

LIGHTFOOT GREEN LANE, FULWOOD, PRESTON

Hybrid application for site re-profiling works (Full),
84no. Custom-build Dwellings (Outline) and replacement
section of Guild Wheel (Outline)

PLANNING STATEMENT

(INCORPORATING:
WASTE MANAGEMENT, REFUSE & RECYCLING STATEMENT,
SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT,
AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT,
MINERALS SAFEGUARDING ASSESSMENT
AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT)

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/1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. PWA Planning is retained by J A Jackson Contractors Ltd. ('the Applicant') to progress a hybrid planning application; the application proposes re-profiling works to the site, applied for in full, and the erection of 84no. custom build dwellings and provision of a replacement section of the Guild Wheel applied for in outline with all matters reserved save for access, on land off Lightfoot Green Lane, Fulwood, Preston ('the application site'). The purpose of this Planning Statement is to assess and conclude on the acceptability of the proposal in terms of relevant national and local planning policy, along with any material considerations.
- 1.2. The planning application is made to Preston City Council (the Local Planning Authority) and relates to the red edge application site boundary defined by the Location Plan (drawing no. 6126_L100).
- 1.3. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement will demonstrate that the proposals accord with the provisions of the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and moreover that there are other significant material considerations which indicate that planning permission ought to be granted. In addition, the statement will seek to demonstrate that there are no technical reasons which could hinder the grant of planning permission.
- 1.4. This Planning Statement, alongside a review of the site history and relevant policies, provides a description of the proposed development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme as a whole. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application package, which includes the following documents:
 - 1 APP form, relevant certificates and notices;
 - CIL Liability Form and Self Build Exemption Form;
 - Drawn information: -

- Site Location Plan (Ref. 6126_L100);
- Existing Site Sections (Ref. 6126_L01);
- Existing Site Plan & Topographical Survey (Ref. 6126_L101);
- Proposed Site Plan (Ref. 6126_L02);
- Proposed Groundworks and Site Sections (Ref. 6126-T01)
- Ecological Assessment and Great Crested Newt Survey;
- Air Quality Assessment;
- Noise Impact Assessment – Site Preparation;
- Noise Impact Assessment – Residential Development
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy;
- Phase 1 Geo-technical Assessment;
- Transport Assessment;
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Utilities Assessment; and
- Custom Build Delivery Plan.

1.5. The aforementioned documentation reflects the validation requirements of Preston City Council.

1.6. The remainder of this report is structured as follows: -

- Section 2 - Site Description;
- Section 3 - Proposed Development;
- Section 4 - Technical Considerations;
- Section 5 - Planning Policy;
- Section 6 - Material Considerations;
- Section 7 - Conclusions.

/2 **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1. The application site comprises a 6.7ha plot of land, located off Lightfoot Green Lane. The site is mostly open grassland with a row of trees to the south and electrical powerlines running through its centre. Mature vegetation is located adjacent to the northern and western boundaries. The site is enclosed to the south by the M55 motorway and to the east by the West Coast Mainline railway line.

- 2.2. Beyond the vegetation to the west of the site is the quarry know as Bradley’s Sand Pit. Lightfoot Green Farm and its associated house is located 75m southwest of the site. The wider site area to the north and east of the site is predominantly agricultural land. Beyond the motorway to the south of the site is land allocated for housing as part of the North West Preston Strategic Location on which several planning applications for new housing have been granted.



Figure 1: Aerial image showing the location of the site (not to scale) (source: Google Earth)

- 2.3. The existing access to the site is via a gated field entrance off Lightfoot Green Lane along the site's western boundary. Lightfoot Green Lane passes south over the M55 joining Lightfoot Lane 400m to the south of the site. A public footpath and cycle track are located adjacent to the western and northern site boundaries as part of the 'Guild Wheel'. This section of the Guild Wheel is considered to be one of the most difficult and dangerous stretches of the route. It currently passes along the northern edge of the site and down the western boundary before joining Lightfoot Green Lane. The current route is steep and involves crossing the entrance to the quarry located to the west of the site, meaning conflict with large vehicles is a concern.
- 2.4. The site lies on the edge of the urban area of Preston; the city centre is located approximately 4.4km to the south of the site. A location plan showing the site within its wider setting is provided within the supporting documents (drawing no. 6126_L100). Figure 1 above shows an aerial image of the site within a closer setting.
- 2.5. The majority of the application site is located within Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flood is at its lowest. A small section of the northern portion of the site is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Blundel Brook lies adjacent to the northern site boundary. There are no heritage assets within the vicinity of the site. With regards to ecology, the Lancashire Grassland Ecological Network runs through the northern section of the site.
- 2.6. The application site has been subject to a planning application search on Preston Council's website. There are no applications evident from the planning register which were deemed relevant to the proposed development.

/3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The proposed development comprises two elements; applied for in full is the re-profiling of the site to create a suitable development platform for the proposed dwellings (Phase 1); and applied for in outline is the erection of 84no. custom build dwellings (Phase 2).
- 3.2. The reprofiling works would involve the importation of natural material from the neighbouring quarry which is owned and operated by the applicant. In total, approximately 245.7m³ of material would be excavated from the application site, whilst 27,151m³ would be filled. The net amount of material to be brought onto the site from the quarry would therefore be 26,905m³ which would be transported in 25 tonne dumper trucks. It is anticipated that this would involve the movement of approximately 1,075 trucks, with a bull-dozer used at both the source and the application site to load the dumper trucks and undertake the re-profiling works on site.
- 3.3. Drawing 6126-T01 shows the existing and proposed levels for the site. Existing sections of the site are provided in drawing 6126-L01, whilst the proposed sections are provided on the aforementioned 6126-T01.
- 3.4. Phase 2 of the development involves the erection of up to 84no. dwellings across the site. This part of the application is submitted in outline, with the Proposed Site Plan (ref. 6126_SK01) demonstrating an indicative layout for the site. It is proposed that 65% of the plots on site will be available for custom build, with the remaining 35% provided as affordable housing. At this stage it is anticipated the affordable housing would be delivered by the Community Gateway Association (CGA).
- 3.5. As shown on the indicative site layout plan, access to the site will be directly off Lightfoot Green Lane to the west of the site. Internal roads and footpaths will serve each of the dwellings, which will all have their own private driveways. There is sufficient room on site for each dwelling to have their own garage, either separate from the dwelling or integral, and a generous rear garden. The indicative layout

features a number of house types to demonstrate how houses of varying size and style could fit together in one coherent development.

- 3.6. It is proposed that the Guild Wheel recreational path be redirected through the site, inside the site's western boundary. This would take pedestrian and cycle users off the stretch of the route currently considered to be dangerous due to its steepness and the need to cross the quarry entrance. The path provided within the site would then link back up with the existing Guild Wheel route in to the south of the site. At this stage, the redirection route is indicative and would be the subject of a further planning application at a later date.
- 3.7. Acoustic mounds and fences would be created along the western boundary close to the railway line and along the eastern portion of the southern boundary close to the M55 motorway.
- 3.8. At this stage, no formal landscaping plans have been put forward, however there is sufficient space on site to allow for green open space in the centre of the site, and around the attenuation pond adjacent to the northern boundary.
- 3.9. A Delivery Plan has been prepared by Civic Projects to demonstrate how the custom build offer of the site would be delivered. It should be noted that there is nothing in Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act (2015) (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) which places any restrictions on the scale or location of self-build and custom build developments, or that suggests that a large number of this type of home cannot be delivered in one location. Custom build is not the preserve of the wealthy and should not therefore be restricted by pre-conceptions of what custom build means.
- 3.10. The Delivery Plan covers how the design and build of the dwellings would be managed and considers how finance would be dealt with.

- 3.11. The housing would be subject to reserved matters applications and it is intended that these would be progressed in phases to give the Council comfort that the site would not be developed in an ad-hoc fashion.
- 3.12. The delivery of the affordable housing requires a different approach for developments that are led by custom build homes. Unlike the conventional housebuilding approach, there is no developer to provide the affordable homes for a housing association. It is proposed that the Community Gateway Association (CGA) will deliver 35% of the houses on site as affordable; further detail is provided in the Affordable Housing Statement below. The majority of these dwellings will be provided for affordable rent with a proportion offered for shared ownership. It may also be possible to offer some of the shared ownership homes on a custom build basis.

Waste Management, Refuse and Recycling Statement

- 3.13. The proposed development is for 84no. custom build dwellings on land off Lightfoot Green Lane. Outline planning permission is sought for access only, with all other matters reserved. At this stage the proposed site layout is indicative to demonstrate how 84no. dwellings might be arranged on site.
- 3.14. The proposed dwellings would provide adequate space for the required waste and recycling bins in line with the assumed requirements of the future residents.
- 3.15. The proposed access outlined in the plans/drawings, which accompany this submission, will provide adequate room and facilities to allow the site to be served by refuse vehicles and staff.

Affordable Housing Statement

- 3.16. Core Strategy Policy 7 deals with affordable housing and seeks to ensure 35% on-site affordable housing provision in rural areas on sites in or adjoining villages. The policy sets out the minimum site size threshold will be 15 dwellings but a lower threshold of 5 dwellings is required in rural areas. This is subject to site and development considerations including financial viability and contributions to community services.

3.17. It is proposed that the development would deliver the full requirement for 35% affordables on-site. The applicant has commenced discussions with CGA in this respect. It is proposed that the majority of the affordable dwellings will be provided for affordable rent with a proportion offered for shared ownership. It may also be possible to offer some of the shared ownership homes on a custom build basis.

Sustainability Statement

3.18. The applicant is keen to embrace the core sustainability principals outlined in the NPPF and therefore seeks to ensure the proposed dwellings are built to the appropriate standards in terms of energy conservation and sustainability.

3.19. At this stage and since the dwellings would be custom built, the details of the proposed dwellings have not been finalised, however it is intended that the dwellings would be constructed to ensure that they are as energy efficient as possible, incorporating renewable energy where possible and ensuring that appropriate insulation and buildings materials are utilised in order to meet the carbon and energy requirements of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

3.20. Internal and external lighting throughout the development will be of the low-energy type, with outdoor lighting on sensors/daylight cut-off devices.

3.21. The development would include water efficiency measures to reduce overall water consumption, principally through the installation of water efficient sanitary devices. Water metering is proposed at the development.

3.22. Incorporation of renewable energy technology into the dwellings will be explored and implemented where appropriate. This could include provision of solar panels on south facing roofs, combined heat and power, biomass and air source heat pumps.

3.23. It is intended that waste will be stored in appropriate recycling bins and will be collected by the Local Authority in line with their collection services.

/4 TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. The planning application submitted herein is supported by a number of technical reports which demonstrate that the proposed development is capable of being implemented without significant adverse impacts arising from site constraints. These are summarised below.

Transport

4.2. The supporting Transport Statement considers the highway implications of the proposed development. An assessment of the access arrangements has been undertaken which finds that these would be safe and efficient. With regards to the Phase 1 works to reprofile the site, it is considered that these would result in a reduction in HGV movements on the wider highway network as materials which would otherwise be taken from the quarry are diverted to the adjacent application site.

4.3. The Transport Statement considers the sustainability credentials of the application site and finds that in this respect, is within an acceptable walking distance of local services, including schools, shops and leisure facilities. Access to public transport is also within a reasonable walking distance, allowing future residents to undertake commuting and leisure trips by bus.

4.4. The Transport Statement finds that vehicle movements associated with the proposed residential development would not have a material impact on the highway network.

Noise

4.5. A noise assessment has been undertaken which takes into account the noise impacts as a result of the Phase 1 reprofiling works on nearby sensitive receptors. This found that these works are unlikely to result in any significant effects on nearby sensitive receptors.

4.6. A separate assessment has been undertaken for Phase 2 of the proposals, which includes an assessment on future residents as a result of industrial/commercial noise

from the adjacent quarry, and the impacts as a result of traffic noise. The assessment also makes recommendations for the specification for glazing/ventilation/screening required to achieve acceptable noise levels.

4.7. The assessment has found that mitigation in form of appropriate glazing/ventilation/screening would suffice to ensure noise levels within new dwellings are within acceptable limits.

4.8. It is acknowledged that external daytime noise levels may exceed the requirement limit of 55dB in rear gardens across the site; the majority of rear gardens will achieve levels <60dB with only a small number likely to achieve <65dB. BS 8233: 2014 recognises that the requirement of <55dB in rear gardens may not be achievable in all circumstances, such as higher noise areas adjoining the strategic transport network, and that a compromise between elevated noise levels and other factors may be warranted.

Land Contamination

4.9. With regards to land contamination, the supporting Phase I Geo-Environmental Site Assessment which considers the potential contaminated land and geo-technical issues associated with development of the site for residential purposes. Phase II intrusive ground investigations are recommended in the report to confirm the findings, but overall there are no constraints on site which would prevent it coming forward for residential development.

Air Quality

4.10. The proposed development has the potential to cause air quality impacts at sensitive locations in the vicinity of the site. An Air Quality Assessment was therefore been undertaken which considers both phases of development.

4.11. The AQA found that the air quality impacts of the Phase 1 works to reprofile the site and the Phase 2 construction works would not be significant and therefore would be within acceptable levels. During the operation of the development (the dwellings), and

specifically the emissions associated with traffic generated by the development, impacts would also be within acceptable limits. The AQA looked at the effects on future residents of the site in terms of air quality and found that there would be no unacceptable impacts as a result of emissions from local and wider highway network, and from the neighbouring quarry.

- 4.12. Overall, air quality is not considered to be a constraint to the development of the site as proposed.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.13. The application is supported by a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy which has assessed the proposed development.
- 4.14. The assessment considers that the risk of flooding in terms of fluvial, canals, reservoirs and other artificial sources, groundwater, sewers, pluvial runoff and from the development drainage is low.
- 4.15. In relation to drainage, it is intended that surface water runoff from the development site will be attenuated to pre-development runoff rates allowing surface water runoff generated by all rainfall events up to the 100-year critical rain storm plus 30% on stored volumes to discharge into the Blundell Brook that lies along the site's northern boundary. Attenuation will be provided in the northern portion of the development site.
- 4.16. Foul water from the development will be collected by a piped system to an onsite pumping station located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site.
- 4.17. With regards to the reprofiling works undertaken as Phase 1, the surface water during this phase will be collected by a cut-off drain that is to be constructed parallel to the southern bank of the Blundell Brook, to discharge into the proposed attenuation pond area which will act as a lagoon.

Utilities

- 4.18. A Utilities Infrastructure Statement has been provided which demonstrates that there are available existing electrical, gas, water, sewerage and telecommunication network services in the locality of the site. These services are considered capable of serving the proposed development.

Ecology

- 4.19. An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the application site has been undertaken, along with Great Crested Newt surveys of ponds in the surrounding area.
- 4.20. The habitats identified on site are common throughout the UK and no nationally or locally rare plant species were located during the survey. The site mainly supported short, species-poor improved grassland which is habitat of little ecological value. The scrub, woodland and scattered trees, which are mainly directly adjacent to the site offer cover for wildlife and nesting habitats for birds.
- 4.21. With regards to protected species, no evidence of badger activity or setts were found on site and the development is considered unlikely to impact this species.
- 4.22. Although some of the trees on the site periphery were considered to provide suitable bat-roosting habitat, since these trees are to be retained, no further work is required in this respect.
- 4.23. With regards to GCN, no ponds exist on site, whilst surveys of the three ponds within 250m of the site were surveyed and no evidence of GCN was found. No GCN mitigation is considered necessary.
- 4.24. Suitable habitat for nesting birds exists on the site periphery. No works on these habitats should be undertaken during the bird nesting season, which would suffice to ensure nesting birds are protected.

- 4.25. Himalayan Balsam is a non-native invasive species which was found on the site. The ecology report recommends that this species is eradicated from the site to prevent spread.
- 4.26. With regards to protected sites, no statutory or non-statutory protected sites exist on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. There would not be any detrimental impact on any protected sites from the proposed development.
- 4.27. It is considered that the proposed development offers opportunities for habitat enhancement; including tree and shrub planting, planting of native and non-native flowering species and bird and/or bat boxes which could be erected on new dwellings and/or retained trees.

Arboriculture

- 4.28. A tree survey has been undertaken and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The Survey found one tree group and one individual tree categorised as high quality, with the remainder of moderate or low quality, or suitable for retention.
- 4.29. The development would involve the removal of part of a moderate quality group of trees, one low quality tree, two low quality groups and part of one further low-quality group, in addition to three trees and three groups of trees that are recommended for removal regardless of the development proposals.
- 4.30. It is considered that the provision of new planting will more than compensate for the anticipated losses. It is recommended that retained trees are subject to protection measures to preserve them in the long term.

/5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and 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 shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

5.2. The statutory Development Plan for the application site comprises the Preston Local Plan (2012-2026) and the Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy (2012). Consideration should also be given to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance, and any supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the proposed development.

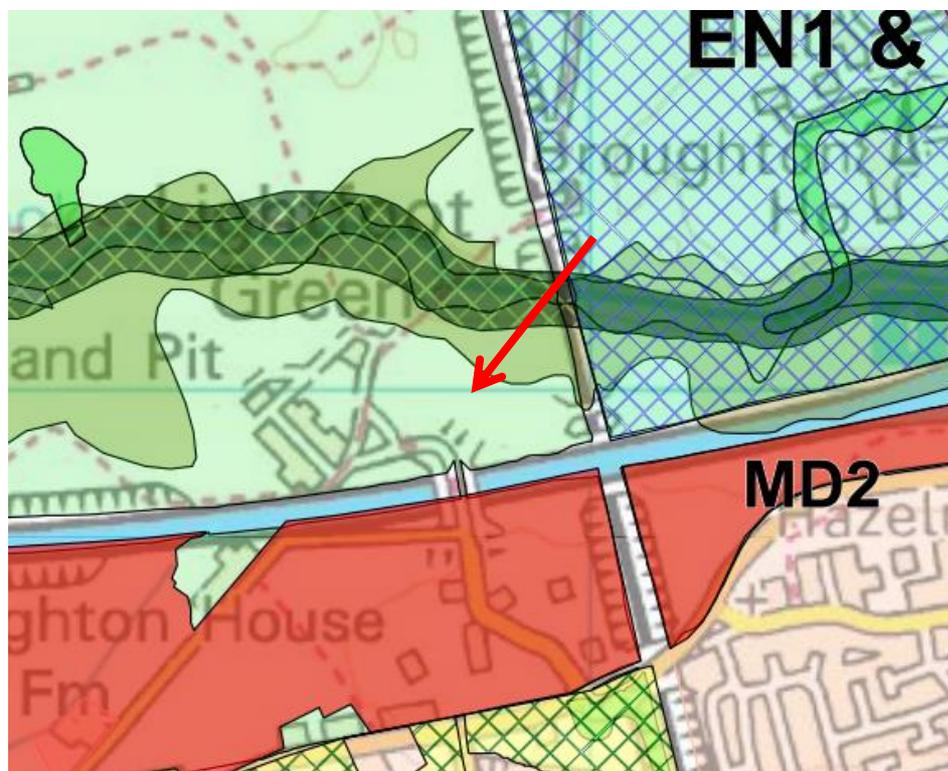


Figure 2: Extract from Preston Council Policies Map (2015)

5.3. According to Preston's policy map, the site is allocated as within the Open Countryside (Policy EN1). Across the northern boundary of the site is a Wildlife Corridor, where

Policy EN10 is applicable and a northern section of the site is designated as laying within an area of Mineral Safeguarding. To the south of the site is the North West Preston Strategic Location.

5.4. The following Central Lancashire Core Strategy policies are considered relevant to this application:

- Policy 1 – Locating growth
- Policy 3 – Travel
- Policy 4 – Housing delivery
- Policy 5 – Housing density
- Policy 6 – Housing quality
- Policy 7 – Affordable and special needs housing
- Policy 17 – Design of new buildings
- Policy 21 – Landscape character areas
- Policy 22 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy 26 – Crime and community safety
- Policy 27 – Sustainable resources and new developments
- Policy 29 – Water management
- Policy 30 – Air Quality

5.5. Policies of the Preston Local Plan 2012-26 (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies) are also relevant to this application:

- Policy EN1 – Development in the open countryside
- Policy EN7 – Land quality
- Policy EN9 – Design of new development
- Policy EN10 – Biodiversity and nature conservation
- Policy EN11 – Species protection
- AD1 (a) – Development within (or in close proximity to) the Existing Residential Area
- Policy ST1 – Parking standards
- Policy ST2 – General transport considerations

5.6. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions as per Paragraph 2 of the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

5.7. The NPPF sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The golden thread running throughout the NPPF is the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11):

"For decision making this means

(c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

(d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the applications are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts in doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."*

/6 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1. The site is currently allocated as Open Countryside in the Preston Local Plan. A swathe of the northern portion of the site is also designated as a minerals safeguarding area, with a small slither of this portion of the site designated as a wildlife corridor.
- 6.2. Core Strategy Policy 1 'Locating Growth' aims to focus growth and investment on well-located brownfield sites, the Strategic Location of Central Preston, the key service centres of Chorley and Leyland and the other main urban areas of South Ribble. The policy aims to protect the character of suburban and rural locations, whilst acknowledging that some greenfield development will be required on the fringes of the urban area. In the context of Policy 1, given its Open Countryside designation, the site falls within part (f) 'other places', where it is stated that development will typically be small scale and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need, unless there are exceptional reasons for larger scale redevelopment schemes. It is however considered that the site is more closely aligned with the characteristics of the areas listed in part (a) (ii) of Policy 1 which relates to the northern suburbs of Preston and includes the North West Preston Strategic Location, which the site sits directly adjacent to the north.
- 6.3. Development within the Open Countryside is controlled by policy EN1 of the Preston Local Plan. This policy seeks to restrict development to that needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area including uses which help to diversify the rural economy; the re-use and re-habitation of existing buildings; and infilling within groups of buildings in smaller rural settlements. It is acknowledged that the proposed development conflicts with EN1. There are however important material considerations which are considered to override this conflict.
- 6.4. The NPPF (2018) at Section 5 sets out the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes and ensure that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, and that the needs of specific groups are met.

- 6.5. Policy 4 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy sets out the housing requirement for the City Council in the period 2010-2026. This sets a minimum requirement of 507 dwellings per year over this period. As per the Framework, the Council is required to maintain a 5 year Housing Land Supply (5yr HLS) of specific, deliverable sites.
- 6.6. The Planning Inspectorate has recently determined two appeals in Broughton, Preston (Sandy Gate Lane and Key Fold Farm, references 06/2016/0736 and 06/2017/0097). Both appeals were allowed, and planning permission has been granted. In allowing the appeals, the Inspector concluded that the Council's supply of housing land lies between 3 and 3.5 years, therefore there is a very substantial shortfall.
- 6.7. Although the 2018 Framework sets out a standardised methodology for calculating housing land supply which has the potential to reduce the Council's annualised housing requirement which could have ramifications for the Council's housing land supply issues, further guidance published in the 'Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book' states that any new housing requirements will be used for the calculation of the Housing Delivery Test from the date that it becomes part of the development plan. As such, any reduced requirement would not come into effect until it forms part of an adopted development plan.
- 6.8. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF is clear that where policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, which includes where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a 5yr HLS, the tilted balance is engaged whereby planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts in doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
- 6.9. Considering the Framework in the round, it is important to note that Paragraph 7 of the NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At paragraph 8 it is states that: "*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching*

objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)”

- 6.10. The first objective is with regards to the economy, where the planning system should help to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. The second objective is a social objective where by the planning system should help to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being. Finally, an environmental objective, whereby the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and minimising waste and pollution.
- 6.11. The proposals would see the development of a parcel of land adjacent to the North West Preston Strategic Location for development. The scheme would deliver up to 84no. new dwellings, proposed as custom-build. Given the custom build nature of the scheme, it is considered more than likely that before and during construction, the development would contribute to the local economy directly through the employment of local companies to facilitate the builds. This would include planners and architects/designers as part of the reserved matters process, local contractors involved in the physical build and the local supply chain through the provision of materials. Once occupied, new residents of the proposals would use and support the growth of local services. It is considered that the proposed development would therefore assist in achieving the economic aims of sustainable development.
- 6.12. The location of the site adjacent to a major strategic location for development is considered to represent a sustainable location in the context of the NPPF. Excellent

transport links to the M6 and M55 are available providing easy access to Blackpool, Lancaster and routes through to Manchester. The site is within close proximity to public transport links; bus stops on Lightfoot Lane are accessible on foot from the site within 500m and provide regular services to Preston city centre. From here, services from the bus station and train station run throughout Lancashire and beyond. The Guild Wheel cycle route passes directly adjacent to the site along Lightfoot Green Lane and this links to National Cycle Route 6 which runs through to Blackburn and Lancaster and further afield.

- 6.13. As demonstrated through the suite of documents which support this planning application, there would be no unacceptable impacts on the environment as a result of the proposed development, indeed it is considered that there are opportunities for biodiversity enhancement within the scheme. The proposed development therefore meets the environmental aims of sustainable development.
- 6.14. Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would constitute sustainable development in the context of the NPPF. Furthermore, it is clear from the technical reports submitted with this application, summarised in Section 4 of this Planning Statement, that there are no environmental or technical constraints which would preclude development of the proposal. An assessment of these aspects of the proposals against the relevant development plan policies is provided below.

Minerals Resource Assessment

- 6.15. The northern portion of the site is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area as designated under Policy M2 of the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. In addition, the application site is located adjacent to a working sand quarry, which is operated by the applicant in this instance.
- 6.16. The portion of the site subject the M2 designation is relatively small and is also designated in the most part as a wildlife corridor. In the wider area around the designation, the site is constrained by the motorway to the south, the railway line to the east and residential development to the west. New housing developments are

located to the immediate south of the application site on the opposite site of the motorway.

- 6.17. Significant environmental impacts can occur as a result of minerals extraction and as such the section of the application site subject to the minerals designation is not considered suitable for that purpose.

Design

- 6.18. **CS Policy 5** seeks to secure densities that are in keeping with the local area that will have no detrimental impact on the amenity, character and appearance of an area. At this stage, the layout of the proposals is in outline with the Proposed Site Plan (SK01) demonstrating how the proposed number of units could be accommodated on site, together with areas of open space, landscaping features and drainage attenuation. The final layout of the development with regards to the dwellings and route that the redirected section of the Guild Wheel would take would be finalised through discussions with the LPA at the Reserved Matters stage.
- 6.19. **CS Policy 17** and Local Plan Policy **EN9** aim to ensure high quality design in new developments. The design of new development is expected to accord with the Central Lancashire Design Guide SPD and should take opportunities to make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area through high quality new design that responds to its context. These policies also require new development to take account of how landscaping contributes to the character and appearance of a local area. CS Policy 17 requires that the design of new buildings will be expected to take account of the local area, including through siting, layout, massing, scale, design, materials and landscaping. This policy also requires that the amenities of occupiers of the new development will not be adversely affected by neighbouring uses and vice versa, and that proposals should ensure that contaminated land and other risks are considered and addressed through appropriate remediation and mitigation measures.
- 6.20. At this stage, the siting and design of individual dwellings as indicated on the sketch scheme are indicative and the final layout of the proposals would be subject to reserved

matters application(s). The indicative design does however show how up to 84no. units could be achieved on the site and demonstrates that there would be sufficient amenity garden areas for each of the dwellings, including landscaping, parking and sufficient circulation space. The design of the dwellings is anticipated to be high quality, based on the occupier's specifications. No conflict with CS Policy 17 or EN9 has been identified.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 6.21. The site is adjacent to the strategic masterplan area of North West Preston to the south and sits to the immediate north of the M55 and to the west of the railway line. An existing working quarry is located to the west. The existing application site, although open countryside, is therefore considered to have limited landscape value. Nonetheless in line with **CS Policy 21** it will be required to be well integrated the existing settlement patterns and contribute positively to its conservation and enhancement. It is considered that this can be achieved.

Ecology

- 6.22. **CS Policy 22** aims to conserve, protect and seek opportunities to enhance and manage the biological and geological assets of the area, which is echoed by the aims within Local Plan Policies **EN10** and **EN11** which look to conserve and enhance designated sites of ecological interest, protected species and the habitats of protected species. An ecological assessment of the site was undertaken which found that the site has limited ecological value, whilst further work in respect of Great Crested Newts found no issues in this respect. It is considered that the proposed development offers opportunities for habitat enhancement; including tree and shrub planting, planting of native and non-native flowering species and bird and/or bat boxes which could be erected on new dwellings and/or retained trees. No conflict with the aforementioned policies has therefore been identified.

Highways

- 6.23. **CS Policy 3** and Local Plan Policies **ST1** and **ST2** have regard to traffic and highways safety. ST2 requires that all development proposals demonstrate that road safety and

the efficient and convenient movement of all highways users is not prejudiced, that appropriate provision is made for public transport services, access on cycle or foot and that, where practicable, existing pedestrian, cycle and equestrian routes are protected and extended.

- 6.24. The application site is proposed to be accessed off Lightfoot Green Lane to the west of the site, which would provide a suitable access point for the proposed development. Internal roads and footpaths would serve each of the plots. In terms of parking provision, there is adequate room on site to accommodate garages and parking spaces in line with the Council's requirements.
- 6.25. The proposed development is considered to be well connected by public transport, with bus services running to Preston and Longridge from Lightfoot Lane. From Preston, bus services to the wider area are available, whilst the city is on the West Coast Mainline providing rail services to numerous locations.
- 6.26. It is acknowledged that the site is in an area where numerous other committed developments are located. It is however relevant that work on the Preston Western Distributor is due to start in 2019 which will ease congestion in the area and is likely to be in operation prior to the completion of many of the committed development.
- 6.27. It is considered that the redirection of the Guild Wheel through the application site will have a significant beneficial impact on safety, providing a new section of route which avoids the steep sections of the existing path in this area and removes the need to pass directly across the entrance to the quarry.
- 6.28. The proposed development is considered to comply with the relevant policies in respect of highways.

Sustainable Resources

- 6.29. **CS Policy 27** considers sustainable resources in new developments and requires that all new dwellings meet Level 3 (or where economically viable, Level 4) of the Code for

Sustainable Homes. The policy sets out that this requirement would raise to Level 6 in January 2016. Although the code is no longer applicable, it is anticipated that the new dwellings would be capable of achieving the equivalent of level 4 in terms of energy efficiency.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.30. **CS Policy 29** aims to improve water quality and water management and reduce the risk of flooding. The planning application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and drainage strategy. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is identified as land having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. There are no recorded instances of flooding on this site and the FRA considered that the risk of flooding from all sources is low. The drainage strategy involves the inclusion of an attenuation pond and pumping station in the northern portion of the site which would offer a viable drainage solution for the site. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with the provisions of CS Policy 29

Residential Amenity

- 6.31. Local Plan policy **AD1** considers development within or in close proximity to existing residential areas and requires that there be no adverse impacts on residential amenity, referring to noise, design and scale, general disturbance and vehicle movements as a key consideration.
- 6.32. The site is located close to the strategic location for development to the south where new residential development is proposed, separated from this allocation by the M55. No adverse impacts on future residents of the approved schemes to the south would result from the proposed development. There would be no unacceptable impacts on properties in close proximity to the site, specifically by virtue of noise, air quality (see below) or congestion as referred to above.
- 6.33. The design of the site has been provided as an indicative layout. This, together with the scale of development proposed, is considered appropriate for the site and would

not lead to any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of existing residents or future residents of nearby sites, such that **AD1** is complied with.

Air Quality

- 6.34. **CS Policy 30** looks to improve air quality through delivery of Green Infrastructure initiatives and through taking account of air quality when prioritising measures to reduce road traffic congestion. The proposed development would not be impacted by nor give rise to unacceptable air quality impacts. As such there is no conflict with Policy 30.

Noise

- 6.35. With reference to **Policy CS17** with regards to the impact on new residents as a result of neighbouring land uses, and with specific regard to noise, it is acknowledged that external daytime noise levels may exceed the limit of 55dB in rear gardens across the site. It is however also recognised that an increase in levels may be appropriate where sites join the strategic road network and that whilst the development should be designed to achieve the lowest practicable levels, development should not be prohibited in such circumstances. It is not considered that there would be a conflict with Policy CS17, since guidance suggests that acceptable limits can be breached in some circumstances, and since future residents would be fully aware of the circumstances prior to purchasing their property.

The Planning Balance

- 6.36. As per paragraph 11 of the NPPF as set out above, in the absence of a 5 yr HLS, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts in doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. As set out above, the proposed development constitutes sustainable development and there are no technical or environmental constraints which would preclude development.

- 6.37. Significant weight should be given to the fact that the proposed development would deliver custom build housing for the area. Custom build is a type of housing for which the local planning authority is statutorily obliged to make provision, as per the Self-build and Custom Build Housebuilding Act (2015) (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016).
- 6.38. It is also considered that significant weight should be attributed to the provision of a replacement section of the Guild Wheel, which would involve re-routing the path inside the western boundary of the site. This would result in very real safety benefits by replacing a steep section of the route which currently passes across the entrance to the neighbouring quarry.
- 6.39. The adverse impacts of the proposals are considered to be limited to the policy conflicts with EN1 and Policy 1 (f) given the open countryside location of the site, and minor landscape and visual impacts of development of the site. Given the position of the site adjacent to a major strategic location for new development and the Council's lack of housing land, it is considered that development of this site is logical. The proposed development would boost the supply of housing in the area resulting in significant economic and social benefits; it would, contribute to Preston's custom build offer and would replace a dangerous section of the Guild Wheel with a safer route. Whilst some minor harm may result from development of a greenfield site, this adverse impact would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme.
- 6.40. Taking the above into account, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable, and in the absence of any material considerations which indicate otherwise, planning permission should be approved without delay.

/7 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Use

- 7.1 The proposed development is for the erection of up to 84no. new dwellings for residential use following reprofiling of the site. A replacement section of the Guild Wheel would also be provided.

Amount

- 7.2 Reprofiling works would involve works across the site to provide a level development platform.
- 7.3 The residential proposals comprise up to 84no. new dwellings together with access off Lightfoot Green Lane and provision of internal roads and footways. Ancillary development includes an attenuation pond and pumping station in the northern portion of the site and acoustic barriers along the eastern boundary close to the railway line and the eastern portion of the southern boundary adjacent to the M55. Green space is provided in the centre of the site.

Layout

- 7.4 Drawing 6126_L02 provides a proposed masterplan for the site, which at this stage is indicative to demonstrate how the proposed number of houses and ancillary development could be accommodated on the site. It also demonstrates how a new section of the Guild Wheel would be provided within the site. Access would be off Lightfoot Green Lane and the site would be served by internal roads and footways to each property. Each property would have its own generous rear garden and its own private parking, either on a private driveway or in a garage, or both.

Scale

- 7.5 It is anticipated that the proposed dwellings would be of a scale which reflects those in the surrounding area and would largely be dictated by the size of plot available for each

house. Details of scale would be applied for as part of a future reserved matters application.

Landscaping

- 7.6 It is assumed that a detailed landscaping plan will be required as part of a subsequent reserved matters application for the site. The majority of trees, including the higher quality trees located on the site periphery would be retained.

Appearance

- 7.7 The appearance of the dwellings, including materials, have not be specified at this stage. These details would be part of a reserved matters submission at a later date. It is considered that the appearance of the houses would reflect local character.

/8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 PWA Planning is retained by J A Jackson Contractors to progress a hybrid planning application on land off Lightfoot Green Lane for reprofiling works (in full) and the erection of up to 84no. dwellings and provision of a replacement section of the Guild Wheel (in outline).
- 8.2 The site is located opposite the North West Preston Strategic Location and is considered to represent a logical location for new housing. Although the site is currently designated as open countryside where this type of development would not normally be permitted, the titled balance provided in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged given the Council's lack of 5yr housing land supply. The proposed development is considered to constitute sustainable development and the limited harm as a result of the scheme is not considered to demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme which include significant social and economic benefits and an important contribution to the number of plots available for custom build development.
- 8.3 There are no technical constraints which would preclude the development of this site for residential use.
- 8.4 Given the above, the proposed development is considered acceptable and should be approved without delay.



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