

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

APPROVAL

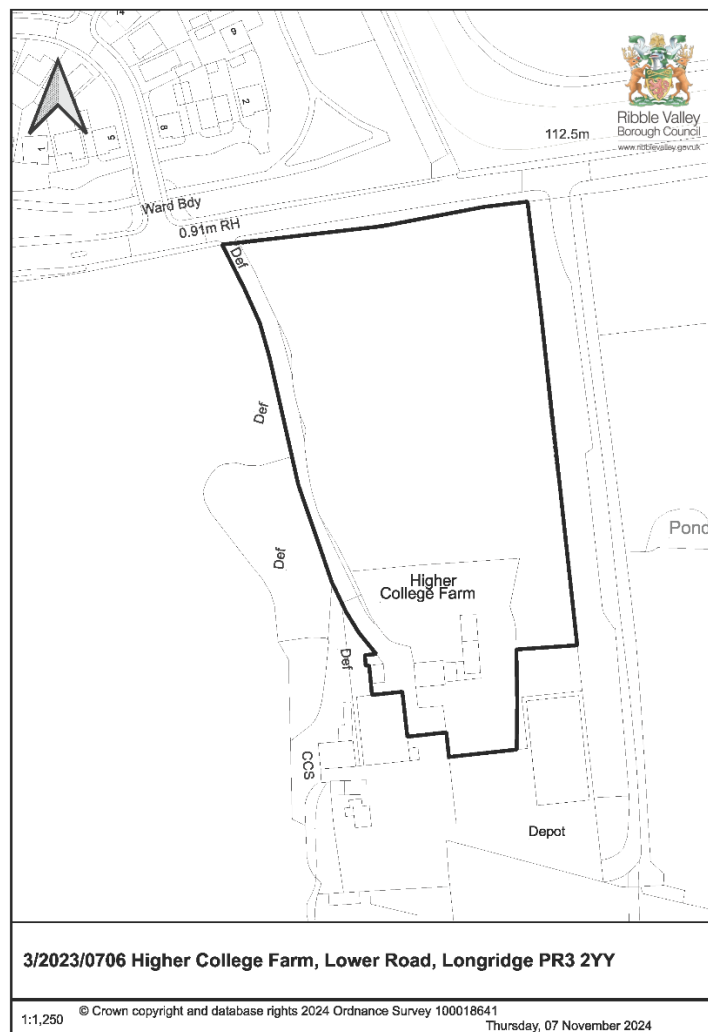
DATE: 28 NOVEMBER 2024
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APPLICATION REF: 3/2023/0706

GRID REF: SD 361561 437175

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:

PROPOSED ERECTION OF 34 CLASS E(G) UNITS AND ONE BATTERY STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE UNIT WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND ACCESS. RESUBMISSION OF APPLICATION 3/2022/0553. HIGHER COLLEGE FARM, LOWER ROAD, LONGRIDGE PR3 2YY.



CONSULTEE RESPONSES/ REPRESENTATIONS MADE:

PARISH COUNCIL:

Hothersall Parish Council have objected to the proposal stating the following:

The key to the developer's new application can be found on page 25 of the Planning Statement. Paragraph 7.26 makes it clear that it is a desire to substitute a cheaper alternative than the one already approved that is behind this application. A shrunken portion of the site is now to have higher density, cheaper, uniform windowless units in place of the approved proposal.

- 1. 3/2022/0553 contained a similar number of units to the current proposal. That is where the similarity begins and ends. The claim in paragraph 6.2 of the Planning Statement that the current application is 'broadly the same as the approved scheme' is fanciful.*
- 2. 3/2022/0553 accommodated 40 units, of varying sizes, over an area of 5265 square metres – the current proposal will provide 40 units over an area of little more than half that size, 2788 square metres, greatly increasing the density.*
- 3. In the proposal already approved, the units varied in size and outlook to accommodate a wide range of uses within Class E. Given that the site has been designated for employment and is a speculative development, it made sense to have a variety of premises available to businesses and this is codified in Policy EAL3.*
- 4. However, the Planning Statement, paragraph 5.19, while referring to the need for flexibility, contradicts itself at paragraph 7.22 where it justifies the uniformity of the units with a claim 'that each unit is to be utilised for the same purpose'.*
- 5. Paragraph 7.11 notes that, given the site's location in the countryside (it lies within Hothersall rather than Longridge itself), development proposals are required to be 'essential to the local economy'. Hothersall Parish Council acknowledges that the land is zoned for employment but can find no evidence that a business needs survey has been carried out by the applicant to identify what facilities are needed to meet the criterium of being 'essential to the local economy'. While understanding the principle of business confidentiality, the Parish Council has been given assurances of need in the past which turned out to be fictitious. We are therefore sceptical of the need for 40 units 'to be utilised for the same purpose'.*
- 6. Rather than the courtyard surrounded by well-designed buildings in a variety of sizes using a blend of contemporary and traditional building materials, we now have four large sheds each subdivided into 10 identical units with roller shutters in place of glazing and the only natural light coming from roof glazing.*
- 7. The four sheds, it is claimed at paragraph 4.7 will 'blend seamlessly into the surroundings'. As most of the surrounding farm buildings are made of local stone, it's difficult to understand how the units described in paragraph 4.6 could possibly 'blend seamlessly'.*
- 8. Paragraph 7.25 claims that the design has been influenced by 'nearby developments' and illustrates this with Mitton Road Business Park. In fact, much closer to this site is Manor Court in Ribchester – this is a much more appropriate comparison and very different from Mitton Road.*
- 9. Despite the current proposal claiming, as did its forerunner, that it will provide 60 FTE jobs, parking has been reduced by a third, from 151 spaces to 101 spaces. No rationale is offered for this discrepancy. The size of the site is an irrelevant consideration if the number of proposed users remains the same (paragraph 4.2 of the Transport Statement). The danger is that cars will park on the grass verge on the main road and around the sheds creating hazards for road users and blockages for commercial vehicles and refuse lorries.*
- 10. While all efforts to discourage single driver vehicles are to be encouraged, the claim in paragraph 6.8 that the site 'has good public transport links' must be challenged. There is only*

one service an hour between Chipping and Clitheroe and one an hour between Blackburn and Preston. The nearest bus stop for frequent services to Preston is a one mile walk from the site. It is reasonable to assume that many site users, visitors or employees, will use private transport.

11. Nevertheless, we support the use of public transport and insist that safe pedestrian access is provided to the public transport nodes. For those who do use the bus services, this current proposal offers no pathway to the nearest westbound bus stop (a distance of 240m). The only provision for pavement is around the bellmouth access to the site.
12. The Travel Plan acknowledges the need to promote walking and cycling. In paragraph 6.5 of this document it uses the example of providing facilities for storage, changing and showering for cyclists. However, nowhere on the plan do we find changing rooms and showers for cyclists.
13. Reference is made in the Travel Plan, at paragraph 2.13, to Lower Road being part of Ribble Valley's Northern Loop for cyclists. Adding an extra access road for commercial and private vehicles on to Lower Road and placing a pedestrian refuge (necessary as it is) on the road increases the potential hazards for cyclists on this stretch of Lower Road. Nowhere in the application is there any mitigating proposal.
14. Paragraph 7.6 reads 'If the results of annual monitoring show the targets of the Travel Plan are not being met consideration will be given to providing additional funding to incentivise sustainable travel'. 'consideration will be given' is no assurance that action will be taken.
15. Contrary to the claim in paragraph 6.12 that 'the proposal will not have a severe impact on the operation of the local road network', many residents have long had concerns about safety on Lower Road. Hothersall Parish Council has been working to extend the 30mph zone from Lower Road to Ribchester Road. The proposed road from the site meets Lower Road directly opposite the existing bus stop, within metres of a change from 30mph to 60mph, and close to a 90degree bend at the junction by the Corporation Arms, a junction acknowledged as hazardous by LCC Highways and, in previous applications, subject to modification by this site's developers. Morning and mid-afternoon, taxis for Hillside Special School park on Lower Road creating an extra hazard for traffic entering or exiting the site. It's essential that the increased traffic generated by any development on this site be taken into consideration and mitigating measures introduced prior to any construction work beginning.
16. Please refer to Attachment 1 – a drawing illustrating the area around the proposed access road and showing bus stops and the 30mph speed restriction which only applies west of the sign. To the east of the 30 sign, the national speed limit is in operation.
17. Paragraph 7.5 refers to a battery storage facility for PV 'for a portion of the energy for the proposed units'. No PV panels are shown on the drawings. Has this been thought through?
18. A similar vagueness is evident in paragraph 7.21 with the reference to 'development will likely include a decent amount of planting and landscaping'. 'likely include' and 'decent amount' are so vague as to be worthless as assurances.
19. We note that the existing mature hedge bordering the site on Lower Road will need to be reduced to 1m in height to improve visibility for traffic leaving the site. What plans have been made to make good this deficit? Again, there is no evidence that the loss of nesting sites and the carbon capture capacity of hedging has been taken into account.
20. We note that Lancashire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority has objected to the current proposal because of inadequate information from the applicant.
21. We too have concerns. Although designated in a area of lower risk, as local residents we know that Lower Road has been subjected to flooding. With heavier and more frequent extreme weather events as the Met Office has warned, it's probable that there will be flash floods on Lower Road.
22. Of potentially greater concern is the impact of this hard landscaping and building on land south of the proposed development. Land slopes away towards the River Ribble and, on the heavy

clay pan, flooding affects farmland and dwellings between this site and the river. The Met Office timeseries of annual UK rainfall (source:HadUK-Grid 01/01/2024) shows a consistently upward trend from the 1970s onwards. This is likely to be aggravated by more frequent and extreme storms.

23. There appears to be little consideration of the ways to tackle drainage from this site so that it does not have a negative impact on neighbouring property. Indeed, the Flood and Drainage Strategy document while acknowledging that the 'ground conditions (hard brown clay) mean that infiltration is unlikely to provide a viable drainage solution for surface water run-off' – paragraph 4.7 - offers no solution other than letting surface water run-off into fields beyond the site. And as all land south of the site slopes down towards the river it is inevitable that the development will create problems for properties between the site and the river. Until detailed proposals have been presented to mitigate the risks (e.g. rainwater storage on site with the potential to be used for flushing toilets and irrigation), the Parish Council cannot support the application.
24. When planning permission was granted for the new building at the adjacent Hillside School, a green roof was stipulated in order to slow the flow of water to avoid flash flooding. Why is something similar not proposed here?
25. We note that sewage is to be routed into the main sewers north of the site and that this will require a pumping station to the south of the site. We do not see this identified on the plans. Is it to be incorporated into the maintenance building or is it an additional structure?
26. We note that it has been practice, in some cases, for an applicant to submit a proposal for development and, only if that is successful, continue to purchase the site with an intention to re-negotiate the Planning Approval after purchase. We note that the property was sold to the applicant four months after Planning Approval was granted and that Ribble Valley Properties was incorporated a month after that. The current proposal – drafted by Evolve, an out of Borough practice rather than SPA, the Ribble Valley based practice which drafted the successful application – was submitted five months later. That may explain why the current application is so very different from the previous successful application which had the broad support of the Parish Council

In summary, Hothersall Parish Council – the Parish in which the land is sited - opposes this application, finding little of merit in it.

The current application is driven by a cost-cutting mindset, is incoherent and contradictory about the businesses that might use the premises, ill thought through on its flooding and drainage strategy, inadequate on the Transport Statement and Travel Plan, casual in its attention to environmental concerns and out of sympathy with the vernacular architecture of surrounding buildings.

LOCAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY (LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS):

The Local Highways Authority have raised no objection to the proposal stating the following:

Proposal:

This application proposes 40 class E(g) units totalling a floor area of 2788sqm and an ancillary battery storage and maintenance unit (sui generis) of 140sqm. There are 101 car parking spaces proposed including 10 disabled parking spaces, 4 motorcycle spaces, 10 cycle spaces (secure and covered) and 8 electric vehicle charging points.

Site Access:

The previously approved drawing PSA Design H2683-01 Rev A dated Nov 2017 is submitted for this application and the design is carried forward onto 'Evolve Architectural Design Ltd 'Proposed site plan' EAD_203_03_Rev C2' and is deemed suitable to accommodate the development traffic. The new access will serve the whole development and will need to be constructed prior to the works commencing on site.

The works need to be completed under a S278 agreement with Lancashire County Council – contact email developeras@lancashire.gov.uk . Due to high demand for these services, the developer should make early contact to progress the agreement.

The existing access on Lower Lane will remain open to serve the existing farmhouse and field accesses. The existing gap in the hedge will be infilled to separate the existing access from the development site. We do not support the intensification of use of the existing access due to sub standard geometry and visibility splays. Public footpath 23 runs along the eastern boundary of the site but is not affected by the development proposal.

Parking:

There are 101 car parking spaces proposed including 10 disabled parking spaces, 4 motorcycle spaces, 10 cycle spaces (secure and covered) and 8 electric vehicle charging points. The units are for class E(g) uses carried out in residential area, offices, research and development, industrial processes (Formally B1 – 1:30) with floor area of 2788sqm will require 93 spaces. The battery storage area will generate very infrequent maintenance vehicles.

The level of parking provision is considered acceptable.

A Framework Travel Plan is submitted, and this is considered acceptable.

Servicing:

Appendix C of the Transport Statement includes a swept path analysis for a 11.2m refuse wagon and articulated vehicle (largest delivery vehicle) to enter, turn and exit onto Lower Lane in forward gear.

This is considered acceptable. A Delivery Management Strategy is not considered necessary.

Conclusion:

Lancashire County Council acting as the Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Should the application be approved the same conditions are requested as for the previously approved application expect for the Delivery Management Strategy which is not considered necessary.

LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY:

The Lead Local Flood Authority have raised no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions.

UNITED UTILITIES:

No representations received in respect of the proposal.

ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS:

29 letters of representation have been received objecting on the following grounds:

- Detrimental impacts upon habitat
- Detrimental impact upon the character of the area
- Increased flood risk
- Inadequate highways infrastructure
- Increase in traffic in the area
- Noise and disturbance
- Not in keeping with the character of the area
- Inappropriate location for such development

21 letters of support have also been received in respect of the application citing benefits to the local economy and employment opportunities.

1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

- 1.1 The application relates to an area of land associated with 'Higher College Farm'. The site is located at the eastern extents of Longridge, being located to the south of and outside of the defined settlement limits of Longridge. The site is approximately 1.53 Hectares in area including the former farmhouse associated with Higher College Farm. The site is also located outside (to the east of) but directly adjacent the Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.
- 1.2 The site is bounded to the north by Blackburn Road and established hedgerow with the eastern extents of the site being bounded by existing hedgerow and an existing road providing access to a food processing business to the south of the site beyond the existing farmhouse. The western extents of the site is delineated by existing hedgerow and an existing access road that provides access to the existing farmhouse and associated agricultural buildings.
- 1.3 With the exception of the existing dwelling, the site is greenfield in nature presently used for agricultural purposes. The adjacent site to the east previously benefitted from outline consent for 'employment floorspace (use classes B1, B2 and B8) and associated access, car parking, landscaping and services infrastructure with all matters reserved except for access' (3/2017/0317) – this consent has since expired and as such no longer remains extant.
- 1.4 The existing site accommodates a number of trees and areas of well-established hedgerow, being relatively open in aspect. A Public Right of Way (FP23) runs north to south outside of and directly adjacent the eastern extents of the site.
- 1.5 The site to which the application relates currently benefits from an 'EAL' designation, being designated as Site EAL3 within the Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document Adopted 15th October 2019 (HED-DPD). With the Employment Allocation Policy stating the following:

Land will be allocated for employment uses (defined as uses falling within classes B1 to B8) to meet employment land requirements in the plan period (2008-2028) as follows and as shown on the Proposals Map:

- *Policy EAL1 Land at Sykes Holt, Mellor (1.7ha);*
- *Policy EAL2 Land at Time Technology Park, Simonstone (0.8ha); and*
- *Policy EAL3 Land at Higher College Farm, Longridge (1.5ha)*

With the supporting justification stating:

The Council proposes to allocate 4ha of employment land. This results in an overprovision against the identified requirement in the Core Strategy of 1.6ha. In making these allocations the plan addresses the identified requirements of the Core Strategy whilst also ensuring the delivery of necessary employment land to meet requirements for Longridge. Overall, the Council when taking these allocations and existing commitments into account provides through this plan for a choice of sites and locations to accommodate economic growth.

2. **Proposed Development for which consent is sought**

- 2.1 The application seeks consent for the erection or a range of buildings to accommodate uses within Class E sub-class/sub-activity (g), with consent also being sought for a battery storage building and associated maintenance store.
- 2.2 The proposed Class E(G) units are configured in four blocks with the blocks accommodating the following:
- Block 1: 7 X 'Workshop Units'
 - Block 2: 7 X 'Workshop Units'
 - Block 3: 10 X 'Workshop Units'
 - Block 4: 10 X 'Workshop Units'

Dedicated parking provision is provided to the frontage of the proposed units with additional parking provision being located towards the southern extents of the site.

3. **Relevant Planning History**

2022/0553: Proposed erection of commercial units (Use Class E(g)) including conversion and extension of existing farmhouse for purposes of Use Class E (g). (Approved)

2018/1105: Application for Outline planning permission for 21 dwellings and associated works. (Refused)

2017/0602: Application for Outline planning permission for industrial units (use classes B1, B2, B8) and associated access, parking, landscaping and services infrastructure with all matters reserved except access. Change of use of farmhouse to office (B1). (Approved)

4. **Relevant Policies**

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations
Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees & Woodland
Policy DME2: Landscape & Townscape Protection
Policy DME3: Site and Species Conservation
Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
Policy DMB5: Footpaths and Bridleways

Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development DPD:

Policy EAL: Employment Allocation
Policy EAL3: Land at Higher College Farm, Longridge

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5. **Assessment of Proposed Development**

5.1 **Principle of Development:**

- 5.1.1 The site to which the application relates is located within an area designated as defined open countryside, being located outside any defined settlement limits.
- 5.1.2 However, the site currently benefits from an EAL Designation, being designated as 'Site EAL3' within the Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (HED-DPD). The Employment Allocation states that the site is designated to accommodate 'uses falling within classes B1 to B8'.
- 5.1.3 Subsequent to the original site designation in October 2019, the Use Classes Order experienced significant revisions that came into effect on the 1st of September 2020 whereby a number of differing use classes were now considered to fall within the same use class, namely Use Class E which reads as follows:

Use, or part use, for all or any of the following purposes:

- A. Shop other than for the sale of hot food*
- B. Food and drink which is mostly consumed on the premises*
- C. the following kinds of services principally to visiting members of the public*
 - (i) financial services*
 - (ii) professional services (other than medical services)*
 - (iii) any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality*

- D. *Indoor sport and recreation (not swimming pools, ice rinks or motorised vehicles or firearms)*
- E. *Medical services not attached to the residence of the practitioner*
- F. *Non-residential creche, day centre or nursery*
- G.
 - (i) *office*
 - (ii) *the research and development of products or processes or*
 - (iii) *any industrial process, (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area)*

5.1.4 In respect of the above, it is noted that the designation solely relates to that of uses falling within use classes B1-B8. In respect of the changes to the Use Classes Order, uses previously falling within use Classes B1(a), (b) and (c) are now considered to fall within Use Class E sub-class/sub-activity (g). The proposal seeks consent for uses falling within Use Class E sub-class/sub-activity (g) with Use Class E(g) now incorporating uses that would be considered compliant with the previous B1-B8 designation as afforded by the original 'EAL' designation.

5.1.5 The Employment Allocation extends to 1.5ha and includes the former farmhouse associated with Higher College Farm and its associated residential curtilage at the southern extents. Whilst this is included within the red edge of the application site, this aspect would be unchanged and remain as a separate residential unit. However, as the proposed development would still enable future employment development to come forward on this part of the site, subject to minor reconfiguration of a bin store and motorcycle parking, then this is not considered to represent a significant policy conflict.

5.1.6 In respect of the above, notwithstanding other development management considerations, the principle of the development is considered acceptable insofar that that the proposed Use Class E(g) uses would align with the 'EAL' designation of the site and as such raises no direct significant measurable conflict with the adopted development plan for the borough.

5.2 Impact upon Residential Amenity:

5.2.1 The proposal site is relatively remote from nearby residential receptors save that for those to the north-west of the site on the opposing side of Blackburn Road/Dilworth Lane. As such and taking account of the separation distances between the proposed buildings and the residential dwellings to the north-west (approximately 70m) it is not considered that the proposal will result in any measurable undue impacts upon existing residential amenities.

5.2.2 It is noted that the residential dwelling known as Higher College Farm remains within the remit of the application site, with the submitted details failing to propose any alternative uses or alterations to the dwelling. As such consideration must be given in respect of potential impacts from the development upon occupiers of the dwelling.

5.2.3 In this respect, uses within Use Class E(g) are considered to be uses 'which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity'. Taking this into account and taking account of the distance of the dwelling from the units within

which activities will be undertaken it is not considered that the proposal will result in any significant measurable impact upon the residential amenities of occupiers of the dwelling to a degree that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission on these grounds.

5.2.4 This property is the subject of a separate application to change it from a C3 use to a C2 use, however whether that proposed use is compatible with an employment development would be a matter for that application to consider.

5.2.5 As such, and taking account of the above matters, the proposal does not raise any significant direct conflicts with Policy DMG1 which seeks to ensure of adequate standards of residential amenity and protect against development(s) that would result in measurable detrimental impact(s) upon nearby existing residential amenities.

5.3 Visual Amenity/External Appearance

5.3.1 Whilst it is recognised that the site benefits from an employment land designation, the site remains within the defined open countryside, afforded a high level of visibility upon approach from the east and west along Blackburn Road. As such significant consideration must be given in respect of the proposals visual compatibility with the immediate and wider landscape setting and its visual compatibility with the character of the wider open countryside designation.

5.3.2 The submitted details propose that the Class E(g) units will be configured in four blocks occupying a relatively central location within the site with the proposed 'Battery Store' being located towards the southeastern extents of the site.

5.3.3 It is proposed that the Class E(g) units will benefit from a dual mono pitch roof arrangement with recessed element providing roof articulation/variation. It is proposed that the units will be faced in timber-cladding with a plinth are faced in reconstituted stone which also forms part of an intermediate recessed full height panel to delineate between the front and rear 'bays' of the units. It is proposed that the southerly facing roof slope of the proposed units will accommodate an array of photovoltaic panels. The units are of a typical commercial appearance commensurate with typical units accommodating Class E(g) uses. The proposed 'Battery Store' is a pitched roof appearance, being faced in materials to match those found on the remainder of the buildings, with the westerly facing roof-plane also accommodating a number of photovoltaic panels.

5.3.4 Following officer concerns in relation to the visual compatibility of the units with the immediate landscape character, significant negotiation has been undertaken to secure varied roof-forms, a more sensitive materials palette and a significantly augmented green infrastructure and landscape strategy.

5.3.5 In respect of landscape mitigation, a landscape bund has been proposed towards the site frontage, with the bund and surrounding land accommodating a significant mix of tree and shrub planting to create a natural 'multi-layered' visual buffer which will filter views of the proposed buildings upon approach. Tree and shrub planting has also been secured to the eastern and western extents of the site to add further visual mitigation upon approach, with hedgerow reinforcement also being

proposed. A condition to secure the timely delivery of this landscaping is considered necessary.

- 5.3.6 Taking account of the scale, configuration and external appearance of the proposed buildings, in concert with the significant landscape enhancements secured, it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any significant adverse visual impact upon the character and visual amenities of the immediate or wider area that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission on these grounds.
- 5.3.7 As such and taking account of the above, the proposal is considered to align with the aims, objectives and requirements of Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

5.4 Landscape and Ecology:

- 5.4.1 Given the proposal site relates to greenfield agricultural land that accommodates a small number of trees and areas of hedgerow, consideration must be given in respect of the potential for the development to result in adverse impacts upon protected species, ecology or habits and wildlife biodiversity. With consideration also required in respect of the ability for the proposal to satisfy the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as imposed pursuant to Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021), which requires that applicable development deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain over and above the pre-development biodiversity value of the site.
- 5.4.2 In respect of the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements, the proposal is considered exempt insofar that the submission of the application pre-dates the introduction of the mandatory BNG requirements. The application has been accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- 5.4.3 In respect of the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment, six trees are identified as being within the extents of the application site, with the removal of a Common Oak (T2) and Apple Tree (T4) being proposed, the former being removed to facilitate the construction of the development with the latter necessitating the need for removal due to poor structural condition. The Impact Assessment further identifies a number of groupings within the site (G1 - G4), including areas of hedgerow (H1 - H6). It is proposed that these will be retained within the context of the development with varying management recommendations being proposed to ensure their retention and long-term lifespan.
- 5.4.4 The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal states the following:

The site comprises two distinct sections; a field of enclosed poor semi-improved grassland to the North and amenity grassland lawns to the South. The site has not significantly changed since the previous site visits. The site abuts a farm complex to the South, an access track to the East, public highway to the North and agricultural land to the West.

Ecological surveys, site appraisals and impact assessments were carried out with respect to land at Higher College Farm, off Blackburn Road, Longridge, Lancashire. It is proposed that new commercial units will be constructed on the site.

It is considered, based on the current understanding of the site proposals, that SSSI Impact Risk Zones will not be a notable constraint. The development proposal does not fall within any of the specified SSSI risk categories.

Amphibians, Bats, Birds, Reptiles and Invertebrates are known to occur in the local area, there was however no conclusive evidence of any specifically protected species regularly occurring on the site or the surrounding areas which would be negatively affected by site development following the mitigation proposed. The vegetation to be cleared has a low ecological significance in the local area; the trees close to but outside the development area are generally of low quality.

The protection of trees on the site boundary and landscaping will promote structural diversity in both the canopy and at ground level and will encourage a wider variety of wildlife to use the site than already occurs. Any category trees to be felled should be re-inspected for bats to confirm they remain absent. Contractors will be observant for protected species and all nesting birds. Should any species be found during construction, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

- 5.4.5 In respect of the landscaping details submitted in support of the application, these proposed significant tree-planting (67 in total), native buffer planting, ornamental planting, areas of 'flower meadow' planting and species rich grassland including areas of hedgerow enhancement. Areas of the landscaping to the northern extents of the site adjacent Blackburn Road will be accommodated on 'landscape bunds' to the east and west of the primary vehicular access to further increase the visual mitigation to be provided by planting in this location.
- 5.4.6 Taking account of the extent of the proposed planting schedule and taking account of the classification of the land at present, it is considered that the proposed landscaping proposals will result in biodiversity and ecological enhancement over and above that of the existing ecological value of the site.
- 5.4.7 As such and taking account of the above, the proposal does not raise any significant measurable conflict(s) with Policies DME1, DME2 nor DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seek to protect against adverse impacts upon habitat, biodiversity, ecology or protected species and species of conservation concern.

5.5 Highway Safety and Accessibility:

- 5.5.1 The Local Highways Authority (LHA) have raised no objections to the proposal stating that 'the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site'.

5.5.2 As such and taking account that the Local Highways Authority have raised no objections in respect of the proposed development, the proposal is considered to align with the aims, objectives and requirements of Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy insofar that the proposed development will not result in any significant measurable detrimental impact upon the safe operation of the immediate or wider highways network.

6. **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion**

6.1 For the reasons outlined above, the application is recommended for approval insofar that the proposal will not result in any significant adverse impacts, nor will the proposal result in significant measurable conflicts with the aims and objectives of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION: That the application be APPROVED subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2. Unless explicitly required by condition within this consent, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the proposals as detailed on drawings:

EAD_203_01: Location Plan
EAD_203_03 Rev: C5: Proposed Site Plan
EAD_203_04 Rev: C2: Proposed Floor Plan Block 1
EAD_203_05 Rev: C3: Proposed Elevations Block 1
EAD_203_06 Rev: C2: Typical building Plan and Elevation
EAD_203_08 Rev: C2: Proposed Site section
EAD_203_09 Rev: C2: Proposed Floor Plan Block 2
EAD_203_10 Rev: C1: Proposed Floor Plan Block 3 & 4
EAD_203_11 Rev: C3: Proposed Elevations Block 2
EAD_203_12 Rev: C3: Proposed Elevations Block 3 & 4
EAD_203_14: Site Phasing Plan
5492 01: Planting Plan
5492 02: Indicative Section
Arboricultural Impact Assessment (October 2023)
Preliminary ecological Appraisal

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify which plans are relevant to the consent hereby approved.

3. Notwithstanding the submitted details, precise specifications and samples of all surfacing, walling and roofing materials including details of all proposed window and doors to be implemented within the development hereby approved shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before their use in the proposed

development. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In order that the Local Planning Authority may ensure that the materials to be used are appropriate to the locality and respond positively to the inherent character of the area.

4. Details of the alignment, height, and appearance of all boundary treatments, fencing, walling, retaining wall structures and gates to be erected within the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation.

For the avoidance of doubt the submitted details shall include the precise nature and location for the provision of measures to maintain and enhance wildlife movement within and around the site by virtue of the inclusion of suitable sized gaps/corridors at ground level.

The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details. The agreed wildlife corridors/gaps shall be retained in perpetuity and thereafter remain free from obstructions which would preclude their use by wildlife.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to minimise the potential impacts of the development upon protected and non-protected species through the inclusion of measures to retain and enhance habitat connectivity for species of importance or conservation concern.

5. Prior to their installation details of a scheme for any external building mounted or ground mounted lighting/illumination, shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. For the avoidance of doubt the submitted details shall include luminance levels and demonstrate how any proposed external lighting has been designed and located to avoid excessive light spill/pollution and shall include details to demonstrate how artificial illumination of important wildlife habitats is minimised/mitigated.

The lighting schemes(s) be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained as approved unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over development which could prove materially harmful the character and visual amenities of the immediate area and to minimise/mitigate the potential impacts upon protected species resultant from the development and to limit unnecessary light spill/pollution.

6. Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to their installation, details of the proposed roof mounted Photovoltaic Panels, including section details, shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may ensure that the detailed design and external appearance of the proposal is appropriate to the locality and responds positively to the inherent character of the area.

7. No extract vents, means of extract, air conditioning, ventilation or any other associated externally mounted/located plant or HVAC shall be installed upon the buildings hereby approved unless details of the design, specification, noise ratings, fixing and finish has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In order that the Local Planning Authority may ensure that the detailed design of the proposal is appropriate to the locality and that any externally mounted equipment is not of detriment to the visual amenities of the area.

8. Notwithstanding the submitted details, elevational details at a scale of not less than 1:20 and details of the precise location and capacity of all proposed refuse storage provision shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation.

The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details. The approved details shall be installed and made available for use prior to any of the uses hereby approved becoming first operative, the agreed provision shall be retained and made available for use at all times thereafter.

REASON: In order that the Local Planning Authority may ensure that the detailed design of the proposal is appropriate to the locality and that any ancillary structures are not of detriment to the visual amenities of the area.

9. The landscaping hereby approved (Drawing: 5492-01 Rev: A) shall be implemented and carried out in strict accordance with the phasing and timings as indicated on the submitted 'Site Phasing Plan' (Drawing EAD-203-14).

The landscaping proposals shall be maintained thereafter for a period of not less than 20 years to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. This maintenance shall include the replacement of any tree or shrub which is removed, or dies, or is seriously damaged, or becomes seriously diseased, by a species of similar size to those originally planted. For the avoidance of doubt all trees/hedgerow shown as being retained within the approved details shall be retained as such in perpetuity.

REASON: To ensure the proposal is satisfactorily landscaped and trees/hedgerow of landscape/visual amenity value are retained as part of the development.

10. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development, including any site preparation, demolition, scrub/hedgerow clearance or tree works/removal shall commence or be undertaken on site unless and until a scheme for protective fencing for trees within and adjacent to the site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Such fencing shall be in accordance with BS5837 (2012): 'Trees in Relation to Construction'. Such fencing shall be erected in its entirety prior to any other operations taking place on the site.

For the avoidance of doubt the erected fencing should not be breached or removed during development. Furthermore, within the areas so fenced the existing ground level shall be

neither raised nor lowered and there shall be no development or development-related activity of any description including the deposit of spoil or the storage of materials within these areas.

REASON: To protect trees/hedging of landscape and visual amenity value on and adjacent to the site or those likely to be affected by the proposed development.

11. No removal of vegetation including trees or hedges shall be undertaken within the nesting bird season (1st March – 31st August inclusive) unless a pre-clearance check on the day of removal, by a licenced ecologist, confirms the absence of nesting birds. A letter from the ecologist confirming the absence of nesting birds shall be submitted to the Council within one month of the pre-clearance check being undertaken.

Any removal of vegetation outside the nesting bird season shall be preceded by a pre-clearance check by a licensed ecologist on the day of removal to ensure that removal does not result in unacceptable impacts upon nesting birds or other species of conservation concern.

REASON: To ensure that there are no adverse effects on the favourable conservation status of birds, to protect the bird population and species of importance or conservation concern from the potential impacts of the development.

12. No increase to existing land levels shall be undertaken on site, over and above those hereby approved, to accommodate the development hereby approved unless precise details of the increase in land-levels have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

For the avoidance of doubt the submitted information shall include existing and proposed sections through the site including details of the height, scale and location of proposed building in relation to adjacent existing development/built form (where applicable).

The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the proposed development responds positively to characteristics of the area and to ensure the Local planning Authority can make an accurate assessment of potential impacts upon existing nearby residential amenity or the amenities of the area.

13. No goods, plant or materials associated with the use(s) hereby approved shall be deposited or stored externally on site or around/adjacent the building(s) to which the application relates.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory appearance of the site in the interests of the character and visual amenities of the area.

14. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended), or any subsequent enactment or re-enactment thereto, no enlargements, improvements or other alterations, including the insertion of additional mezzanine floors or any increase in commercial floorspace shall be undertaken within or to the buildings/uses hereby approved without express planning permission being obtained.

REASON: To clarify the nature of the consent hereby approved and to ensure the floorspace created remains commensurate with the dedicated parking provision to be provided.

15. The Class E(g) uses hereby approved shall only be operated between the following hours:

08:00hrs to 19:00hrs Monday to Friday

09:00hrs to 17:00hrs Saturdays

10:00hrs to 16:00hrs on Sundays

For the avoidance of doubt there shall be no business or activities operated or undertaken on the site associated with the use(s) hereby approved outside the stated operating hours.

REASON: To clarify the nature of the consent hereby approved and to ensure the development hereby approved remains compatible with the character of the area.

16. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended or re-enacted) and the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (as amended or re-enacted) and the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2016 (as amended or re-enacted) the use of the development/buildings hereby approved shall only be used for purposes within Use Class E(g) and for no other sub-activities or sub-class uses within Use Class E.

REASON: To define the scope of the permission hereby approved and to ensure that the development remains compatible with the Employment Designation (EAL3) of the site to which the application relates.

17. No development shall commence in any phase until a detailed, final surface water sustainable drainage strategy for the site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The detailed surface water sustainable drainage strategy shall be based upon the site-specific flood risk assessment and indicative surface water sustainable drainage strategy (October 2023 / 23.1384 / REFORD) submitted and sustainable drainage principles and requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance and Defra Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. No surface water shall be allowed to discharge to the public foul sewer(s), directly or indirectly.

The details of the drainage strategy to be submitted for approval shall include, as a minimum;

A: Sustainable drainage calculations for peak flow control and volume control for the:

- (i) 100% (1 in 1-year) annual exceedance probability event;
- (ii) 3.3% (1 in 30-year) annual exceedance probability event + 40% climate change allowance.
- (iii) 1% (1 in 100-year) annual exceedance probability event + 50% climate change allowance.

Calculations must be provided for the whole site, including all existing and proposed surface water drainage systems.

B: Final sustainable drainage plans appropriately labelled to include, as a minimum:

- (i) Site plan showing all permeable and impermeable areas that contribute to the drainage network either directly or indirectly, including surface water flows from outside the curtilage as necessary;
- (ii) Sustainable drainage system layout showing all pipe and structure references, dimensions and design levels; to include all existing and proposed surface water drainage systems up to and including the final outfall;
- (iii) Details of all sustainable drainage components, including landscape drawings showing topography and slope gradient as appropriate;
- (iv) Drainage plan showing flood water exceedance routes in accordance with Defra Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems;
- (v) Finished Floor Levels (FFL) in AOD with adjacent ground levels for all sides of each building and connecting cover levels to confirm minimum 150 mm+ difference for FFL;
- (vi) Details of proposals to collect and mitigate surface water runoff from the development boundary;
- (vii) Measures taken to manage the quality of the surface water runoff to prevent pollution, protect groundwater and surface waters, and delivers suitably clean water to sustainable drainage components;

C: Evidence of an assessment of the existing on-site culverted watercourse to be used, to confirm that these systems are in sufficient condition and have sufficient capacity to accept surface water runoff generated from the development.

D: Evidence that a free-flowing outfall can be achieved. If this is not possible, evidence of a surcharged outfall applied to the sustainable drainage calculations will be required.

The sustainable drainage strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure satisfactory sustainable drainage facilities are provided to serve the site in accordance with the Paragraphs 173 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance and Defra Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems.

18. No development shall commence until a Construction Surface Water Management Plan, detailing how surface water and stormwater will be managed on the site during construction, including demolition and site clearance operations, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details of the plan to be submitted for approval shall include method statements, scaled and dimensioned plans and drawings detailing surface water management proposals to include for each phase, as a minimum:

- A. Measures taken to ensure surface water flows are retained on-site during the construction phase(s), including temporary drainage systems, and, if surface water

- flows are to be discharged, they are done so at a restricted rate that must not exceed the equivalent greenfield runoff rate from the site.
- B. Measures taken to ensure surface water flows are retained on-site during the construction phase(s), including temporary drainage systems, and, if surface water flows are to be discharged, they are done so at a restricted rate that must not exceed the equivalent greenfield runoff rate from the site.

The plan shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan for the duration of construction.

REASON: To ensure the development is served by satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of surface water during each construction phase(s) so it does not pose an undue surface water flood risk on-site or elsewhere during any construction phase in accordance with Paragraph 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

19. The commencement of use of the development shall not be permitted until a site-specific Operation and Maintenance Manual for the lifetime of the development, pertaining to the surface water drainage system and prepared by a suitably competent person, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details of the manual to be submitted for approval shall include, as a minimum:

- A. A timetable for its implementation;
- B. Details of the maintenance, operational and access requirement for all SuDS components and connecting drainage structures, including all watercourses and their ownership;
- C. Pro-forma to allow the recording of each inspection and maintenance activity, as well as allowing any faults to be recorded and actions taken to rectify issues;
- D. The arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme in perpetuity;
- E. The arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme in perpetuity;
- F. Details of whom to contact if pollution is seen in the system or if it is not working correctly; and
- G. Means of access for maintenance and easements.

Thereafter the drainage system shall be retained, managed, and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure that surface water flood risks from development to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those risks to controlled waters, property, and ecological systems, and to ensure that the sustainable drainage system is subsequently maintained pursuant to the requirements of Paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

20. The commencement of use of the development shall not be permitted until a site-specific verification report, pertaining to the surface water sustainable drainage system, and prepared by a suitably competent person, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The verification report must, as a minimum, demonstrate that the surface water sustainable drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the approved drawing(s) (or detail any minor variations) and is fit for purpose. The report shall contain information and evidence, including photographs, of details and locations (including national grid references) of critical drainage infrastructure (including inlets, outlets, and control structures) and full as-built drawings. The scheme shall thereafter be maintained in perpetuity.

REASON: To ensure that surface water flood risks from development to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those risks to controlled waters, property, and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development as constructed is compliant with the requirements of Paragraphs 173 and 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

21. Notwithstanding the submitted details, elevational details at a scale of not less than 1:20 and details of the precise location of all proposed cycle storage provision shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation. For the avoidance of doubt all proposed cycle storage shall be enclosed and lockable.

Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied the agreed provision for cycle storage shall be provided within the site prior to any of the uses hereby approved becoming first active and shall be retained and made available for use at all times thereafter.

REASON: Reason: To ensure sustainable travel modes are promoted and supported and to minimise use/reliance of the private motor-vehicle.

22. Notwithstanding the submitted details, details of the precise location and nature of all proposed motorcycle parking provision shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation.

Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied the agreed provision for motorcycle parking shall be provided within the site prior to any of the uses hereby approved becoming first active and shall be retained and made available for use at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure adequate motorcycle parking provision within the development hereby approved.

23. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a construction method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. It shall provide for:

- A. The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- B. The loading and unloading of plant and materials
- C. The storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- D. The erection and maintenance of security hoarding
- E. Details of working hours

- F. HGV delivery times and routing to/from the site
- G. Contact details for the site manager

REASON: In the interests of protecting residential amenity from noise and disturbance and to ensure the safe operation of the Highway.

24. The new road/access between the site and Blackburn Road shall be constructed in accordance with the Lancashire County Council Specification for Construction of Estate Roads to at least base course level before any development takes place within the site.

REASON: To ensure that satisfactory access is provided to the site before the development hereby permitted becomes operative and to facilitate safe access for construction vehicles.

25. The existing access on Lower Lane (along the western boundary of the site) shall not be used for the purposes of access in connection or conjunction with the development hereby approved. Measures to control and limit access shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the use(s) hereby approved becoming first active.

REASON: To prevent increased use of an access which has insufficient geometry and visibility splays.

26. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 there shall not at any time in connection with the development hereby permitted be erected or planted or allowed to remain upon the land hereinafter defined any building, wall, fence, hedge, tree, shrub or other device over 1m above road level.

The visibility splay to be the subject of this shall be that land in front of a line drawn from a point 2.4m measured along the centre line of the proposed road from the continuation of the nearer edge of the carriageway of Blackburn Road to points measured 61m in each direction along the nearer edge of the carriageway of Blackburn Road, from the centre line of the access, and shall be maintained at footway/verge level in accordance with a scheme to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the Highway Authority.

REASON: To ensure adequate visibility at the street junction or site access.

27. No part of the development hereby approved shall commence until a scheme for the timings and construction/completion of the site access and the off-site works of highway improvement has been submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.

For the avoidance of doubt the off-site highway works shall include:

- A. Provision of pedestrian refuge and localised carriageway widening
- B. Signing and lining
- C. Junction realignment at the Blackburn Road, Lower Lane, Preston Road junction
- D. Provision of a footway on the south side of Blackburn Road from the proposed pedestrian refuge to Woodville cottages

- E. Advertising and implementation of a 40mph speed limit on Blackburn Road from the current 30mph terminal point in an easterly direction

For the avoidance of doubt no part of the development or use(s) hereby approved shall be occupied or become operative until the approved details have been constructed and completed in accordance with the scheme details.

REASON: In order to satisfy the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority that the final details of the highway scheme/works are acceptable before work commences on site and to ensure that the traffic generated by the development does not exacerbate unsatisfactory highway conditions in advance of the completion of the highway scheme/works.

28. The car parking hereby approved shall be surfaced or paved in accordance with a scheme that shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority prior to the commencement of any development within the site. The car-parking spaces and manoeuvring areas shall be marked out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first use of any of the premises becoming operative.

REASON: To allow for and ensure the effective use of the parking and vehicular manoeuvring areas.

29. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of the provisions for electric vehicle charging points shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed provision(s) shall be installed and made available for use prior to any of the uses hereby approved becoming first operative and thereafter be retained.

REASON: To encourage sustainable methods of transport and to reduce carbon emissions resultant from activities associated with the development hereby approved.

30. The Framework Travel Plan hereby approved (Ref: T4246 R-01) shall be adhered to and undertaken in strict accordance with the agreed details and timetable/timings for a period of 5 years from the date of any of the uses hereby approved becoming first operative.

REASON: To ensure sustainable travel modes are promoted and supported and to minimise use/reliance of the private motor-vehicle.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Planning Application - Ribble Valley Borough Council](#)