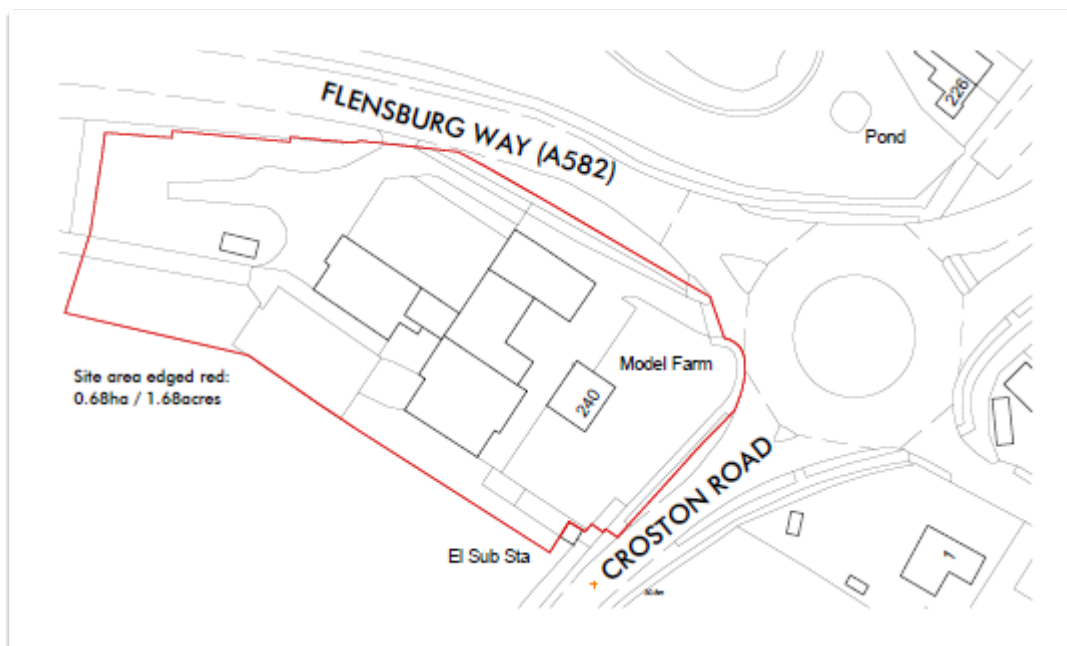


Application Number	07/2023/00257/FUL
Address	Model Farm 240 Croston Road Farington Moss Leyland Lancashire PR26 6PN
Applicant	WHITWELL PROPERTIES LIMITED
Agent	Mrs Sophie Marshall MacMarshalls Ltd Hamill House 112-116 Chorley New Road Bolton BL1 4DH
Development	Demolition of Existing Buildings and Erection of Start Up Commercial Units
Officer Recommendation	Approval with Conditions
Date application valid	04.04.2023
Target Determination Date	14.12.2023
Extension of Time	14.12.2023

Location Plan



Report Summary

- 1.1 This application relates to the demolition of existing vacant buildings in the Green Belt. The site was previously in commercial use and is therefore considered as Previously Developed Land under the definition in the NPPF. The application proposes new build start up units which will provide employment opportunities and redevelop a vacant site.
- 1.2 The proposal is not considered to have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing situation and is therefore compliant with Policy G1 in the South Ribble Local Plan.
- 1.3 Objections have been received from nearby residents, expressing concerns, including that the proposal will result in an increase in noise and traffic. However, County Highways have no objections in principle, subject to the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions.
- 1.4 Consultation responses relating to Trees, Ecology, and Environmental Health do not raise any concerns that cannot be addressed through the imposition of conditions to provide mitigation for the proposed development. It is considered that with these conditions in place, the proposals are acceptable, and the application is recommended for approval.

Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application relates to the former Model Farm, 240 Croston Road, Leyland, which has a site area of 0.68 hectares and is located approximately 2km to the north of Leyland Town Centre.
- 2.2 The site consists of a former residential property (no 240 Croston Road) to the east, with a number of former agricultural buildings set behind. There is a man-made pond associated with the former use as a dairy farm and a large amount of hardstanding on the site. The existing dwelling is set back from Croston Road with grass to its frontage and comprises a 2 storey traditional brick built property with pitched roof. The barns are varying sizes and heights.
- 2.3 Whilst the site was originally a dairy farm, it had more laterally been used as a plant nursery business and an outdoor furniture shop / planter business with storage. The site has most recently been used for a mixed use of residential with manufacture, storage and retail sales and is currently vacant.
- 2.4 The site is screened from the adjacent A582 to the north with established vegetation. To the south, there is a substation which fronts onto Croston Road. The remainder of land to the south and west is open grassland which is agricultural in use. On the northern side of Flensburg Way there are a number of fishing lakes, beyond which is Moss Farm. On the opposite side of Croston Road to the east there are several residential properties and kennels.
- 2.5 The existing vehicular access into the site is via a dedicated access directly off Croston Road, immediately adjacent to the roundabout which serves the junction of Croston Road and Flensburg Way, which lies to the immediate north-east of the site.
- 2.6 Within the site, the internal access road runs along the northern boundary leading to the former car parking area which was positioned to the west of the site. There was an historic vehicular access egress from the car park area directly onto Flensburg Way where there is still a dropped kerb present. This access is currently redundant and hoarded off.
- 2.7 The site is relatively flat in nature and is wholly within Flood Zone 1.

- 2.8 The site and surrounding area are located within the Green Belt which is covered by Policy G1 of the South Ribble Local Plan and within an Area of Separation covered by Policy G5.

Planning History

- 07/2021/00918/FUL – Formation of new agricultural access and associated works. Approved 17.12.2021.

LCC Highways Application:

- LCC/2020/0014 – Improvement of Existing A582 and B5253 in Leyland to four lane dual carriageway standard with segregated combined cycle track between Broad Oak Roundabout and the Stanifield Lane/Watkin Lane Roundabout (A582) and the Flensberg Way roundabout to Longmeanygate junction (B5253). The development includes new carriageways, upgrade of existing Croston Road, Sherdly Road and Longmeanygate Junctions to fully signalised operation, embankments, attenuation ponds, landscape/ecological mitigation works, new railway bridges, retaining structures and fences, alteration/extension or subway, bridges and culverts and temporary contractor access and compounds.
- 3.1 The above application has been valid since February 2020 and is currently pending with no changes since 2020.

Proposal

- 4.1 The application proposes the demolition of all existing buildings on the site and the erection of start-up commercial units. A total of 16 start-up units are proposed. There are two types of units (A & B) where these range from 75.17 sq. m to 98.96 sq. m. in size and are single storey. Unit A will measure 6.59 m to ridge and 5.4m to eaves in height and Unit B measures 6.7m to ridge and 5.4m to eaves.
- 4.2 The buildings will be constructed and let out as shells with individual fit outs being agreed with individual tenants. Anticipated uses would be B2, B8 and E (g). Internally the units would each have a small kitchen area and WC facilities.
- 4.3 The proposed units are arranged in four rows of units, with two rows positioned in an NE/SW orientation and two rows in a SE/NW orientation. In terms of proposed materials these are to be coloured green to blend in with the surrounding landscaping.
- 4.4 The vehicular access road into the application site is to be relocated from the NE corner of the site to further southwest along Croston Road, which is further away from the existing roundabout. The access will be gated, and the gates will be open during the daytime and locked for security in the evening/weekends.
- 4.5 The proposal also includes parking for 2 spaces per unit, whereby the parking spaces for units A1- A12 are of sufficient dimensions to allow for light vans. In addition, there are an extra 18 visitor spaces, plus two further dedicated disabled spaces. There are 3 proposed covered cycle stores which will each cater for approximately 10 cycles.

Summary of Supporting Documents

- 5.1 The application is accompanied by the following documents:

- ☐ Full application forms
- ☐ Site Location Plan

- ☐ Proposed Site Layout Drawing, Floorplans and Elevations
- ☐ Topographical Survey
- ☐ Phase 1 & 2 Site Investigation Report
- ☐ Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- ☐ Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- ☐ Bat Survey - Dusk Survey Results
- ☐ Noise Assessment
- ☐ Utilities Search Report
- ☐ Planning Statement
- ☐ Completed CIL Forms

5.2 Amended site plans and additional highways information were submitted during the course of the application following extensive discussions with LCC County Highways.

Representations

6.1 Neighbouring properties were notified, and a site notice posted with letters of representation being received, both objecting and support. Those objecting were on the following grounds:

- Traffic congestion on Croston Road
- Concerns over pedestrians crossing Croston Road and pedestrian safety
- Concern the site will look like Centurian Way Industrial Estate and be a blot on the landscape
- Concern about commercial and residential uses next to each other
- Greenbelt should be protected
- Amendments contradict traffic proposals for this part of Croston Road
- Concern that industrial sites once built out will not be maintained.
- Land was previously a farm with no detrimental effect on Croston Road, this will be unsightly and access will negatively effect local residents.
- Farington Moss is turning into a giant Industrial Estate
- Inappropriate use of land. Site is a residential area and unsuitable for commercial development
- Insufficient proposed parking on the development
- Size, privacy and design
- Object to loss of mature trees even if replaced 2:1 with smaller trees due to environmental impact and loss of visual amenity
- Industrial units likely to operate outside daylight hours with resulting light pollution and noise pollution being suffered by residents at all hours of day and night
- Number of bat roosts in property, proposed low level bat boxes don't offer suitable remediation
- Loss of Open Space
- Supporting infrastructure cannot support any additional traffic
- Croston Road suffers from tarmac deterioration and frequent flooding
- Commercialisation of protected land should be avoided at all costs
- The design is not in keeping with a residential area
- What will happen if Croston Road becomes blocked off at roundabout. Would mean industrial vehicles using Croston Road as an access.
- Access adjacent to a roundabout is inappropriate

6.2 Those supporting were on the following grounds:

- The derelict farm is now of poor condition and has become unsightly within the area and also a potential danger.
- The current farm/buildings are also unsightly and will deteriorate further in the future as the site is no longer a working farm. It was used as a small industrial type business manufacturing garden furniture prior to the application being made.

- Leyland economy needs more projects like this to help start up, new and local businesses.
- Excellent design and hopefully provide more jobs for the area.
- Good use of the site. The small units will be a great addition for local small businesses and sole traders.

Summary of Consultations

- 7.1 **Lancashire County Council Highways** have provided comments based on all the information provided by the applicant to date. The final Highway Authority response confirms that LCC have no objections although they advise they have some reservations regarding the extent of the proposed development. These reservations focus on an issue surrounding an anomaly over the adoption of old Lodge Lane. The applicants and their agents are aware there is a live planning application for the proposed widening of the A582 on the land required for the widening which is within the ownership of the applicant. However, as the A582 widening scheme does not have planning permission at this stage, LCC do not object to this planning application but would recommend the scheme is amended to avoid the road widening.
- 7.2 In relation to the proposed vehicular access into the site LLC comment that;
- ‘The updated plan includes improved radius on the north of the access, together with the existing footway, and the stopping up of the farm access. The tracking which has been provided in your email of 15 November 2023, shows the rigid vehicle tracking is tight when entering and existing the site, the access may need to be tweaked during the s278 process. This access is acceptable for planning purpose and as the basis of the s278 for the access/highway works’*
- 7.3 In relation to cycle storage, LCC comment that the proposed shelter is suitable for visitor storage and further details are required for long terms staff cycle parking which can be conditioned.
- 7.4 **Arboriculture** –the Council’s Tree Officer has reviewed the information submitted and identifies that the proposal suggests the removal of 9 trees in total, which comprise of Category B and C trees. There is no objection to the removal of these trees to facilitate the development on the basis of a suitable landscaping plan which mitigates tree loss at a minimum of 2:1 basis. Replacement trees should be a minimum 8 – 10cm diameter and planted in areas of open space suitable for long term retention. It is recommended that a landscaping plan is submitted and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of development, which can be secured by the imposition of a planning condition.
- 7.5 A standard condition covering tree planting replacement within a period of 5 years if any tree dies, is removed, destroyed or damaged is recommended to ensure the visual appearance of the development is satisfactory.
- 7.7 **Environmental Health** have reviewed the submitted Noise Assessment and have no objection subject to the imposition of planning conditions both during construction and when operational to control timing of loading and deliveries to minimise potential impact outside of the hours on nearby residential properties.
- 7.7 **Greater Manchester Ecology Unit** raise no overall objections to the planning application on Ecology grounds and suggest a number of conditions to ensure appropriate mitigation relating to bats, lighting, and the provision of a swallow shelter.
- 7.8 The agent for the application has responded to the request and confirmed in writing that the applicant is willing to provide a bespoke swallow shelter.

- 7.9 In relation to Biodiversity Net Gain, GMEU comment as follows: *'The proposed layout appears to include moderate areas of soft landscaping assuming the green areas on the proposed site layout are amenity space, with adequate potential to mitigate for loss of trees and existing amenity grassland. I am therefore satisfied that a biodiversity net gain assessment could be waived and that the detail of landscape and biodiversity enhancement measures can be conditioned (assuming the green areas are not hardstanding).'*

Policy Background

- 7.10 The site is located within the Green Belt and Area of Separation in the adopted Local Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 2. Achieving sustainable development

- 7.11 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 7.12 Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places

- 7.13 At paragraph 124, the NPPF advised that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 7.14 At paragraph 127 it requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments meet a range of criteria to deliver well- designed spaces.

Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt Land

- 7.15 Paragraph 137 confirms the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. Paragraph 147 indicates that inappropriate development is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 7.16 Paragraph 149 states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development;

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

- 7.17 **Policy 1: Locating Growth** focuses growth and investment on well-located brownfield sites and the Strategic Location of Central Preston, the Key Service Centres of Chorley and Leyland and the other main urban areas in South Ribble, whilst protecting the character of suburban and rural areas.

South Ribble Local Plan

- 7.18 **Policy G1 - Green Belt** The application site is designated as Green Belt by Policy G1 of the South Ribble Local Plan. In line with the NPPF, planning permission will not be given for the construction of new buildings which are considered inappropriate unless the proposal sits within a clearly defined range of exceptions, or the applicant can demonstrate that there are very special circumstances which clearly outweigh the harm caused to the fundamental open nature of the area. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances; when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and should determine proposals in accordance with the Local Development Plan.
- 7.19 A number of exceptions however are prescribed by both the NPPF and G1; these include g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would a) not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development
- 7.20 **G5 – Areas of Separation:** The three Areas of Separation are shown on the Policies Map as between:
AS1 Bamber Bridge and Lostock Hall;
AS2 Walton-le-Dale and Penwortham – including part of Central Park, see Policy G6;
AS3 Between Farington, Lostock Hall and Penwortham.
The Council will protect this land from inappropriate development in line with Policy G1 and the NPPF.
- 7.21 **Policy E2: Protection of Employment Sites and Areas** advises that land is protected for employment uses including business, general industrial or storage and distribution (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) as shown on the Policies Map:
a) in line with Core Strategy Policies 9 and 10 (Policy 10 does include a set criteria for the change of use to protected employment land if it was deemed appropriate within the Plan period)
b) in line with the Controlling the Reuse of Employment Premises Supplementary Planning Document; and
c) to support the local economy by ensuring there are jobs for local people and to attract commuters from outside the borough, at sites which are listed.
- The site itself whilst commercial is not listed under criterion (c)
- 7.22 **Policy G17: Design Criteria for New Development** permits new development, including extensions and free-standing structures, provided that, the proposal does not have a detrimental impact on the existing building, neighbouring buildings or on the street scene by virtue of its design, height, scale, orientation, plot density, massing, proximity, use of materials.

Material Considerations

- 8.1 **Green Belt** The supporting statement confirms that the site has been used for manufacture, storage and retail sale of furniture and planters, and the site was serviced by a range of commercial vehicles. Based on this, the applicant considers the site to be previously developed as it operated as a commercial business. This position was confirmed to the applicant in a written pre-application response, whereby it was also confirmed that with options for residential use and employment put forward, that the preferred option for the site would be for employment use. This was considered appropriate as the existing site was already in commercial use and Local Plan Policy E2 seeks to protect sites for employment purposes.

- 8.2 Annex 2 of the NPPF provides the following definition of Previously Developed Land, '*Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.*'
- 8.3 Based on the previous use of the site for commercial premises which has been described in detail above, the site is considered to be Previous Developed Land based on this definition. Therefore, the principle of the use of the previously development site for employment use, and specifically small units as is the case here is acceptable, subject to the size of the units in volume terms to ensure compliance with the Rural Development SPD and Green Belt policy, which is reviewed below in further detail.
- 8.4 The proposal includes the demolition of all existing buildings on the site and the erection of new build units as described in the proposals section.
- 8.5 The rural Development SPD encourages the development of small businesses in rural areas in paragraph 19 of Section D: Employment, and it is considered that this site whilst in the Green Belt, is conveniently located with good access to the highway and motorway network as detailed within paragraph 18 of the SPD. There are a mix of uses including residential and some commercial uses in the vicinity of the site.
- 8.6 Volumes of both the existing and proposed buildings were provided as part of the application. Taking account of the Rural SPD which permits an increase in volume of up to 30%, which this proposal is below, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development on the site is acceptable, subject to the impact on openness.

Impact on the openness of the Green Belt

- 8.7 Paragraph 137 confirms that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. Paragraph 147 indicates that inappropriate development is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. However, paragraph 149 indicates that the redevelopment of previously developed land can be considered not inappropriate development provided the development would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.
- 8.8 It is therefore necessary to assess whether the proposed development would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. If it is found that there is a greater impact, the proposals would be considered inappropriate development, and therefore harmful to the Green Belt. This approach is also reiterated through the Policy G1 of the Local Plan.
- 8.9 The existing buildings on site would be demolished and the proposed commercial units would be positioned to the eastern side of the site. The proposed buildings would largely be on a similar footprint to the existing buildings, albeit they are closer to Croston Road at the frontage with more space between to allow for car parking and circulation space and have a smaller footprint with less of a cluster in the central area. Indeed the footprint of the proposed buildings measures 900.38 sq m in comparison to 1991.55 sq m for those being demolished which is less than half the total area. The footprint of the commercial aspect has reduced by 285.83sqm. In terms of the overall volumes, this is proposed to increase by 28%. This

accords with the Rural Development SPD which allows up to a 30% increase in volume of development in the Green Belt subject to other policies being met.

- 8.10 The Council has worked with the developer to re-position some of the buildings to ensure that the western side of the site remains largely undeveloped in terms of massing to retain the openness in this area. The applicant has also agreed to a condition to ensure no external storage will be placed outside the buildings. To the west of the site the turning head is positioned on the area of the existing hardstanding and former car park area, which was historically utilised for external storage with historic images providing evidence of this. New landscaping will surround the turning head which will increase the greenspace in comparison to the existing use.
- 8.11 The existing buildings range in height, and whilst the replacement buildings are more uniform in size and height, they are broken up with car parking, and will be screened to the north by existing vegetation which is to be retained.
- 8.12 The existing farmhouse building at the front of the site has a ridge height of 8.61metres which compares to the proposed height to ridge of the units at 6.7m. In terms of eaves height the existing is 5.92m compared to 5.4m for the proposed units.
- 8.13 Based on the above, as the footprints and siting of the buildings are contained and similar to the existing, it is considered that the openness of the Green Belt would be retained, and the impact would be no greater than the existing site. As such, the proposed development would accord to paragraph 145 of the NPPF.
- 8.14 As it is not considered that the proposed development has a greater impact on openness, the scheme is considered to be not inappropriate in the Green Belt.

Impact on Area of Separation

- 8.15 Policy G5 sets out the Areas of Separation which are shown on the Policies Map as between: AS3 Between Farington, Lostock Hall and Penwortham. In these circumstances as the site is considered to be previously developed land and accords with the above Green Belt policies it is considered that the aims of the separation policy can be considered met and there would be no greater impact than the existing situation presents.

Access, Parking and Highway Issues

- 8.16 The application along with amended site layout drawings has been reviewed by LCC. Prior to submitting the application, the applicant had also undertaken a pre-application enquiry with LCC on the access to the site and received a written response which was provided in the application submission. The pre-application response suggested that neither the existing access off Croston Road adjacent to the roundabout nor use of the historic access directly onto Flensburg way were suitable. Flensburg Way has a 50mph speed limit and traffic pulling out onto this road is considered a safety concern and would also impact the flow of traffic. The existing access is sub standard for a future development for modern commercial vehicles, whereby the existing access point also suffers from poor alignment and geometry. LCC recommended the access point was moved further south along Croston Road.
- 8.17 In accordance with the LCC pre-application advice, the current application proposes a new access which is positioned off Croston Way. It is considered that the repositioning of the vehicular access point away from the existing junction is a benefit and improvement in terms of highway safety.
- 8.18 Internally within the site the Highway Authority is satisfied with the level of car parking proposed. During the course of the application, additional parking has been provided at the

request of the Highway Authority. The proposed parking includes the provision of dedicated disabled parking spaces. There are now 2 spaces positioned outside the frontage of each unit. On the majority of units these allow for a long wheel base transit van. In addition to these spaces there are separate visitor parking spaces.

- 8.19 The Highway Authority have been reconsulted and has confirmed that the proposed site plan, in relation to matters of access, vehicle tracking and parking provision is considered to be acceptable and a number of planning conditions have been recommended.
- 8.20 LCC in their latest response refer to the LCC highways application which has been live since early 2020 with no recent progress made. Whilst there are draft plans, as it stands there is no planning permission for any alternative proposals on land owned by the applicant. In the future should there be a permission in place for highway works, LCC have powers to acquire any land required.

Impact on Residential Amenity

- 8.21 A number of residents have objected to the proposal on the grounds of the potential for noise from increased traffic and the proposed use of the buildings. A Noise Assessment was provided during the application.
- 8.22 Environmental Health have considered the Noise Impact Assessment and advise that it is robust. Notwithstanding this Environmental Health consider it would be prudent to control and mitigate the impact of the development and therefore recommend conditions are imposed to restrict the hours of operation; and that no external plant or machinery be installed at the development without a further Noise Assessment. The proposed conditions are considered reasonable to protect residential amenity.
- 8.23 With the inclusion of the requested conditions, it is considered the proposal will be acceptable in terms of noise and disturbance and consequently would not have a detrimental impact on residential amenity for the neighbouring residents.

Economic and Social Needs

- 8.24 It is considered that the proposal will bring the site back into economic use to the benefit of the local economy. In terms of social needs, this will be of benefit if it provides employment for local people.

Trees

- 8.25 The application was accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Woodsage Consulting. The site survey identified a total of 24 individual trees and four groups of trees with the potential to be affected by the development proposals. The trees situated on or immediately adjacent to the site include eight Category B trees of moderate-quality, 15 Category C trees and four groups of low-quality, and one Category U tree which displays serious physiological and/or structural defects. There were no Category A trees of high-quality identified at the site.
- 8.26 It is advised that the development proposals will necessitate the removal of two Category B trees of moderate-quality, and nine Category C trees and two groups of low-quality. The remaining trees at the site will be retained, with the root protection areas (RPAs) suitably protected throughout the demolition and construction processes. The prominent Silver Birch Tree which lies close to the existing access and is in good condition will be retained.

- 8.27 A no-dig geo-cellular confinement system is to be installed underneath several proposed areas of hardstanding which encroach onto tree RPAs. This will ensure that the affected trees survive and thrive upon completion of the development.
- 8.29 To account for the unavoidable removal of trees from the site, and the associated impacts upon the local amenity and ecology, it is recommended that a minimum of 15 trees are included within a post-development mitigation planting scheme.
- 8.30 Although the removal of trees to facilitate the development proposals is unfortunate, the proposed mitigation planting will diversify the age and species composition of the tree population. The Council's Tree Officer does not object to the proposed development and has suggested that replacement trees are provide at a minimum of 8-10 cm diameter which has been incorporated to ensure the development is suitably screened and visual appearance of the development is not inappropriate.

Biodiversity

- 8.31 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (September 2022) and a separate Bat Survey – both by Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd were submitted in support of the application and advised the following; One priority habitat was present on site; an intact hedgerow including seven functioning trees which has a fairly species rich ground flora, albeit containing several garden varieties, and the invasive species Montbretia. It is recommended that any developmental works retain the hedge as a key boundary feature and aim to enhance both its condition, and the areas around it, for its visual amenity and biodiversity value, as part of the development proposals.
- 8.32 Breeding provisions for Kestrel in the form of erection of a nest box/site on the site is recommended as part of the proposals. Mitigation for loss of Swallow nests is also recommended. A new dedicated Swallow shelter should be constructed that caters to this species which is faithful to its nest site arriving early spring following late summer migration. The new Swallow shelter should be constructed in a suitable area of the site away from harsh lighting and be accessible by Swallows and provide permanent long-term value to this species.
- 8.33 The Bat Survey (November 2022) included 2 separate survey visits which were recommended as a result of the initial Ecological Appraisal. This found that the farmhouse (B15) is being used by low numbers of Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats for roosting purposes. Based upon the evidence, the building is host to two separate 'Day roosts' of the named species in singular/small numbers. Whilst it is not possible to conclusively determine whether the Pipistrelle bats emerged from a single internal crevice with subsequent emergences at the open eaves, or several separate crevices, based on the two Pipistrelle emergence locations it has been concluded that two separate internal crevices are being utilised as 'Day roosts' by singular/low numbers of Common Pipistrelle. From the evidence gained during the dusk surveys, the use of the farmhouse at Model Farm by bats is considered to be of 'low' level significance relatable to Common Pipistrelle bats and their current status. In terms of mitigation , no foraging habitats will be lost as a result of the development and it is suggested that to ensure that bats are not left without a roost while works take place one tree, wall, or pole-mounted (as appropriate) bat box will be erected within the site boundary or wider ownership boundary, away from the works but within direct line of sight of the roost areas. The box should be erected prior to any roofing or demolition works and will serve as a receptor bat box should bats need to be captured by hand and translocated to them by a suitably licenced Ecologist or named agent during the works schedule.; they will be retained permanently following the works.
- 8.34 GMEU have considered the Ecological Assessment and advise a condition that if the buildings are not demolished before April 2025, then a further bat survey is undertaken and requested clarification that the developer would be willing to provide a swallow shelter prior

to the determination of the application and this is something which the applicant has agreed that they would provide.

Other Considerations

- 8.35 The whole of the site is included within the red line of the LCC planning application for the proposed improvement area of the existing A582 to a Dual Carriageway. Whilst this has been referred to within the latest LCC highways consultation response, there is no current permission for the site and the existing application remains pending at present. In this regard it is considered that this should not impact the determination of the current application.

Conclusion

- 9.1 The proposal is for demolition of existing buildings and erection of new start up units in the Green Belt. The site which is currently vacant was previously in commercial use and therefore considered as previously developed land. The applicants have worked closely with the Council to provide a site layout plan which provides buildings on a similar footprint to the existing built development. The buildings would result in a smaller footprint in terms of sq metres and result in less than a 30% increase in volume. The proposal accords with Policy G1 and is not considered to have an adverse impact on openness.
- 9.2 The proposal will provide a new vehicular access into the site which meets technical requirements and is an improvement over the existing access which is closer to the roundabout.
- 9.3 An assessment has been carried out and the proposal is found to be in accordance with the policy requirements of the NPPF and South Ribble Local Plan and therefore the application is recommended for approval subject to the imposition of conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval with Conditions.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The development, hereby permitted, shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted approved plans Dwg;

22/007/L01 Location Plan and Existing Site Layout
22/007/P01 Rev A - Proposed Site Layout
22/007/P02 Unit A1 - A3 - Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations
22/007/P03 Unit A4 - A7 Proposed Floor plans and Elevations
22/007/P04 Units A8 - A12 Proposed Floor plans and Elevations
22/007/P03 Unit B - Proposed Floorplans and Elevations
22/007/EW01 Proposed Site Layout - Existing Buildings and Hardstanding
MM.TS.21 Topographical Land Survey Sheet 1 of 2
MM.TS.21 Topographical Land Survey Sheet 2 of 2
455-23-1 - Swept Path Refuse Vehicle
455-23-2 - Swept Paths Rigid Lorry
455-23-3 Swept Path Van

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development

3. No work shall be commenced until details of the colour and texture of the facing and roofing materials have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
REASON: To ensure the satisfactory detailed appearance of the development in accordance with Policy 17 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G17 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

4. No part of the development hereby approved shall commence until a scheme for the construction of the site access and off-site works of highway alteration to Croston Road and Flensburg Way has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The works shall include:
 - o Closure of the existing vehicular access point off Croston Road (old section of Lodge Lane) together with the extension of the exiting footway and crossing point of Flensburg Way.
 - o Closure of the existing vehicular access point off Flensburg Way.

Reason: In order to satisfy the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority that the final details of the highway scheme/works are acceptable before work commences on site.

5. No part of the development shall be occupied until the highway works subject to condition 4* have been constructed in accordance with the scheme submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access is provided to the site before the development hereby permitted becomes occupied.

6. The new estate road between the site and Croston Road shall be constructed in accordance with Lancashire County Council's Specification for Construction of Estate Roads to at least base course level before any development takes place within the site.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory access is provided to the site before the development hereby permitted becomes operative.

6. The gates shall open away from the highway and shall be set back 10m into the site.

Reason: To permit vehicles to pull clear of the carriageway when entering the site and to ensure adequate inter-visibility between highway users when exiting, in the interests of highway safety.

7. The proposed access from the site shall be constructed to a minimum width of 7.3m and this width shall be maintained for a minimum distance of 10m measured back from the nearside edge of the carriageway.

Reason: To enable vehicles to enter and leave the premises in a safe manner without causing a hazard to other road users.

8. No building shall be used until the car parking area has been surfaced or paved in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the Local Planning Authority and the car parking spaces and manoeuvring areas marked out in accordance with the approved plan. The car parking area shall thereafter be always kept free of obstruction and available for the parking cars.

Reason: To allow for the effective use of the parking areas.

9. No development of the approved scheme shall be occupied until such time as the existing highway along the A582 has been stopped up under the appropriate legal process (Section 247 of the Town & Country Planning Act) in consultation with the local planning authority and highway authority.

Reason:

10. No building or use hereby permitted shall be occupied or the use commenced until secure/enclosed cycle parking provision has been provided in accordance with the scheme submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle store area shall thereafter be kept free of obstruction and available for the parking of cycles only at all times.

Reason: To ensure the provision and availability of adequate cycle parking and the promotion of sustainable forms of transport.

11. No part of the approved site shall become operational until the existing access at the north-east of the site (old section of Lodge Lane) has been closed, with the existing pedestrian footpath to be retained.

Reason: To ensure provision of adequate footway.

12. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition or site clearance, until a Construction Management Plan (CMP) or Construction Method Statement (CMS) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved plan / statement shall provide:

- o 24 Hour emergency contact number;
- o Details of the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- o Details of loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- o Arrangements for turning of vehicles within the site;
- o Measures to protect vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists);
- o Wheel washing facilities;
- o Measures to deal with dirt, debris, mud or loose material deposited on the highway as a result of construction;
- o Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
- o Details of a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
- o Delivery, demolition and construction working hours.

The approved Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period for the development.

Reason: in the interests of the safe operation of the adopted highway during the demolition and construction phases.

Note: Construction Management Plan.

- o There must be no reversing into or from the live highway at any time - all vehicles entering the site must do so in a forward gear, and turn around in the site before exiting in a forward gear onto the operational public highway.
- o There must be no storage of materials in the public highway at any time.
- o There must be no standing or waiting of machinery or vehicles in the public highway at any time.
- o Vehicles must only access the site using a designated vehicular access point.

There must be no machinery operating over the highway at any time, this includes reference to loading/unloading operations - all of which must be managed within the confines of the site.

All references to public highway include footway, carriageway and verge.

11. Deliveries to the approved development shall only be accepted between the hours of (9.30am) and (2.30pm) Monday - Friday, to avoid peak traffic on the surrounding highway network.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety

14. No development shall commence until details of the landscaping of the site including, wherever possible, the retention of existing trees and hedges have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in the first planting season following completion of the development, or first occupation/use, whichever is the soonest.
- The approved scheme shall be maintained by the applicant or their successors in title thereafter for a period of 5 years to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. This maintenance shall include the replacement of any tree or shrub which is removed, becomes seriously damaged, seriously diseased or dies, by the same species or different species, and shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The replacement tree or shrub must be of similar size to that originally planted.
- Details submitted shall be compliant with 'BS 5837 2012 - Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations' and shall include details of trees and hedges to be retained or removed, root protection zones, barrier fencing, and a method statement for all works in proximity to those trees or hedges to be retained during the development and construction period. Details shall also indicate the types and numbers of trees and shrubs, their distribution on site, those areas seeded, turfed, paved or hard landscaped, including details of any changes of level or landform and the types and details of all fencing and screening.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area in accordance with Policy 17 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G8 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

15. Prior to development an external lighting strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The strategy shall:
- o Identify retained and proposed features on site that are potentially sensitive to lighting for bats and the location of bat roost mitigation measures;
 - o show how and where external lighting will be installed and through appropriate isolux contour plans demonstrated clearly that any impacts on bats is negligible;
 - o Specify frequency and duration of use.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with agreed specifications and locations set out in the strategy.

REASON: To ensure the protection of scheduled species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in accordance with Policy 22 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G16 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

16. The demolition of building B15 is likely to cause harm to common pipistrelle bats as identified in the Dusk Survey Results Report, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd, dated

November 2022 and shall not in any circumstances commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:

- a) a license issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55, of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 authorising the specified activity/development go ahead: or
- b) a statement in writing from the relevant licensing body or LPA to the effect that it does not consider that the specified development will require a license.

Reason: To ensure the protection of scheduled species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in accordance with Policy 22 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G16 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

17. If the demolitions hereby approved do not commence before the 1st April 2025, the buildings shall be resurveyed for bats and the findings supplied to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of scheduled species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in accordance with Policy 22 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G16 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

18. Details of a dedicated Swallow shelter shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The new Swallow shelter should be constructed in a suitable area of the site away from harsh lighting and be accessible by swallows and provide permanent long-term value to this species. The approved shelter shall be installed prior to the first employment units being brought into use and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To ensure the protection of scheduled species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in accordance with Policy 22 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G16 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

19. No works to trees or shrubs shall occur or demolition commence between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure the protection of scheduled species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in accordance with Policy 22 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G16 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

20. Prior to any earthworks or vegetation clearance, a reasonable avoidance measures method statement for mammals and amphibians shall be provided to and agreed in writing by the LPA. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Method Statement.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision is made for these protected species in accordance with Policy 22 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G16 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

21. Prior to any earthworks a method statement detailing eradication of rhododendron and monbretia should be supplied to and agreed in writing to the LPA. The agreed method statement shall be adhered to and implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: The spread of invasive plants is prohibited under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Without measures to prevent spread as a result of the development there would be the risk of an offence being committed and avoidable harm to the environment recurs

22. During the site preparation, demolition, and construction of the development no machinery, plant or powered tools shall be operated outside the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday 09:00 - 13:00 on Saturdays. No construction shall take place at any time on Sundays or nationally recognised Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the NPPF.

23. No deliveries of construction materials or removal of construction waste shall be undertaken outside the hours of 09:00 - 17:00 Monday to Friday. No deliveries or removal of waste shall be carried out at weekends or nationally recognised Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and NPPF

24. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendation of the Acoustic Report to control noise from deliveries (Ref No: 2585-1 Oct 23). Deliveries shall be restricted to 0700-1900 Mon-Fri; 0800-1300 Sat with no deliveries on Sundays and nationally recognised Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and NPPF

25. No external plant shall be installed to any unit until an application has been made to the local authority and a suitable noise impact assessment submitted.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and NPPF

26. There shall be no external storage and no external work shall take place outside of the proposed units on the site.

Reason: To retain the openness of the site in accordance with Policy G1 of the South Ribble Local Plan and NPPF and protect the amenities of nearby residents.

27. If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place.

REASON: To ensure that the visual appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policies G13 and G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan 2012 - 2026

28. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Use Classes Order 2020 (or any other order revoking or re-enacting that Order), the use of the building(s) shall be limited to Use Class B2, B8 and E(g) and shall not be used for any other purpose without the express consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.
REASON: To ensure that inappropriate uses do not occur within the locality in accordance Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G17 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

RELEVANT POLICY

1 Locating Growth (Core Strategy Policy)

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

POLG1 Green Belt

POLG5 Areas of Separation

Note:

1. Highway notes

A) The grant of planning permission will require the applicant to enter into an appropriate legal agreement (Section 278), with Lancashire County Council as Highway Authority prior to the start of any development. The applicant should be advised to contact the county council for further information by telephoning the Development Support Section on 0300 123 6780 or email developeras@lancashire.gov.uk in the first instance to ascertain the details of such an agreement and the information to be provided, quoting the location, district and relevant planning application reference number.

B) This consent does not give approval to a connection being made to the County Council's highway drainage system. The applicant is further advised that highway surface water drainage system must not be used for the storage of any flood waters from the adoptable United Utility surface water system, or any private surface water drainage system.

C) The alterations to the existing highway as part of the new works may require changes to the existing street lighting at the developer's expense.

D) The site is not suitable for adoption and will remain private.