5.24. The application is also accompanied by a BNG Assessment. It confirms that no designated sites, irreplaceable habitats, priority habitats or habitats of medium or high distinctness will be impacted. The assessment shows that there will be a very small net loss in biodiversity value for habitats, totalling 0.03

units. The biodiversity loss is very small in relative terms and only extends to modified grassland habitat only.

- 5.25. That said, the development will therefore not meet the biodiversity net gain condition for habitats and hedgerows which is required to demonstrate that a 10% net gain would be achieved. A total of 0.04 habitat units are required to achieve a 10% net gain and a total of less than 0.007 hedgerow units are required. Given the limited green space available within the site boundary to achieve net gain, the applicant has expressed that off-site credits will be sought.
- 5.26. Recommendations are included within the BNG assessment that demonstrate that the biodiversity net gain condition is more than capable of being discharged.
- 5.27. Accordingly, the scheme is considered acceptable in terms of ecology and biodiversity.

Flood Risk

- 5.28. The site lies within Flood Risk Zone 1 and is and is not within an area at risk of surface water flooding. Accordingly, if considered necessary, a scheme to provide a drainage strategy based on sustainable drainage principles, can be subject to an appropriately worded planning condition.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. Section 38(b) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, 'the determination must be made in accordance with the plans unless material considerations dictate otherwise'.
- 6.2. It has been demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable having regard to the development plan and material planning considerations, most notably, the NPPF.
- 6.3. The scheme will improve the visual amenity of the site and its setting and bring positive economic benefits to the area, for an existing local business that is in desperate need to upgrade and expand. This development provides that opportunity and would do so in a manner that would not be detrimental to neighbour amenity, highway safety, ecology, or surface water drainage, and would ensure that biodiversity net gain is achieved.
- 6.4. The Council is therefore respectfully requested to approve the planning application without delay.

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