

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	03/09/2026	Manager:	LH	Date:	4/9/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0443			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	29/07/2026	Publicity:		
Officer:	MC			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Proposed erection of an engineering stores building and control room building, as well as associated infrastructure, equipment and works.
Site Address/Location:	Johnson Matthey Plc, Pimlico Industrial Area, West Bradford Road, Clitheroe, BB7 4QB

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No objection	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objection.
RVBC Countryside Officer:	The Countryside Officer considers the scheme is exempt from BNG under the de minimis rule. With regards to trees, they recommend a tree protection condition be added to any grant of permission (including any pruning proposals).
RVBC Environmental Health Officer:	The EH Officer recommends condition relating to the control of noise/dust/fumes/vibration and construction noise/deliveries. More information was requested in relation to noise but no plants that would generate noise are proposed which is acceptable.
United Utilities:	United Utilities recommend the inclusion of a surface and foul water drainage strategy condition. An easement crosses the proposed development site and has restrictive covenants.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No additional representations have been received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development
Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility
Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection
Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DME6 – Water Management
Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2021/0449

Consent for storage of hazardous substances involved in an industrial process, previously approved on 3/2014/0759.

Approved with Conditions

3/2019/0819

Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) from planning permission 3/2018/1065 to reflect a reduction in scale.

Approved with Conditions

3/2018/1065

Advance infrastructure and enabling works to facilitate future industrial development comprising site clearance and preparation works, ground investigation and remediation/removal of any contaminated material, import of new materials, bulk earthworks and soil stabilisation, installation, diversion and/or disconnection of below-ground infrastructure including drainage and statutory utilities, installation of building foundations, piles and retaining walls, and temporary works including provision of a contractor's compound, security fencing and hoarding, material set-down area, access road, car parking and other structures and works incidental to the construction phase of development.

Approved with Conditions

3/2015/0299

Single Storey 11kV and 33kV Electrical Substation.

Approved with Conditions

3/2014/0759

Consent for storage of hazardous substances involved in an industrial process.

Approved with Conditions

3/2011/0199

Proposed erection of two stack vents adjoining south site manufacturing building.

Approved with Conditions

3/2010/0232

Re-cladding of existing south site building in olive green cladding.

Approved with Conditions

3/2009/0363

Installation of a temporary prefabricated office building.

Approved with Conditions

3/2008/0758

Installation of 28 plant vent system.

Approved No Conditions

3/2008/0498

Consent for storage of hazardous substances involved in an industrial process.

Approved with Conditions

3/2007/1131

Erection of two storey office building.

Approved with Conditions

3/2007/0654

Replacement of part of perimeter fence with palisade fence.

Approved with Conditions

3/2007/0638

Erection of catalyst plant building.

Approved with Conditions

3/2007/0637

Erection of extension to existing by-product treatment plant.

Approved with Conditions

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site comprises an existing employment area within the settlement boundary of Clitheroe. The site is occupied by Johnson Matthey who specialise in platinum group metals. As a result, there are a large number of industrial buildings on the site.

The site is bound by a railway line to the east, with residential development further off Pimlico Road. To the west/southwest is designated open space and to north/northwest of the site is a designated Local Geodiversity Heritage Site and Cross Hill Quarry Local Nature Reserve (SSSI). Access to the site is off West Bradford Road to the northeast of the site with the internal access road crossing a freight spur to the Clitheroe railway line (which extends to the Heidelberg site to the northeast).

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The supporting planning statement indicates that the applicant is currently in the process of upgrading the existing catalyst manufacturing facility within an existing process building, which will require additional enabling infrastructure to be built. As such, planning permission is required for the erection of an engineering stores building and control room building, as well as associated infrastructure, equipment, and works.

The proposed storeroom would be sited to the west of the site, on an area of existing hardstanding which is currently used for the informal storage of materials. The building would be approximately 22x14m and would have an eaves height of approximately 6.5m with a total height of 7.7m. The building would have a dual pitched roof and would have a rolled steel frame, clad in insulated steel cladding in grey (RAL 7038).

The proposed control room building would have two floors and would be located between two existing buildings on an area of hardstanding which previously housed a storage tent. The building would be located more centrally within the site and would include a first-floor link from the adjacent plant production building. The footprint of the control room building would have a stepped layout approximately 18x17m and the link extension would be approximately 2m in width. The building would be tall, with an eaves height of approximately 9.5m and a total height of approximately 10.5m. The building would be constructed using metal steel cladding to the walls (grey RAL 7038), with a Euroclad Elite 1 Quattro Roof System using insulated

steel sheets in the same colour as the walls. This building includes a number of doors to 3 no. elevations which would comprise steel faced doors, as well as louvres for the plant room door for ventilation.

Principle of Development:

Key Statement EC1 states that:

'Employment development will be directed towards the main settlement of Clitheroe, Whalley and Longridge as the preferred locations to accommodate employment growth together with land at Barrow Enterprise Site, the Lancashire Enterprise Zone at Samlesbury and locations well related to the A59 corridor.'

Policy DMB1 also states:

'Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. Development proposals will be determined in accord with the core strategy and detailed policies of the LDF as appropriate.'

The borough council may request the submission of supporting information for farm diversification where appropriate.

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.'

Policy S4 of the NPPF states that:

1. *Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.*
2. *In applying policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:*

a. Have a substantial adverse impact in relation to:

- i. *The allocation or safeguarding of land or buildings for particular uses in the development plan, unless there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the allocated use, or there is evidence that the safeguarding is no longer appropriate; or*
- ii. *The application of the policies in this Framework for existing recreational land and facilities (HC7), Local Green Space (HC8), areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity (N6), Protected Landscapes (N4) and development within residential curtilages (L2(1)(d)).*

b. Involve the whole or partial loss of undeveloped land which is used for a cemetery or burial ground; or for water storage and/or flood risk management (unless suitable compensatory provision is made that does not increase the risk of flooding either on or off-site); or

c. Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

Policy E2 also states:

1. *To support business growth, substantial weight should be given to:*

a. The economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt; especially where this would support the economic vision and strategy for the

area, the implementation of the Industrial Strategy, support improvements in freight and logistics and/or reflect proposals for Industrial Strategy Zones and AI Growth Zones

With regards to the principle of development, the planning statement indicates that the proposal would contribute positively to the employment within the settlement of Clitheroe.

Whilst the application form indicates that the number of employees at the site would not change as a result of the proposed development, the proposal would support and contribute towards the continued growth of Johnson Matthey within their existing Site and would accord with Policy DMB1 in principle, insofar that it constitutes the expansion of an existing firm within the settlement boundary of Clitheroe.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that, development must:

- 1. Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
- 2. Provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
- 3. Have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
- 4. Consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible.*

Policy P3 of the NPPF states that:

- 1. Development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity. In assessing the potential effects of pollution, consideration should be given to the potential sensitivity of the site, and its intended occupiers and users, as well as that of the environment and population in the surrounding area (including where certain groups could be particularly vulnerable to its effects, such as children and older people).*
- 2. Within this context development proposals should:*
 - a. Provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users in terms of adequate access to light and avoiding exposure to levels of air, noise, artificial light or other sources of pollution which could have an unacceptable adverse effect on health and the quality of life. Where necessary suitable mitigation measures should be incorporated to secure acceptable living conditions;*
 - b. Not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree. Where possible, opportunities should be taken to reduce pollution affecting the wider area (such as through traffic and travel management or improved external lighting);*
 - c. Sustain and contribute to compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives and targets for air pollutants including PM2.5. Development proposals should take account of Air Quality Management Areas and be consistent with the objectives of relevant Air Quality Action Plans, Clean Air Plans and Local Air Quality Strategies;*
 - d. Mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise, not result in levels of noise exposure which would have a significant observed adverse effect, and maintain the character of tranquil areas (those areas that have remained relatively undisturbed by noise from human sources and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason);*
 - e. Limit any adverse impact from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes (those areas entirely, or largely, uninterrupted by artificial light) and nature; and*

f. Assess and mitigate impacts where the development could have an unacceptable adverse effect on water quality, especially in relation to sensitive water bodies such as chalk streams.

In applying this policy, it should be assumed, unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, that separate regulatory regimes for the control of pollution will operate effectively, as set out in policy DM7. This means that it will be appropriate to take into account emissions limits set through those other regimes.

The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the application.

They are satisfied that based on the additional information provided by the agent for the application that the proposal would not generate any significant noise that would adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties. They recommend conditions relating to the control of noise/dust/fumes/vibration and construction noise/deliveries and it is considered that whilst the first suggested condition would not meet the tests, it would be reasonable to restrict construction hours/deliveries in the interest of amenity.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF states:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting'.

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows:

'All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style...particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character.'

With regards to the visual impact resulting from the proposed development, the buildings would be situated within the existing industrial site and would be read in the context with other buildings within the site. The western boundary of the site is screened by existing trees and is therefore the proposed equipment storage building would not be highly visible within the site.

Turning to the control room building and link, this would be sited immediately adjacent to an existing taller building which is 4/5 floors in height and would be constructed of similar materials. As such, it is considered that the erection of this building would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the site or surrounding area.

Highways and Parking:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG3 states that:

'All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards'.

In addition, Policy DMG1 states that all development must:

- '1. consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
- 2. ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated'.*

There are no changes proposed to the existing access or parking arrangements and the Local Highway Authority raise no objection to the scheme and are of the opinion that the proposed development would not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.

As such, the proposal accords with Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Landscape/Ecology:

With regards to trees, Policy DME1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

'Where applications are likely to have a substantial effect on tree cover, the borough council will require detailed Arboricultural Survey information and tree constraint plans including appropriate plans and particulars. these will include the position of every tree on site that could be influenced by the proposed development and any tree on neighbouring land that is also likely to be with in influencing distance and could also include other relevant information such as stem diameter and crown spread'.

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which states notes that none of the trees on site are protected by a a Tree Preservation Order and no part of the site contains or is within 15m of any woodland listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory.

Three individual category B trees and two category B tree groups have been identified and it is recommended that all effort should be made to retain trees of high and moderate value (categories A and B respectively).

The proposal would not involve the removal of any trees and the construction of the proposed development would require a temporary incursion into the RPA of two category B tree groups. Minor pruning works to the eastern canopy of tree G1b to provide clearance for the installation of external cladding. It is considered the incursions into the RPA are fully mitigable through the use of appropriate ground protection measures. It is considered that the extent of tree works required will not have a significant negative impact on the health or amenity value of these trees.

The Countryside Officer recommends that a planning condition is added to grant of permission for tree protection to BS3998 for tree works (including any pruning).

With regards to the impact on protected species, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted with the application which recommends a pre-construction survey for INNS and a number of precautionary works/mitigation measures such as outline mitigation measures the protection of adjacent priority habitats, the avoidance of night-time working and implementation of a wildlife-friendly sensitive lighting strategy.

This can be secured by way of planning condition.

Turning to Biodiversity Net-Gain, as there are no natural habitats within the Site boundary, only developed land and artificial surface of no ecological value, the site is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain and no assessment is required.

Other Matters:

Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

'Development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

Applications for development should include appropriate measures for the conservation, protection and management of water such that development contributes to:

- 1. preventing pollution of surface and / or groundwater*
- 2. reducing water consumption*
- 3. reducing the risk of surface water flooding (for example the use of sustainable drainage systems (suds))*

as a part of the consideration of water management issues, and in parallel with flood management objectives, the authority will also seek the protection of the borough's water courses for their biodiversity value.

All applications for planning permission should include details for surface water drainage and means of disposal based on sustainable drainage principles. the use of the public sewerage system is the least sustainable form of surface water drainage and therefore development proposals will be expected to investigate and identify more sustainable alternatives to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding and environmental impact'.

United Utilities have been consulted on the application and they recommend the inclusion of a surface and foul water drainage strategy condition. They also note that an easement crosses the proposed development site and has restrictive covenants. The agent for the application has been made aware of this constraint and has advised that they are seeking the easement details from United Utilities. The agent for the application is aware that they will need to satisfy the relevant legislation to ensure the United Utilities property remains accessible.

The site is known to be located on contaminated land and whilst it is not considered to involve a use that is sensitive to contamination, a condition should be added to any grant of permission for unsuspected contamination.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and this application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:	That planning permission be granted subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.
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