

**Development Control Committee**  
Meeting to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015

Electoral Division affected:  
Skelmersdale East

**West Lancashire Borough: Application number. LCC/2014/0148**  
**Change of use of part of brickworks to concrete casting factory including new site office facility, increase in the height of part of existing factory buildings, minor regrading of land levels, waste storage tanks, filter press, storage silos, and associated plant and machinery, amended access layout, extension of boundary screening wall, external lighting and new landscaping, including demolition of existing structures. Ravenhead Brick Works, Chequer Lane, Up Holland**

Contact for further information:  
Jonathan Haine, 01772 534130, Environment Directorate  
[DevCon@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:DevCon@lancashire.gov.uk)

### **Executive Summary**

Application - Change of use of part of brickworks to concrete casting factory including new site office facility, increase in the height of part of existing factory buildings, minor regrading of land levels, waste storage tanks, filter press, storage silos, and associated plant and machinery, amended access layout, extension of boundary screening wall to 3.3m high, external lighting and new landscaping, including demolition of existing structures. Ravenhead Brickworks, Chequer Lane, Up Holland.

### **Recommendation – Summary**

That planning permission be **granted** subject to conditions controlling working programme, hours of operation, building materials, noise controls, lighting, highway matters and landscaping.

### **Applicant's Proposal**

The application is for the change of use of redundant brick making buildings to a factory for making reinforced concrete beams and lintels.

The development would involve the refurbishment and reuse of the central core of the former brick making factory. Two extensions on the northern and southern sides of the central core building would be demolished along with the majority of a further building at the eastern end of the site which was formerly used for brick drying. The central core building (measuring 150 metres by 21 metres widening at its eastern end to 42 metres ) would have its northern façade completely reclad using a cavity wall with internal blockwork and brick and cladding to the external elevation. The roof

would also be fully reclad and provided with roof lights. An area measuring 21 metres by 21 metres towards the western end of the building would be raised in height by 2 metres in order to accommodate a beam crane required to lay reinforcing wire. A new single storey office building and ramp for steel loading would be provided to the northern elevation of the existing building.

At the eastern end of the main kiln building, the existing clay processing machinery would be removed and the internal space reconfigured to house a concrete mixing plant including two vertical cement silos.

Beyond the eastern end of the main kiln building is a further large shed which used to house brick clay drying equipment. This building would be reduced to ground level across 75 % of its area with the retained portion being used for the storage of aggregates and sand, steel reinforcing materials and lintel packing equipment.

In order to manufacture the beams and lintels, up to nine casting beds (measuring 100 m long by 1m wide by 250 mm deep) would be constructed in the floor of the former kiln building. Concrete would be manufactured in the normal way using the imported aggregates and cement and would be extruded along the casting beds encasing reinforcing wire. The castings would then be allowed to dry before cutting to length with a circular saw. Completed beams (up to 8 metres long) and lintels (up to 2 metres long) would be stored in the yard areas to the north and east of the building, including those areas created by demolition of buildings.

The hours of operation for the factory are proposed to be from 07.00 – 19.00 Monday to Friday and 07.00 to 13.00 on Saturdays for manufacturing and 06.00 – 19.00 Mondays to Saturdays for loading and dispatch. The raw material requirements of the factory would generate approximately 20 HGV movements per day with approximately 24 HGV movements associated with the export of finished products. An existing access point at the north west corner of the site would be utilised as the entrance to the factory with vehicles leaving the site via the existing access to the operational brickworks which would be improved. Another disused access point to the frontage of the site would be closed and landscaped.

The new factory is expected to generate 20 new full time jobs.

### **Description and Location of Site**

The application site occupies the northern part of the existing Ravenhead brick making factory, located off Chequer Lane in Up Holland, approximately 3km east of Skelmersdale.

The application site is currently occupied by a number of large buildings with external yard areas forming brick factory no 1 which closed in the late 1990's. Immediately to the south is the operational brick factory no 2 beyond which is Ravenhead Quarry which is used for the supply and storage of clay and shale materials for the brick manufacturing process.

The majority of the northern boundary of the site is formed by a 3 metre high brickwall beyond which is a line of trees and footpath. To the north again is an area

of single story houses on Danbers, Darfield and Daybrook. The nearest house is approximately 15 metres from the application site. There are also a number of properties at two locations on Chequer Lane adjacent to the access points into the site.

Some areas of Ravenhead Quarry are designated as geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

## **Background**

History – The application site is located within the boundary of the mineral planning permission for Ravenhead Quarry / brickworks. This was originally granted in 1949 (ref 9/10/26). The conditions to this permission were reviewed in 1998 under the provisions of the Environment Act 1995. A further periodic review of this permission is currently under consideration by the County Council (application LCC/2014/0008).

Permission for the change of use of no. 1 factory to mixed industrial uses (B1, B2 and B8 uses) was granted in 2001(ref 8/01/536). The permission was never implemented and has now lapsed.

## **Planning Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework : Paragraphs 11 – 16, 17, 18 – 21, 56 – 60, 100 and 123 of the NPPF are relevant with regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, core planning principles, building a strong competitive economy, design, flooding and impacts of noise.

Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Policy DM2 Development Management

West Lancashire Local Plan

Policy GN3 Criteria for Sustainable Development

Policy EC1 The Economy and Employment Land

Policy EM2 Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Natural Environment.

## **Consultations**

West Lancashire Borough Council – Object to the application on the basis of the proposed hours of operation and the impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Upholland Parish Council - No observations received.

LCC Developer Support (Highways) - No observations received.

Environment Agency – The EA initially raised objection to the application due to the lack of an acceptable flood risk assessment and incorporation of measures within the development to attenuate run off of surface water. However, on consideration of

additional information, the EA have withdrawn their objection provided that a condition is imposed requiring the development is undertaken in accordance with the submitted drawings.

Coal Authority – No observations received.

Natural England – No observations received.

Representations – The application has been advertised by press and site notice, and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. Two objections to the application have been received along with two further letters questioning various aspects of the development.

The letters of objection raise the following issues:-

- The traffic impacts of the development when combined with the traffic from the brickworks and quarry.
- The impacts of dust, noise and proposed working hours
- The close proximity of the site to houses
- There are other sites in the Skelmersdale area that are available and are not close to houses
- The proposal will give rise to vibration impacts at the nearest houses.
- The proposal should be subject to a health impact assessment.
- There is a history of noise and dust complaints at this site and any new development should not exacerbate existing problems.

## **Advice**

The application is for the redevelopment of redundant brick manufacturing buildings at the Ravenhead Brickworks to a factory for the manufacture of pre stressed concrete floor beams and lintels, primarily for use in house building.

The Ravenhead brickworks originally had two production lines; No 1 factory and No. 2 factory. No. 1 factory, which is the subject of this application, closed in the late 1990's and has remained derelict ever since with brick production being concentrated at the No.2 factory. The No.2 factory would remain in production as a brick making plant should planning permission be granted for the re use of the no. 1 factory.

In 2001 planning permission was granted for the change of use of No 1 factory to a combination of B1, B2 and B8 uses. Although, the planning permission was never implemented and has now lapsed, it provides some indication of the types of uses that have been previously considered acceptable on this site.

In terms of planning policy, paragraphs 18 – 22 of the NPPF state that the Government is committed to securing economic growth and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support such growth through the planning system. The application site is also allocated in policy EC 1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan for B1, B2 and B8 uses. The proposed concrete products factory would involve the reuse of an existing derelict factory site for a use falling within class B2 (General

Industrial Uses). It would involve the creation of 20 new full time jobs as well as supporting existing posts in haulage, administration and sales. The proposal would therefore generally accord with national and local policy in terms of the need to support economic growth by releasing sites that are suitable for general industrial uses and the creation of employment opportunities.

Whilst the application site is located in an existing industrial area, it is close to a large number of residential properties. Given the nature of the manufacturing use that is now proposed, it is necessary to examine the likely impacts on residential amenity as well as issues in relation to visual impact, traffic and flooding. Policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan requires that any proposals for industrial development are of acceptable scale and appearance and must not significantly harm the amenities of adjacent occupiers.

In terms of visual impact, the site is currently characterised by a large expanse of former brickmaking buildings, many of which are in a poor state of repair. The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing wings on either side of the existing former brick kiln building along with much of the clay drying building at the eastern end of the site. The building housing the new concrete products factory would cover approximately 50% of the floor area of the existing structures. Whilst much of the no.1 factory is not particularly visible from the surrounding highways, the removal of many of the existing disused buildings would improve the appearance of the site frontage when viewed from Chequer Lane. There are also a number of properties to the east of the site which have views over the brickworks and the removal of redundant buildings would also have some benefits for the outlook from these properties.

The new buildings that would be erected as part of this development to provide new offices and other ancillary facilities are all small in scale and would have negligible visual impact on views from the nearest houses. The main visual impact arising from the new development relates to the proposed raising of roof on a section of the main casting hall building. However, the area to be raised is relatively limited and the height increase of two metres would not have any unacceptable impacts given the separation distance of 60 metres to the nearest property.

Following demolition of the existing structures, the remaining building would be re clad in Goosewing Grey roof and wall cladding panels with facing brickwork on the lower elevations of the building. Subject to a condition being imposed, these materials are considered acceptable. At the site frontage on Chequer Lane a currently disused access point would be brought back into use so that vehicles associated with the new factory could operate on a one way system by exiting the site via the existing brickworks access. On the frontage of the site there is a further disused access point which would be removed and landscaped thereby further improving the frontage of the site. Subject to the details of this landscaping, including any new fencing to be erected being the subject of a planning condition, it is considered that the application is acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

In terms of the impacts of the development on local amenity, the nearest houses are located on an estate of single storey dwellings located immediately to the north of the application site. The nearest property is approximately 12 metres from the

external yard area that would be used for the storage of finished beams and lintels. The majority of the northern boundary of the site is formed by a 3.3 metre high brick wall beyond which is a row of trees and shrubs and a footpath running along the rear of the houses. There are also four properties on the western side of Chequer Lane opposite the proposed access to the site (10 metres from the site boundary). There is also a terrace of properties located adjacent to the existing access to the brickworks which are in the control of the applicant. There are also a number of more modern areas of housing to the east of the site, some of which overlook the quarry and brickmaking buildings.

Whilst there are a number of properties located close to the site, it should be recognised that No. 1 factory could resume as a brick works without the need for any further planning permissions. Planning permission was also previously granted for the reuse of the site for a variety of uses falling within use class B1, B2 and B8 and such a permission, if implemented would have resulted in the external yard areas nearest to the houses being used for storage activities and loading of HGV's. The impacts of the new proposal on local amenity should therefore be considered in that regard.

However, the applicant has acknowledged that this part of the site has not been used for many years and that the redevelopment of the site would introduce a new activity into this area. The applicant has therefore sought to design the new factory so that impacts on local amenity are mitigated where possible.

The demolition of the existing wing on the northern side of the building will leave an exposed elevation which will need to be rebuilt in order to contain the new factory. It is proposed to rebuild this elevation as a cavity wall with a concrete block inner wall and brick / metal cladding outer wall in order to improve noise attenuation. A new door would also be required in this side of the building to allow finished products to be transported to the external yard areas. This door would be fitted with a roller shutter and has been orientated so that it faces west rather than north and provided with a 4 metre high screen to reduce noise emissions through this opening. The northern boundary of the site is approximately 330 metres in length and a 3.3 metre high brick wall currently extends over approximately 170 metres of this boundary. It is proposed to extend this boundary wall along the full length of the boundary in order to provide additional noise attenuation and screening for the activities that would take place.

The applicant has undertaken a noise assessment of the proposed activities. The noise assessment demonstrates that there would be a slight increase in noise levels above existing background levels but that the increase would be of marginal significance and unlikely to generate complaints. The Borough Council's Environmental Health Officer is satisfied with the assessment of noise impacts but requests that conditions should be imposed to control hours of operation, noise levels, reversing alarms, lighting and construction activities.

The handling of materials such as aggregates and cement has the potential to generate dust emissions. The concrete batching process will require a permit under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which will contain controls on emissions to air. However, the applicant has sought to control dust emissions as the bays for the

storage of aggregates would all be undercover and the cement silos and mixing process would be contained within the building. In view of the design of the factory, it is considered that dust emissions from these sources could be controlled to acceptable levels.

The activities most likely to result in disturbance to local residents are the stockpiling and loading of beams and lintels in the external yard areas. West Lancashire Borough Council has objected to the application due to the proposed hours of operation and likely impact of the development on residential amenity. In terms of hours of operation, the applicant has requested the ability to be able to commence operations including in the external yard area from 06.00 hours. The Borough Council consider that shorter hours for the loading of vehicles should apply so that such operations commence at 07.00. Given the proximity of the external yard area to the nearest houses, it is considered that the later start time can be justified. Noise impacts would be mitigated by the proposed continuation of the wall along the full northern boundary of the site and it is considered important that these works are completed prior to the use of the factory commencing. This can be achieved through a planning condition. The EHO has commented upon the use of low noise reversing alarms and it is considered that a condition should be imposed requiring such alarms to be fitted to mobile plant (forklifts) used on site. Such a condition could not require the fitting of such alarms to road going HGV's but the external yard areas have been designed in such a way as to minimise the need for such vehicles to reverse during loading operations. The EHO has also requested a condition controlling site construction activities. Whilst some of the matters requested can be incorporated within conditions, some of the requirements such as wheel cleaning measures, erection of security hoardings, vehicle routing and recycling of wastes are not necessary and do not meet the tests for conditions and are therefore not supported. Subject to the imposition of conditions as referred to above, the development is considered acceptable in terms of local amenity and complies with policy DM2 of the LMWLP and EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.

The Environment Agency initially raised objection to the application due to the absence of an acceptable flood risk assessment containing proposals for the on site attenuation of surface water. However, the application site is not in an area of high flood risk and the development would not increase rates of surface water run off. In such circumstances there is no requirement within the NPPF to incorporate additional attenuation within development. The application does include proposals to construct a small water feature at the front of the site which could be engineered to provide some mitigation of run off rates. Subject to the design of this lagoon being the subject of a planning condition, the development is considered acceptable in terms of flood risk. It should be noted that the Environment Agency have also now withdrawn their objection to the application.

In relation to highways, the site is accessed from Chequer Lane which allows good access to the A577 and the M58 without passing any residential properties apart from those located directly opposite the site access. The Borough Council have raised concerns about the use of access point no.1. Whilst traffic does not currently use this access, it is an existing access to the site and no further permission would be required for it to be brought back into use. The number of HGV movements that would be generated by the development is around 45 per day which can be

accommodated within the capacity of the highway network in the area and which is no greater than that associated with the former brickworks use. The objections of the Borough Council in relation to the impact of traffic on local amenity are therefore not supported and the development is considered acceptable in terms of the capacity and safety of the highway network subject to a condition being imposed regarding the improvement of the site access.

In conclusion, this development would secure the reuse of redundant brick making buildings for a beneficial use that would generate a number of new jobs therefore securing local economic benefits. Whilst the site is close to a number of properties, the development has been designed so that the impacts on residential amenity can be controlled to acceptable levels. The other potential impacts of the development in relation to flooding and traffic are also acceptable. It is therefore considered that the development complies with the policies of the NPPF and the development plan and should therefore be supported.

In view of the scale, location and design of the development, it is considered that no Convention Rights 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 and supporting statement received by the County Planning Authority on 20th October 2014.

- b) Submitted Plans and documents:

Drawing 69804.SS.002 Site Area Plan

Drawing 69804.SS.003 Planning Application and land ownership

Drawing 69804.SS.004 Outline Proposal

Drawing 69804.SS.008 Proposed General Arrangement



Drawing 47069804 - PL1007 Rev P2 - Proposed Elevations  
Drawing 47069804 - PL1009 Rev P2 - Proposed Roof Plan  
Drawing 69804.SS.009 - Office and Welfare Layout Plan  
Drawing 69804.SS.011 - Office and Welfare Elevations  
Drawing 69804.SS.018 External Plant and Machinery  
Drawing 69804.SS.012 - Access modifications with landscaping

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

*Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable the County Planning Authority to adequately control the development and to minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the local area, and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policies EC1 and EN2 of the West Lancashire Borough Local Plan.*

3. The development shall not be brought into use until the existing brick wall along the northern boundary of the site has been extended as shown on drawing 69804.SS.008. The extended wall shall conform to the dimensions shown on drawing 69804.SS.017 and shall be constructed from brick materials to match the existing boundary wall.

*Reason : In the interests of the visual and general amenities of local residents and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

4. The stacking of finished beams and lintels within the existing external yard areas shall not take place to a height exceeding three metres.

*Reason : In the interests of the visual and general amenities of local residents and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

### **Control of Noise**

5. No mobile plant or vehicles shall be operated at the site until a scheme and programme describing the types of reversing alarms to be fitted to mobile plant /vehicles used on the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme and programme shall provide for the fitting of non-audible or white noise reversing alarm systems and include details of alternative measures that will be adopted should non-audible or white noise warning systems fail to operate or be unsuitable. Following the written approval by the County Planning Authority the approved

reversing alarms shall be fitted to and used by all mobile plant on the site at all times during the development.

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Borough Local Plan.*

6. The level of noise from all activities on site shall not exceed a noise taing level of 47dB(A) Tr at the boundary of 9 Daybrook, 11 Darfield, 20 Danbers and 2 Chequer Lane between the hours of 07.00 - 19.00 on any day. All measurements and assessments shall be carried out in accordance with BS4142:2014 - Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound.

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

7. The operation of the concrete products factory including any loading operations or delivery of raw materials shall not take place outside the hours of:

07.00 to 19.00 hours, Mondays to Fridays (except Public Holidays)  
07.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturdays

No such operations shall take place at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

This condition shall not, however, operate so as to prevent the carrying out, outside these hours, of essential repairs to plant and machinery used on site.

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of local residents and adjacent properties/landowners and land users and to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

## **Car parking**

8. The materials used for the recladding of the external elevations and roof of the main casting building and for the raw materials storage building and lintel

packing facility shall conform to the details shown on drawing 47069804 - PL1007.

The materials used for the external elevations and roof of the office and welfare building shall conform to the details shown on drawing 69804.SS.011.

*Reason : In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to conform with policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Borough Local Plan.*

9. The development shall not be brought into use until the access has been improved and laid out according to the design shown on drawing 69804.SS.012.

*Reason : In the interests of highway safety and to conform with Policy DM 2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

10. Any lighting erected to illuminate the building and external yard areas shall conform with the design and specification shown on drawing 69804.SS.016.

All lighting with the exception of that attached to the building as shown on drawing 69804.SS.016 shall be turned off outside the hours of operation specified in condition 7.

*Reason ; In the interests of local amenity and to prevent light pollution and to conform with policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

11. No development shall commence until a scheme and programme for the landscaping of the site frontage to Chequer Lane has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme and programme shall provide for the following:-

a) the breaking out of the disused access including reinstatement of the pavement on the eastern side of Chequer Lane.

b) details of new fencing to be erected including colour, height and design

c) details of tree and shrub planting including details of types, numbers and sizes of species, location of planting, planting methods and protection measures.

d) details for the formation and function of the proposed surface water features including areas of the site to be drained, volumes of water to be held

and outfall arrangements.

The landscaping works including new planting shall be implemented in the first planting season following the concrete products factory being brought into use and shall thereafter be maintained for a period of five years including replacement of failures, weed control and maintenance of protection measures.

*Reason : In the interests of the general amenities of the area and to secure the proper control of surface water to conform with Policy DM2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and policy EC1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan.*

## **Definitions**

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

Free field : At least 3.5 metres away from the facade of a property or building.

## **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

The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the British Standards Institution Code of Practice for Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of Disabled People (BS8300:2009). The design of the building will also need to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations 2010.

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

### **List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
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Development Information Folder LCC/2014/0148		
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20th October 2014		
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Jonathan Haine  
Environment  
534130

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate  
N/A

