

Application Number 07/2020/00674/FUL
Address Test Track
Aston Way
Moss Side Industrial Estate
Leyland
Lancashire
PR26 7TZ

Applicant Barratt Homes (Manchester)

Development Removal of obsolete bridge on Test Track
redevelopment requires embankment removal
and site re-profiling

Officer Recommendation **Approval with Conditions**
Officer Name **Mrs Catherine Lewis**

Date application valid 18.08.2020
Target Determination Date 13.10.2020
Extension of Time 16.10.2020



1.0 Report Summary

1.1 The application site relates to a small parcel of land within the site boundary of the Industrial unit known as MI Vehicle Technologies at Moss Side Industrial Site. The land is part of the embankment initially constructed to provide the necessary gradients to a viewing bridge within the Test Track Site.

1.2 Planning permission is sought to remove the landscaped embankment including some trees which abuts the Test Track site, to enable the clearance of the built structures associated with the redevelopment of the Test Track. As the embankment straddles the ownership of the two sites it was not included within the red edge of the application site for the redevelopment of the Test Track.

1.3 The principle of the development is acceptable as the application site is subject to Policy C2 which relates to the redevelopment of the Test Track in the South Ribble Local Plan. On balance and given the location of the site within an industrial area the loss of a small group of low value trees is considered acceptable without the need to provide replacement planting.

1.4 The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions controlling the protection of birds and amphibians and a construction management plan.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 The application site relates to a small parcel of land measuring 2390.00 square metres within the site boundary of the Industrial unit known as MI Vehicle Technologies at Moss Side Industrial Site. The land is part of the embankment initially constructed to provide the necessary gradients to a viewing bridge within the Test Track Site. To the south and west is the Leyland Test Track and to the north and east is a small strip of green space and the car park associated with the Industrial unit.

2.2 The site is subject to Policy C2 which relates to the Test Track site of the South Ribble Local Plan.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 Planning Permission was granted for the redevelopment of the Test Track 07/2017/3361ORM in 2019:

3.2 Hybrid planning application comprising of Full and Outline development - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development:

Part A FULL - Site enabling works, the development of highway and drainage infrastructure for the full application site (the proposed development site) and the provision of car park accessed off Titan Way (Phase 1); together with the construction of 197 dwellings and associated internal access roads, public open space, green infrastructure, an acoustic barrier and highway infrastructure (Phase 2)

Part B OUTLINE - for the remainder of the proposed development site for the development of between 653 and 753 new homes, up to 5,000 sqm of Business Park (Use Classes B1); up to 15,000 sqm of Use Class B2 and up to 8,000 sqm Industrial Estate (Use Class B8), local centre comprising up to 3,000 sqm of accommodation for occupation within any combination of uses within Classes A1,A2,A3, A4,A5,B1 or D1 (including health centre/clinic) (which shall not exceed 2,500 sqm of main town centre uses), a primary school (1.646ha) and associated public open space and green infrastructure (Phases 3-5 and education, employment and local centre phases) (Amended Plans)

4.0 Proposal

4.1 Planning permission is sought for the removal of a small area of landscaped embankment to enable the clearance of the built structures associated with the Test Track infrastructure. Namely a bridge, abutment walls, concrete paving and the embankment. The ground would be reprofiled to tie in to the existing ground levels of the Industrial site.

4.2 The works would take approximately 4 weeks on this small piece of land and would be secured by temporary fencing and then by fencing that has been previously approved as part of the redevelopment of the Test Track.

5.0 Summary of Publicity

5.1 A site notice has been displayed and neighbouring properties have been consulted. One letter of representation has been received which is summarised below:

- As property manager for MIPD the company is being increasingly pressurised to utilise land at the boundaries of the site and “reclaimed” land to support the existing tenants. These tenants include commercial and military automotive business sectors who hope to bid successfully for new contracts which would see workload and employment activity increase.
- The additional land that would be made available following the regrading of the embankment would support the business needs of the tenants.
- Whilst there would be a loss of trees the company has invested in £200k for a solar energy scheme to the main roof of the building. This would contribute to 59 tonnes of carbon reduction a year and equates to 163 trees. Further solar measures are being considered which would enable the company to become a major grid exporter too. They request that the business needs for useable land and space are weighed against the need to plant trees.

6.0 Summary of Consultations

6.1 Ecology Services- There are no significant ecological issues and issues relating to nesting bird, amphibians and biodiversity enhancement measures can be resolved via condition and or informative.

6.2 Tree Officer the trees were originally identified for retention and were categorised as C2 as part of the redevelopment of the Test Track. Once profiling has been completed trees should be replanted with native deciduous trees and whips and appropriate landscaping conditions are recommended.

6.3 Lancashire County Council Highways- No comments received.

6.4 Environmental Health – Raised no objection and is satisfied that the Construction Management Plan as submitted should mitigate any possible demolition/construction impacts.

7.0 Policy Background

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - sets out the Government’s economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. At the heart of the planning system is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Chapter 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy- Planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

7.2 Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted July 2012)

Policy 1: Locating Growth focuses growth and investment on brownfield sites in the main urban areas, and the Strategic Sites, whilst protecting the character of suburban and rural areas. Moss Side Test Track is identified as a major site for development

Policy 22: Biodiversity & Geodiversity aims to conserve, protect and seek opportunities to enhance and manage the biological and geological assets of the area.

7.3 South Ribble Local Plan (adopted July 2015)

Policy C2: Moss Side Test Track, Leyland permits development at the Moss Side Test Track site, provided a masterplan for the site has been submitted and agreed, and a phasing and infrastructure delivery schedule and an agreed programme of implementation have been submitted. The Policy also permits the development of alternative uses, such as community facilities, to include a small local centre to serve the needs of the local residents, and an assessment of the education and health provision in the local area.

Policy G13: Trees, Woodlands and Development states that development will not be permitted where it affects protected trees and woodland unless justified. Where loss of the same is unavoidable, this policy accepts suitable mitigation.

Policy G16: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation protects, conserves and enhances the natural environment at a level commensurate with the site's importance and the contribution it makes to wider ecological networks.

7.4 Central Lancashire Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD provides guidance for developers in relation to improving biodiversity of the Central Lancashire area. Its main goal is to ensure that there is no net loss of nature conservation assets and where appropriate there is an improvement in them. It also explains the Council's approach towards conserving, protecting and enhancing biodiversity and ecological networks.

8.0 Material Considerations

Local Plan Allocation

8.1 The principle of the redevelopment of the Test Track site has already been established through the allocation of the site under Policy C2 South Ribble Local Plan and the recently approved planning application Ref: 07.2017.3361.ORM.

8.2 The application site falls within this Policy designation, but the approved plans associated with the Test Track did not include this sliver of land which is in the site boundary and ownership of the industrial unit known as MI Vehicle Technologies at Moss Side Industrial Estate. In order to carry out the clearance works associated with the Test Track development this piece of land is required.

8.3 The principle of the removal of the embankment for the redevelopment of the Test Track is therefore acceptable.

Compliance with other policies.

Wildlife

8.4 Policy G16 and paragraph 170 of the NPPF is clear that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The Council's Ecology specialist has advised that there are no significant ecological issues. However, a condition to ensure the protection of birds during the site clearance is required. Common toad have been previously identified on the wider site and reasonable avoidance measures (RAM) of the wider permission have been agreed. A further condition to control this aspect is recommended and the existing approved document that details the RAM can be conditioned to cover this application too.

8.5 The removal of the embankment will result in the loss of previous landscaping that will be of moderate ecological value. The site should be replanted once re-profiling is completed with native trees and shrubs.

Tree Issues

8.6 Policy G13 of the South Ribble Local Plan requires replacement planting at a rate of two trees for each tree lost. The removal of the embankment would require the loss of a group of trees. When originally surveyed in 2016 as part of the Test Track application this group was designated as Ref No 157G and is described as "mixed off site group comprising predominantly Blackthorn and Hazel with some Dogwood and Elder." The Tree Survey deemed The Group to have low value. Although there has been some self-seeded trees over the past four years, this group of trees is considered to be of low value and this has been confirmed by the Council's Tree Officer. Ordinarily, a condition would be imposed for a landscape scheme to be submitted for the loss of the trees however, this would be outside of the control of the applicant as they do not own the land. Whilst this could be the subject of a legal agreement between the land owner and applicant this would take time and potentially delay the Test Track site clearance. Further, the current land owner has indicated that they would like to utilise this small area for extra car parking /or storage and as a company already contribute to sustainable measures⁹ (see paragraph 5.1 above). These plans would be the subject of a future application. On balance, therefore, and given the location of the small piece of land within an industrial area, the loss of a small group of low value trees is considered acceptable -without the need to provide replacement planting.

Other matters

8.7 The applicant has submitted a Construction Management Plan to address the proposed works. This has been assessed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer who has raised no objection and the detailed implementation can be controlled through condition.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The removal of the embankment is required to enable the redevelopment of the Test Track to be undertaken. The site would be regraded and reprofiled to tie in with the existing ground levels of the MI Vehicle Testing site. The existing trees have been assessed as of low value and their removal is considered acceptable. As the application site is a small sliver of land subject to Policy C2 of the South Ribble Local Plan which provides for the redevelopment of a brown field site, on balance, replanting is not required. The proposal accords with the Development Plan and the NPPF.

10. RECOMMENDATION:

10.1 Approval with Conditions.

11 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 approved plans

Drawing No: 471/ED/85 entitled Proposed Red Edge

Drawing No: 471/ED/49 entitled Cross Sections

Drawing No: 471/ED/86 entitled Existing and Proposed Levels

or any subsequent amendments to those plans that have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

3. No works to trees or shrubs shall occur 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 or a reasonable avoidance method statement provided which has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To protect birds and meet the aims of Policy G16 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

4. During the construction phase the development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Leyland Test Track Phase 1 Construction Management Plan.

REASON: To safeguard the living conditions of nearby residents particularly with regard to the effects of noise, vibration, dust, waste and air quality in accordance with Policy 17 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G17 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026

5. During the construction phase the submitted report entitled Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement for Protection of Amphibians RE: 2020-0208 dated April 2020 shall be implemented in full.

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

RELEVANT POLICY

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

1 Locating Growth (Core Strategy Policy)

22 Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Core Strategy Policy)

POLC2 Moss Side Test Track, Leyland

POLG13 Trees, Woodlands and Development

POLG16 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

Note:
