

EIA SCREENING STATEMENT

Land North of Whalley Road, Read (Ribble Valley Borough Council)

Regulation 6 – Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Screening Statement is submitted in support of a request for an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Screening Opinion pursuant to Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (“the EIA Regulations”).
- 1.2 The request relates to land known as Land North of Whalley Road, Read, within the administrative area of Ribble Valley Borough Council (“the Council”).
- 1.3 The proposed development comprises approximately 80 residential dwellings, together with new publicly accessible parkland, green infrastructure, landscaping and associated access works, on a site extending to approximately 48 acres (c. 19.4 hectares).
- 1.4 This Screening Statement provides sufficient information to enable the Council to determine whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the Schedule 3 selection criteria of the EIA Regulations.

2. Description of the Proposed Development

- 2.1 The proposed development at Land North of Whalley Road comprises:
 - Approximately 80 residential dwellings
 - New vehicular access and internal estate roads
 - Associated infrastructure, including drainage and utilities
 - Extensive areas of new parkland, landscaped open space and green infrastructure
- 2.2 Of the total site area of approximately 48 acres, only around 7.5 acres (c. 3.0 hectares) would be occupied by built development, roads and hardstanding. The remaining land (approximately 40.5 acres) would remain undeveloped and

would be delivered as publicly accessible parkland and environmental infrastructure.

- 2.3 The development would be constructed using standard residential construction methods. No industrial, hazardous or abnormal processes are proposed.

3. Site Context and Location

- 3.1 Land North of Whalley Road is currently undeveloped greenfield land located adjacent to the settlement of Read.

- 3.2 The site is not located within, nor does it adjoin, any nationally designated sensitive areas, including:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Ramsar sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 3.3 The proposal would result in a significant net increase in accessible green space, with the majority of the site retained as parkland and landscaped open space, thereby enhancing environmental quality relative to the existing baseline.

4. EIA Schedule Status

- 4.1 The proposal constitutes Schedule 2 development within the meaning of the EIA Regulations, falling under:

Schedule 2, Paragraph 10(b): Urban development projects

- 4.2 While the total site area exceeds 5 hectares, the extent and intensity of built development is limited, with the overwhelming majority of the site remaining undeveloped and delivered as green infrastructure and parkland.

- 4.3 Accordingly, EIA is not mandatory, and the determining factor is whether the development is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects, having regard to the Schedule 3 criteria.

5. Likely Environmental Effects

5.1 The environmental effects associated with the proposed development are typical of residential schemes and include:

- Localised changes to landscape character
- Additional traffic associated with residential occupation
- Temporary construction-phase effects such as noise and dust

5.2 These effects would be:

- Local in extent
- Predictable and well understood
- Temporary during construction and low magnitude during operation
- Capable of being mitigated through standard planning conditions and design measures

5.3 There is no potential for:

- Transboundary environmental effects
- Significant cumulative impacts
- Unusual, complex or irreversible environmental harm

6. Development Plan Context

6.1 The statutory development plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted 2014).

6.2 While development plan policy compliance is not determinative of whether EIA is required, it provides relevant context when considering the nature, scale and potential significance of environmental effects, particularly under Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies

6.3 The proposal has been developed having regard to the following Core Strategy policies:

- **Policy DMG1 - General Considerations** seeks to ensure that development avoids unacceptable impacts on amenity, landscape, highways, ecology and environmental quality. The modest scale of built development and the

dominance of green infrastructure indicate that impacts are predictable, localised and capable of mitigation.

- **Policy DMG2 - Strategic Considerations** requires development to be proportionate to its location and to avoid undue harm to environmental assets. The landscape-led nature of the proposal demonstrates that it would not give rise to EIA-type impacts.
- **Policy EN2 - Landscape** requires development to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance landscape character. The limited built footprint and extensive parkland reduce the magnitude of any landscape effects.
- **Policy EN4 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity** supports development where impacts on biodiversity are avoided or mitigated. Any ecological effects would be typical of residential development and capable of being addressed through standard mitigation.
- **Policy DMI1 - Infrastructure and Planning Obligations** ensures necessary infrastructure is provided to support development. The infrastructure proposed is conventional and does not introduce unusual or complex environmental effects.

7. Settlement Boundary and Countryside Policy Context

- 7.1 The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary of Read and is therefore subject to countryside restraint policies within the development plan.
- 7.2 Settlement boundary and countryside policies operate as development management controls to guide the location and form of development. They do not designate land as environmentally sensitive for the purposes of the EIA Regulations.
- 7.3 The fact that development is proposed outside a settlement boundary does not, of itself, indicate the likelihood of significant environmental effects. The relevant EIA test relates to the nature, scale and characteristics of the development, rather than policy conformity.
- 7.4 In this case, approximately 85% of the site would remain undeveloped and would be delivered as parkland and green infrastructure. This landscape-led approach directly responds to countryside policy objectives and materially limits the scale and intensity of environmental effects.
- 7.5 Any landscape or visual effects arising from development outside the settlement boundary would be localised, predictable and capable of mitigation, and would not be of a nature or magnitude requiring assessment through EIA.

8. Screening Conclusion

8.1 Having regard to:

- The modest scale of residential development (approximately 80 dwellings)
- The limited developed footprint (c. 7.5 acres)
- The dominance of parkland and green infrastructure across the site
- The absence of nationally designated sensitive areas
- The predictable and manageable nature of environmental effects

it is concluded that the proposed development at Land North of Whalley Road, Read is not likely to have significant effects on the environment for the purposes of the EIA Regulations.

8.2 It is therefore respectfully requested that Ribble Valley Borough Council issues a negative EIA Screening Opinion, confirming that Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

SCHEDULE 3 SCREENING MATRIX

Land North of Whalley Road, Read (Ribble Valley Borough Council)

1. Characteristics of the Development

Criterion	Assessment
Size of development	Approx. 80 dwellings. Built development limited to c. 3.0 ha within a 19.4 ha site.
Cumulation with other development	No abnormal or significant cumulative effects identified.
Use of natural resources	Typical of residential development only.
Production of waste	Standard construction and domestic waste streams only.
Pollution and nuisances	Temporary construction impacts only; capable of mitigation.
Risk of accidents	No hazardous substances or abnormal risks proposed.

2. Location of the Development

Criterion	Assessment
Existing land use	Undeveloped greenfield land.
Environmental sensitivity	Site is not within or adjacent to nationally designated sensitive areas.
Settlement boundary designation	Site lies outside the defined settlement boundary; countryside policies operate as development management controls and do not indicate heightened environmental sensitivity for EIA purposes.
Absorptive capacity of the environment	High, due to extensive retention of undeveloped land and creation of parkland.

3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Criterion	Assessment
Extent of impact	Localised only.
Magnitude and complexity	Low magnitude and non-complex.
Probability of impact	Predictable and typical of residential development.
Duration and reversibility	Temporary (construction) and permanent but low-level (operation).

Criterion	Assessment
Frequency	Limited and non-significant.
Transboundary effects	None.

Overall Screening Outcome

The assessment against Schedule 3 confirms that the proposed development at Land North of Whalley Road, Read is not likely to result in significant effects on the environment and therefore does not constitute EIA development.