

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 11

meeting date: 12 APRIL 2012  
title: FORMER RIDINGS DEPOT AND LAND NORTH AND SOUTH OF  
WHITTINGHAM LANE, LONGRIDGE – CONSULTATION FROM  
NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: GRAEME THORPE

## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the Council's response to a proposed development in a neighbouring authority.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Council Ambitions – the matters dealt with in this report relate to the ambition of helping to protect and enhance the local environment, it also has relevance to the Council's Local Development Framework.
- Community Objectives – the matters covered in this report relate to objectives of creating a sustainable local economy and ensuring that there is a suitable supply of sites for employment and housing.
- Corporate Priorities – the paper supports the performance of the Council as a well managed authority.
- Other Considerations – none.

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council has been consulted by Preston City Council on a planning application for a significant mixed use development adjacent to the borough boundary at Longridge. Officers have advised Preston City Council that the matter is being considered as part of this agenda and that our formal response will be submitted after consideration by Members.

2.2 The application may be viewed on Preston City Council's website ([www.preston.gov.uk](http://www.preston.gov.uk)) using the planning application search facility and entering the application number 06/2012/0101.

Copies of the site plan and indicative layouts are attached as an appendix to this report.

2.3 Members are reminded that Committee previously considered the site on 16 June 2011 when a previous proposal was submitted at the site, planning application 6/2011/0344. The resolution south that Preston City Council be advised that the Council raises no policy objections to the proposal but that the matters set out in section 3 and 3 of the report were taken into consideration when determining the application.

2.4 There is little change between the two proposals so the same matters are again outlined within this report. It is anticipated that Preston City Council's Planning Committee will consider the planning application in 2012.

### 3 THE PROPOSAL AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 The proposal is for a mixed use scheme including up to 200 residential units, office space, leisure uses, residential apartments with care and open space. The scheme proposes to:

- contribute to the current shortfall in the 5 year housing land supply within the City of Preston;
- provide additional affordable housing (30% of the total number of new dwellings on site) in an area where a shortfall exists;
- new employment buildings that provide potential for the creation of 80 to 100 jobs;
- residential apartments with care to provide for elderly members of the community who are in need of care;
- new and enhanced bus stop provision;
- improved safety measures along pedestrian routes;
- new public open spaces available and accessible to all of the new and existing Longridge community;
- new recreational areas and children's play areas within the public open spaces;
- increased access to public footpath network; and
- wildlife and ecological enhancements.

3.2 The site lies adjacent to the Ribble Valley boundary to the west of Longridge on land that comprises areas of previously developed land with established employment uses and Greenfield land. The application sits in part to the south of Whittingham Lane but it is predominately on land to the north. It does not extend over the full extent of land put forward as part of the site allocations proposals published earlier.

3.3 The site will have impacts upon Longridge, which would be anticipated to provide the service facilities for residents. Capacity of infrastructure would need to be considered with the statutory providers and it should be borne in mind that Ribble Valley is currently in the process of establishing its Core Strategy and seeking to determine appropriate scales of development. This issue was raised in the Core Strategy Topic Paper 'Discussion on the approach to the Preferred Option' considered by Members at the 8 December 2011 Planning and Development committee meeting, acknowledging this site as part of this. It was agreed in principle that this site could contribute to the housing requirements within Longridge as part of the Core Strategy, and deliver an allowance of 200 dwellings on the site as part of the housing numbers for Longridge./ approval of the development would not lead to the situation where no further development would be required within Longridge. It would however, be a factor in judging scale.

3.4 It is considered important, given a current lack of readily available employment land in the Ribble Valley to serve Longridge to be satisfied that the proposed employment provision is adequate to mitigate against loss of the existing employment uses on the

site and the future opportunity to develop or redevelop these sites further, including the need to serve the Ribble Valley element of Longridge. A careful assessment of the employment opportunity should be undertaken.

- 3.5 It is a matter for Preston City to consider their position in regard to their need for housing land and their delivery of a five year housing land supply. Preston City are unable to demonstrate a five year supply. The consideration of this would need to take account of their wider planning strategies and proposals being pursued in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy. In general terms, the scale of this proposal is not in conflict with the general policies of that proposed strategy. It is understood that in terms of saved local plan policies, the site lies within a location that has no specific land designation and consequently any application would be considered on its merits.
- 3.6 Primarily, the application falls to be determined against National Planning Policy Framework. At the hearts of the National Planning Policy Framework, is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 3.7 Members should be aware that the application is in outline and that the indicative layout included with the scheme provides an illustration of how the overall form of development could take place. It is not intended to be a detailed representation of how any final scheme would actually turn out. However, it is worth considering a number of issues that have been raised by residents in response to pre-application consultation undertaken by the developer with regard to the relationship between open space areas and existing residential properties in Ribble Valley. As this application is not a matter of detail, it is difficult to offer other than general comments on these issues and to ask that the City Council have regard to residents' concerns about the relationship between existing houses and the design that could ultimately take shape on this site.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 There are a number of important issues to review with this proposal. Clearly, it has an impact upon Longridge given the site's relationship to the town centre, consequently any decision will be taken into account in this Council's development of its Core Strategy. However, whilst the decision will influence, the outcome of Ribble Valley's deliberations on its Core Strategy, there are no substantive prematurity grounds that could be raised as a reason for refusal in my view, the proposal supports this Council's emerging position with regard to the Core Strategy.
- 4.2 The impact of the scheme on infrastructure must be taken into account. Members have previously and consistently raised the need to ensure highway impacts upon both the local and wider networks in this location are mitigated. These issues must be adequately addressed as should the wider implications of infrastructure capacity. Where measures are proposed to mitigate impacts or create additional capacity, it is important to ensure they are deliverable and that any implementation programme is both clear and understood.

- 4.3 It is also important to have regard to the employment implications of developing the site as proposed. However, it must be recognised that this mixed use scheme makes provision to support and enhance employment opportunities as part of its proposals.
- 4.4 In overall policy terms there are no matters that warrant this Council raising an objection to the proposed development on policy grounds. Clearly, there are a number of important issues that Preston City, in determining the application, would need to address and it is suggested that they are mindful of the wider cumulative impacts of schemes within the area. It is important that the concerns regarding highway matters and infrastructure are addressed to the satisfaction of the relevant agencies, however that is part of the normal development management process. Whilst it may seem frustrating that development proposals are considered in parallel to the Local Development Framework process, that it is inevitable in the current planning system where there is a duty and responsibility to deal with applications on their merits.

## 5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – none.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – none.
- Political – it is important that the Council takes the opportunity to contribute to matters of local concern.
- Reputation – none.

## 6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

6.1 Agree that the Director of Community Services advises Preston City Council that this Council raises no policy objection to the proposal but that the matters set out in section 3 and 4 of this report are taken into consideration when determining the application.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

1 Preston City Council Planning Application 06/2012/0101 – Neighbouring Authority consultation.

For further information please ask for Graeme Thorpe, extension 4520.