



RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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my ref: JM/EL/3/2012/0630/P
your ref:
date: 3 August 2012

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Dear Mr Chadwick

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
REGULATIONS 2011
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF LAND TO THE SOUTH WEST OF BARROW AND WEST OF
WHALLEY ROAD BARROW**

A planning application was submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council on 16 July 2012 for the development as detailed above. Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 the Council has undertaken a formal Screening Opinion. You will recall that in December 2011 a formal Screening request was submitted and that the Local Planning Authority asked for an extension of time to adopt that Opinion. In a letter to the Council dated 12 December 2011 you agreed to let the screening process lapse and proceed on the basis that if on registration of the outline planning application the Council decided to adopt a Screening Opinion that EIA is required and set out the scope of the EIA you would be content to comply with that request.

The site submitted for consideration under the above reference is located adjacent to the village of Barrow directly to the west of Whalley Road. The proposed development will comprise up to 504 residential units including affordable housing with 3 new vehicular and pedestrian accesses onto Whalley Road, on site landscaping, formal and informal open space, associated infrastructure works and a new foul water pumping station.

Having considered the proposals as detailed in your planning submission Ribble Valley Borough Council is of the opinion that the application does not fall within Schedule 1 of S.I. 1999 No 293 (as revoked by S.I. 2011 No 1824) but within Schedule 2 Development, Part 10 Infrastructure Projects (Section 10(b) Urban Development). The application site is 18.26ha in size and therefore falls within the criteria set out for Part 10(b) as the area of development exceeds the threshold of 0.5ha. However, Ribble Valley Borough Council has also given consideration to the characteristics of the development, its location and potential impact as set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011 and the criteria set out in Annex A of Circular 2/99 Environmental Impact Assessments. Annex A indicates the types of case in which an EIA is more likely to be required. It states:

- A18 *In addition to the physical scale of such developments, particular consideration should be given to the potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise. EIA is unlikely to be required for development of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination (paragraph 41).*
- A19 *Development proposed for sites which have not previously been intensively developed are more likely to require EIA if -*
- a) *The site area of the scheme is more than 5ha*
 - b) *It would provide a total of more than 10,000m² of new commercial floorspace; or*

- c) *The development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. new development of more than 1,000 dwellings)*

The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposal does require an Environmental Impact Assessment. The reasons for adopting this Screening Opinion are as follows:

The site is not considered to fall within a Sensitive Area as defined in the Regulations however being a development area greater than 0.5ha the proposal exceeds the threshold of the Regulations and the requirement for EIA therefore rests on whether the proposals will have significant environmental effects

DETR Circular 02/99 Environmental Impact Assessment advises that as a starting point Authorities should study Schedule 3 to the Regulations which set out the selection criteria which must be taken into account in determining whether a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. It identifies 3 main types of case where EIA will be needed for Schedule 2 development:-

- a) For major developments which are of more than local importance
- b) For developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations
- c) For developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects

In assessing your site against the Schedule 3 criteria the following conclusions have been reached

CHARACTERISTICS OF DEVELOPMENT

Size

The overall site extends to approximately 18.26ha (504 dwellings). This is a substantial size when compared with the existing size of the village of Barrow and would be seen as having a significant urbanising effect in a previously non-urbanised area

Cumulation

The scheme would result in the addition of 504 houses. The cumulation of this with other developments in the area that would feed into the Whalley Waste Water Treatment Works which is nearing capacity and in need of upgrade would have significant effects on existing infrastructure

Use of Natural Resources

Non

Waste

The proposal would not result in the production of waste other than that normally associated with an urban infrastructure project.

Pollution and Nuisances

The proposal is likely to result in additional traffic during construction of the development. The proposal will result in additional traffic when the development is complete and the level of traffic generated and its impact on the local road network may result in significant impacts due to the scale of development proposed.

Risk of Accidents

The proposal in itself is not considered to result in additional accidents at the site or within the immediate vicinity.

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

Existing Land Use

The site is greenfield in nature and outside the defined settlement limit of Barrow as defined in the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (saved policies G4/G5)

Natural Resources

There is a County Biological Heritage site to the west of the site. The development site itself would not appear to extend into this area however the impact of this development on the ecology/habitats at this location will require further consideration. The impact of the site in terms of biodiversity at the site also needs to be considered further.

Capacity of the Natural Environment

There are no international or national designations affecting the site.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED IMPACT

Extent

The site is large in comparison with the village which it is sited on the edge of. The visual impact of the development of the site and in the surrounding area needs to be given further consideration. The impact of this scale of development is considered to be significant in terms of visual amenity and potential impacts on local infrastructure capacity in terms of the Waste Water Treatment Works and local highway network.

Transfrontier Nature

No issues raised in this regard.

Magnitude and Complexity

No issues raised in this regard.

Probability

No issues raised in this regard.

Duration, Frequency and Irreversibility

The final completed development will be permanent and change the nature of the land in question.

CONCLUSIONS

The development is not proposed in a particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable location nor would it have unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects.

However, the impact of this scale of development is considered to have the effect of urbanising non urban land on this side of Whalley Road. There would be significant effects on visual amenity and having regard to para 35 of Circular 02/99 an assessment has to be made as to whether this is considered to be a major development of more than local importance. Having carefully assessed the potential impacts of a development of this scale it is the view of Ribble Valley Borough Council that the impact of the development would not be of a localised nature but have wider environmental impacts beyond the site.

As per the request in your letter dated 16 July in support of the planning application I will provide in writing the Local Planning Authority's opinion as to the information to be provided within the Environmental Statement (a 'scoping opinion') within five weeks of the date of this letter.

Yours sincerely



JOHN MACHOLC - HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

Mr D Chadwick
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EIA ANALYSIS AND SCREENING PROFORMA

EIA details					
A	Schedule 1				
(i)	Is the proposed development Schedule 1 development as described in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations? <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table>	Yes		No	X
Yes					
No	X				
(ii)	If YES, under which description of development i.e. Nos. 1-21? 				
B	Schedule 2				
(i)	Is the proposed development Schedule 2 development as described in Column 1 of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations? <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	X	No	
Yes	X				
No					
(ii)	If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 i.e. Nos. 1-13? 10(b) Urban Infrastructure Project				
(iii)	Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations? <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table>	Yes		No	X
Yes					
No	X				
(iv)	If YES, which area? 				
(v)	Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met? <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	X	No	
Yes	X				
No					
(vi)	If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria? site area greater than 0.5ha				
Name	Sarah Westwood				
Date	31 July 2012				

SCREENING

A. CHECKLIST			
Questions to be considered		Likely/Unlikely – briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a Significant effect?
			Yes/No - why?
1	Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc)?	Yes - scheme will involve development of a large site predominantly open grassland used for grazing	Yes - loss of grassland on this scale for residential development would be significant when compared to the size of the existing village
2	Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes - During construction the project will use land resource and the normal materials associated with the construction of buildings	No - the construction of houses in this location is not predicted to have a complex or unusual effect and would therefore not be significant
3	Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes - Building materials	No - Health and Safety at Work legislation is in place to mitigate any effects
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Possibly waste produced during construction	No - Regulations exist to govern the removal of building waste
5	Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes - air pollution from traffic and dust produced during construction	Possibly - Needs further consideration
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Possibly - during construction and after use of development site	Possibly - A construction method statement could be used to minimise disturbance to local residents during construction. In terms of final use light and heat from new homes will be generated and given the scale of development proposed on the fringe of an existing residential area these effects may be considered to be significant in this context.
7	Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	No Nothing identified	No
8	Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are	No No evidence of existing environmental damage	No

	exceeded, which could be affected by the project?		
9	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	Yes - during construction only	No - construction will be expected to adhere to Health and Safety Regulations
10	Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes - new homes bring new people therefore affecting demography of village. The potential for some live/work units may bring employment opportunities.	Yes - Associated rise in population in relation to the existing population is considered to be significant. At 2001 Census 451 properties in Wiswell parish so a scheme for 500 properties would be a significant increase.
11	Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	Yes - County Biological Heritage Sites to the west of site	Possibly - The sites lie outside the development site and proposals can be designed so as not to adversely affect these local designations. This needs further consideration.
12	Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	No	No
13	Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	No Nothing identified	No - Protected species would be protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No Nothing identified	No
15	Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No
16	Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes - the proposal site is situated between the main road through Barrow and a railway line	Yes - Given the scale of the proposal it is considered potentially out of context with the existing settlement
17	Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes - 3 definitive rights of way that either align the boundary or run through the proposed development area	No - measures can be incorporated into the development scheme to protect existing rights of way

18	Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Possibly	Possibly – Increases in traffic are inevitable with this scale of development and as the nature of the area is semi rural the effects may be significant in this context.
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	No
20	Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes - the land is currently grassland in nature and used for grazing with an area of allotments	Yes – This is a substantial sized development site and will involve urbanisation of greenfields.
21	Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	Yes - residential development to the east of the site and a small collection of houses to the north with a primary school within the village of Barrow. To the west is a railway line	No – proposal would be unlikely to have any significant detrimental impact on existing neighbouring land uses
22	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?		Possibly – additional development of this scale may impact on the local highway network passing through both Barrow and Whalley. This needs further consideration.
23	Are there any areas on, or around, the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities, which could be affected by the project?	No	No
24	Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	No Nothing identified	No
25	Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to	No	No

	present environmental problems?		
26	Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Possibly – the business park to the opposite side of the Whalley Road is put forward as an strategic employment centre in the emerging Core Strategy.	No
27	Are there any other factors which should be considered, such as consequential development which could lead to environmental effects, or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes – This scale of development would naturally drain to the Whalley Waste Water Treatment Works which is already nearing capacity	Possibly – Requires further investigation

