

Officer Report to Planning Committee

Application ref:	20/0021
Ward:	Marton Ward
Application type:	Full
Location:	Land east of Marples Drive (Part of former NS&I site) off Preston New Road, Blackpool.
Proposal:	Erection of 90 x two storey detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings with associated car parking, garages, boundary treatment, landscaping, including attenuation basin, and highway works.
Recommendation:	Agree in principle and delegate approval to the Head of Development Management, subject to conditions and a Section 106 agreement and subject to confirmation from the Secretary of State that the application will not be called-in for his own determination.
Case officer:	Clare Johnson
Case officer tel. no.:	01253 476224

1.0 BLACKPOOL COUNCIL PLAN 2019-2024

1.1 The Council Plan sets out two priorities. The first is 'the economy: maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool' and the second is 'communities: creating stronger communities and increasing resilience. The application satisfies the second of these priorities.

2.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The site is allocated for the development of employment uses. However, the applicant has demonstrated that appropriate marketing has proved unsuccessful and so is proposing residential development. The housing proposed would make a substantial contribution towards meeting the borough's housing needs. On balance and as will be detailed below, the scheme is considered to be acceptable. However, as the site is allocated for employment uses, residential development would constitute a departure from the Development Plan. The application must therefore be referred to the Secretary of State who may then choose to call the application in to make the decision himself. The recommendation is therefore that the Committee resolves to support the application and grant planning permission subject to the

signing of a Section 106 legal agreement relating to a financial contribution of £125,000 towards off site public open space, off site affordable housing provision and the up-grading of local health facilities; and subject to confirmation from the Secretary of State that the decision can be made by the Council.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 The application site forms part of the former 9 hectare NS&I (Premium Bonds) site which was accessed from Mythop Road with a pedestrian entrance from Preston New Road, and has recently been replaced with a new access from Preston New Road. NS&I retain a smaller presence on the site within the Moorland building at the northern end of the site. The remainder of the site has been cleared and a housing development of 118 dwellings (79 detached, 30 semidetached and 9 terraced houses) is nearing completion on the western half of the site following the granting of planning permission under reference 15/0420. As part of planning permission 15/0420, an office and light industrial development was also approved in outline on the eastern half of the site. It is this eastern half of the site that is the subject of the current detailed planning application for residential development following an unsuccessful period of marketing of the site for office and light industrial development.

4.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 A new access road, including a traffic signal junction, has been constructed into the site from Preston New Road as part of the on-going housing development to the west of the application site. This access also serves Moorland House and was also intended to serve the approved office and light industrial development. This access road forms the western boundary to this cleared 3.85 hectare site which is bounded to the south by Preston New Road with a chain link fence forming the boundary, to the north by Marton Mere Holiday Park and to the east by the rear gardens of houses fronting Mythop Road. Mythop Court, a part two/ part three storey apartment block with parking to the rear also abuts the southern site boundary. The site boundaries are well landscaped and the central area of the site has been cleared in preparation for re-development. Land levels across the application site drop some 3.5 metres from Preston New Road and the new access road towards the eastern site boundary where the former site access was located and close to the remaining vehicle access from Mythop Road into the Marton Mere Holiday Park. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and has a low risk of surface water or reservoir flooding.

5.0 DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

5.1 This is a full planning application involving the erection of 90 x two storey houses comprising 30 x four bed houses, 54 x three bed houses and 6 x two bed houses. The proposed houses are mainly a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties with a single terrace of three dwellings also included. Approximately 210 off-street parking spaces would be provided comprising a combination of detached garages

and hardstanding areas to the front and sides of the respective dwellings. Two main spine roads feed off the existing access road with a number of dwellings fronting onto the main access road and houses also facing towards Preston New Road with a landscaped buffer along the boundary. A number of dwellings back onto the Mythop Road and Marton Mere Holiday Park, again with a landscaped buffer to the respective boundaries. A significant amount of the existing boundary landscaping will be retained and supplemented with additional planting, the details of which would be agreed by condition.

5.2 A 125sqm children's play area is proposed towards the south of the site, which would be accessed directly from one of the proposed cul-de-sacs and close to the Preston New Road boundary. The development includes green infrastructure including tree planting around and within the site. The existing water attenuation basins associated with phase one of the scheme to the west of the site, would be utilised by the proposed development for the discharge of surface water.

5.3 The application is accompanied by the following supporting documents:

- Planning statement
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
- Ecological Appraisal
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Method Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment Addendum Strategy
- Viability Assessment (Confidential)
- Marketing Report
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Design and Access Statement
- GeoEnvironmental Statement
- Remediation Strategy
- Shadow Habitat Regulation Assessment

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

6.1 **15/0420** Hybrid Planning application comprising -

- a) full planning application for the erection of 118 dwellings with associated garages, landscaping, highway works and new access off Preston New Road.
- b) outline planning application for the demolition of the existing National Savings and Investments Building and the erection of offices (Use Class B1a) and light industrial premises (Use Class B1c) with associated roads, parking/servicing areas and landscaping. Granted 28th Oct 2016 subject to a Section 106 Agreement relating to phasing of the development.

7.0 MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.1 The main planning issues are considered to be:

- principle of the development

- site layout and housing mix
- impact on residential and visual amenity
- impact on highway safety / car parking provision
- design and layout considerations
- public open space/ children play provision
- planning contributions

8.0 **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

8.1 **Blackpool Services, Contaminated Land:** The Phase 1 and 11 reports shows that there are elevated concentrations within some of the ground conditions. Following the recommendations of the report a remediation and validation is required. These matters can be dealt with by way of condition.

8.2 **Natural England:** For residential development in this area, proportionate assessment of recreational disturbance impacts on the coastal designated sites resulting from the development is required via the Screening stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), as required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitat Regulations').

Under Regulation 63 of the Habitat Regulations the determination of likely significant effect is for the Local Planning Authority. If your authority can be satisfied that the proposal can conclude no likely significant effects there is no further need to consult Natural England. Where the HRA Screening cannot rule out a likely significant effect on the coastal designated sites then an Appropriate Assessment is required, of which Natural England is a statutory consultee, please consult us again at this stage. Natural England has not assessed this application for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published Standing Advice which you can use to assess impacts on protected species or you may wish to consult your own ecology services for advice.

The planning agent submitted two Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRP) screening documents which show no significant effects. In response, Natural England have not objected to the scheme but are requiring that the development should proceed in accordance with the mitigation measure identified in the submitted Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) by Envirotech dated 09/04/2020 (householder information packs to be provided in the new dwellings).

8.3 **Electricity North West Ltd:** standard comments where proposed development adjoins and could have an impact upon infrastructure.

8.4 **County Archaeologist LCC:** The site is largely under the footprint of the former "ERNIE" complex and its associated car parks. Evaluation of land to the west suggested that area had been planed off to the top of the subsoil levels as part of the development of the NS&I complex, removing any features of archaeological or historical significance. We are of the opinion that the current proposal, which is on a site which will have undergone considerable more disturbance, is extremely unlikely

to be of archaeological interest and would therefore not offer any objections to, or further advice on, the proposed development

- 8.5 **NHS Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG):** This proposal will generate approximately 216 new patient registrations based on average household size of 2.4. The proposed development falls within the catchment area of Harris Medical Centre. This need, with other new developments in the area, can only be met through the refurbishment and reconfiguration of the existing premises in order to ensure sustainable general practice. The practice is located less than 0.2 miles from the development and would therefore be the practice where the majority of the new residents register for general medical services. The CCG has assessed the implications of this proposal on delivery of general practice services and is of the opinion that it will have a direct impact which will require mitigation with the payment of an appropriate financial contribution. This contribution amounts to £24,805.
- 8.6 **Police Architectural Liaison Officer:** I recommend that the development is designed and constructed to Secured by Design 'Homes 2019' security specification early in the design phase to mitigate any risk to crime.
- 8.7 **United Utilities Plc (Water):** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.8 **Head of Transportation:** I accept the parking provision currently shown. I also accept the conclusions in the Transport Assessment. I have a few minor points on the detail of the layout, as below. Tandem parking spaces are unacceptable on the main road into the site. That applies to plots 120,168,172,173 and 204. They should be amended to side by side, people do not use tandem spaces.
- The bin collection points need to move. The one at plot 116 should be moved as close to the road as possible to reduce the standing time for the collection vehicle. The ones at plots 132 and 157 should both be moved as close to the road as possible to reduce the drag for the loaders to a minimum. I also do not see why a small number of plots have no footway adjacent to what will be an adopted road. For example plots 125,134,157. Without a good reason the strips should be replaced with footway. The will not be accepted in s38 negotiations. Any other highway issues can come out in the s38 process. Amended plans have been submitted which satisfy the above comments.
- 8.9 **Head of Housing and Environmental Protection Service:** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.10 **Assistant Director - Enterprise and Business Development:** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.

- 8.11 **Environment Agency:** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.12 **Fylde Borough Council:** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.13 **Fire Service:** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.14 **Education - Property and Development Officer:** We do not envisage any issues with the proposed 90 additional properties in relation to primary school places. The forecast is for surplus primary places in the next few years. Primary forecasts for Blackpool's south planning area predict surplus places running at around 100 in relation to overall availability. Mereside and Marton Primary Academies are currently consulting on reducing their intake numbers from September 2021. For secondary schools, we predict that things will be tight from September 2023 for four or five years when pupil numbers will rise. This will require additional secondary places and the Council will be addressing this matter. However, the small number of proposed houses and potential additional pupil yield would not seem to present a significant change. We also expect that the main increase in secondary demand will be in north and central planning areas.
- 8.15 **WASTE- Residential:** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.16 **Parks and Green Environment:** Recommended the on-site provision of a LAP (local area for play and intended for young children) to be enclosed with fencing and a minimum of 100sqm in area. The amended location of the LAP accessed direct from one of the cul-de-sacs and increased in size to 125sqm is acceptable. (The LAP will be fitted with an appropriate level of play equipment to be provided by the applicants. The details of which can be dealt with by condition, including the long term maintenance of the play equipment)
- 8.17 **Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) (i.e Biological Heritage Sites):** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.
- 8.18 **Head of Transportation (Network Maintenance):** No comments have been received in time for inclusion in this report. If any comments are received in advance of the Committee meeting they will be reported through the update note.

9.0 REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 Press notice published: 24th January 2020
Site notices x 4 published: 29th January 2020
Neighbours notified: 16th January 2020

9.2 Two representations have been received raising the following issues:

15 Stock Road- concerns regarding the quality of construction of existing houses built on adjoining land. It is considered the applicants should not be allowed to build any further homes until the existing properties meet the required technical standards.

26 Mythop Road- concerns regarding the loss of trees which run along the south eastern site boundary with gardens of the properties facing Mythop Road and the distance the proposed houses will be sited from the common boundary.

The Police Architectural Liaison Officer states that 'rear gardens that are adjacent to public spaces, public rights of way, woodland or countryside are more vulnerable as a concealed and less visible approach is available that makes them more likely to be targeted.' Therefore, the proposal makes the proposed dwellings 140-191 backing onto Mythop Road and the houses along Mythop Road more vulnerable to intrusion.

10.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

10.1 National Planning Policy Framework

10.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in February 2019. It sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following sections are most relevant to this application:

- Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 - Making effective use of land
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

10.2 National Planning Practice Guidance

10.2.1 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) expands upon and offers clarity on the points of policy set out in the NPPF.

10.3 Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027

10.3.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016. The following policies are most relevant to this application:

- CS1 - Strategic location for development
- CS2 - Housing provision
- CS3 – Economic development and employment
- CS5 – Connectivity
- CS6 - Green infrastructure
- CS7 - Quality of design
- CS9 - Water management
- CS10 - Sustainable design
- CS12- Sustainable neighbourhoods
- CS13 - Housing mix density and standards
- CS14 - Affordable housing
- CS15 - Health and education
- CS24 - South Blackpool employment growth
- CS27 - South Blackpool connectivity and transport

None of the policies listed conflict with the policies in the Saved Blackpool Local Plan.

10.4 Blackpool Local Plan 2011-2016 (saved policies)

10.4.1 The Blackpool Local Plan was adopted in June 2006. A number of policies in the Local Plan have now been superseded by policies in the Core Strategy but others have been saved until the Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies has been produced. The following saved policies are most relevant to this application:

- LQ1 - Lifting the Quality of Design
- LQ2 - Site Context
- LQ3 - Layout of Streets and Spaces
- LQ4 - Building Design
- LQ5 - Public Realm Design
- LQ6 - Landscape Design and Biodiversity
- BH3 - Residential Amenity
- BH4 - Public Health and Safety
- BH10 - Open Space in New Housing Developments
- HN4 - Windfall Sites (for housing development)
- NE6 – Protected Species
- NE7 – Site and Features of Landscape, Nature Conservation and Environmental Value
- DE1 - Industrial and Business Land Provision
- AS1 - General Development Requirements
- AS2 – New development with Significant Transport Implications

10.5 Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (emerging policies)

10.5.1 The Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 has been subject to an informal consultation exercise and will be subject to formal consultation later this year. At this point in time limited weight can be attached to the policies proposed. Nevertheless, the following draft policies in Part 2 are most relevant to this application:

- Policy DM5: Design Requirements for New Build Housing Development
- Policy DM33: Biodiversity
- Policy DM39: Transport Requirements for New Development

The application site is identified as a housing allocation in the Blackpool Local Plan:Part 2 (H22).

10.6 Other relevant documents

- Supplementary Planning Guidance 11: Open Space: provision for new residential development and the funding system.
- Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

11.0 ASSESSMENT

11.1 Principle

11.1.1 The site is allocated as a Main Industrial/Business Area on the Proposals Map to the Local Plan and as such, the application constitutes a departure from the Local Plan. Should the Planning Committee be minded to grant planning permission, the application will have to be referred to the Secretary Of State who may wish to call the application in for his own determination.

11.1.2 There is concern over the loss of the employment land, especially given the Council has had to approach Fylde Council to provide 14ha of employment land to meet Blackpool's future needs, but this needs to be balanced against the circumstances on the site and the need to look for a solution in bringing the site back into use. The applicant has demonstrated that the site has been unsuccessfully marketed for business development for a number of years. Furthermore, since 2016 the Government and the Council have been actively encouraging new businesses to locate at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, with incentives such as Business Rates Relief and Enhanced Capital Allowances, making employment land elsewhere a less attractive proposition for new businesses.

11.1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and should reflect changes in the demand for land. The NPPF confirms that where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of development coming forward for

the use allocated in their local plan, they should reallocate the land for more deliverable use that can help address identified needs, and in the interim, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported where proposals would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.

- 11.1.4 The scheme would make a substantial quantitative contribution towards meeting Blackpool's housing requirement and provide a qualitative improvement to the housing stock by the addition of two, three and four bedroom family homes. Whilst at present the Council is able to identify a five year supply of housing land, it must be acknowledged that Blackpool is a very tightly constrained, urban borough, with relatively little opportunity for major housing development. An approval in this instance would provide a valuable buffer to offer greater choice and availability in the market-place. Nevertheless, there is no unmet housing need at the current time.
- 11.1.5 The site is allocated for housing under the draft Part 2: Site Allocation and Development Management Policies document, to assist the Council in meeting its five year housing supply. Although little weight can be given to this proposed change of allocation in advance of the publication of Part 2, the draft document was subject to an informal consultation early in 2019 and it should be noted that no objections were made to this site being allocated for housing.
- 11.1.6 As stated above, the NPPF advocates that proposals on land that is unlikely to come forward for its allocated use should be supported where they would meet an unmet need. In this case, the applicant has demonstrated and it is accepted by officers that the land is unlikely to come forward for employment uses in the short to medium term. At present, Blackpool does not have an unmet need. That said, and whilst the proposed allocation in Part 2 cannot be afforded much weight, it is likely that larger sites such as this will be required to meet housing need in the future. Given the constrained nature of the borough and the rarity of sites of this scale, this is considered to weigh very heavily in favour of the application. As such and on balance, whilst this proposal represents a departure from planning policy, it is considered to be acceptable in principle.

11.2 Site layout and housing mix

- 11.2.1 The proposal would deliver a mix of two, three and four bedroom properties and a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. Core Strategy Policy CS13 normally requires that 20% (18) of the houses should have two bedrooms to deliver a good housing mix. The scheme proposes just six houses with two bedrooms, contrary to the required mix in CS13. However, the applicant has demonstrated that there is limited demand for two bedroom properties within their developments, with the highest demand coming for houses with three plus bedrooms. They also argue that Blackpool has an over-concentration of smaller housing units and a lack of larger, detached and semi-detached houses and replacing three and four bedroom units with two bedroom units would render the scheme unviable.
- 11.2.2 Having considered the issue of viability and the benefits that the proposal would bring in terms of meeting an identified housing need, the conflict with Policy CS13 is

not considered to weigh significantly against the proposal and the housing mix is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

11.2.3 The layout has been designed to be primarily outward looking and in an attractive setting, behind linear landscaped buffers to the north, south and east. Trees are included throughout the scheme along with shrubs and grassed areas, minimising the impact of the development on neighbouring residents. The site layout is similar to, and a continuation of phase one to the west, and is considered to be acceptable.

11.3 Amenity

11.3.1 Cross sections have been submitted, showing the site levels in relation to the existing houses on Mythop Road. The levels are acceptable, especially when considering the 30m+ separation distances between the existing properties on Mythop Road and the proposed houses to the east of the site and the landscaping/tree planting to be provided in between.

11.3.2 The proposed houses would all have private amenity space to the side and/or rear and although not all of the houses meet the Nationally Prescribed Space Standards in terms of total floorspace and bedroom sizes, there is no current policy requirement for them to do so. The accommodation proposed would be of a reasonable standard and no amenity issues are identified on this ground.

11.3.3 The scheme includes green infrastructure which would soften the appearance of the estate and provide some local amenity space which would benefit future occupants of the estate.

11.3.4 Refuse collection would either be from the pavement or from dedicated bin collection points, all of which would meet bin drag distances.

11.3.5 On balance, no adverse impacts on amenity are anticipated.

11.4 Visual Impact

11.4.1 The house types used in the development are the same as in phase one to the west, including materials and should phase two go ahead, both sites would read as one development. The houses are well designed and detailed and offer a variety of materials and finishes which complement each other.

11.4.2 There would initially be a loss of landscaping around the perimeter of the site, particularly along the northern and eastern boundary which weighs against the scheme. However, additional landscaping and tree planting is proposed and would be secured by condition in mitigation. The landscaping scheme would soften the appearance of the streetscene and would add visual interest to the estate.

11.4.3 Like phase one, the estate would be open plan. Private garden space would be enclosed by either 1.8m brick walls, 1.8m or 0.9m high timber fences with timber knee rails separating the estate from green spaces. A 125sqm play area would be

enclosed by 1m high bow top railings. The various boundary treatments are considered to be appropriate and reflect phase one.

11.4.4 On balance, the overall design of the scheme is considered to be acceptable and no undue visual impacts are anticipated.

11.5 Planning Obligations

11.5.1 Policy CS11 states that development will only be permitted where the developer enters into a legal undertaking or agreement to meet the additional needs arising from the development. The application was submitted along with a viability report, which stated no developer contributions were viable. The Council worked with the applicant and consultants Lambert Smith Hampton on the issue of viability, and a sum of £125,000 contribution is viable. The applicant is prepared to enter into a Section 106 agreement to pay this sum of money towards essential infrastructure.

11.5.2 Policy CS14 requires that 30% of new houses should be affordable unless such requirements would render a development unviable. The draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (AHSPD) sets out the need for affordable housing in Blackpool, the required mix and the calculations per unit.

11.5.3 On a development of 90 dwellings, the contribution towards affordable housing of 30% would be 27 affordable housing units on site, or a contribution towards off-site affordable housing in the order of £1,547,000 (2 x 1 bed apartments at £27,000 each = £55,000, 4 x 2 bed apartments at £42,000 each, 4 x 2 bed houses at £52,000 each, 6 x 3 bed apartments at £59,000 each, 6 x 3 bed houses at £67,000 each and 5 x 4+ bed houses at £72,000 each = £1,547,000 according to the needs and costs set out in the AHSPD).

11.5.4 Policy CS15 states that contributions will be sought from developers towards the provision of health facilities where their development would impact on the capacity of existing healthcare facilities. The NHS Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group has assessed the implications of the proposal on the delivery of general practice services and are requiring a £24,805 contribution towards the refurbishment and reconfiguration at Harris Medical Centre, which falls within the catchment of the application site. The sum of £24,805 contribution could be secured in a Section 106 agreement.

11.5.5 Policy CS6 requires development to incorporate new or enhance existing green infrastructure and confirms that financial contributions will be sought from development for open space and green infrastructure. The Supplementary Planning Guidance 11: Open Space (SPG11) sets out the public open space requirements in new housing development, until it is replaced by the draft Greening Blackpool Supplementary Planning Document.

11.5.6 SPG11 calculations state that 7,056sqm of open space is required as a result of this development. 125sqm of play space for young children is proposed within the scheme so the total requirement would be 6,931sqm. (30 x 4 bed houses =

2,880sqm, 54 x 3 bed houses = 3,888sqm, 6 x 2 bed houses = 288sqm = 7,056sqm requirement less 125sqm play space = 6931sqm requirement.). SPG11 requires a contribution of £14.33 per sqm which equates to £99,321.23 and this could be accommodated within the £125,000 contribution proposed.

11.5.7 There is currently no requirement for a financial contribution towards local education provision.

11.5.8 The issue of viability on this site has been independently verified by consultants Lambert Smith Hampton. If the £125,000 that is available were to be split proportionally between the three competing requirements of affordable housing, local health care and public open space; the over-whelming majority would be directed to affordable housing provision with negligible sums for health and open space. However, officers are mindful that a new 100% affordable housing scheme is currently being developed at Troutbeck Crescent and that a significant amount of affordable housing is otherwise available locally on the existing Mereside estate. On this basis, it is considered that the greatest public benefit in this instance would be achieved by directing the available funds to public open space and local health care provision with the nominal excess given over to affordable housing.

11.6 Flooding and Drainage

11.6.1 The site is in Flood Zone one and so has a low risk of tidal or river flooding. The site also has low risk of ground water, surface water, sewer or reservoir flooding. As the development is not at risk of flooding, the main issue is ensuring that the proposed development does not cause flooding elsewhere.

11.6.2 The submitted Flood Risk Addendum identifies that 62.3% of the site is currently impermeable. Should the site be developed for housing, the impermeable areas would be reduced to 31.7% meaning surface water could infiltrate in a greater area, resulting in less run-off and reducing the chances of flooding elsewhere. The planting of trees and green infrastructure would further increase the capacity of permeable areas to act as a soak away.

11.6.3 The drainage principles for phase one were agreed with United Utilities and phase two would adopt the same drainage principles. Surface water would be fed into an existing attenuation basin with foul water being directed into the foul sewer.

11.6.4 In terms of flood risk and the requirements of Policy CS9, it is not anticipated that the proposed development would cause flooding on site or elsewhere.

11.7 Ecology

11.7.1 The site is within 500 metres of the Marton Mere SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The submitted Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRP) screening documents show no significant effects on the coastal designated sites. In response, Natural England have not objected to the scheme but are requiring that the development should proceed in accordance with the mitigation measure identified

in the submitted Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) by Envirotech dated 09/04/2020 (householder information packs to be provided in the new dwellings).

11.7.2 The submitted ecological appraisal of the site confirms that plant species and assemblages recorded at the site are all common in the local area and are considered to be of low ecological value. Domestic gardens and sympathetically landscaped open space is considered to offer habitat of equal or greater ecological value. No notable or protected species were recorded on the site.

11.7.3 A tree protection plan has been submitted and the details have been agreed with colleagues in Parks. A condition requiring the felling of trees and removal of vegetation etc. to take place outside of the bird nesting season (March to September) is considered necessary.

11.7.4 Installing bird and bat boxes around the development and agreeing the landscaping by condition will offer the opportunity to ensure that the development has overall ecological benefits which would weigh in favour of the proposal.

11.8 Highways

11.8.1 The scheme has been considered by the Head of Transportation and all matters raised during the initial consultation and reported in the Consultation Responses section, have been resolved.

11.8.2 The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that the proposed housing scheme would result in a significant reduction in vehicle movements compared to the use of the land as an employment site.

11.8.3 All of the properties would have two parking spaces, with some of the larger houses also having a garage. The garages and driveways should be subject to a restrictive condition to ensure that the development has sufficient off-street parking spaces and reduce the incidences of cars being parked on the highway.

11.8.4 The site is in an established residential area, on one of the main routes into Blackpool. The site is considered to have good accessibility, on bus routes on Preston New Road and close to schools and services.

11.9. Contaminated Land

11.9.1 A Phase I and Phase II Geo-Environmental Site Assessment has been submitted which provides an assessment of the geological, geotechnical, mining, hydrological, hydrogeological and contamination setting at the site. This assessment concludes that there is a low potential for groundwater contamination. A condition requiring the submission of a remediation and validation report is necessary to demonstrate that this will be appropriately mitigated.

11.10 Security

11.10.1 A neighbour on Mythop Road has raised the issue of security posed by the landscape strip between the development and the back gardens of properties on Mythop Road. This strip could be gated at either end in a wildlife friendly manner so that the land still functions as a green corridor but prevents unauthorised/unsupervised access. These details can be secured by condition.

11.10.2 Issues to do with the quality of the build are dealt with under the Building Regulations rather than planning.

11.11 Other issues

11.11.1 The scheme would not impact upon biodiversity. Air, land and water quality would be unaffected and the site would not be expected to be at undue risk from such.

11.11.2 The application has been considered in the context of the Council's general duty in all its functions to have regard to community safety issues as required by section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended).

11.11.3 Under Article 8 and Article 1 of the first protocol to the Convention on Human Rights, a person is entitled to the right to respect for private and family life, and the peaceful enjoyment of his/her property. However, these rights are qualified in that they must be set against the general interest and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This application does not raise any specific human rights issues.

11.11.4 The scheme would generate income to the Council from the collection of domestic council tax but this is not a consideration that carries any weight in the planning balance.

11.12 Sustainability and planning balance appraisal

11.12.1 Sustainability comprises economic, environmental and social components.

11.12.2 Economically, the site is safeguarded for employment use and the proposal constitutes a departure from the Local Plan which weighs against the proposal. However, the applicant has demonstrated that the site has been marketed for employment uses for a number of years without any interest. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and alternative uses of land should be supported where proposals would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area. Although there is no unmet need at present, it is anticipated that there will be in the future and that large sites like this will be required to meet that demand. Some limited employment would be generated through the construction process and future residents would help support local shops and services.

11.12.3 Environmentally, no impacts on biodiversity have been identified. Replacement and additional tree planting and green infrastructure is proposed which will be environmentally beneficial, as would the reduced flood risk as a result of increased permeability and green infrastructure across the site. No unacceptable visual impacts have been identified.

11.12.4 Socially, the scheme would deliver good quality family homes in a pleasant environment, making a significant contribution towards Blackpool's housing requirements. No unacceptable amenity impacts are anticipated and no undue impacts on highway safety are expected. The scheme can contribute towards public open space and health provision locally, but cannot make any significant contribution towards the affordable housing requirement as this would render it financially unviable.

11.12.5 In terms of planning balance, the benefits of providing good quality family homes which will assist in re-balancing the town's housing stock and the contribution towards green infrastructure are, in this instance, considered sufficient to outweigh the employment land allocation and the lack of contributions towards affordable housing provision. The design of the scheme is otherwise acceptable and so the proposal is judged to constitute sustainable development. No other material planning considerations have been identified that would outweigh this view and so that scheme is deemed to be acceptable.

12.0 CONCLUSION

12.1 As set out above, the scheme is judged to represent sustainable development and no other material planning considerations have been identified that would outweigh this assessment. On this basis, planning permission should be granted.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION

13.1 Resolve to agree the proposal in principle and grant planning permission subject to conditions and a S106 agreement and confirmation from the Secretary of State that he does not want to call the application in for his own determination.

13.2 A list of proposed conditions is being prepared and will be communicated through the update note. These conditions are expected to cover the following:

- Standard timeframe for commencement
- Development to proceed in accordance with approved plans
- Details of materials
- Fenestration to be recessed behind elevation frontage
- Details of surfacing
- Details of boundary treatments
- Details of landscaping
- Protection for existing trees to be retained in accordance with submitted tree protection plan

- No vegetation clearance during bird nesting season
- Ecological enhancement measures to be provided
- Work to proceed in accordance with habitats regulations recommendations
- Foul and surface water to be drained separately
- Surface water drainage scheme to be agreed
- Drainage management scheme to be agreed
- Highways management scheme to be agreed
- Construction management plan to be agreed
- Details of play area
- Play area to be provided as agreed
- Land contamination remediation and validation report to be agreed
- Remove permitted development rights to protect open plan character of estate
- Remove permitted development rights to protect car parking provision
- Car parking provision for each dwelling to be provided prior to first occupation
- No use of properties for holiday accommodation
- No use of properties as small HMOs
- Provision of electric vehicle charging points
- Agreement and implementation of a travel plan
- Provision of security lighting for each dwelling