

Ag 32

For official use

Ref. No. Ack'd

Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (HED DPD)



Regulation 19 (Publication) comments response Form

Before using this form to make any comments please ensure that you have read the Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document and the Guidance Notes, which can be found on Ribble Valley Borough Council's website - www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk and follow the HED DPD.

If after reading the Guidance Notes you should have any queries in completing the form please telephone 01200 425111.

This form has two parts: -

Part A - Personal Details (you need only complete one copy of Part A)

Part B - Your comment(s) (Please complete a separate Part B for each comment you wish to make.)

All completed comments forms must be received by the Council no later than 5:00pm on Friday 9th June 2017.

Please return paper copies marked 'HED DPD PUBLICATION CONSULTATION' to Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, BB7 2RA

Part A

Q1 Please can you provide the following information which will assist us in contacting you if we need to discuss any of

Name

Name of Organisation (if you are responding on behalf of an organisation)

Database Reference number (if you have one)

Address

Post Code

Email Address

Phone number

[Redacted]

BKW Developments Ltd

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Copies of all comments made in Part B of the form will be put in the public domain and are not confidential, apart from any personal information. All personal information within Parts A and B will only be used by the Council in connection with the Local Development Framework and not for any other purpose and will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The Council will summarise the comments and all representations will be made available to the Planning Inspectorate.

Part B

Please use a separate form for each individual comment.

Q2

Name / Name of Organisation (if you are responding on behalf of an organisation)

BKW Developments Ltd

Q3

To which part of the HED DPD does this comment relate?

Part of document e.g. Housing allocations, open space policy etc...

Employment Allocation Policy - EAL3

Paragraph No.

N/A

Q4

As a consequence do you consider the HED DPD is:

i) Legally compliant

Yes

No

ii) Sound *

* The considerations in relation to the HED DPD being sound are explained in the Guidance Notes

Q5

If you consider the HED DPD is unsound, is this because it is not... (please tick the appropriate box)

Justified

Consistent with national policy

Effective

Positively prepared

Q6

Please give details of why you consider that the HED DPD is not legally compliant or sound. Please be as precise as possible.

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the HED DPD, please also use this box to set out your comments. *Please continue on a separate sheet if required.*

Please see attached sheet for comments

**RIBBLE VALLEY HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DPD
REGULATION 19 PUBLICATION VERSION CONSULTATION**

REPRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF BKW DEVELOPMENTS LTD

9th June 2017

Response to Consultation Questions 6 and 7

Introduction

This representation is made following the previous comments and a 'call for sites' nomination submitted on behalf of BKW Developments Ltd on the 4th April 2016 and 7th October 2016, in support of the proposed identification of 2.2 ha of land within its ownership and control to the east of Higher College Farm, Blackburn Road, Hothersall, Longridge, as Employment Allocation Option Site 3 in the previous Housing and Economic Development DPD (HEDDPD) - Issues and Options consultation.

The Council has deleted Employment Allocation Option Site 3 in favour of the adjacent smaller site of 1.5 ha proposed under draft Policy EAL3 - Land at Higher College Farm in the publication version of the HEDDPD.

Q6 *Please give details of why you consider that the HEDDPD is not legally compliant or sound. Please be as precise as possible.*

BKW Developments Ltd acknowledges that whilst the Council has committed to an early review of its Local Plan, the HEDDPD must be in general conformity with the adopted Core Strategy and cannot revisit the strategic employment land requirement for the plan period to 2028 and its intended spatial distribution set out in Key Statement EC1.

The residual requirement to be allocated by the HEDDPD is nevertheless a minimum and not a ceiling, and it can be exceeded to provide sustainable economic growth in accordance with Key Statement EC1 and the Framework, without detriment to the spatial development strategy. This is particularly relevant at Longridge where Recommendation 3 - Future Employment Land Provision of the HEDDPD evidence base document '*Employment Land Study Refresh - Final Report*' May 2013, makes clear that; (our emphasis added)

- 11.25 *In recommending the allocation of further employment land, BE Group has had regard not just to forecast need levels but also the structure of the existing employment land portfolio. At April 2012 just two locations, made up almost 87% of the supply. Two of three main settlements, Longridge and Whalley, have no available land allocations but this is a greater issue for Longridge.*

- 11.27 *It is recommended that Ribble Valley gives priority to identifying new land allocations in Longridge, and that the possible sites at College Farm and to the rear of Sainsbury be examined for their suitability.*

BKW Developments Ltd therefore fully supports the principle of allocating much-needed new employment land in the Longridge area, and specifically at Blackburn Road, Hothersall in the vicinity of Higher College Farm.

We have fundamental concerns however regarding both a) the amount of land proposed for allocation at Longridge to meet identified needs over the residual plan period and beyond, and b) the choice of the proposed site in Policy EAL3 and its ability to meet identified needs in terms of being suitable and achievable. These concerns are set out below.

a) The amount of employment land to be allocated to meet needs in the Longridge area

Calculation of the Residual Requirement

The HEDDPD identifies a minimum residual employment land requirement of 2.4 ha to be met through the identification of new site allocations. This is considered to be an unsound figure on the basis that;

- i) The 1.1 ha of Class B1 floorspace at Carr Hall Garden Centre, Whalley Road, Wilpshire (planning application ref. 3/2014/1044) should not be included as a commitment towards meeting general employment needs, as it is occupied by the contractor appointed by United Utilities to deliver the Water Asset Management Period 6 contract in the local area. The site does not fit the spatial criteria of Key Statement EC1 as it is outside the three main settlements in Ribble Valley and is not on the A59 corridor, and it had been vacant for several years previously despite active marketing. It is only occupied by single user for a fixed-term user-specific purpose from 2015 to 2020, and will not meet general employment needs during this time or afterwards.
- ii) It is not certain that the 2.25 ha employment commitment at Standen, Clitheroe will come forward as it forms a later phase of the strategic site and is not well located to meet employment market needs, being at the centre of large scale future residential development.

Removing both of these sites from the committed supply of employment land increases the residual strategic requirement from 2.4 ha to 5.75 ha.

In addition, the proposed site allocation Policy EAL1 in the publication version HEDDPD at Sykes Holt, Mellor Brook is also a user-specific proposal that is intended to be occupied by Thwaites Brewery rather than meeting general purpose employment needs, and the allocation Policy EAL2 at Time Technology Park, Simonstone does not accord with the spatial requirements of Key Statement EC1, being outside the three main settlements and remote from the A59 corridor.

Apportioning of the Residual Requirement across the Borough

Unlike housing growth, Key Statement EC1 of the Core Strategy does not indicate how the strategic employment land requirement for the plan period is to be quantitatively apportioned across the Borough, other than by geographical reference to the three main settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley, and the A59 corridor.

Due to its geography, highway network and limited borough-wide accessibility, it is plain that meeting employment needs in one part of Ribble Valley will not meet needs in another, so that committed and planned employment development that has, or is proposed, to take place at Clitheroe, Whalley and on the A59 corridor and elsewhere within the plan period, does not benefit Longridge where local needs remain unmet.

Therefore, apportioning only an element of the residual strategic employment land requirement to Longridge, notwithstanding the inclusion of a proportion of the proposed 1.6 ha headroom, is therefore unsound as no meaningful high-quality new employment development has taken place at Longridge in the plan period to date, or for the preceding 15 years. The HEDDPD therefore proposes an under-provision of employment land for the plan period, compared to the full amount that should, and was expected to, be allocated to the Longridge area as a priority, at the time of the Core Strategy examination and its subsequent adoption.

This point has been long recognised by Longridge Town Council (see paragraph 7.73 of the HEDDPD evidence base document *Employment Land Study Refresh - Final Report*, May 2013) and among the local business community, whereby Objective 6 of the draft Longridge Neighbourhood Plan 2016 which is *'To protect and enhance local employment opportunities'*, states;

- 5.34 It is important that Longridge continues to perform an economic role by providing local employment opportunities. This will ensure the community is more balanced and does not become a dormitory, commuter town. Local employment also reduces the need to travel, and helps supports local shops and services.
- 5.35 Ribble Valley Borough Council's Core Strategy states in Key Statement EC1 that Longridge is one of three preferred locations to which employment development will be directed. The type of units delivered in the future will need to be of a range of sizes, but starter units, or nursery factories, should be an important component of any provision to enable the start of new businesses and to enable existing ones to expand.

It is reasonable to assume that as the second largest settlement in Ribble Valley below Clitheroe and the only market town serving the central western part of the Borough, Longridge was intended to accommodate at least 25% (2 ha) of the 8 ha strategic employment land requirement set out in Key Statement EC1.

Longridge has already met its strategic housing requirement for the plan period and a large proportion of new homes have been delivered, whilst at least 400 further dwellings are committed and will be delivered in the short to medium term, together with further housing development in the part of the town within Preston Borough.

The developed and committed large-scale housing sites are predominantly for solely residential use and the only mixed use sites have included a supermarket and a care home. The scale and speed of residential growth has not been matched by equivalent business and industrial development, and compounding the preceding years without growth, Longridge Town Council is rightly concerned and to caution that the town risks local economic decline and a future as an unsustainable dormitory community with high levels of outward commuting. This has a two-fold consequence as local employers will leave and new businesses will not be attracted to, or able to start-up within, Longridge because they cannot find suitable land and premises.

This concern is confirmed by local evidence on the ground. Shay Lane and other smaller industrial areas in Longridge are full and cannot be extended; there is no new employment land coming to the market and there are no remaining employment land site allocations as the Districtwide Local Plan 1998 to 2014 did not contain any, and limited premises that become available, are poor quality and constrained and not tailored to meeting needs and boosting sustainable economic growth in accordance with the Framework and Council growth agenda.

Local commercial property agents report that local employers are subsequently leaving Longridge and will continue to do so in increasing numbers, because their requirements for expansion and relocation cannot be met, and equally entrepreneurs wishing to set up new businesses cannot do so because of the lack of quality, affordable start up space. The shortage of quality sites and accommodation applies to all sectors including services, manufacturing, food production, engineering and construction, and there is a consequent need for a range of office accommodation, starter business units, light industrial / workshop and general industrial floorspace, and warehousing, storage and distribution space.

Overall, BKW Developments Ltd therefore considers there is a clear need to allocate an employment site of at least 2 ha to meet identified needs in the Longridge area over the remaining plan period. The proposed site identified in Policy EAL3 cannot accommodate this requirement and its proposed allocation is not justified, effective and positively-prepared, and is therefore not sound.

b) The Suitability and Achievability of the proposed allocation site in Policy EAL3

It is understood from discussions with the Council that the decision to delete the site within the ownership and control of BKW Developments Ltd in preference for the land identified in draft Policy EAL3 at Higher College Farm, results from firstly, the perceived need to allocate a smaller site, derived from the reduced residual requirement proposed to be allocated to serve the Longridge area, and secondly, the comparative site assessment (contained in the Sustainability Appraisal, March 2017) evidence base compiled by the Council to inform the publication version of the HEDDPD.

The negative consequences of allocating an under-sized site are twofold. Firstly, future employment needs cannot be accommodated due to the constraints of the proposed Policy EAL3 site (set out below), and secondly the lack of a larger and more strategically-beneficial site is likely to result in piecemeal development around Longridge in order to meet future needs, which is unsustainable and inefficient. Ultimately, a failure to allocate the right amount of land in the right location will result in under-investment and Longridge continuing to become an increasingly unsustainable dormitory town.

Whilst the proposed site in Policy EAL3 is available, BKW Developments Ltd considers it is unsuitable and is unlikely to be achievable, and is therefore an unsound allocation. The reasons for this are;

- i) It is fundamentally under-sized and physically constrained;
- ii) It has a close relationship to and partly lies opposite, houses within the newly-built Taylor Wimpey development at Tootle Green;
- iii) It is a narrow and poorly configured site, offering a limited frontage onto Blackburn Road and limited commercial visibility;
- iv) It is constrained by existing development to the south and offers no scope for future expansion. If it was able to expand onto adjacent land in separate ownership, this could only be to the west (notwithstanding the land owned and controlled by BKW Developments Ltd) which would be closer to residential areas and directly opposite the Taylor Wimpey development, and;
- v) Being only 1.5 ha gross area, the available net development area and shape of the site is unlikely to offer sufficient financial return for a developer, as it will not be able to accommodate the overall amount and mixed range of accommodation needed to justify the level of investment and development / infrastructure cost needed to deliver the site.

The proposed site allocation in Policy EAL3 is therefore an unsuitable and unsound solution and if put forward, will not meet Longridge needs over the plan period. Because it is not a long-term opportunity offering scope for future extension (future-proofing), another site/s will be needed leading to unplanned piecemeal development, and missing the opportunities to focus development in a single effective location; creating economies of scale and critical mass, and maximising economic benefit.

In conclusion, BKW Developments Ltd considers that the allocation of only 1.5ha of land in Longridge would fail to meet the strategic objectives and requirements of Key Statement EC1 of the Core Strategy. The HEDDPD comprehensive evidence base and local evidence compiled by Longridge Town Council and local agents, shows a clear need for investment in a suitable deliverable site to meet long-term needs as a minimum and ensure that Longridge can accommodate sustainable economic growth and does not become a dormitory town. An allocation of under-sized and/or unsuitable land in the HEDDPD will not address employment needs in the Longridge area and will compound the economic issues arising from the existing shortfall.

Q7 Please set out what change/s you consider necessary to make the HEDDPD legally compliant or sound, having regard to the tests you have identified at Q5 where this relates to soundness. You will need to say why this change will make the HEDDPD legally compliant or sound.

In order to make the HEDDPD sound, BKW Developments Ltd considers that the proposed 1.5 ha site allocation at Higher College Farm under Policy EAL3 should be deleted and replaced by the inclusion of the 2.2 ha of land within its ownership and control that was identified by the Council through its own evidence base work, as Employment Allocation Option Site 3 in the 2016 Housing and Economic Development DPD (HEDDPD) - Issues and Options consultation (see attached plan).

Employment Allocation Option Site 3 is suitable, available and achievable and is a sound site allocation proposal for the following reasons;

- a) It occupies a suitable location in the 'vicinity of Higher College Farm' which is the recommended locus identified for detailed examination in the HEDDPD evidence base document *'Employment Land Study Refresh - Final Report'* May 2013. It lies on a principal arterial route outside Longridge where it is accessible to the wider rural area and villages, and as the evidence base identifies; *'is well connected in that access back to Preston and the M6 motorway would not necessitate road traffic passing through the town'* [paragraph 10.65]. All of these factors demonstrate that the site would offer a range of benefits and an attractive proposition to employees, customers and suppliers of future business tenants;
- b) There are no better alternatives in the Longridge area. No available land has been identified to the rear of the Sainsbury supermarket and the location is not suitable in any event, being on the northern and least accessible, edge of the town. Previously identified land to the west of Longridge at Grimbaldeston Farm, Preston Road is no longer available as planning application (ref. 3/2016/0974) is resolved to be granted for the erection of 275 dwellings, and there are no large enough brownfield sites in the urban area and all of the industrial estates and commercial areas in Longridge are fully occupied and offer no scope for expansion.
- c) The site lies sufficiently beyond the urban area of Longridge so it is off-set from residential development to the west, and can be screened from adjacent properties and Hillside Specialist School. The HEDDPD Sustainability Appraisal, March 2017 prepared by Arcadis also confirms that Employment Allocation Option Site 3 performs better than the proposed Policy EAL3 allocation site. This is described in the SA Site Option Matrices at Appendix C as having the *'potential to have a moderate effect on townscape character or views'*, whereas the SA Rejected Alternative Site Matrices at Appendix E confirm that the BKW Developments Ltd land will have a *'neutral effect on townscape character'*.
- d) The site contains no physical features or technical constraints which would prohibit development and it is not located within a sensitive landscape or ecologically important area.

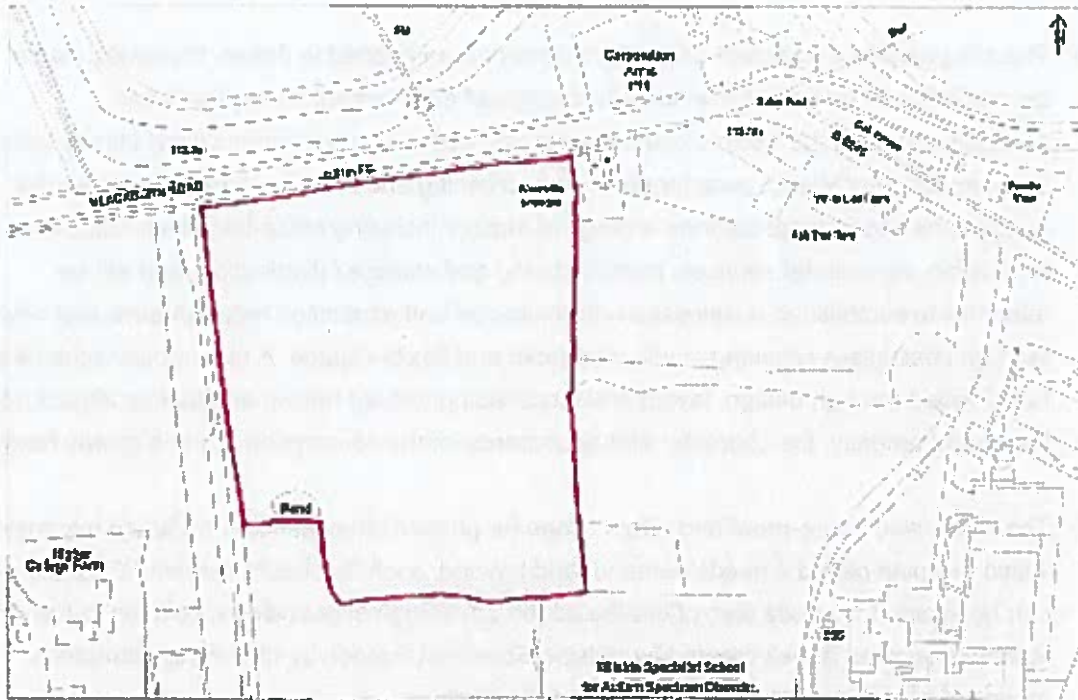
The suitability and deliverability of the site is also demonstrated by the outline planning application and illustrative proposals informed by market testing, submitted by BKW Developments Ltd which is awaiting determination.

- e) The site provides a sufficient gross development area needed to deliver financially viable development, in terms of the amount and range of employment floorspace it can accommodate and the sectors of the market and occupier requirements it will attract, whilst also providing sufficient space for perimeter screening and infrastructure. It would enable needs to be accommodated from a range of sectors including office-based services, food production, agricultural services, manufacturing and storage / distribution, and will be attractive to established businesses with relocation and expansion requirements, and new, start-up businesses requiring small, affordable and flexible space. A high-quality scheme can be achieved through design, layout and landscaping without having an adverse impact on residential amenity, the character and appearance of the countryside or the highway network.
- f) The site is also future-proof and offers scope for phased development and future expansion within this plan period if needs demand, and beyond, such that future piecemeal development can be avoided. The site also offers the added advantage of providing a solution to the long-standing highway issues created by Hillside Specialist School, by offering an alternative means of access to the School for pupil minibus taxis.

In conclusion, BKW Developments Ltd considers that the land it owns and controls forming the previously-identified Employment Allocation Option Site 3, offers the only available, suitable and achievable site allocation option to meet existing and future employment needs arising in the Longridge area over the residual plan period.

In order to meet the residual strategic requirement in accordance with the Core Strategy and to deliver sustainable economic growth in accordance with the Framework, the site should represent the Council's Preferred Option to make the HEDDPD sound, and replace the proposed site in Policy EAL3 which should be deleted.

Proposed Employment Allocation Option Site 3- Land at Higher College Farm, Longridge



The map is intended to show the location of the site in relation to the surrounding area. It is not intended to show the exact boundaries of the site. The map is based on the best available information and is subject to change. The map is for information only and should not be used for any other purpose. The map is the property of the Council and should not be reproduced without the Council's permission.

This 2.2ha site was identified through evidence base work.

The residual economic development/employment land requirement for the remainder of the plan period within the borough is 2.41ha.

Q7 Please set out what change(s) you consider necessary to make the HED DPD legally compliant or sound, having regard to the test you have identified at Q5 above where this relates to soundness.

You will need to say why this change will make the HED DPD legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be precise as possible. *Please continue on a separate sheet if required.*

Please see attached sheet for comments

Please note: your comment should cover succinctly all the information, evidence, and supporting information necessary to support/justify the comment and the suggested change, as there will not normally be another opportunity to make further comments based on the original comment made at the publication stage.

After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination in the forthcoming Examination in Public. Please note also that the Inspector is not obliged to consider any previous comments that have been made in respect of the HED DPD. You are urged, therefore, to re-submit on this form any previously submitted comments that, in your view, remain valid and that you wish the Inspector to consider.

Q8 If your representation is seeking change, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

No, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

Yes, I do wish to participate at the oral examination

Q9 If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary. *(Please note that the Inspector will determine who participates.) Please continue on a separate sheet if required.*

The representations raise matters and evidence that BKW Developments Ltd wishes to present to the Inspector.

Q10 If you wish to be kept informed as the HED DPD progresses through to adoption, please indicate which of the following stages you wish to be informed of by ticking the box(es) below.

Submission of the HED DPD to the Secretary of State for independent Examination

The publication of the Inspector's report following the Examination

The formal adoption of the HED DPD

Q11 If you have any other comments to make on the HED DPD that have not been covered elsewhere, please use the box below. *Please continue on a separate sheet if required.*

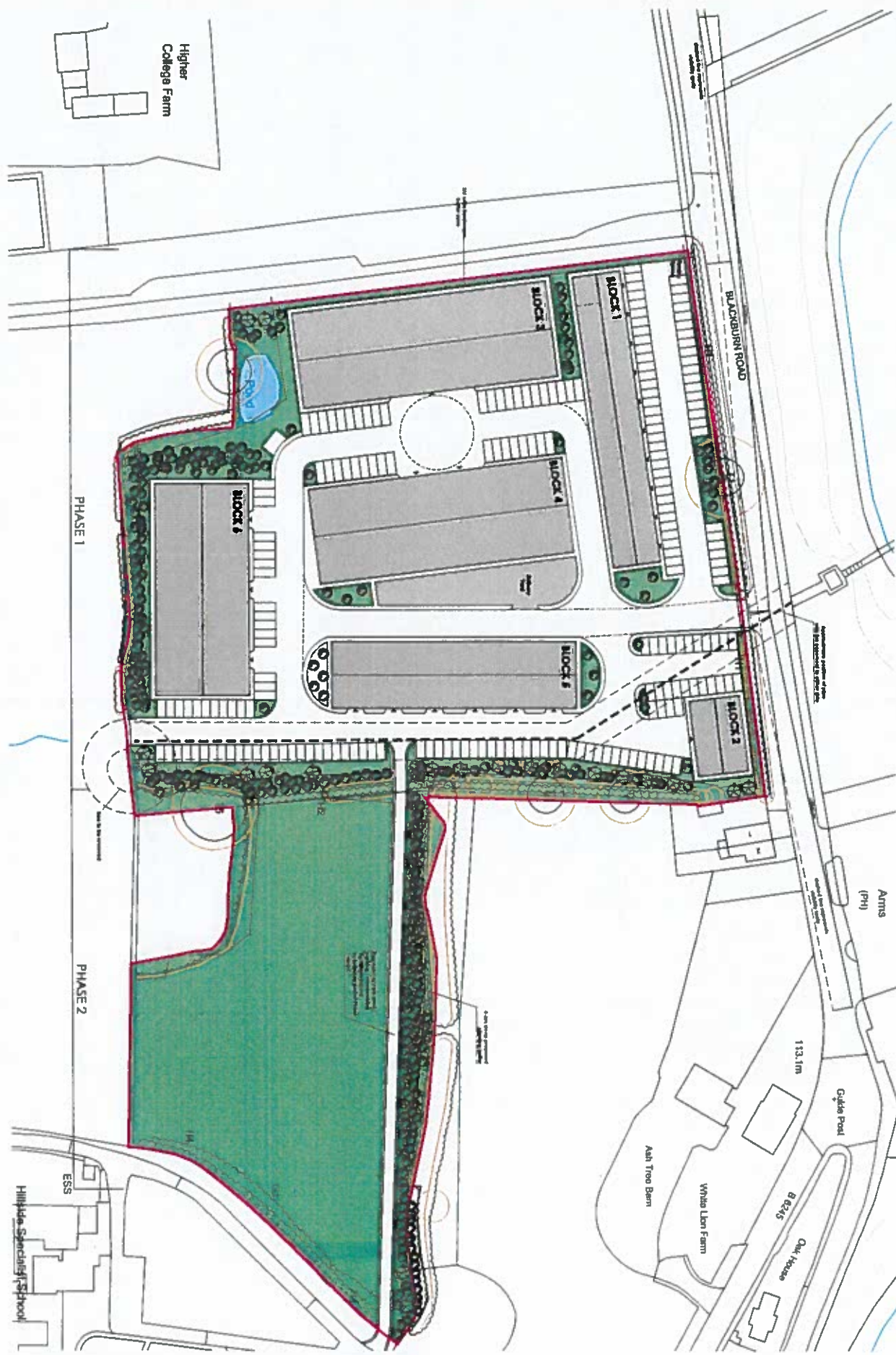
Q12 Date of completion: 09 / 06 / 2017

Q13 Signature

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this comments form, your comments are very much appreciated.

If after reading the Guidance Notes you should have any queries in completing this form please telephone 01200 425111

NR



PROPOSED SITE PLAN
SCALE 1:500

GENERAL NOTES:

- 1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN METERS UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.
- 2. THE CLIENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES.
- 3. THIS PLAN IS BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT AND IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF ACCURACY.
- 4. THE DESIGNER ACCEPTS NO LIABILITY FOR ANY DAMAGE OR LOSS ARISING FROM THE USE OF THIS PLAN.

- PHASE 1:** BLOCK 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
- PHASE 2:** (To be confirmed)

- LANDSCAPING AREA
- AREA OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
- EXISTING ROADWAY
- PROPOSED ROAD
- NEW PROPOSED DRIVE

NO.	REVISIONS	DATE	BY
1	ISSUE FOR COMMENT	07.01.2017	SPAC

5220-P01 B

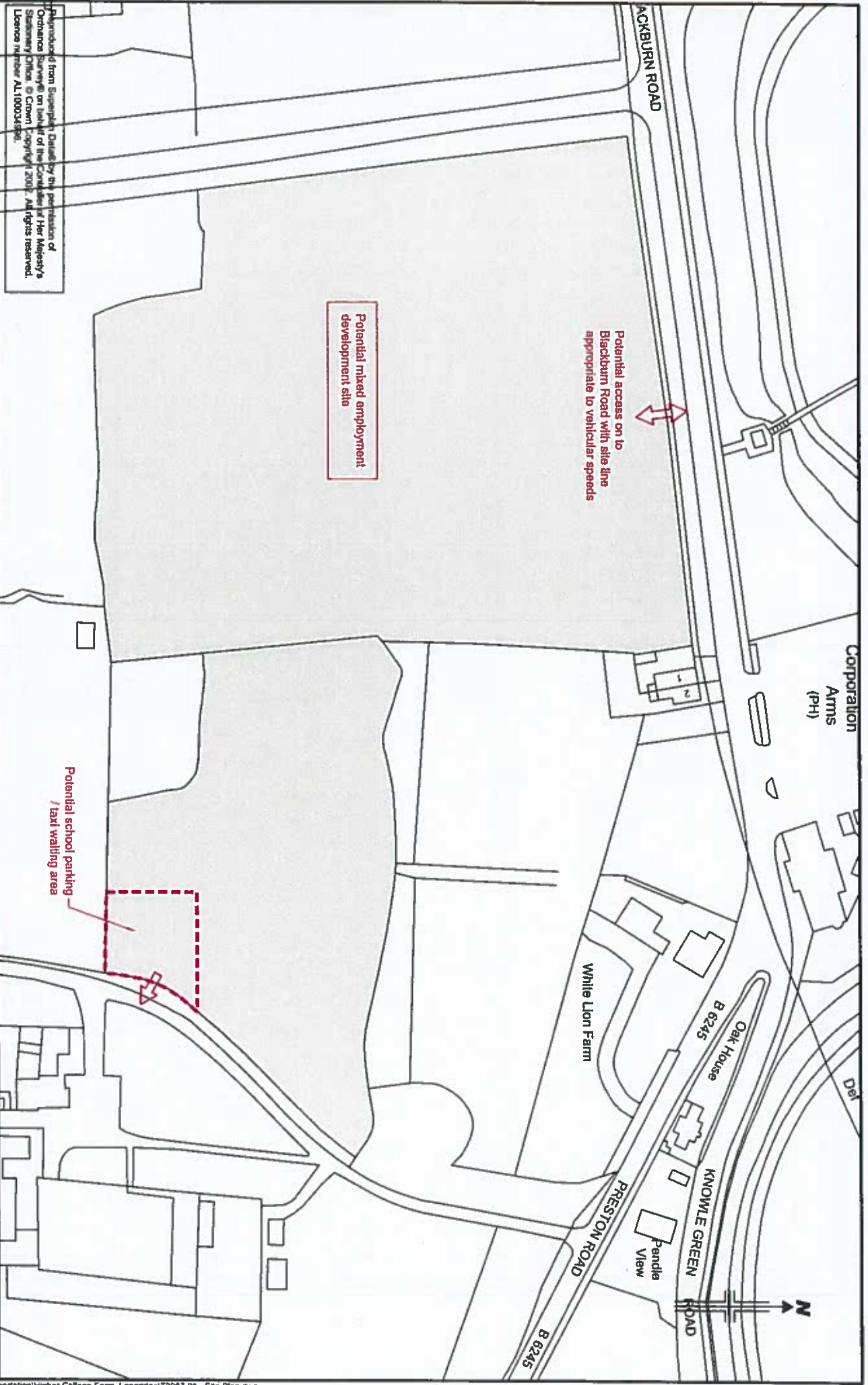
spa

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

10001 HILLTOP DRIVE, SUITE 101, RICHMOND, BC V6X 1E9

TEL: 604-271-1111

WWW.SPACANADA.COM



Potential mixed employment development site

Potential access on to Blackburn Road with site line appropriate to vehicular speeds

Potential school parking / taxi waiting area

Produced from Superhigh Data by the provision of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 2002. All rights reserved. Licence Number AL1000345891.

www.psa-design.co.uk
 mail@psadesign.co.uk

PSA
 DESIGN

enabling your ambitions
 CIVIL, STRUCTURAL, GEOTECHNICAL, TRANSPORT

PSA Design
 The Old Bank House
 6 Berry Lane, Longridge
 Preston, PR3 3JA
 Tel: 01772 786066
 Fax: 01772 786265

Client	Mr B Walker
Job	Land East of Higher College Farm
Title	Site Plan

Drawn	GS
Check	
Appr.	

Date	4 April 2016
Scale	1:1000 @ A3

Drawg No.	T2267/01
Rev.	

