

# E.I.A. SCREENING OPINION REPORT

LAND AT BLAINSCOUGH HALL, COPPULL

2018-087

DECEMBER 2020

## Signing off Sheet

**Client:** Lea Hough and Co LLP

**Project:** Land at Blainscough Hall, Coppull

**Document:** EIA Screening Opinion Report

**Date:** December 2020

**Ref:** 2018-087

Stage	Prepared By	Checked By	Date	Signed
Draft	EB	MS	23.12.2020	

### Final

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Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan

Appendix 2 – Illustrative Masterplan

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by NJL Consulting on behalf of Lea Hough and Co LLP. It represents a request to Chorley Council for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion to determine whether proposals for new residential development of up to 123 dwellings constitutes Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development.
- 1.2 The report reflects the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017<sup>1</sup> (the "EIA Regulations") and contains:
  - A plan sufficient to identify the land;
  - a description of the development, including in particular:
    - (i) a description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
    - (ii) a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;
  - a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;
  - to the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—
    - (i) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
    - (ii) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and
  - such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

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<sup>1</sup> SI 2017/571

## **2.0 The Site and Proposed Development**

### **The Site and Surrounding Uses**

- 2.1 The site comprises two irregularly shaped parcels of greenfield land and additional land around Blainscough Hall, located to the south west of Coppull and falling within the Chisnall ward area (see Illustrative Masterplan in **Appendix 2**). The site measures 5.51ha in area with the main element of the site currently used for agricultural purposes while the land around Blainscough Hall is currently part of a domestic garden serving the property but in the ownership of the applicant of this planning application.
- 2.2 The site is general flat in topography (falling slight west to east) and bordered by Blainscough Lane and an industrial employment site to the southern boundary. The site benefits from mature tree cover and woodland which screens the site along the western, southern and eastern boundaries which broadly follow the brook corridor. Beyond this woodland to the south is Blainscough Hall and adjacent industrial/commercial premises. Adjacent to the east is a Local Nature Reserve.
- 2.3 Further to the east and beyond is the Springfield Leisure Centre and core settlement of Coppull where local amenities, services and facilities can be found. The former Lancashire Union Railway line dissects the settlement and is also located to the east of the site.
- 2.4 Further beyond to the south is predominantly agricultural fields which extend towards the next most adjacent settlement of Standish. Ribbon development comprising of dwellings extends along the A49 to the west of the site, with agricultural fields extending to the boundary of the M6.
- 2.5 A site location plan is provided at **Appendix 1**.

### **Planning History**

- 2.6 The site has not been subject to any planning applications previously and therefore has no development history.
- 2.7 Land within the red line boundary partially comprising the domestic garden to Blainscough Hall, falls within the application boundary for an approved change of use application (Ref: 89/00254/COU) to convert the existing dwelling (Blainscough Hall) into a nursing home.

## **The Proposed Development**

- 2.8 Outline planning permission is sought for the following description of development:

*'Outline planning application for the erection of up to 123 dwellings with public open space provision, structural planting and landscaping, and vehicular access points from Grange Drive. All matters reserved save for access.'*

- 2.9 All other matters except for access will be reserved for consideration at a later date; however, **Appendix 2** sets out the Illustrative Masterplan which illustrates how the site could be developed.

### **3.0 Requirement for EIA**

- 3.1 In order to determine whether the proposed development is 'EIA development', regard must be had to the EIA Regulations and supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). EIA development is defined by the EIA Regulations as development that is:
- 'likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location'*
- 3.2 EIA development falls into two Schedules of the EIA Regulations. EIA is mandatory for developments listed within Schedule 1. Schedule 2 developments require EIA if they would lead to likely significant effects on the environment.
- 3.3 The proposed development does not meet any of the categories of development set out in Schedule 1, but does fall within the criteria for Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. The development falls within Section 10 (b) of Schedule 2 '*Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex*' in that it seeks to develop a site exceeding 5 hectares.
- 3.4 Schedule 2 developments require EIA where '*The development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location*'.
- 3.5 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Reference ID: 4-057-20140306) provides further guidance about where a development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. For '*Urban development projects*' it provides a range of examples:
- '(i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares;*
- (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floorspace; or*
- (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area'*
- 3.6 We therefore conclude that the proposed development constitutes Schedule 2 development. There is a requirement for Schedule 2 development to be 'screened' to understand whether it meets the criteria for EIA. In undertaking the screening assessment, the question to be addressed is whether the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Only those developments which are considered likely to have such effects are required to be identified as EIA development.

3.7 In determining whether the development is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects, reference should be made to Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations. This specifies that the characteristics of the development must be considered with regard to the following factors:

- '(a) the size and design of the whole development;*
- (b) cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;*
- (c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;*
- (d) the production of waste;*
- (e) pollution and nuisances;*
- (f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;*
- (g) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).'*

3.8 Schedule 3 specifies that the sensitivity of the location must be considered with reference to:

- '(a) the existing and approved land use;*
- (b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;*
- (c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas—*
  - (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;*
  - (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;*
  - (iii) mountain and forest areas;*
  - (iv) nature reserves and parks;*
- (v) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation;*

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;

(vii) densely populated areas;

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.'

'(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);

(b) the nature of the impact;

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;

(e) the probability of the impact;

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;

(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.'

- 3.9 In order to allow Chorley Council to determine the need for EIA, this report provides a description of the site and proposed development, a review of the EIA Screening Criteria based on the EIA Regulations and the PPG, and a site location plan at **Appendix 1**.

## **4.0 Screening Assessment**

- 4.1 Consideration has been given to the characteristics of potential impacts, having regard to the factors set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulations. Taking into account the Regulations and PPG, we identify the potential environmental impacts and assess whether they are likely to be significant by virtue of their characteristics.
- 4.2 It is first necessary to determine whether the site falls under a 'sensitive area', as defined by the Regulations, and whether it will result in a significant environmental impact. This definition includes the following:
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
  - National Parks;
  - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
  - World Heritage Sites;
  - Scheduled monuments;
  - International conservation sites; and
  - Land to which Nature Conservation Orders are applied.
- 4.3 On the basis of the above, the site is not categorised as a 'sensitive area' and it is not considered that the impact will be more than local importance. As such there are currently no implications for development of the site in terms of statutory designations.
- 4.4 A review of the online DEFRA Magic Map shows the site to be in the outermost quadrant for the Charnock Richard Pasture SSSI and periphery of the outermost quadrant for the Wrightington Bar Pasture SSSI.
- 4.5 Given the lack of direct connectivity and the distances between the proposed development and both SSSIs (1.7km to 2.25km) it is concluded that there would be no significant impact on the ecological value of these sites.

### **Schedule 3 Selection Criteria**

- 4.6 In order to assess any likely significant environmental effects, the selection criteria contained in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations should be applied. These are:

- a) Characteristics of development – having regard to size, cumulative impacts, natural resources, waste and pollution;
- b) Location of development – having regard to existing use and statutory designations and landscape
- c) Characteristics of the potential impact – having regard to the nature, extent and scale of impacts

4.7 These considerations are addressed in this section below.

#### ***Characteristics of the Development***

- 4.8 The planning application relates to the redevelopment of an existing greenfield site for residential development of up to 123 dwellings. The site covers an area of 5.51ha with an application being submitted in outline.
- 4.9 Unlike more sensitive uses such as industrial uses, the proposed residential use will not result in any significant emissions or waste or involve processes with the potential to introduce new pollutants, noise or hazardous materials into the area.
- 4.10 While the size of the site exceeds the screening threshold of 5ha, the quantum and density of development proposed is well within the threshold of 150 dwellings and is not of a scale that would give rise to likely significant environmental impact.

#### ***Location of the Development***

- 4.11 It has already been established that the site is not a 'sensitive area' as defined by the Regulations.
- 4.12 The existing land use of the site is managed for agricultural purposes, with a portion of the site to the south west serving as a domestic garden for Blainscough Hall. These uses are not considered to be sensitive, however there are existing landscape features which may be deemed important and therefore where possible the proposals seek to retain vegetation, trees and hedgerow across the site.
- 4.13 Whilst the site is currently undeveloped, the site's location is immediately adjacent to residential development on Grange Drive and forms a logical extension to the settlement of Coppull. The proposal has been designated as Safeguarded Land in order to meet future development needs and has more recently been allocated for housing under the Central Lancashire Issues & Options Consultation (2019) under

emerging planning policy. This reinforces the suitability of the site's location for residential development.

4.14 An assessment on the sensitivity of the site's location is detailed below and set out against applicable criteria under Schedule 3 as follows:

- Classified areas – It has been established that while the site is within the Impact Risk Zone of Charnock Richard Pasture SSSI and Wrightington Bar Pasture SSSI, the scale of development proposed and relationship to these areas is such that it will not result in a materially adverse impact.
- Nature reserves and parks – Blainscough Wood Nature Reserve is located to the east of the site and comprises a wildflower meadow, pond along Tanyard Brook. The proposed development has been purposely designed to accommodate ecological buffer zones along the stream corridor to set back development from the wooded edge to further reduce any potential risk to species such as water voles and otter, if present.
- Densely populated areas – The scale of development proposed (as shown in the illustrative Masterplan) is fully in keeping with the density and character of surrounding residential development in Coppull. Coppull is identified as a highly sustainable settlement under the Chorley Local Plan as suitable for accommodating additional growth and development. In this context the proposals will not impact the capacity of the wider urban area. The extent of any impacts arising from the development, especially on existing dwellings in close proximity to the site, is considered further below.
- Landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance – The site is not located within a Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings/ structures on the site itself. The landscape is not deemed valued or important in environmental terms.

4.15 Consideration to wetlands, coastal zones, mountain and forest areas, and areas where environmental quality standards are exceeded is not applicable to this development.

4.16 Overall, the site is considered a suitable location for residential development and will not introduce new or different types of environmental effects to the area.

#### ***Potential Impacts of the Development***

4.17 It is next necessary to consider the potential environmental impacts of the development. This has been undertaken with reference to Schedule 3 (Parts 1 and 3) of the Regulations and supported by a suite of technical assessments accompanying the application.

## **Transport**

- 4.18 A Transport Assessment has been prepared to support the planning application which provides details on the development site, its accessibility by non-car modes, the anticipated traffic impact, and operational requirements relevant to the scheme.
- 4.19 The Transport Assessment confirms the sustainability credentials of the site in relation to local amenities, services, facilities and public transport, as detailed in Section 2.0 of this Planning Statement. The report outlines how these locational benefits will encourage residents and occupants to make use of non-car modes of transport, particularly those within the young professional/ student demographic who are less likely to commit to the financial outlay for a car.
- 4.20 The site is located within a highly accessible location and therefore seeks to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the planning policy guidance at both local and national level.
- 4.21 Proposed access via the existing access points off Grange Drive have been assessed and confirmed as suitable and safe arrangements for serving the proposed development.
- 4.22 An assessment of traffic generation has been undertaken showing that the proposed development will result in 55 two-way trips in the Weekday AM peak and 56 two-way trips in the Weekday PM peak. These flows will have no material impact on the surrounding highway network.
- 4.23 More specifically for the junction at Spendmore Lane/ Grange Drive, traffic flows are forecast to add circa 55 and 56 two-way trips during the AM and PM peak hours respectively. The potential impact at the A49 Preston Road/Spendmore Lane junction is estimated at approximately 37 two-way trips in the AM peak and 38 two-way trips in the PM peak.
- 4.24 Both mini-roundabout junctions have been assessed as benefitting from good visibility with no known capacity issues. Taking into account the level of traffic generation, the proposed development will not result in any severe impact on the operation of the local highway network or road safety. The accompanying accident analysis reinforces

this position emphasising the development will not have an adverse impact on these identified junctions.

### Conclusions

- 4.25 Overall, no significant highways impact are anticipated and it not considered an EIA would be required on the basis of highways and access issues.

### **Air Quality**

- 4.26 An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Ensafe which assesses the impact of the development on local air quality during the construction and operational phases of development.
- 4.27 The Assessment found that during the construction phase the development will have between a medium impact on air quality, as a result of earthworks, construction and track out. The area was considered to be of medium to high sensitivity to dust soiling effects and low to high sensitivity to human health, depending upon the activity. This is largely due to the site's location adjacent to a predominantly residential area. As a result, mitigation in relation to dust soiling is required. Subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures the residual risk was not significant.
- 4.28 In terms of the operational phase, the assessment has considered the impact of traffic associated with the development on Nitrogen Oxide and Particulate Matter concentrations. The Assessment confirms annual concentrations are currently well below objective values at all sensitive receptors. The impact of introducing the proposed development can be classified as 'not significant'.
- 4.29 The proposed development will not result in any of the objectives being exceeded, given the number of vehicle movements anticipated. The impact of introducing the proposed development can be classified as 'not significant'.

### Mitigation

- 4.30 The Assessment confirms that subject to the implementation of dust mitigation measures the residual impact of dust is 'not significant'. The measures proposed include but are not limited to:
- Declare a person accountable for air quality and dust issues during construction.

- Have a record of all dust and air quality incidents.
- Undertake regular inspections to monitor compliance with the Dust Management Plan.
- Plan site layout to minimise dust impacts.
- Avoid using generators and switch off engines when stationary.
- Only allow cutting and other activities in conjunction with suitable dust suppression techniques.
- Ensure adequate water supply for dust suppression.
- Use enclosed chutes, conveyors and skips and minimise drop heights.

4.31 Mitigation measures are not necessary in relation to Nitrogen Oxide and Particulate Matter.

#### Conclusions

- 4.32 The Air Quality Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development will have a negligible impact on air quality in terms of dust, Nitrogen Oxide concentrations and Particulate Matter concentrations. Mitigation measures are required only in respect of dust and these can form a planning condition. The baseline assessment confirmed that the location is not sensitive to minor air quality changes so that the type and characteristics of the potential impact could be considered significant.
- 4.33 Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will not have an impact on air quality and so it cannot represent a significant environmental effect due to pollution or the risk to human health and therefore does not trigger the need for EIA. Such matters can be addressed through the submission of the Air Quality Assessment with the planning application and EIA is not required.

#### **Noise**

- 4.34 A Noise Exposure Assessment has been carried out by Clement Acoustics to consider the extent of prevailing environmental noise levels across the site, particularly the industrial estate located to the south.
- 4.35 Given the site's relatively rural location and proximity to a breakers yard, the ambient noise levels were assessed during the daytime at 56dB to 59dB, while in the evening

these ranged from 44dB to 48dB. The assessment considers the risk of noise intrusion to be low in the south/ south-east corner of the site and low to medium along Blainscough Lane.

- 4.36 The majority of the site is assessed in the ‘Negligible’ noise risk category during daytime hours, and the ‘Low’ noise risk category during night-time hours. Assessed against the guidance of British Standard 8233: 2014, the report confirms that appropriate mitigation will ensure there is no adverse impact.

#### Mitigation

- 4.37 Appropriate mitigation measures are also proposed in accordance with the NPPF in circumstances ‘where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development in its vicinity’.
- 4.38 The assessment provides outline parameters on those dwellings requiring higher glazing specification, as well as locations for 2m high mounding to help mitigate noise associated with HGV movements along Blainscough Lane and 3m high, solid screens along the southern boundary to mitigate noise emissions from adjacent industrial units. These outline measures will help to achieve target internal noise levels and external levels for amenity areas and gardens.
- 4.39 Gardens sited away from Blainscough Lane and the adjacent industrial use demonstrate compliance with target noise levels without the need for mitigation.

#### Conclusions

- 4.40 It is clear from the Noise Exposure Assessment that noise from the proposed development will not have a significant environmental impact due to pollution and nuisance, and risks to human health. Nor is the location sensitive so that the type and characteristics of the potential impact are significant. Therefore, it is considered that noise associated with the development do not represent a significant environmental effect and therefore does not trigger the need for EIA. Such matters can be addressed through the submission of the Planning Assessment with the planning application and EIA is not required.

#### **Minerals**

- 4.41 Noting the site’s location within a Mineral Safeguarding Area, more specifically for shallow coal and sandstone, a Mineral Resource Assessment has been prepared by Wardell Armstrong in support of the application.

- 4.42 The assessment identified the historic role of Blainscough Colliery, located just 1km from the application site, which may have already extracted coal from the local seams given its activity over 70 years in operation. If significant coal seams were identified under the site, the likelihood is this would have already been extracted.
- 4.43 Notwithstanding this, mining the site for coal or recovering sandstone would neither be practicable, nor possible due to the impact on residential properties adjoining the site and local environment.
- 4.44 The prospects for coal and sandstone being worked from the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation are concluded as unrealistic and therefore the site offers no economic value. Any siltstone and mudstone identified on the site would also not offer commercially viable minerals.
- 4.45 Taking account of the above, the assessment confirms that development of the site would be acceptable in the Mineral Safeguarding Area and would not result in significant environmental impacts triggering the requirement for an EIA.

## **Ecology**

- 4.46 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been prepared by Pennine Ecological to assess the ecological significance of the site in terms of protected species and habitats. The Survey confirms that the development will not have an impact on statutory or non-statutory designated sites. It also considers the importance of onsite habitats, protected species and invasive species.

### Habitats

- 4.47 The Appraisal identified one record of the invasive Indian balsam located sporadically on the southern and northern boundary of the site as well as adjacent to existing hedgerow sections which transect the site. The report sets out measures to mitigate any risks during the construction phase.
- 4.48 Plant species across the site were typically of low quality or widespread to the local area and therefore offer just limited site value. The pond located on-site to the east and further beyond outside the application boundary has identified potential to support amphibian species.
- 4.49 While hedgerow falls under Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance in England (NERC) Act 2006, the sections of hedgerow found on-site are all of low quality and

deemed to be species poor. This supports the conclusions of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

- 4.50 The broad-leaved woodland, particularly along the stream corridor, is also a Lancashire BAP Habitat and should be retained and suitably buffered from development.
- 4.51 The proposal will therefore not have a significant impact on habitats.

#### Protected Species

- 4.52 In terms of protected species, there is a record of Great Crested Newt (GCN) population 224m from site on the western side of Preston Road (A49). Given the nature of the A49 as a key route within the local highway network this is seen as a significant barrier to any GCN migrating to the application site. One small pond was however identified on-site with another pond located just 12m from the site boundary to the south east. Further surveys are recommended during the appropriate conditions (Mid-March to Mid-June) to establish the presence or absence of on-site GCN populations.
- 4.53 No badger setts were identified on-site, nor were there any signs of badger activity such as latrines and runs which suggests the site is not used for foraging or commuting purposes.
- 4.54 One tree (T8) located along the tree line and hedgerow transecting east across the site was assessed as offering bat roosting potential. Both existing hedgerows and extensive woodland alongside Tanyard Brook provides good quality foraging habitats for bats and will be retained by the scheme.
- 4.55 No evidence was found for otter and water vole activity associated with the Tanyard Brook and adjacent ponds. The surveys were limited to visually accessible lengths of the brook due to physical constraints such as impenetrable shrub and level changes, however given the retention of woodland and proposed ecological buffer zones to the brook corridor, the report confirms that no surveys are required.
- 4.56 Noting the extent of existing habitat features, the site is considered suitable for nesting and breeding birds and should therefore be appropriately inspected prior to any construction works in order to avoid impacts.
- 4.57 The Survey notes that where protected species are present on site they will either not be impacted by the development or any loss to their habitat can be mitigated, therefore the development will not have a significant effect on protected species.

## Mitigation

- 4.58 Overall, the Appraisal supports the proposed development of the site which will result in a limited impact to both fauna and flora species as well as seeking to retain higher quality habitat and secure biodiversity net gain through opportunities for ecological enhancement.
- 4.59 The report recommends appropriate mitigation measures to ensure development works are legally compliant and to promote good practice. These recommendations include:
- Provision of buffer zones and setbacks of built development from the stream corridor and adjacent Local Nature Reserve;
  - Any retained trees should be appropriately protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012 - "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations";
  - Works relating to site clearance will need to be undertaken outside the breeding bird season between March to August inclusive;
  - Ensuring that any felled trees/scrub etc, piles of brash be removed from the site to avoid creating potential nest sites if left in situ;
  - If removal of vegetation is envisaged during the breeding season (March 1st to August 31st), then checks should be made to establish any nesting or breeding activity, prior to removal;
  - Undertaking 'presence/absence' survey using three survey methods (*preferably torch survey, bottle trapping and egg search*) for each visit. There should be four visits in suitable weather conditions, between mid-March and mid-June, with at least two of these visits during mid-April to mid-May.
  - Soft felling techniques for trees assessed as having potential to support roosting bats should be adopted by the specialist contractor;
  - During the construction phase any structure capable of capturing, containing or injuring an otter must be covered or made safe to prevent access by otters during the night.
  - Suitable otter passes / routes along the brook corridor to be maintained at all times during the construction phase;

- Minimising any lighting and ensuring this is directed away from the stream corridor during the construction and operational phase of development. If required lighting requirements will follow guidance provided by the Bat Conservation Trust.
  - If the oak tree identified in Target Note 3 is to be affected directly or indirectly by development then it will need to be inspected by torch and endoscope by a licensed bat handler.
- 4.60 It is clear from the PEA that the site is not ecologically sensitive and so the proposed development will not have a significant environmental impact due to the use of natural resources (biodiversity) or cumulatively with other developments. Nor is the location sensitive so that the type and characteristics of the potential impact are significant, therefore the submission of the PEA with the planning application is sufficient to understand the impacts and EIA is not required.

## **Trees**

- 4.61 A Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Christians Environmental for the application site. This confirms a Tree Preservation Order referenced: CBC TPO 3 (Coppull) 1984 is enforced in the woodland area located to the east of the application site, however this is outside of the red-line boundary. A desktop review and site survey identified no Tree Preservation Orders; no trees within a Conservation Area; no ancient woodland; no veteran trees; no trees within a Community Forest; and arboreal no Habitats of Principal Importance on the site itself.
- 4.62 The proposals, while in outline form, seek to retain and enhance the site's existing landscape features. This includes the mature tree cover and woodland that screens the site boundaries and will promote local amenity.
- 4.63 In order to facilitate access to plots in the south east corner of the site, two category C trees of low quality (T11 and T15) will require the partial removal of Category C hedgerow (H1). Other low quality hedgerow (H3 and H5) will also need removing based on the proposed outline layout.
- 4.64 In terms of facilitating pedestrian connectivity, the outline scheme identifies the potential for a footpath in the north east corner as an opportunity for enhanced accessibility along Blainscough Lane. While subject to the detail of a final scheme, this may involve the partial removal of trees contained within tree group G4. These are assessed as Category B trees of moderate quality.

- 4.65 The report confirms that a Method Statement will need to be submitted at the reserved matter stage to demonstrate appropriate mitigation and protection.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 4.66 A Flood Risk Assessment was prepared by Lees Roxborough in support of the application to assess the potential risks of flooding as a result of the proposed development and the principles underpinning an outline drainage strategy.
- 4.67 Following a review of the drainage hierarchy on site, it is anticipated the most appropriate solution is discharge to the foul and surface water drainage network within the vicinity of the site.
- 4.68 The Environment Agency's flood map for planning identifies that the entire site is located within Flood Zone 1 (land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<0.1%)). The site is therefore considered to be at a low probability of flooding. The nearest watercourse is Tanyard Brook located immediately along the eastern and south boundaries of the site.
- 4.69 The site comprises of greenfield land and as a result of the underlying ground conditions, the Flood Risk Assessment concludes that infiltration is not a suitable drainage solution for the site.

#### Mitigation

- 4.70 Given the nature of the site as undeveloped, greenfield land there is a requirement for development runoff rates to be controlled to existing runoff rates. The assessment sets out the principles of an outline drainage strategy, proposing a hybrid drainage solution of both attenuation measures and piped system.
- 4.71 While the drainage strategy remains subject to detailed design and the detail of any reserved matters application, the assessment confirms that the development will not be at any increased risk of flooding or impact upon flood risk elsewhere.
- 4.72 No significant effects are anticipated, and it is not considered an EIA is required on the basis of flood risk and drainage.

### **Geology and Ground Contamination**

- 4.73 A Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report prepared by REFA has been submitted in support of the application to ascertain if there is a potential contamination risk across the site.

- 4.74 An appraisal on the site's historic context has confirmed that the site has been utilised for agricultural purposes throughout its recorded history with no signs of development. Assessment of the surrounding area has indicated the presence of collieries to the north east and south east as well as the industrial estate located to the south east.
- 4.75 In the absence of any previous development on the site and its continued use for agricultural purposes, the likelihood of widespread soil contamination is projected to be very low. Potential sources of contamination have been identified and include:
- 4.76 Naturally occurring elevated concentrations of contaminants within the topsoil and natural strata;
- Potential contaminants associated with waste treatment facility;
  - Potential migrating ground gases generated from off-site features; and
  - Migration of contamination from the industrial estate located to the south east.
- 4.77 Further investigations are required to establish the extent of potential risks, and these will recommend detailed mitigation strategies to ensure that the risks remain low.

### Conclusions

- 4.78 The Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study establishes that the site is not at high risk of contamination but that further investigation is required which can form a condition of a planning permission. The proposed development will therefore not have a significant impact on the use of natural resources (soil), increase the risk of major accidents and/or disasters including those caused by climate change or pose a risk to human health either solus or cumulatively with other developments. Nor is the location sensitive so that the type and characteristics of the potential impact are significant. Therefore, the environmental impacts can be addressed by the submission of a technical report with the planning application and EIA is not required.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

- 4.79 PPG states that Local Planning Authorities should have regard to the possible cumulative effects with any existing or approved development, in order to ascertain whether the effects of a development are likely to be significant. A review of Chorley Borough Council's planning portal has identified a detailed planning application (Ref: 16/00656/FULMAJ) at Land West of Coppull Enterprise Centre, Mill Street, Coppull.

- 4.80 Full planning permission was granted in May 2018 for the following description of development:

*'Detailed planning consent for the erection of 75 dwellings with associated access arrangements at land adjacent to Coppull Enterprise Centre, Chorley.'*

- 4.81 A subsequent Section 73 application (Ref: 19/00846/FULMAJ) and discharge of conditions application have since been submitted suggesting the scheme will soon be or already has been implemented. This development is located approximately 2 kilometres to the north-east of the site, on the northern edge of Coppull.
- 4.82 Subject to the implementation of appropriate control measures and mitigation secured by planning condition and ensuring high architectural design is achieved, it is concluded the proposed development will not result in cumulative environmental effects during either the construction or operational phase.
- 4.83 There are no other major residential or employment development schemes within the vicinity of the site which could result in cumulative effects. Each of the technical reports prepared consider cumulative issues and as confirmed above, it is considered that the proposed development will not result in significant environmental impacts when considered cumulatively with other developments.

## **5.0 Planning Application Submission**

### **Planning Application Submission**

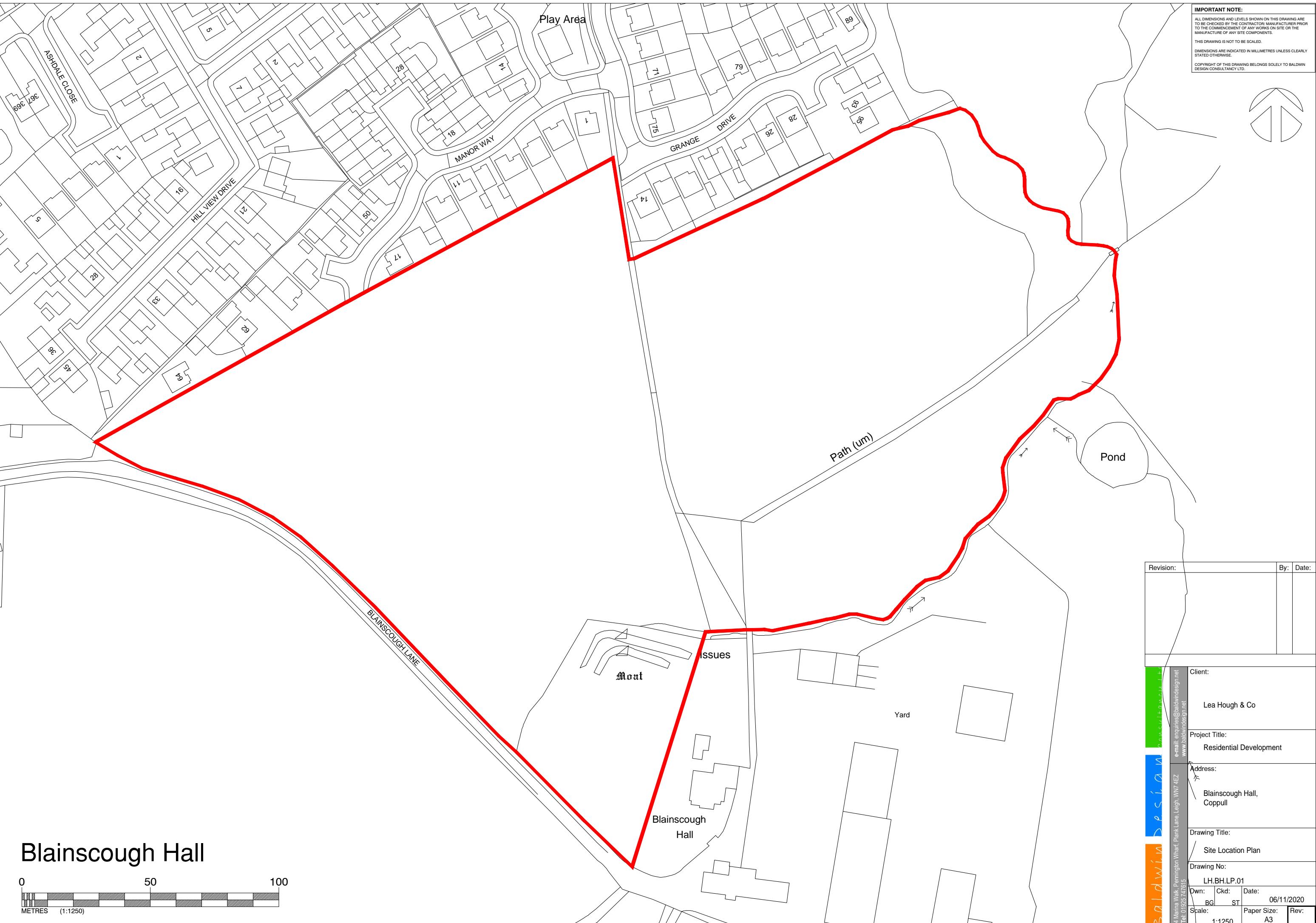
- 5.1 Whilst not prejudicing the decision of the Council in its response to request for a formal screening opinion, the project team is of the opinion that the comprehensive preliminary work that has been undertaken demonstrate that there are no environmental indicators that suggest the EIA procedure should be followed. It is considered that there are a number of discrete issues for which standalone reports will be required. These are already completed and will form part of planning application submission. None of the issues addressed are of an individual or collective magnitude that would require the EIA procedure to be followed and an ES produced.
- 5.2 The applicant will provide any further information required to assist in a full and proper decision being made. If the LPA concludes that there is not a requirement for the EIA procedure to be followed, it is proposed that the technical information submitted is sufficient to assist the Council with its determination of the planning application.
- 5.3 The following documents are to be submitted with the application to address environmental matters:
- Transport Assessment prepared by Eddisons
  - Phase 1 Geo-environmental Desk Study Report prepared by REFA
  - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Lees Roxborough
  - Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Clement Acoustics
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Pennine Ecological
  - Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Christians Environmental
  - Mineral Resource Assessment prepared by Wardell Armstrong
  - Air Quality Assessment prepared by Ensafe Consultants

## **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 This Screening Opinion Report has been prepared to support a planning application for the following description of development on Land at Blainscough Hall, Coppull:
- 'Outline planning application for the erection of up to 123 dwellings with public open space provision, structural planting and landscaping, and vehicular access points from Grange Drive. All matters reserved save for access.'*
- 6.2 This Report considers each of the environmental considerations for the application site and proposed development in turn, sets out the recommendations for mitigation and draws conclusions with reference to the EIA Regulations. Technical assessments have been undertaken for each environmental matter which provide a full and detailed review of the environmental considerations and make recommendations for mitigations measures, therefore the assessment that has been undertaken is robust.
- 6.3 The report has identified the following key points:
- The site is not sensitive in terms of the receiving environment or surrounding receptors.
  - The magnitude and complexity of impacts associated with this type of development and of residential development of this scale are not of a significance that an EIA would be required to evaluate them.
  - The potential for significant effects at the site is low and can be managed through the use of best practice measures or mitigation measures that can be conditioned.
- 6.4 The Report confirms that there are no environmental issues either solus or cumulatively with other developments that could be significant. The site and the proposed development are not environmentally sensitive and therefore it is considered that the proposed development is not EIA development in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

## **Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**  
ALL DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING ARE  
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## **Appendix 2 – Illustrative Masterplan**



NOTE:  
AND LEVELS SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING ARE  
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Drawing Title:

Drawing No:  
**LH.BH.IMP.01**

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