

APPLICATION REPORT – 21/01475/FULMAJ

Validation Date: 23 December 2021

Ward: Euxton

Type of Application: Major Full Planning

Proposal: Erection of 108no. dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated access, landscaping, parking and other works following demolition of existing building.

Location: DXC Technology Euxton House Euxton Lane Euxton Chorley PR7 6FE

Case Officer: Jonathan Noad

Applicant: Bellway Homes Limited (Manchester Division)

Agent: Miss Kerry Walker, Pegasus Group

Consultation expiry: 24 February 2022

Decision due by: 15 July 2022

RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that planning permission is refused for the following reasons:
 - i. The proposed development would result in an unacceptable reduction in the type and quantity of employment land supply contrary to policy 10 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.
 - ii. The application site is proposed in isolation from residential development patterns and associated amenities resulting in an unsustainable form of development. It would fail to provide connectivity with supporting amenities, which means that the development does not integrate or function well with the surrounding area. The proposal does not, therefore, secure a high-quality inclusive design. The proposal is, therefore, contrary to policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

SITE DESCRIPTION

2. The application site is located within the settlement area at Euxton and falls within the Buckshaw Village Strategic Site boundary. The site measures 3.02 hectares in area and is most notably occupied by the two storey 'DXC Technology' office building, surface car parks, areas of grass sward and some landscaping. There are two mature oak trees to the western side of the site, both of which are protected by tree preservation orders. It is noted that the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 policies map identifies part of the site as being a sport and recreational facility in the Green Belt, however, the site has never been in use for this purpose and is not in the Green Belt. These designations are not identified on the web based mapping system and are considered to be cartographic errors.
3. The application site is positioned between the Manchester to Preston railway line with Buckshaw Parkway railway station to the north and Euxton Lane to the south. To the east is a football training ground and associated facilities, whilst to the west are offices and a Runshaw College site. The site has an open aspect with Euxton Lane being a particularly wide carriageway in this location, and with which the site has a frontage, from which it is

highly prominent. The area comprises a mixture of uses including business, leisure and education, with a range of modern buildings and more functional structures. There is open land on the opposite side of Euxton Lane with some sporadic buildings including a dwelling and a children's nursery. This results in a rather mixed character, although it is noted that there is existing residential development further to the east and west.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4. This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing building on site and the erection of 108 no. dwellings (Use Class C3). The proposal comprises both market and affordable dwellings, over a range of house types in a traditional design style. Car parking spaces are predominantly provided within the plot or through integral garages. Some properties, which do not have integral garages, are accompanied by detached, single garages. The layout of the proposed development includes dwellings facing Euxton Lane and around internal estate roads, whilst a public open space with play area would be included to the western end of the site. Vehicular access would be taken from Euxton Lane.
5. It is noted that the proposal has been reduced from 118 dwellings to 108 dwellings through a process of negotiation to secure public open space and children's play facilities on site. Other amendments have been made to the layout and highway access.

REPRESENTATIONS

6. Representations in objection have been received from 1 no. individual raising the following issues:
 - Impact on highway safety.
 - Noise generated by increased traffic movements.
 - Poor road surface condition of existing carriageways.

7. CONSULTATIONS

8. Euxton Parish Council: Have made the following comments:

The Central Lancashire Strategic sites and locations assessment - revised 2011 report indicated that this site was a strategic site. Chorley Borough Council was a stakeholder of this report. The plan relating to this application indicates that the area is a strategic site.

3.10 of the report assesses the site to consider the true representation of the site potential. It suggests that the actual facilities provided should be evaluated.

4.2iii Originally identified by NW regional investment as a site to contribute very significantly to growth through housing and employment. The housing detailed has largely been provided in the majority of the Euxton area of Buckshaw Village.

4.2iv the take-up of employment premises stalled during the recession but is now picking up (however this was written more than 10 years ago and has not considered the recent Covid related slow-down). Proposing the site as a strategic resource would reassure investors. Even with backing Buckshaw Village will take many years to complete taking it into 2016 - 2021 mid phase of the core strategy. With the recent Covid difficulties this has now been delayed to the point we are at now.

Strategic Objective 10. To ensure there is a sufficient range of locations for employment purposes. Patently the area of proposed housing is in an area that has been used for employment purposes since 1938. Changing the use to housing further dilutes the strategic objectives of housing/employment balance. This follows recent losses of workplaces to housing in Euxton and the likely increase in travel for work which is prone to contribute to the climate-change challenge. Chorley Local Plan identifies Euxton as a Key Service Centre (EP1.5) and Urban Local Service Centre (2.9) and Urban Local Service Centre (2.9) and identifies Employment Land Supply (6.7). Changing the allocation of this area of land from

employment diminishes the employment available in the Key Service Centre area and Urban Local Service Centre.

9. Regulatory Services - Environmental Health: Have no objection.
10. Lancashire County Council Archaeology Service: Have no objection subject to condition.
11. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit: Have no objection.
12. Growth Lancashire: Have no objection.
13. Waste & Contaminated Land: Have no objection subject to condition.
14. Lancashire County Council Highway Services: Have no objection subject to conditions and travel plan contribution.
15. Lead Local Flood Authority: Have no objection subject to conditions.
16. Network Rail: Have provided general advice and an objection in relation to a wish to secure a 3m easement with the operational railway land.
17. United Utilities: Have no objection subject to conditions.
18. Environment Agency: Have no objection subject to condition.
19. Lancashire County Council Education: Have commented that an education contribution is not required at this stage in regards to this development.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

20. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that if regard is to be had to the development plan for any determination then that determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
21. The Development Plan comprises the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012) and the adopted Chorley Local Plan 2012- 2026.
22. The proposal is located within the settlement of Euxton as covered by Local Plan Policy V2 where there is a presumption in favour of appropriate sustainable development, subject to material planning considerations and the other Policies and Proposals within this Plan.
23. The Central Lancashire Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012 and covers the three neighbouring authorities of Chorley, South Ribble and Preston. The three authorities are a single Housing Market Area (HMA).
24. Core Strategy Policy 1 sets out the locations for growth and investment across Central Lancashire. The site is within the Buckshaw Village Strategic Site (Policy 1(ciii) – mixed use) where growth and investment will be concentrated in to help meet local housing and employment needs. The proposed development of 108no. dwellings clearly accords with this element of the development plan strategy for the area.
25. Core Strategy Policy 4 sets out the minimum housing requirements for the plan area and is assessed later within this report.
26. Core Strategy Policy 10 seeks to protect all existing employment premises and sites last used for employment for employment use. There will be a presumption that 'Best Urban' and 'Good Urban' sites will be retained for B use class employment use.

27. The application site is in employment use and has an existing office building on it. It forms part of a corridor of employment uses on Euxton Lane, with the Chorley Business and Technology Centre located to the west beyond Runshaw College. Immediately to the west of the site is a single storey business unit and beyond this a three storey office completed in 2019/20. To the east, on Euxton Lane, beyond the football training and golf course, is a new employment development, Strawberry Meadows (Alker Lane) comprising 6 units expected completion in 2022, and also the recently completed Strawberry Fields Digital Hub further east that provides both employment uses and housing. The 2017 Central Lancashire Employment Study identifies the Euxton Lane corridor as being home to a diverse group of high value occupiers. To the north of the site, beyond the railway, are employment units accessed from Buckshaw Avenue. The Study states that stakeholders highlighted the Euxton Lane corridor (along with Buckshaw Village) as a focus of demand for both office and industrial uses. As such the site is of value as a location for employment development.
28. Policy 10: Employment Premises and Sites states that all existing premises and sites last used for employment will be protected for employment use. Consideration will only be given to alternative uses where an applicant has clearly demonstrated that the criteria in the policy have been met in full, including proposals for change of use. These criteria are as follows:
- a) *there would not be an unacceptable reduction of the type, quality or quantity of employment land supply;*
 - b) *the provision and need for the proposed use;*
 - c) *the relative suitability of the site for employment and for the alternative use;*
 - d) *the location of the site and its relationship to other uses;*
 - e) *whether the ability to accommodate smaller scale requirements would be compromised;*
 - f) *there would be a net improvement in amenity.*
- Any proposals for housing use on all employment sites/premises will need to accommodate criteria a) – f) and also be subject to :*
- g) *Convincing evidence of land of demand through a rigorous and active 12 month marketing period for employment re-use and employment redevelopment;*
 - h) *An assessment of the viability of employment development including employment re-use and employment redevelopment.*
29. The adopted SPD 'Controlling Re-Use of Employment Premises' expands on the policy criteria and provides guidance on information that needs to be submitted in relation to these criteria. The SPD emphasises the Council's starting point that employment sites should be retained unless an applicant wishing to change the use can demonstrate that the criteria in Policy 10 have been addressed. The proposed is assessed against these criteria below.
- a) *there would not be an unacceptable reduction of the type, quality or quantity of employment land supply;*
30. The range of employment sites allocated in the Local Plan include a variety of sites with the aim of providing choice and to meet a range of needs and uses of different types of employer. At 1 April 2022, 71.79 hectares of employment land was available in the borough for employment uses. This includes 65.18ha of Local Plan allocations remaining (out of a total of 88.74ha allocated in the Local Plan comprising 15 employment sites), 15.14ha of which has planning permission for employment use. In addition, 6.61 hectares of non-allocated land has planning permission for employment development.
31. At Buckshaw Village there are three areas of land for employment available (3.26ha at the Revolution, 2.3ha on Group 1 and 2.04ha on the Southern Commercial site). Within Chorley Town as a whole there remains 7 allocated sites available for employment use amounting to 41.38ha (gross).
32. A Central Lancashire Employment Land Study was prepared in 2017 by BE Group and updated in February 2022. The update identified a need of 76.34ha of employment land to 2038 in Chorley Borough, with a realistic supply of 56.28ha. This results in an undersupply of 20.06ha. The Study states that Chorley needs to protect its existing supply of employment land and identify another 20.06ha of new employment land to 2038 to meet the undersupply.

It identifies that of the 20.06ha of employment land needed, there is an anticipated need of 7.62ha for office uses.

33. In August 2022, a Chorley Market Update was prepared by BE Group which provides an updated picture of need and demand for employment land and premises in the borough. It builds upon the Central Lancashire Employment Land Study 2022 and updates the research particularly in relation to the office market. The key findings relating to the office market in Chorley are:
- National and regional office markets are recovering from the Covid-19 Pandemic and large flexible offices are now popular.
 - Based on transactions the most active locations in the borough are Ackhurst Business Park, Railway House and Euxton Lane.
 - There has been a significant reduction in the number of offices being marketed. In June 2021 55 offices were marketed but this reduced to 36 in July 2022.
 - Based on the 36 offices being marketed in July 2022, Chorley only has 18-21 months of available premises to meet its needs.
 - Occupancy rates of offices are identified as 94.3% by premises number and 93.8% by floorspace. This suggests that the borough has a reasonably healthy market for offices, with enough premises to meet needs with no oversupply, but little scope to reduce stock.
 - There is enough supply to meet demand in the short term however the lack of new development planned will increasingly lead to supply shortages.
34. The applicant has assessed the loss of 3.02 hectares (gross) of 'B' use class employment land in respect of the Core Strategy/Chorley Local Plan requirements (to 2026): Table 1/Policy EP1 /Chorley Employment Monitoring Report and finds the reduction to be less than 5% than what is available.
35. It is noted that permission was granted for 5 offices on EP1.13 Land at Barnes Wallis Way, Wallis Way, Buckshaw Village. The first of these offices is now complete, with work on the remaining 4 offices not started as of April 2022. These are approximately 100m north of the application site although separated by the railway and accessed from Ordnance Road.

b) the provision and need for the proposed use;

36. The SPD confirms that in order to demonstrate the need for a housing development, applicants will need to present evidence on existing housing land supply and brownfield capacity. This matter is covered in greater detail below, however, there is an undersupply of housing, and in particular social housing, across the Borough. As a result there is an identified need for housing and social housing.

c) the relative suitability of the site for employment and for the alternative use;

37. The site has an existing employment use and forms part of the Euxton Lane corridor, which comprises a mixture of uses in this location including the nearby Runshaw College. The site is within 1 mile of the A49 and A6, local roads are wide and access is very good as are pedestrian and cycle access, whilst there is also good access to Buckshaw Village railway station. The site is bound by a major highway to the south and railway to the north, whilst there are commercial uses to the west and leisure uses to the east. As a result the site is well suited to employment use being divorced from residential settlements. As such the site provides a more logical and suitable location from employment than it does for residential use.

d) the location of the site and its relationship to other uses;

38. The site is in use for offices and has a low impact relative to the surrounding uses and does not present any harmful effects. It is noted that there are no residential developments bounding the site with a railway to the north, highway to the south, football training ground to the east and offices to the west. A residential development could exist alongside these surrounding uses and would not be at risk of any particular amenity issues that would be

uncommon to a residential development. However, there would be a lack of integration with established communities and supporting amenities.

e) whether the ability to accommodate smaller scale requirements would be compromised;

39. The site forms part of a corridor of employment uses along Euxton Lane and its existing use for employment is considered to fit well with this corridor.

f) there would be a net improvement in amenity.

40. The amenity impacts of the development would be neutral given the absence of any existing harms, and the nature and design of the proposed development.

g) Convincing evidence of lack of demand through a rigorous and active 12 month marketing period for employment re-use and employment redevelopment;

41. The applicant has not provided evidence of marketing for a 12 month period, stating that Policy 10 is out of date because it was influenced by NW RSS and that there is inconsistency between the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the adopted plan as the Framework has a greater flexibility.

42. The Central Lancashire Employment Land Study Update 2022 sought stakeholder views, who identified the Euxton Lane corridor as a focus of demand for both office and industrial uses.

43. The applicant has provided a review of demand for office space in the locality, suggesting that such demand is low given nearby unoccupied office space. The applicant provides an assessment of the existing building, which finds it does not meet modern requirements and cannot be viably refurbished, which they consider would hinder its continued use as offices.

h): an assessment of the viability of employment development including employment re-use and employment redevelopment

44. A Viability Report prepared by TCP and contained as an appendix to Pegasus' Employment Land Review has been submitted in support of the application. This considers that the existing building and site cannot be viably refurbished to meet modern day requirements for office space and the site would not be viable for an office-based redevelopment scheme.

45. The report concludes the key reasons for this are as follows:

- i. The level of demand in the local market is such that schemes like Buckshaw Parkway that offer both standing new office space and future development options has not progressed
- ii. Vacant floorspace in the wider area is a further indicator of generally weak demand
- iii. The abnormal development costs weigh down on the ability to deliver a scheme even should stronger demand exist
- iv. As a consequence of generally weak demand and the identified costs of delivery, an assessment of viability has shown that a typical office scheme would not be brought forward owing to viability challenges (echoing the experience of Buckshaw Parkway).

46. The Council has not been able to verify the validity of these claims.

47. In overall conclusion, it is considered that the proposal has failed to demonstrate compliance with policy 10 of the Core Strategy because a lack of demand through a rigorous and active 12 month marketing period for employment re-use and employment redevelopment has not been demonstrated. It is also considered that the location of this site in relation to other employment uses on Euxton Lane should be valued as part of an employment hub along this road. Furthermore, the latest evidence available to the Council demonstrates that the borough has a reasonably healthy market for offices, with enough premises to meet present needs but with no oversupply and, therefore, little scope to reduce stock. This indicates that

there is enough supply to meet demand in the short term, however, the lack of new development planned will increasingly lead to supply shortages. As a result, any further loss of office and employment land supply would exacerbate a latent under supply thereby constraining economic growth within the borough. In addition to this the site is not well suited to residential development.

Other material considerations

48. The Framework is a key material consideration. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives). There are three objectives to sustainable development set out at paragraph 8 and it is fundamental that development strikes the correct balance between:
1. Environmental - the protection of our natural, built and historic environment
 2. Economic - the contribution to building a strong and competitive economy
 3. Social - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities
49. Paragraph 10 of the Framework states that; so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).
50. Paragraph 11 of the Framework states for decision-taking this means:
- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. 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.
51. The Footnote (6) to paragraph 11 sets out examples of the type of policies that may indicate development should be refused. Footnote 7 makes clear that the tilted presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply where a Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
52. Paragraph 59 of the Framework confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.
53. Paragraph 60 of the Framework reinforces that requirements represent the minimum number of homes needed.
54. Paragraph 73 of the Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to maintain a supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. Footnote 37 states in circumstances where strategic policies are more than five years old, five year housing land supply should be calculated against Local Housing Need calculated using the Government standard methodology, unless those strategic policies have been reviewed and found not to need updating.

Housing land supply

55. At 1st April 2022 there was a total supply of 1,890 (net) deliverable dwellings which is a 3.3 year deliverable housing supply over the period 2022 – 2027 based on the annual housing requirement of 569 dwellings which includes a 5% buffer.

56. Recent appeal decisions concluded that it is appropriate to calculate the housing requirement against local housing need using the standard method, as such the Council can no longer demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land meaning that the tilted balance, and presumption in favour of sustainable development is, therefore, engaged under paragraph 11(d) of the Framework.
57. The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) sets out the housing requirement to be consulted on in the Central Lancashire Local Plan and is informed by the Central Lancashire Housing Need Assessment. It has been signed by the portfolio holders responsible for the Local Plan across the three Councils for Chorley, Preston and South Ribble following endorsement by the Joint Advisory Committee on 25th July 2022.
58. Chorley Council adopted the SoCG as a material consideration for use in decision making at the General Purposed Committee on 7th September 2022. The weight to be attached to the SOCG in making decisions on planning proposals is for the decision maker to consider.
59. The SoCG sets out a housing requirement of 334 for Chorley for the first five year period of the Local Plan (2023-2028). The housing supply against this requirement is 5.4 years.
60. Chorley Council is working with Preston and South Ribble Councils to produce a Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP). Once adopted, this will replace the existing joint Core Strategy and Chorley Local Plan. The CLLP is at an early stage of preparation and consultation on Issues and Options closed in February 2020.
61. This site has not been submitted to date as part of the Call for Sites.
62. As set out above, the existing Core Strategy Policy 1: Locating Growth sets out the locations where growth and investment will be concentrated across Central Lancashire. The emerging CLLP will look at the distribution of new homes and the CLLP will be informed by an evidence base including a Housing Need and Demand Study, the results of which will also help to inform the future distribution of housing across the Plan area.
63. Three call for sites exercises have been completed to date for the Central Lancashire Local Plan. The results from Call for sites 1 and 2 were consulted on as part of the Issues and Options Consultation which ran between November 2019 and Feb 2020, during this time, a further window was opened for addition site suggestions (Call for sites 3).
64. Work to assess the sites commenced in February 2021 following completion of Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). This was undertaken in line with Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) methodology.
65. Officers in Chorley, South Ribble and Preston Councils finished their initial assessment of the sites in January 2021, and their findings were collated by the Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP) Team into the SHELAA database. This work will also include undertaking Integrated Assessment (IA) and Habitats Regulation assessment (HRA) and viability assessment of the sites, and will bring in findings of the SFRA as well as consultation responses on the specific sites from Statutory Consultees and local residents.
66. The direction of growth and development of a spatial strategy for the area is also in early development, with the Councils starting to look at the level of growth likely to be needed over the plan period and how the plan should look to direct this. There is still work to be done on this, including testing the emerging options in terms of transport and other infrastructure needs as they develop.
67. It is important to note that until all these stages of work have been completed, no decision on sites to be taken forward through the CLLP can be made.

Summary - the tilted balance

68. Paragraph 11 d (ii) of The Framework essentially comes into play whereby the most important policies for determining an application are out of date, then planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
69. Policies 4 and 10 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy are the most important policies for determining the planning application.
70. At 1 April 2022 there was a total supply of 1,890 (net) deliverable dwellings, which is a 3.3 year deliverable housing supply over the period 2022 – 2027 based on the annual housing requirement of 569 dwellings which includes a 5% buffer. Chorley does not have a five-year deliverable supply of housing plus 5% buffer and the shortfall is significant. Significant weight should therefore be attached to the delivery of housing provided by this proposal and 30% of which would be affordable housing.
71. In light of the above, Policy 4 of the Core Strategy is out of date and the tilted balance is, therefore, engaged.
72. The High Court decision [Gladman Developments Limited v Sec of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Corby Borough Council and Uttlesford District Council [2021 EWCA Civ 104] concerned the application of para 11d of the Framework and the tilted balance. In particular, the effect of footnote 7 in this case, where there was not a five year housing land supply, was simply to trigger paragraph 11(d) and that it did not necessarily render all policies out of date. It was noted that where 11(d) is triggered due to the housing land supply position it is for the decision maker to decide how much weight should be given to the policies of the development plan including the most important policies and involve consideration whether or not the policies are in substance out of date and if so for what reasons.
73. Policy 10 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect land that was last use for employment purposes, and for the reasons set out above the proposal is considered contrary to this policy.
74. It must, therefore, be considered whether or not policy 10 should also be considered out of date. The central question in determining whether or not Policy 10 is out of date is whether or not it is consistent with up to date national policy contained in the Framework.
75. As set out above the application site is unallocated within the development plan. Paragraph 123 of the Framework is directed at such sites and includes the following;
“Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to:
- i. use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework...”*
76. In this instance the site is located along the Euxton Lane corridor (along with Buckshaw Village) and is a focus of high demand for both office and industrial uses. There is a clear evidence of need for employment land and offices in Chorley and the location of the application site is within a key location. As such any redevelopment of this site for residential development would clearly undermine a key economic site and would lead to a building shortage of office supply in the borough harming economic growth.

77. On this basis the failure to comply with policy 10 should attract significant weight in the determination of the planning application and must be given due consideration in the planning balance.

Technical matters

Design and impact on the character of the area

78. The proposed development would be located to the east of a low level commercial building with a football training facility to the east of the application site comprising functional buildings that are largely screened from view. There is a railway line to the north with industrial warehouse sheds beyond and to the south is Euxton Lane, beyond which there is open land and sporadic buildings of traditional design style. The site has an open aspect other than the existing office building, which is a two storey block of no particular architectural merit and does not reflect any particular local vernacular. Of particular note are two mature oak trees at the western end of the site.
79. The proposed housing comprises mainly detached dwellings with some semi-detached and mews properties and a single apartment building. There would be a range of house types across the application site of a simple traditional design consisting of a red brick finish and grey tile roofing. This would provide a consistency across the site, whilst allowing for variety and difference in the detailing. The access would link into the main internal estate spine road, which would split into two cul-de-sacs. A dwelling would form the focal point at the end of the main access road, whilst the scheme has been amended in order to provide an active frontage of dwellings facing onto Euxton Lane. This would provide a level of interface with Euxton Lane that is currently lacking at the site and would result in an improved relationship between the site and the main highway.
80. A public open space would be provided at the western end of the site between the office building at Classic House and Euxton Lane. This would include a children's play area and landscaping, which would provide a soft edge to the corner of the site with the existing access from Euxton Lane. The open aspect of the site would help to allow for natural surveillance from the highway and an adjacent dwelling. The planting of trees and retention of the protected oak trees would help to generate an attractive aspect when viewed from Euxton Lane.
81. Parking would be provided by a mix of private driveways, garages in unobtrusive positions and shared parking courts to the front and sides of the dwellings. All units would be provided with two parking spaces. Each dwelling would have an enclosed rear garden, whilst the frontages would be open plan contributing to an open and uncluttered street scene. The density of the development would be relatively low, whilst striking a balance with making an efficient use of the land.
82. In relation to the proposed boundary treatment there would be a knee rail fence along the frontage of the site, which is an appropriately unobtrusive delineation of the site boundary in this location. There would be taller close boarded fencing to the rear of properties and in certain positions to provide security and acoustic protection. The boundary with the railway land to the north is an existing high level brick wall, which is to be retained with a 1m access strip between this and the rear boundary fencing to plots 37 to 67. This is considered to provide an appropriate degree of security and acoustic protection.
83. Overall, the layout and design of the proposed housing and landscaping would result in an appropriate form of development and it is, therefore, considered that the proposed development complies with policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 in respect of design considerations.
84. Notwithstanding the acceptability of the design credentials of the proposed development such that there would be no undue impact on the character of the area, the location of the site is not well suited to a residential development in that it is divorced from other residential settlements and suffers from a lack of connectivity with any established communities or amenities. The railway line to the north of the site imposes an impenetrable barrier between

the site and Buckshaw Village, where local amenities are located. Accessing services on foot or by cycling would require a circuitous trip via a road bridge to the west. As a result, the proposed residential development would be isolated and not well linked to surrounding movement patterns contrary to policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impact on neighbour amenity

85. The application site is somewhat isolated from residential development with the nearest residences on the opposite side of Euxton Lane at Stansfield House Farm and Billinge House being over 35m from the site. As such there would be no adverse impact on the amenity of any existing occupiers by virtue of the degree of separation.
86. In terms of the interface distances between the proposed properties themselves, these are considered to be acceptable in relation to the Council's guidelines being in general conformity. The proposal is, therefore, considered acceptable in terms of the relationship with the existing surrounding properties and between the proposed dwellings.
87. A noise assessment has been carried out and submitted in support of the application, which includes measurements of noise from road traffic on Euxton Lane and from trains on the railway line to the north of the proposed development. These measurements have then been used with noise modelling software to predict noise levels across the proposed development site.
88. The results of this modelling (presented in Appendix B of the report) are compared against noise design targets for habitable rooms and gardens set out in British Standard document BS8233 (Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings) and from this, external barrier heights and locations and glazing and ventilation requirements for individual properties have been determined.
89. The conclusions of the report are that internal target noise levels can be achieved, through the glazing and ventilation specifications outlined in the report and that externally the majority of plots (although not all) can achieve the external noise design targets based on the barrier fencing locations and specifications outlined in the report.
90. This has been examined and considered by the Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) who accepts the findings of the report and proposed mitigation measures and raises no objection to the application. An air quality assessment and vibration assessment have also been submitted and considered by the EHO, who accepts the findings of these reports.
91. Overall, therefore the proposed housing would have no adverse impact on the amenity of any existing or future residential occupiers.

Highway safety

92. Lancashire County Council (LCC) as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) is responsible for providing and maintaining a safe and reliable highway network. With this in mind, the present and proposed highway systems have been considered by them and areas of concern that potentially could cause problems for the public, cyclists, public transport, motorists and other vehicles in and around the area have been identified.
93. LCC embraces appropriate development within Lancashire in line with local and national policies / frameworks and that which is emerging. This involves working closely with planning authorities, in this case officers of Chorley Council, developers and their representatives and also with National Highways. This approach supports the delivery of high quality, sustainable development and an appropriate scale of development that can be accommodated both locally and strategically.
94. The development proposal is for 108 dwellings with access from Euxton Lane. This is a reduction of 10 dwellings from the original submission. A Transport Assessment (TA) has been provided in support of the application.

95. The existing use of the site is offices, i.e., Class E (formerly B1) with gross floor area (gfa) of 5327m². Using TRICs based trip rates as per the output in appendix 1 of the TA, the trip generated by the existing site was established as 102, 2-way trips in the AM peak and 95, 2-way trips in the PM peak. The summary of the trip generated by the existing site is shown on Table 4.1 (para. 4.2.4) of the TA.
96. The proposal was initially for 118 dwellings, therefore using LCC preferred trip rates of 0.140 (AM Peak) (Arrival) and 0.445 (AM Peak) (Departure); and 0.437 (PM Peak) (Arrival) and 0.226 (PM Peak) (Departure), it was predicted that the proposed development would generate 70, 2-way trips in the AM peak and 79, 2-way trips in the PM peak. This is shown in Table 4.2 of the TA.
97. When the proposed development trips were deducted from trips generated by the existing site as shown in Table 4.3 of the TA, it resulted in the proposed development generating 32, 2-way trips less than the existing site in the AM peak and 16, 2-way trips less in the PM peak.
98. The developer is proposing to create a new access onto Euxton Lane rather than using the existing access roads through Xton Business Park. The proposed access is a priority junction with a right turn lane on Euxton Lane. The access road is proposed to be 5.5m wide with 2m wide footways on both sides. The access is shown on plan BHM200 PL01 Rev T.
99. Whilst the existing access to Xton Business Park would form an acceptable means of access it is accepted that there can be road safety benefits in separating residential and commercial traffic from each other. A pedestrian access is proposed at the easterly end of the site onto Euxton Lane. This should be amended so as to be a pedestrian / cycle link. The form of the junction and its geometry are acceptable to LCC Highway Services.
100. Euxton Lane is classified as the C197 and is subject to a 40mph speed limit. In the vicinity of the site it is of a high standard, is well-lit with separate footways and cycleways and carries a significant volume of traffic. The road safety record on Euxton Lane is relatively good with only 1 injury accident within 400m of the proposed site access in the last 5 years. The next nearest collisions are on the roundabout at Westway and the traffic signals at Euxton Lane / Central Avenue. Bus stops are located on Euxton Lane a little to the east of the proposed pedestrian access.
101. The existing access into Xton Business Park is a signalised junction with a long right turn lane for traffic passing the development site. In providing a new access for the proposed residential site the length of the existing right turn lane would be reduced. The need for a right turn at these signals remains, however, the volume of traffic that it would need to accommodate in the morning peak, which coincides with the period when there is greatest demand, is reduced. This point has been discussed with the developers Transport Consultants and it has been confirmed that LCC Highways are satisfied that the revised proposal, such that it will not have an adverse impact on the existing access to Xton Business Park.
102. The nearest bus stops that are served by a public bus service are located close to the Central Avenue / Euxton Lane junction. Service 109 operates from here on a half hourly schedule between Chorley and Preston. No improvements to the frequency of services are considered necessary.
103. The existing bus stops adjacent to the development site on Euxton Lane are currently only served by school services. These stops are not to current standards as they lack raised boarding areas. Whilst there are no current proposals to introduce a public service here, this situation will be reviewed before the development would be built out. Nonetheless it is considered appropriate to require the developer to upgrade these bus stops as part of the off-site highway works.
104. To aid (child) pedestrian movements to the bus stops nearest the development it is considered necessary that a pedestrian refuge be introduced on Euxton Lane close to the

proposed pedestrian (and cycle) access. This should also form part of the off-site highway works.

105. The developer proposal is of a scale that justifies the need for a Travel Plan. The developer has produced an Interim Travel Plan, which is generally acceptable, however, LCC consider that the appointment of the Travel Plan Coordinator should take place sooner than the 1 month proposed.
106. LCC request that the developer contributes £6,000, secured through a s106 agreement, towards travel planning support the aid the developer moving from Interim Travel Plan to full Travel Plan as well as evolution and monitoring over a 5 year period post occupation. These monies should be paid on commencement of development.
107. The layout of the development is generally acceptable in order to be accepted for adoption under a s38 agreement. Any proposed sustainable drainage systems under the adoptable highway will only be considered acceptable where they are adopted by United Utilities under the powers of the Water Industry Act 1991 or they only retain highway surface water.
108. The integral garages for the Baxter and Farrier house types have internal dimensions of less than 6m x 3m and as such cannot be considered as car parking spaces, which could lead to vehicles being parked on the road. As these types of property are located well away from turning heads it is unlikely that any resultant on road parking would be a danger or a nuisance.
109. To ensure that road safety is not compromised during the construction period a Construction Traffic Management plan will be required.
110. In order to access the site from Euxton Lane in a safe manner the right turn lane and traffic island would need to be in place before the development can commence, however, if the site was accessed via Eton Business Park these works would only be necessary prior to first occupation. As such it is considered appropriate for a phase and construction plan to be provided together with a programme for the construction of the site access and off-site highway works.
111. In conclusion no highway objections are raised subject to the developer entering a s106 for Travel Planning Support and subject to conditions being imposed.

Impact on designated heritage assets

112. The application site is approximately 3 hectares in size, located on the northern side of Euxton Lane and currently comprises of a large modern two storey commercial building, which is currently redundant. In addition, the site includes, a large lawned area separating the building from Euxton Lane, which encompasses the associated hard standing areas. The site spreads out to the west in front of Classic House.
113. The north of the site is bounded by the railway line with commercial land sitting further beyond to the northern side. To the south of the site are multiple open field parcels, south of Euxton Lane. An existing belt of established trees forms a buffer to the eastern site boundary and the west of the site is bounded by existing commercial land. The wider site towards the west includes residential areas, including some large housing developments that were recently granted approval.
114. The application site is located within close proximity to several grade II and grade II* listed buildings. Most notably, the 'Barn Circa 40 Metres West of Stanfield House (Stansfield House Barn), List Entry Number 1204306, as they are visually connected. Therefore, the proposal will be assessed in relation to the impact on its setting to that heritage asset. The application site also lies adjacent to three non-designated heritage assets (NDHA's) to the north west and west of the proposal site (Runshaw College buildings (former Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) Offices) and a WWII pillbox or guard post built into the perimeter

wall as part of the Chorley Royal Ordnance Factory). The proposal will be assessed in relation to whether it causes impact on the NDHA's.

115. The principal statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. LPA's should, in coming to decisions, consider the principle Act, which states the following;

Listed Buildings - Section 66(1)

116. In considering whether to grant planning permission for development, which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest, which it possesses.
117. In determining planning applications LPAs should take account of;
- a. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b. The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
118. P.193 states that when considering the impact of proposals on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be applied. This is irrespective of whether any harm is identified as being substantial, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
119. The relevant local policies include Chorley Local Plan 2012-26 – BNE 8 Protection and Enhancement of Heritage Assets, Central Lancashire Core Strategy – Policy 16 Heritage Assets and the Central Lancashire Design Guide Assessment SPD.
120. The supporting documents, which includes an existing and proposed site layout, Indicative Street Scenes, House Types, Design and Access Statement prepared by Astle Planning & Design Ltd – December 2021 and a Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment, prepared by Heritage Archaeology – August 2021 have been reviewed by the Council's heritage advisors Growth Lancashire, who also carried out their own site visit.
121. The key heritage issues for the LPA to consider under the application are:
1. Whether the proposal would harm the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building.
 2. In respect of NPPF P.203 – whether the scheme will cause any undue loss of significance to any of the nearby non-designated heritage assets (NDHA).
122. The application seeks the demolition of the existing building and the erection of 108no. dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated access, landscaping, parking and other works. The submission documents present a mixture of a 2, 3 and 4 bedroom detached, semi-detached, and mews type family homes, with some 2 bedroom walk up apartments.

Impact on the setting to designated heritage assets

123. The issue from a heritage viewpoint is whether the proposal would harm the setting of the grade II listed 'Stansfield House Barn', which is considered to be of moderate to high significance. The significance of the property is in its aesthetic and historic context, primarily evidenced in the fabric and architectural form/appearance of the building and former use as an agricultural building.
124. In relation to setting, Historic England's advice is contained in its Planning Note 3 (second edition) entitled The Setting of Heritage Assets. This describes the setting as being the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and explains that this may be more extensive than its immediate curtilage and need not be confined to areas which have public access. Whilst setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations it is also influenced by the historic relationships between buildings and places and how views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated.
125. The building was likely constructed in the early C18 of handmade brick on a stone plinth, with a stone slate roof. Since its listing in 1984 it has been converted into a dwelling and has undergone some modern alterations, including full height glazing in the cart entrance, previously used for wagons and farm vehicles. Originally, the building was an agricultural barn associated to Stansfield House, which was set in fairly extensive surrounding agricultural grounds. Over time, the land to the north and west have been developed, however, the land to the south remains largely open fields.
126. The application site lies directly to the north east of the listed building, on the opposite side of Euxton Lane, spreading out to the north and east. The proposed development would directly front Euxton Lane but would be partially screened by the boundary fencing and trees, which would go some way to reducing the view of the proposed development.
127. According to first edition OS map, as noted above the site was a relatively isolated setting, which gradually changed through the 19th and 20th century, with the arrival of the industrial and commercial buildings within close proximity on the north side of Euxton Lane. These 20th century developments have resulted in pronounced physical changes to the wider setting of the listed building.
128. These cumulative changes have overtime contributed to the gradual erosion of the historic setting and has impacted on how the listed building is now experienced. Therefore, reducing the contribution made by the setting to the overall significance of the listed building.
129. The views along Euxton Lane are open, particularly because of the wide dual carriageway and set back nature of the commercial buildings on its northern side. Nevertheless, due to the hedgerow boundary treatments to the north of the listed building, views of the listed building are limited and the building can only really be fully experienced at close quarter.
130. In this context, it is not considered that the application site contributes any level of significance to the listed building and can be considered, for the basis of this assessment, to be of a neutral value.
131. It is considered that the significance of the listed building is largely defined by the retained fabric of the building itself, primarily in the design, form and materials of the building and in its immediate setting to the south, which has remained open agricultural land.
132. Whilst the new residential development would be noticeable in the same context as the listed building, this in itself does not necessarily translate to a loss of significance.
133. Given the already eroded nature of the setting to the listed building and its neutral importance, it is considered that the impact of the new development on the value of the setting would be very limited. Largely, this would be confined to the visual changes to the wider landscape setting, which is different to loss of significance. Subsequently, it is

considered that the proposal would have no impact on the contribution made by the historic setting on the significance of the heritage asset.

Impact to the Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA)

134. The Government's guidance identifies NDHA's as being buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. P.203 of the Framework makes reference to the LPA's need to consider the effect of an application on the significance of a NDHA when determining an application. In carrying out its planning balance, an LPA should have regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
135. The adjacent NDHA's (Former ROF buildings and pillbox/guard post) significance is based in their aesthetic and historic value. This is primarily evidenced in the architectural form, materials of construction and historic associations to their use/function. It must, however, be recognised that NDHA's are non-designated because they have lower heritage value and as such should be afforded as being of low significance.
136. Unlike in the case of designated assets, LPA's are only required to carry out a simple weighing exercise of those material matters and that any impact (which carries no statutory duty on behalf of the LPA) should be considered against the merits of the whole application including the benefits generated by sustainable new development. It is for the Council to apply what weight it considers appropriate to those material matters in its decision so long as it is being reasonable.
137. The NDHA's are of local importance, but are more modern buildings, which have experienced modern alterations and additions that sit amongst other modern commercial buildings.
138. Architecturally, in terms of the proposed scale, proportions and materials, it is not considered that the proposed dwellings necessarily reflect the scale and mass of the existing adjacent NDHA's. However, it is noted that other similar housing developments have been granted permission recently, close to the south side of Euxton Lane. It is also noted that, some of the proposed materials match the modern alterations seen on the nearby NDHA's, including the use of uPVC windows.
139. In this regard, as with the case of the setting to the listed building, due to the existing low significance afforded to the setting, the loss of significance caused by the new development would be negligible. On this basis, the impact of the proposed development on the contribution made by the setting to the value of those NDHA's would be limited and would not cause any discernible harm, to the significance of those locally important buildings.
140. The duty imposed by s.66(1) of the P(LBCA) Act 1990 has been given considerable weight in the assessment carried out above and a balanced judgement in relation to the NDHA's and the need to preserve heritage has been provided. It is considered that the proposal would meet the statutory test 'to preserve', causing no harm to the contribution made by the setting to the significance of the listed building (Stansfield House Barn). Furthermore, there would be no discernible harm or loss of significance caused to the nearby NDHA's. Therefore, no balancing exercise is required as per P.202 of the Framework. As such, the proposal meets the objectives of Chapter 16 of the Framework and accords with the policies of the Local Plan in this respect.

Archaeology

141. The Framework states at paragraph 205 that "Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible [Copies of

evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository]".

142. The former Chorley ROF is recorded on the Lancashire Historic Environment Record as a non-designated heritage asset, PRN12869 as former elements of the ROF still remain. Amongst those are a number of the former administration buildings, perimeter walls and pill boxes (recorded separately as PRN36956) and rare items of street furniture. The preface to Nevell, Roberts & Smith's A History of Royal Ordnance Factory, Chorley states that the book is not intended to be 'a detailed social history of ROF Chorley, nor as an extensive archaeological record of that site', and none of the former administration buildings have been the subject of any detailed recording, nor the perimeter walls and the remaining defensive posts that can be found still surviving across the former site.
143. Heritage Archaeology's 'Historic Environment Assessment, 2021' suggests that the current DXC building could be one of the former ROF's administration/laboratory buildings, but with no internal inspection having been undertaken the nature of the survival of any original 1930s/40s elements remains unknown, as well as a section of the original Ordnance Factory perimeter wall is to be lost. Aerial photographs (google earth) suggest that this section of wall includes some sort of built structure on the interior (north side) of this wall; its presence on a 1960s aerial photograph suggests it probably is an original ROF structure.
144. The vast majority of the site was not recorded in detail prior to its demolition, with only the Group 1 buildings subject to any archaeological recording in 2007. Surviving elements of the ROF are now few in number but still considered to be of at least local significance. The DXC building (bearing in mind the limitations of the Historic Environment Assessment mentioned above) and the section of perimeter wall/pill box are, therefore, considered to merit recording prior to their demolition. This could be secured by condition requiring a formal record to be created prior to any works commencing.

Ecology and trees

145. Due to the nature of the application site, the application is supported by an ecological survey and assessment, as well as supplementary reports. These have been reviewed by the Council's ecology advisors Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) who confirm that the ecology survey and assessment provided to inform the application has been carried out by suitably qualified ecologists and was to appropriate standards. The site is currently of limited ecological value mostly comprising built structures, sealed surfaces, bare ground and species-poor managed grassland. It does not support any specially protected habitats and is unlikely to support any specially protected or priority species, except for nesting birds, although there are some trees of reasonable quality present.
146. It is noted that some trees would be lost, however, the two oak trees, which are of greatest importance would be retained, whilst a significantly greater number of trees would be planted than those to be lost.
147. Given that the proposed houses would incorporate garden spaces and new landscaping with a landscaped public open space, retained oak trees and plans to install bird nesting and bat roosting boxes, it is anticipated that the development could achieve an enhancement in local biodiversity.
148. Overall, it is considered that the proposed landscaping and mitigation measures are adequate compensatory measures for the impact on biodiversity from the proposed development. This is subject to conditions being attached to any grant of planning permission to secure the landscaping scheme, bird and bat box mitigation scheme and tree protection measures. It is considered that the ecological impacts of the proposal have been fully considered and that the Council has discharged its obligations in consideration of biodiversity mitigation and any potential impact on protected species.

Drainage

149. The applicant has provided a flood risk assessment (FRA) and drainage strategy with the planning submission. This demonstrates that the site is at low risk of flooding from all sources.
150. The drainage strategy submitted in support of the application has discounted the possibility of infiltration as the primary option for surface water management as the Geo Environmental Ground Investigation report identified that the site is predominantly underlain with Glacial Till comprising firm to stiff, soft to firm clay, made ground, reworked deposits and an infilled reservoir. Therefore, infiltration is deemed not to be a feasible option for the discharge of surface water.
151. The closest watercourse, German Brook, is approximately 240m south east of the site, though it is cut off from the site by the alignment of Euxton Lane and as such, discharge to this source is not considered feasible. It is anticipated that the surface water attenuation would be in the form of oversized concrete pipes that would cater for the site critical 1:100yr plus Climate Change event. The pass forward flow would be restricted to greenfield run off rates with the use of a flow control device. This would provide a betterment over and above the existing rates of surface water drainage discharge from the site.
152. The site, specifically the buildings, are protected from flooding by providing a finished floor level higher than the ground level adjacent to the building except as required for level access. The general slope of the external ground levels is away from the building to ensure runoff is not directed towards the buildings; this provides flood routes around the buildings during exceedance events.

Affordable housing

153. Paragraph 64 of the Framework states that where major housing development is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be made available for affordable home ownership. Policy 7 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy requires 30% affordable housing to be provided on sites of 15 or more dwellings, or 0.5 hectares in size (which this is), in urban areas such as this.
154. The proposed development would provide 32 affordable dwellings on site, 22 of which would be rented, whilst 10 would be in shared ownership. These would include a mixture of two and three bed dwellings and a block of six two bedroomed apartments. The affordable dwellings would be spread across the site in four clusters, which would reflect the 'pepper potting' approach advocated by the Central Lancashire Affordable Housing SPD.
155. The Council's Housing Officer considers that the two bedroomed apartments are not acceptable as due to welfare reforms Registered Providers will not take on this type of property, and that these should be changed to single bedroomed apartments. The applicant was approached and given the opportunity to amend the number of bedrooms contained within the apartments. In response the applicant has provided details of a Registered Provider (RP), who are a proven development partner with Bellway Homes on other developments across the country, and have already confirmed there is high demand from their user group for two bed apartments from young families and people trying to get on the property ladder. Furthermore, should the number of bedrooms in the apartments result in difficulties obtaining a suitable RP partner then these units could easily be changed to single bedroom apartments via a simple amendment application.
156. The deliverability of the proposed housing mix on site has, therefore, been verified from both Bellway's and an RP's perspective, whilst any necessary changes to the scheme could be achieved in a straightforward manner. It is, therefore, considered to be a deliverable form of affordable housing, therefore, this would deliver the affordable housing requirement set out in Policy 7 of Core Strategy in line with the Central Lancashire Affordable Housing SPD.
157. Chorley Council introduced a Registered Provider Partnership Framework on 1 April 2022. This is a strategic partnership between the Council and the Registered Providers

selected by the Council to deliver affordable housing in the borough secured through Section 106 Agreements.

158. The delivery of high quality affordable housing is a key objective of the Council's Corporate Strategy. This Framework allows careful selection of Registered Provider partners to ensure that those Registered Providers delivering affordable housing in the borough meet the objectives of the Council and benefit residents by providing high quality and well managed affordable homes.
159. The applicant is agreeable to the terms of the Registered Provider Partnership Framework and the provision of the identified affordable housing on site would need to be secured through a Section 106 legal agreement.

Public open space

160. Central Lancashire Core Strategy policy 24 seeks to ensure that all communities have access to sports facilities. Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 policy HS4A stipulates that all new housing developments will be required to make provision for open space, and recreation facilities where there is an identified deficiency in the area. Where there is an identified local deficiency in quantity and/or accessibility, open space provision will be required on-site. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, off-site financial contributions are required. Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 policy HS4B stipulates that all new housing development will be required to pay financial contributions towards new playing pitch provision.
161. The proposed development would generate a requirement for the provision of public open space in line with policies HS4a and HS4b of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 and the Open Space and Playing Pitch SPD.
162. In relation to policy HS4a there is currently a deficit of provision in Euxton in relation to amenity greenspace and provision for children and young people, and, therefore, a contribution towards new provision in the ward is required from this development. As the development is 10 or more dwellings the required amenity greenspace should be provided on-site. A greenspace with provision for children and young people would be included to the western end of the site and would fulfil this requirement. The applicant has indicated that the management and maintenance of these facilities would be handed over to a private management company. Details of the play area equipment could be secured by condition.
163. In relation to policy HS4b a Playing Pitch Strategy was published in June 2012, which identifies a Borough wide deficit of playing pitches but states that the majority of this deficit can be met by improving existing pitches. A financial contribution towards the improvement of existing playing pitches is, therefore, required from this development. The Playing Pitch Strategy includes an Action Plan, which identifies sites that need improvements. The amount required from the development is £1,599 per dwelling.
164. The applicant has agreed to enter into a Section 106 agreement to secure the provision of the public open space on site and contribution towards the requirement for the provision of playing pitches in line with policies HS4a and HS4b of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026.

Education

165. Lancashire County Council have carried out an education contribution assessment and have identified that an education contribution is not required at this stage in regards to this development.

Sustainability

166. Policy 27 of the Core Strategy requires all new dwellings to be constructed to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes or Level 6 if they are commenced from 1st January 2016. It also requires sites of five or more dwellings to have either additional building fabric insulation measures or reduce the carbon dioxide emissions of predicted energy use by at least 15% through decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources. The 2015

Deregulation Bill received Royal Assent on Thursday 26th March 2015, which effectively removes Code for Sustainable Homes. The Bill does include transitional provisions which include:

167. *“For the specific issue of energy performance, local planning authorities will continue to be able to set and apply policies in their Local Plans which require compliance with energy performance standards that exceed the energy requirements of Building Regulations until commencement of amendments to the Planning and Energy Act 2008 in the Deregulation Bill 2015. This is expected to happen alongside the introduction of zero carbon homes policy in late 2016. The government has stated that, from then, the energy performance requirements in Building Regulations will be set at a level equivalent to the (outgoing) Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. Until the amendment is commenced, we would expect local planning authorities to take this statement of the government’s intention into account in applying existing policies and not set conditions with requirements above a Code Level 4 equivalent.”*
168. *“Where there is an existing plan policy which references the Code for Sustainable Homes, authorities may continue to apply a requirement for a water efficiency standard equivalent to the new national technical standard, or in the case of energy a standard consistent with the policy set out in the earlier paragraph in this statement, concerning energy performance.”*
169. Given this change, instead of meeting the code level, the Local Planning Authority required that dwellings should achieve a minimum dwelling emission rate of 19% above 2013 Building Regulations in accordance with the transitional provisions. Building Regulations 2022 have now been brought into force and under Part L require a 31% improvement above 2013 Building Regulations. This exceeds the Council’s previous requirement and now supersedes the requirement for a planning condition.

Employment skills provision

170. The Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in September 2017. The SPD introduces Employment Skills Statements and provides clarity as to how this requirement relates to the relevant policies set out in the Core Strategy and Local Plan as well as the guidance set out in the Framework. The SPD goes on to state that one of Central Lancashire’s priorities is to encourage economic growth within Central Lancashire that benefits the people and businesses in the three boroughs. The SPD seeks to;
- Increase employment opportunities by helping local businesses to improve, grow and take on more staff
 - help businesses to find suitable staff and suppliers, especially local ones
 - improve the skills of local people to enable them to take advantage of the resulting employment opportunities
 - help businesses already located in Central Lancashire to grow and attract new businesses into the area
171. The SPD requires development over certain thresholds to be accompanied by an Employment and Skills Statement to ensure the right skills and employment opportunities are provided at the right time. This is to the benefit of both the developer and local population and covers the following areas:
- Creation of apprenticeships/new entrants/graduates/traineeships
 - Recruitment through Job Hub and Jobcentre plus and other local employment vehicles.
 - Work trials and interview guarantees
 - Vocational training (NVQ)
 - Work experience (14-16 years, 16-19 years and 19+ years) (5 working days minimum)
 - Links with schools, colleges and university
 - Use of local suppliers
 - Supervisor Training

- Management and Leadership Training
- In house training schemes
- Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Cards
- Support with transport, childcare and work equipment
- Community based projects

172. A condition is recommended requiring an employment and skills plan.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

173. The Chorley CIL Infrastructure Charging Schedule provides a specific amount for development. The CIL Charging Schedule was adopted on 16 July 2013 and charging commenced on 1 September 2013. The proposed development would be a chargeable development and the charge is subject to indexation in accordance with the Council's Charging Schedule.

Planning balance

174. Paragraph 11. d) ii. of the Framework indicates that, where the most important development plan policies for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; the tilted balance.

175. The adverse impacts of the development relate primarily to its conflict with policy 10 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy. The applicant has not provided any evidence to demonstrate that there is a lack of demand for the use of the site for employment purposes or its redevelopment for such purposes. It is also considered that the location of this site in relation to other employment uses on Euxton Lane should be valued as part of an employment hub along this road. Furthermore, the latest evidence available to the Council demonstrates that the borough has a reasonably healthy market for offices, with enough premises to meet present needs but with no oversupply, and, therefore, little scope to reduce stock. Therefore, any loss of employment land on this site would be harmful to economic growth within the borough. In addition, the site is not well suited to residential development being isolated from residential settlements.

176. As such the proposal is contrary to policy 10 of the Core Strategy for a number of reasons, which carries significant weight against the proposed development.

177. Following on from the lack of suitability for residential development identified in the assessment of policy 10 it is noted that the site is isolated from other residential settlements and suffers from a lack of connectivity with any established communities or amenities. Accessing services on foot or by cycling would require a circuitous trip via a road bridge to the west. As a result, the proposed residential development would be isolated and not well linked to surrounding movement patterns contrary to policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This carries significant weight against the proposal development.

178. In terms of benefits, the provision of 108 dwellings in the context of an under supply of housing is a significant benefit. The inclusion of 30% of those dwellings as affordable housing would help to meet a significant shortfall in the supply of such homes across the Borough and represents a significant benefit.

179. The provision of new housing would bring construction and supply chain jobs, places for the economically active to live, increased local spend and greater choice in the local market. The applicant has identified the following benefits that have been quantified on the basis of an Economic Benefits Report:

- Contribution of £22.8 million of gross value added (GVA) to the economy during the construction phase of development.
- The creation of 126 jobs per annum on site and in the wider economy during the construction phase.

- Household expenditure of £3.3 million per annum once the site is fully built out and occupied.
- First occupation expenditure of £600,000.
- Growing labour force benefits, with 141 economically active and employed residents once the site is fully built and occupied.
- £238,000 per annum in additional Council Tax revenue.

180. It is noted that the stated economic benefits were based on the scheme as originally submitted and that this will have reduced slightly given the reduced number of units in order to provide public open space. Nonetheless, these economic benefits would represent a positive aspect of the development and should be accorded moderate weight in the planning balance.

181. The proposal would boost the supply of housing in a situation where there is no five-year supply and an under-provision of affordable housing and, as a result, moderate weight can be given to the economic benefits and significant weight to the social benefits of the development.

182. The provision of open space and its ongoing management and maintenance is a neutral consideration because this is needed to make the development acceptable. The upgrade of nearby bus stops would, however, be of wider benefit and should be afforded moderate weight as should the provision of a contribution towards the off-site provision of playing fields.

183. The site is located within the Buckshaw Village Strategic Development area where the Core Strategy seeks to direct development, and the development would contribute to an undersupply of housing and affordable housing in the borough. However, there is conflict with policy 10 given that the proposal has failed to identify whether or not there is a lack of demand for the site for employment uses, whilst there is a constrained supply of office and employment land in the borough and the site is not well suited to residential development.

184. The adverse impacts of the proposed development relating to the conflict with policy 10 of the Core Strategy are significant and along with the inability of the site to support a well integrated form of residential development significantly and demonstrably outweighs the considerable social benefits associated with the proposed development, which are in themselves significant. This is a finely balanced judgement given the absence of a 5 year housing supply, however, the economic harm would be such that the proposal is recommended for refusal.

CONCLUSION

185. The proposal is recommended for refusal as the adverse impacts of the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh the significant social benefits it would deliver.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE

Ref: 89/00409/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 2 August 1989
Description: Refurbishment of existing storage building to form divisional offices provision of associated car parking and landscaping

RELEVANT POLICIES: In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposal has had regard to guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the development plan. The specific policies/guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.