

Development Control Committee
Meeting to be held on 9 July 2014

Electoral Division affected: Farington

South Ribble Borough: application number. LCC/2014/0076
Demolition of existing Lynnhurst building (former care home) and outbuildings, provision of a new single storey building for overnight short break unit, vehicle parking, external lighting columns, fencing and landscaping at Lynnhurst, Stanifield Lane, Farington

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Executive Summary

Application – Demolition of existing Lynnhurst building (former care home) and outbuildings, provision of a new single storey building for overnight short break unit, vehicle parking, external lighting columns, fencing and landscaping at Lynnhurst, Stanifield Lane, Farington.

Recommendation – Summary

That planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling time limit, working programme, landscaping, highways, hours of construction, hours of lighting, wheel cleaning facilities and ecology.

Applicant's Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the demolition of an existing three storey care home and associated outbuildings and the construction of the following:

- A single storey building measuring 44m x 18m with a maximum height of 6.5 metres to be faced with brick and render and concrete tiles to the roof.
- Nine car parking spaces including 2 disabled spaces.
- Minibus drop area for two minibuses.
- Fixed play equipment to the southern boundary including mound tunnels and slide to a maximum height of 3.7m.
- Canopy measuring 5m x 4.3m with a maximum height of 3.35m.
- Sensory play area.
- Green house renovated.
- 2m high black coloured weld mesh fencing to the eastern boundary (Stanifield Lane).
- 3m wide electronic vehicular gate and 1.5m wide electronic pedestrian gate.

- 2m high black coloured decorative railing fence to the northern boundary (Fowler Lane).
- Alterations and widening of existing access.
- 2m high weld mesh fence to be black in colour to parts of the western and southern boundaries with 3m high timber fencing to the south east corner of the site.
- Existing entrance to the eastern boundary reduced in width to create 1.5m wide controlled pedestrian gate.
- Storage and bin store dedicated areas to the rear of the building adjacent to the western boundary.
- Hard landscaping and woodland trail.
- Lighting: 11 bollards, 2 wall mounted lighting units, 1x4m high steel column with lighting.

Description and Location of Site

Lynnhurst a former residential care home is located to the west of the A5083 (Stanifield Lane) approximately 1km north of Farington. The building is located within 2 acres of wooded sloping grounds and includes a number of mature trees which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

The nearest residential property is Rigby Farm, which shares the western boundary. Abutting the southern boundary is "Oaklands" an equestrian complex and to the east is the main A5083 Stanifield Lane. Fowler Lane forms the northern boundary and includes a row of houses close to the junction with Stanifield Lane. Land on the western, northern and southern sides of the site is in agricultural use.

The site is within the Green Belt.

Background

A former residential home for people with mental health issues the site was declared surplus in 2013.

History

There is no recent planning history relevant to the site.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Section 8 Promoting Healthy Communities
- Section 9 Protecting Green Belt land (in particular Paragraph 89)
- Section 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

- Policy 17 Design of New Buildings
- Policy 19 Areas of Separation and Major Open Space

Policy 22 Biodiversity and Geo-diversity
Policy 25 Community Facilities

South Ribble Borough Local Plan

Policy D4 Green Belt
Policy D5 Development in the Green Belt
Policy QD1 Quality of Development
Policy C1 Community Services Community Facilities
Policy ENV4 Protection of the Habitats of Wildlife
Policy ENV 7 Protection of Trees and Woodlands
Policy ENV8 Trees and Development
Policy ENV24 External Lighting and Development

Consultations

South Ribble Borough Council - No objection.

LCC Developer Support (Highways) – No objection in principle but recommend that that matters relating to the provision of a compliant turning head to enable refuse collection and emergency vehicles to turn within the site be accounted for. Consequently, conditions are recommended controlling car park and manoeuvring scheme and also controls over access construction/removal.

Natural England - No objection.

LCC Lighting Engineers – No comments received.

Representations – The application has been advertised by press and site notice, and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. One letter of representation has been received which raises the following summarised points:

- The proposal makes good use of the area currently taken up by the old Lynhurst building.
- The two metre high metal fence would detract from the appearance of the site particularly on the Fowler Lane side. Is this really necessary given the current hedging and topography of the site?
- The woodland plan is unclear as to whether all the trees/hedges removed during building works would be replaced. This aspect is extremely important to maintain the character of the area. Several trees have preservation orders and it is essential that these remain.

Advice

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a single storey building to provide respite care for young people with severe mental or physical disabilities. The unit has been designed to provide overnight short break stays for children from the ages 3-19 but may include individuals up to 25 years of age. The unit would be registered with Ofsted and would cater for a maximum of six children at any one time. The applicant has further stated that the staffing ratio would be quite high,

possibly 8 to 10 depending upon the complexity of the children's needs. The proposed building would replace 3 facilities elsewhere: Maplewood in Bamber Bridge, Long Copse in Chorley, and the Bungalow in Preston.

The main issues include the principle of the development within the Green Belt, impact upon residential and visual amenity, loss of trees and highway matters.

Impact upon Green Belt

The site is identified on the South Ribble Proposals map as being within the Green Belt. Policy D5 states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is also supported by the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) and the accompanying *Planning Practice Guidance* (PPG). However, Policy D5 (d) does support the limited extension, alteration or replacement of dwellings provided the works do not result in the disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. Given the proposed use would be for typically 6 residents, the reference 'dwelling' is appropriate in planning use class terms.

The site, approximately 2 acres in size, consists of a large three storey brick and slate Victorian style property originally constructed as a dwelling house, in extensive gardens. There are two accesses to the property: one from Fowler Lane, and the other off Stanifield Lane (A5083). To the rear of the site is a large glasshouse and level garden whilst the frontage of the plot on Stanifield Lane has a sloping valley as part of a woodland area which screens the property from the main road. The principle of development on this site, within the Green Belt has already been established. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF sets out exceptions to the general principles of inappropriate development in Green Belt and provides for the replacement of a building provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces. The applicant has stated that the existing gross internal floor space of the current building is 650m². The proposed internal gross floor space would be 558m². Therefore, the proposal would not be inappropriate development in Green Belt for the purposes of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

The property has previously been used as a former residential care home for people with mental health issues. In 2013 the site was declared surplus and the property has been vacant although there is a caretaker as part of security arrangements currently operating the building. In order to meet the needs of children with severe mental and physical differences any development needs to be single storey to suit the specialist care required. The development has been designed so that it would be constructed as close as possible to the existing footprint albeit in a more elongated form. The existing glass house would then be left in situ and provide a useful resource for the children. The vehicular access from Stanifield Lane would be removed and a pedestrian gate incorporated into the boundary treatment with the main vehicular access point from Fowler Lane. The site has ample car parking and the extensive grounds would be secured, landscaped and play equipment installed to meet the needs of the children. The nearest residential properties are a row of three properties located approximately 64m away on the opposite side of Fowler

Lane from the proposed building. A large area of landscaped grounds including an established hedge together with Fowler Lane separates these properties from the proposal. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not have an undue impact upon residential amenity and meets the aims of Policy QD1 and C1 of the South Ribble Local Plan and Policy 17 and 25 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Visual Amenity

To ensure that the children are safe and secure the applicant has secured the boundaries with 2m high fencing. Initially, three boundaries would be secured with 2m high weld mesh fencing although Fowler Lane would be secured with a 2m high decorative railing fence. Following consultation with the Equestrian Centre revised plans have been received that incorporate a 3m high timber fencing to the south west corner of the site to shield the play equipment and children from any horse riding sessions. No objections have been received to this revised aspect.

Representations have been received that question the need for the 2m high fencing particularly on the Fowler Lane section and also that it would detract from the appearance of the site. The applicant is clear that the fencing is required to secure the site given the vulnerability of the children. To help protect the amenities of the area particularly the residential properties on Fowler Lane the applicant has proposed a 2m high decorative railing fence which would be located behind the existing hedging. It is therefore considered that the design of the decorative fencing is considered acceptable, would not detract from the visual amenities of the area and would meet the aims of Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan and the NPPF.

Design of Development

The building has been designed to provide appropriate facilities for children with a wide range of needs. It would be single storey and elongated in shape with a mix of brick and render to the walls and concrete tiles to the pitched roof. Artificial stone heads and cills to the windows and doors have been included and would provide interest and it is considered that the proposal would satisfy the aims of Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan. The development also includes areas of hard and soft landscaping including a kitchen garden, sensory play area and the existing green house to be renovated. Play equipment has been specifically designed for children of all abilities and would be located towards the south west corner of the site. The 3m high close boarded timber fence to the south west corner would ensure that the location of the play equipment would not impact upon the activities at the Equestrian Centre. These aspects are considered acceptable and meet the aims of Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan and Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Highway Matters

The site is currently accessed via two vehicular access points: one off Stanifield Lane, which would be excluded from vehicle use but maintained for pedestrian access; and the existing vehicular access off Fowler Lane, which would be altered to required standards. The proposal includes adequate car parking for staff and visitors

with mobility spaces included and a minibus drop off zone, which would be provided to the front of the building. LCC Developer Support (Highways) has raised no objection to the proposal but recommends that the applicant provides a turning head to enable refuse collection and emergency vehicles to turn within the site. A condition is proposed to require the provision of such. Adequate off road parking has been provided and subject to conditions controlling car parking lay out, access arrangements and visibility splays as recommended by LCC Developer Support (Highways), it is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of highway safety and amenity.

Ecological Issues

The application is accompanied by an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report, dated December 2013, which concludes that, overall, the site contains habitats of high ecological value such as plantation wood land, scattered trees and hedgerows. It identified that the hedgerows are species poor and are therefore considered not to fall under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. No records of amphibians were found and it was considered unlikely that they would be affected by the development.

The application is also accompanied by a Protected Species Survey Report (Bats) dated November 2013 which identifies that the development would involve the demolition of existing buildings and the loss of nine trees. The Bat report concludes that both the buildings to be demolished and the trees to be felled were found to contain negligible potential to support roosting bats. The Bat report makes two specific recommendations: that the trees should be replanted to mitigate the loss and; that bat boxes are should be installed upon some of the trees to be retained. It is considered that subject to these aspects being controlled by condition that the development would meet the aims of Policy ENV4 and ENV8 of the South Ribble Local Plan and Policy 22 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

As part of the development a woodland trail constructed of a cellular structure utilising free draining aggregate would be created. A concern has been raised about the impact of the development upon the existing woodland and the trees subject of a Tree Preservation Order. The applicant has confirmed that the development would not involve the loss of any of the trees the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. Where required some crown lifting would take place to provide a 2m clear stem to allow free passage for users.

Lighting

The applicant proposes some simple external illumination which would include eleven bollards approximately 1 metre in height and two wall mounted lights to the rear of the building. A lighting column approximately 4m in height would be located adjacent to the vehicular access off Fowler Lane. It is considered that some external lighting is required due to the nature of the use of the building and as the proposed scheme is minimal, it is considered that this aspect meets the aims of policy ENV 24 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

In summary, the proposed development would provide, high quality, purpose built accommodation and external facilities for children with special needs, thus providing

much needed respite care for families and carers. Although the development would be within the Green Belt the redevelopment of the site would not constitute inappropriate development. Conditions controlling highways, landscaping and ecology would make the detailed aspects acceptable. The development complies with policies QD1, C1, ENV4, 7, and 8 of the South Ribble Local Plan and policies 17, 19, 22 and 25 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the policies of the NPPF.

In view of the scale and location of the development it is considered that no Convention Rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.

Recommendation

That planning permission be **granted** subject to the following conditions

Time Limits

1. The development shall commence not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Working Programme

2. The development shall be carried out, except where modified by the conditions to this permission, in accordance with the following documents:
 - a) The Planning Application received by the Director of Transport and Environment on 24 April 2014.
 - b) Submitted Plans and documents:

Drawing Number A01 Rev A entitled `Location Plan as Existing`

Drawing Number A02 Rev A entitled ` Site Plan as Existing `

Drawing Number LO1 Rev A entitled `General arrangement`

Drawing Number L02 entitled `Trees and Ecology`

Drawing Number A03 Rev A entitled `Reference Floor Plan`

Drawing Number A04 Rev A entitled `Proposed Elevations`

Drawing Number A05 entitled Vertical Sections `

Drawing Number A06 entitled `Roof Details`

Drawing Number L10 entitled `Sensory Garden`

Drawing Number L11 entitled `Planting Plan

Replacement Tree & Hedgrows`

Drawing Number L12 entitled `Planting Plan Detail`

Drawing Number L 13 entitled `Storage Bin Store`

Drawing Number L14 entitled `Storage General Store`
Drawing Number L15 entitled `Kitchen Garden 1`
Drawing Number L16 entitled `Kitchen Garden 2`
Drawing Number L17 Rev A entitled `Play Area One`
Drawing Number L18 entitled `Play Area Two`
Drawing Number L 19 entitled `Play Area Two Mound
Section A-A`
Drawing Number L20 entitled `Play Area Two Mound
Slide Section B-B`
Drawing Number L 21 entitled Car Park
Drawing Number L22 entitled `Drop Off Point`
Drawing Number L23 entitled `Paved Play Area`
Drawing Number L24 entitled `Wood Land Walk`

c) All schemes and programmes approved in accordance with this permission.

Reason : To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy QD 1 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

Site Operations

3. No development shall commence until a scheme and programme for the control and layout of the construction works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Director of Environment and Transport. The scheme and programme shall include details of the location and layout of a contractors' compound including contractors' car parking and materials storage.

Reason: In order to satisfy the County Planning Authority that the construction development would have no unacceptable impact on local amenity or the trees the subject of the Tree Preservation Order

Hours of Working

4. No construction development, delivery or removal of materials shall take place outside the hours of:

0730 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays),
0800 to 1400 hours on Saturday (except Public Holidays).

No construction development, delivery or removal of materials shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to conform with Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

Highway Matters

5. Notwithstanding the details on the approved plan reference no Lo1 A entitled 'General Arrangements', no development shall commence until a revised drawing providing details of the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment:
- a) A turning head to enable refuse collection and emergency vehicles to turn within the site.
 - b) A car park and manoeuvring scheme with the car park surfaced and marked out.
 - c) Details of surfacing materials.

The approved details of the scheme shall be implemented in full before the development hereby approved is brought into use.

Reason: To allow for the effective use of the car park spaces and to conform with Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

6. No other parts of the development hereby approved shall commence until visibility splays measuring 2.4m x 43m have been provided in an eastern direction, as measured along the centre line of the access road from the continuation of the nearer edge of the existing carriageway of Fowler Lane. The land within these splays shall thereafter be maintained thereafter free from obstruction such as walls, fences, trees, hedges shrubs, ground growth or other structures within the splays in excess of 1.0m in height above the height at the centre of the adjacent carriageway.

Reason: To provide appropriate visibility and to conform with Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

7. Measures shall be taken at all times during the construction phase of the development to minimise the incidence of debris from the site being deposited by vehicles upon the public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners.

Lighting

8. The lighting hereby approved as detailed on the drawing entitled Proposed Site Plan reference Project No. SF012920 shall only be operated within the following hours:

Mornings 06:30 -09:00am
Evenings 16:00 -21:30pm

Reason: In the interest of visual and residential amenity and conform with Policy QD1 and ENV 24 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

Control of Noise

9. All mobile plant and vehicles operated at the site shall be fitted with non-audible or broadband (white sound) reversing alarm systems and shall be used by all mobile plant and vehicles on the site at all times during construction phase of the development.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

Landscaping

10. No trees or hedgerows shall be removed during the bird-breeding season between 1 March and 31 July inclusive unless they have been previously checked and found clear of nesting birds in accordance with Natural England's guidance and if appropriate, an exclusion zone set up around any vegetation to be protected. No work shall be undertaken within the exclusion zone until birds and any dependant young have vacated the area.

Reason: To protect nesting birds and to conform with Policy ENV4 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

11. The landscaping details as shown on Drawing No. L11 entitled 'Planting Plan Replacement Tree and Hedgrow' and Drawing No. L12 entitled 'Planting Plan Detail' shall be implemented in full in the first available planting season as defined in this permission, following completion of construction of the new building. Thereafter, the landscaping shall be maintained for a period of 5 years and any planting that dies or becomes damaged shall be replaced during this time.

Reason: In the interests of visual and local amenity and to conform with Policy QD1 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

Definitions

Planting Season: The period between 1 October in any one year and 31 March in the following year.

Notes

This consent requires the construction, improvement or alteration of an access to the public highway. Under Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980, the County Council, as Highway Authority, must specify the works to be carried out. Only the Highway Authority or a contractor approved by the Highway Authority can carry out these works. Before any works to the access commence you should contact the Area Manager (Public Realm) South address and telephone number see below quoting the planning permission reference.

Area Surveyor (Public Realm) South: Cuerden Way, Bamber Bridge, Preston PR5 6BS Tel: 01772 658560

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
LCC/2014/0076	24 April 2014	Catherine Lewis/Environment/30490

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A