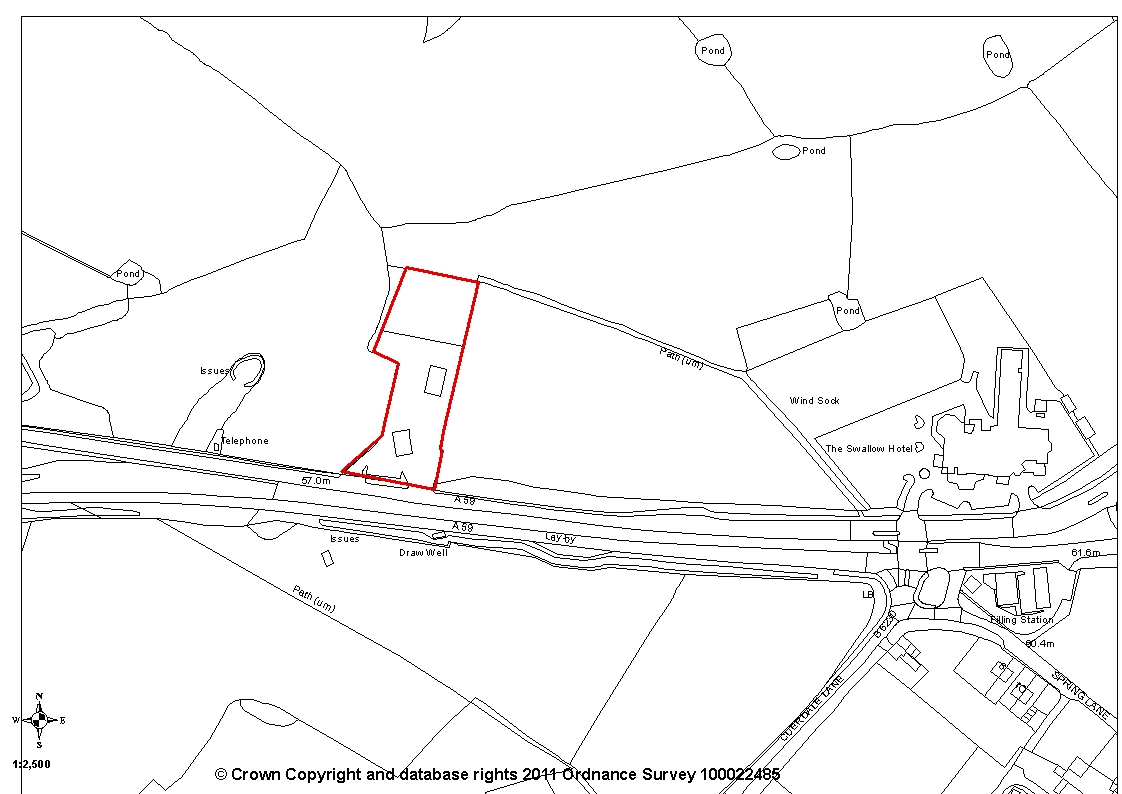
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| --- | --- |
| **Application Number** | 07/2020/00924/FUL |
| **Address** | Two Acres  Preston New Road  Samlesbury  Preston  Lancashire  PR5 0UL |
| **Applicant** | Messrs Ahmed |
|  |  |
| **Agent** | Mrs Sophie Marshall  MacMarshalls Ltd  Hamill House  112-116 Chorley New Road  Bolton  BL1 4DH |
| **Development** | Erection of detached commercial building |
| **Officer Recommendation**  **Officer Name** | **Refusal**    **Mrs Janice Crook** |
| Date application valid | 04.11.2020 |
| Target Determination Date | 30.12.2020 |
| Extension of Time |  |
|  |  |
| **Location Plan** |  |



1. **Report Summary**
   1. The application has been called to planning committee for determination by the local ward councillors due to Green Belt issues.
   2. The proposal is for an additional building for storage and workshop use on the Roman Stone site on Preston New Road in Samlesbury. The proposal is to enable the expansion of this existing business.
   3. The site is within the Green Belt where there is general presumption against inappropriate development. Due to the substantial size and scale of the proposed building, it is considered that, on balance, the proposal would harm the openness of the Green Belt and the proposed expansion is not considered to outweigh that harm. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.
2. **Site and Surrounding Area**

2.1 The application relates to the former Samlesbury Service Station site which gained planning permission in 2010 for redevelopment with the construction of a two storey building to be used as a showroom and office and a single storey storage building with outdoor display area and car parking. These have been erected and the business run form the site is Khotah Stone/Roman Stone, a stone and tile suppliers.

2.2 The site is within the Green Belt and consists of the two buildings, display area and car parking area with areas of hard standing used for outdoor storage. To the rear of the site is rough ground which is overgrown. Existing trees and vegetation are located to the boundaries with the boundary fencing being a concrete panel fence to the western and eastern boundaries. Public Rights of Way are adjacent the northern boundary

2.3 Within the site is the Thirlmere Viaduct, a large diameter high pressure water pipe which runs across the site between the showroom building and the storage building.

1. **Planning History**

3.1 There are a number of planning permissions dating back to the 1980’s relating to the site’s former use as a petrol filling station which are not relevant to this current application. The planning history for the current use is set out below:

07/2008/0810/OUT Construction of single storey building, providing showroom, office and storage area APV 17/07/2009

07/2010/0221/FUL Construction of two storey building providing showroom, office, single storey building providing storage together with associated outdoor display area and car parking spaces SOS 01/10/2010

07/2011/0460/NMA Application for non-material amendment to planning permission 07/2010/0221/FUL – erection of a brick cubicle for electricity. APV 19/07/2011

07/2012/0322/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission 07/2010/0221/FUL – remove two windows on Eastern elevation and move door on Northern elevation APC 04/07/2012

07/2013/0904/ADV Advertisement consent for two internally illuminated box signs CONS 16/01/2014

07/2014/0584/NMA Application for a non-material amendment to planning approval 07/2010/0221/FUL – Installation of 2 no air source heat pumps on rear (North) elevation of showroom building. APC 26/08/2014

07/2015/1759/ADV Erection of 3no flagpoles and flags CONS 22/12/2015

1. **Proposal**

4.1 The application proposes the erection of a detached building measuring 36.3m by 10.6m with a pitched roof over with an eaves height of 4.2m and a ridge height of 7.6m. It would be constructed in profiled steel cladding sheets to the roof and walls with a red stock brick plinth below. Four steel shutter doors of 3.6m wide by 4.2m high and four pedestrian access doors would be formed in the front western elevation. The rear eastern elevation would have three pedestrian access doors. The building is to provide two workshops and a storage area.

1. **Summary of Publicity**

5.1 The neighbouring property was consulted and a site notice posted with no letters of representation being received.

1. **Summary of Consultations**

**6.1 County Highways** provide comments based on all the information provided by the applicant to date and after under taking a site visit. They have no objections to the proposed development and is of the opinion that the proposals at this location should have a negligible impact on highway safety and capacity within the immediate vicinity of the site. The proposed development will utilise existing acceptable access and egress points on to Preston New Road.

**6.2 National Grid** Advise that an assessment has been carried with respect to Cadent Gas Limited, National Grid Electricity Transmission plc and National Grid Gas Transmission plc apparatus. Searches have identified that there is apparatus in the vicinity of the site which may be affected by the activities specified. Therefore, the consultation has been referred to the Asset Protection team for further detailed assessment. They confirm they have No Objection to the proposal which is in close proximity to a High-Pressure Gas Pipeline.

**6.3 Environmental Health** advise that this former service station site has been the subject of numerous reports about contamination associated with its past activities. Extensive remediation work has physically removed the source of contamination and a verification report has demonstrated that the site is now suitable for commercial end-use. However, although EH are satisfied that the site is suitable for commercial end-use, the possibility of contamination remaining on site cannot be discounted. Therefore a condition is recommended to ensure that, once works commence on the site, should site operatives discover any adverse ground conditions and suspect it to be contaminated, they should report this to the Site Manager and Environmental Health.

**6.4 United Utilities** have reviewed the documents submitted for this full planning application and advise that the applicant is aware of the significant water infrastructure that falls within the site boundary, however the exact location of these water mains must be confirmed in order to establish if the easement distances shown on the submitted plan ‘*Proposed Showroom and Storage Building’*, (Drawing ref: 10/010/P10, dated 05/02/19) are acceptable. Should the location of the mains differ, then it may impact on the deliverability of the proposed buildings.

6.5 They also request additional information be provided with regards to the proposed ‘teaching apiary’ as this encroaches into the water main easement. Until the information is submitted, UU object to this proposal.

6.6 Should the Council deem it appropriate to grant planning consent irrespective of our objection, a pre-commencement conditions must be included on any Decision Notice to ensure that the site is drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way; and that no development takes place until a Risk Assessment Method Statement is submitted for approval

6.7 They also advise that no construction should commence until the detailed drainage design, submitted as part of the Section 104 agreement, has been assessed and accepted in writing by United Utilities.

6.8 Finally, UU advise that large diameter trunk mains cross the site and they will not permit building over them as they need access for operating and maintaining them. An access strip of no less than 10 metres, measuring at least 5 metres either side of the centre line of the pipe must be maintained.

1. **Policy Background**

**7.1 Policy G1: Green Belt** has a general presumption against inappropriate development and planning permission will not be given for the construction of new buildings unless there are very special circumstances. However, exceptions to this are buildings for agriculture and forestry; provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it; the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces; limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

**7.2 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. Furthermore, the development should not cause harm to neighbouring property by leading to undue overlooking, overshadowing or have an overbearing effect; the layout, design and landscaping of all elements of the proposal, including any internal roads, car parking, footpaths and open spaces, are of a high quality and will provide an interesting visual environment which respects the character of the site and local area; the development would not prejudice highway safety, pedestrian safety, the free flow of traffic, and would not reduce the number of on-site parking spaces to below the standards stated in Policy F1, unless there are other material considerations which justify the reduction such as proximity to a public car park. Furthermore, any new roads and/or pavements provided as part of the development should be to an adoptable standard; the proposal would sustain, conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of a heritage asset itself and the surrounding historic environment. Where a proposed development would lead to substantial harm or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial public benefits of the proposal outweigh the harm or loss to the asset; and the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on landscape features such as mature trees, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses. In some circumstances where, on balance, it is considered acceptable to remove one or more of these features, then mitigation measures to replace the feature/s will be required either on or off-site.

**7.3 Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document** at D: Employment advises that it is important that employment opportunities exist in rural areas firstly, to enable local people to access employment close to where they live, secondly, to help avoid excessive levels of commuting to urban areas and thirdly to ensure that local communities remain vibrant and sustainable.

The rural areas in Central Lancashire no longer rely on agriculture as a major source of employment. There is now a much more diverse economic profile and it is important that this is encouraged and supported within the area.

The economic activity in the countryside differs from urban areas in that:

* businesses tend to be smaller;
* many businesses are home based;
* smaller businesses usually require premises, rather than land, to start operating or to expand;
* growing businesses in need of larger premises often have to move longer distances to find suitable premises due to a lack of choice;
* it is often harder to attract a skilled workforce to rural areas.

Employment development proposals should be conveniently located in relation to the surrounding road network, provide a safe access, be adequately serviced or can be serviced at a reasonable cost. Applicants seeking planning permission should also demonstrate that the proposed use would not be detrimental to local amenities and the use of neighbouring land. In order to protect visual amenity, signage should be kept to a minimum. The use of large and/or illuminated signs will not be appropriate in the countryside. Uses that involve outside storage or large numbers of parked vehicles are also unlikely to be acceptable, as again these are likely to be visually intrusive in the countryside.

1. **Material Considerations**
   1. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, Local Plan policy G1 has a general presumption against inappropriate development and planning permission will not be given for the construction of new buildings unless there are very special circumstances. There are a number of exceptions to this, buildings for agriculture and forestry; provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it; the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces; limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.
   2. The redevelopment of this site did not fall within the exceptions to the general presumption and planning permission was granted following referral to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans and Consultation) Directions 1999 for a decision as a departure from the development plan. The very special circumstances that were required to be demonstrated were due to the length of commercial inactivity on the site. These very special circumstances were:

* Remediation works for potential contamination was require and this resulted in a lengthy period between the commercial use of the site ceasing and the time when the remediation could be carried out.
* Buildings associated with the former petrol filling station had to be removed in the interests of health and safety, security and to prevent a source of nuisance to nearby residents and businesses.

8.3 The site now can be classed as a previously developed site due to the re-instatement of commercial activity on the site resulting from the planning permission, the buildings on the site and time passed since the current use of the site commenced.

8.4 The proposal is to erect a new detached building for use for storage and workshops. This does not fall within the exceptions to the general presumption against inappropriate development. It is not an extension to the existing building, is not a replacement building does not represent redevelopment of a previously developed site and therefore very special circumstances would need to be demonstrated to allow for this building. The supporting statement submitted with this application advises that the very special circumstances are that the business wants to expand, as follows:

*“The business wants to expand into supplying new lines and cutting/manipulating material onsite to suit customers’ needs. Accordingly, there is a business need for additional storage and workshop space.*

*The business is taking on larger commercial customers. They need space to present the bulk materials to these clients. From a presentation and health and safety perspective, this needs to be separate to the workshop areas.*

*There is a need to stockpile more products on site due to imminent and continued EU restrictions and supply issues caused by the coronavirus pandemic.*

*The business has been forced to store products outside due to the lack of space. They need more internal space to protect the products.*

*Over a number of years the business has built up with a lot of associated goodwill. It is not possible to relocate due to the highway, locational and space requirements of the existing business.*

*The fallback position is extensions to existing buildings and more unsuitable external storage space.*

*The proposal incorporates a teaching aviary as described in section 3.5 above. This will benefit the environment and local agriculture as well as providing public good.”*

8.5 Business Expansion – the supporting statement outlines that the business has been supplying stone and tiles to customers all over the UK for over 20 years and are therefore well established. They supply high end Italian porcelain surface tiles, for both internal and external use; stone paving; building stone; tile products. The products are imported from Italy and India. Due to the travelling distance, they arrive on shipping containers, not pallets. The issue has been a lack of internal space to stockpile. It has been widely reported that global supply chains are under significant pressure because of coronavirus. In order to keep with customer demands it is therefore necessary to stockpile more products.

8.6 The supporting statement goes on to explain that over the course of the next 5 years, with the proposed expansion, turnover is expected to increase two fold and result in the employment of another 6 employees. There are currently 4 employees.

8.7 The business also needs additional internal space for presenting products to large commercial customers, including housing and commercial developers, for checking when these are not available in the showroom. This area needs to be kept separately from the workshop areas for health and safety purposes. Housing and commercial developers wanting to bulk buy products and this area of the business is expanding.

8.8 Health and Safety - There has been demand for the business to provide tailored tiles and stones to meet customer needs and therefore the business needs a workshop in order to develop the cutting and fabrication side of the business. This involves working with large slabs and expensive products so enough room to manoeuvre and work around is required.

8.9 External Storage - As the business has grown, storage has spread out to the yard area. External storage is not suitable for storing high end tile products, both from a security and aesthetic, resale standpoint.

8.10 Relocation - The business is well established on the site. It is well known in the area and people can visit and collect products from the wider area due to its location being so close to the M6. The additional storage and workshop space is needed on site so everything can be managed together and be more sustainable. The original submissions for planning application 07/2010/0221/FUL contained supporting evidence of why the business could not be located elsewhere and why their previous site was no longer suitable. With the proposed expansion plans and the increased stockpiling, the need to stay on the current site is even stronger.

8.11 Fallback Position - Although the proposal does not represent the extension of the existing buildings on site, the supporting statement advises that this is the fallback position. A proposed extension of the buildings would be compliant with Local Plan policy G1c) as long as it did not result in disproportionate additions.

8.12 Apiary - The applicants want to set up a teaching apiary on the site. One of the applicants is a member of the Preston BeeKeepers Association. He currently keeps some bees to the back of the site and the intention is to expand this so that new members and local students can visit the apiary to learn how to keep bees and how they live. Around 35 bee species face extinction at present. We need bees to fertilise many of our crops. There are around 70 crops in the UK that depend or benefit from bee pollination. The site is surrounded by farmland. There is clearly an ecological and agricultural advantage to having more bees on site and increasing the flora and fauna on and off site. In addition, the teaching apiary will provide access to members of the public and is an interesting sideline to the main use of the site, being consistent with Green Belt policy.

8.13 Business expansion is a material consideration when assessing ‘very special circumstances’ and Chapter 6: Building a strong, competitive economy of the National Planning Policy Framework recognises that supporting a prosperous rural economy is essential. At paragraph 83 it advises that planning policies and decisions should enable, a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.

8.14 In terms of its design, the proposed building has been designed to be in keeping with the existing storage building on site, using the same materials and colour palette and therefore will not be out of keeping with the existing buildings on the site. Therefore, it is considered to accord with the aims of paragraph 83.

8.15 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF goes on to advise that it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable. The application site is on the busy Preston New Road close to the M6 motorway junction. It has both entrance and exit accesses and ample parking provision. County Highways have no objections to the proposal, commenting that the proposed development will utilise existing acceptable access and egress points on to Preston New Road. They also are of the opinion that the proposals at this location should have a negligible impact on highway safety and capacity within the immediate vicinity of the site. Therefore, the proposal meets the requirements of paragraph 84.

8.16 Paragraph 144 of the NPPF advises that, when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Therefore, an assessment of whether the harm to the openness of the Green Belt is outweighed by the expansion of this business, resulting in the need for the new building is carried out, below.

8.17 The proposed building is of substantial scale, measuring 36.3m by 10.6m with a pitched roof over with an eaves height of 4.2m and a ridge height of 7.6m and a footprint of 384.78 square metres. The building will have a volume of 2,442 cubic metres, compared to the existing buildings on site which have a combined volume of 2,398 cubic metres. This represents a percentage increase of 101%. As a general guideline, when extending buildings in the Green Belt, a 50% increase is considered permissible as a starting point. Clearly the proposal is for a detached new building not an extension and is in excess of the 50% increase. The supporting statement refers to the ‘fallback’ position of an extension to the existing building. This was subject of pre-application advice for an extension amounting to a 50% increase over the existing building. This was considered acceptable given it was an extension and related well to the existing building but this submitted proposal is far different from that informal proposal.

8.18 The proposed building will be located to the rear of the existing storage building running along the site’s eastern boundary. Although the existing buildings on site will screen the proposed building from view of passing motorists on the A59, there will be clear views from the public rights of way that run to the north of the site. The surrounding area is open and relatively flat farmland with hedgerow boundaries and therefore views of the proposed building will be afforded from a wide area. It is therefore considered that the proposal will impact on the openness of the Green Belt resulting in detrimental harm.

8.19 The creation of jobs and the economic benefit to the borough does amount to the “very special circumstances” required to build on green belt land. In this case just 6 full time jobs will be created in addition to the 4 existing positions. Whilst this is of some a benefit to the area, it does not create sufficient jobs to result in economic benefits to the borough.

8.20 There is a clear balance to be made between the expansion of an existing business in the Green Belt which requires a new building and the impact this would have on the openness of the Green Belt and whether any very special circumstances have been demonstrated which would allow this new building. It is considered that, on balance, the proposed building, due to its size and scale would have an unacceptable impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the very special circumstances offered by the applicant are not considered to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Although it is accepted that the applicants want to expand the business and the economic benefits and job creation such an expansion can have are accepted as very special circumstances, but in this case the benefit it limited. There would be just 6 new jobs created compared to the substantial size of the proposed building and therefore not proportionate. Additionally, there is nothing in the submission that guarantees the business expansion will take place but is more an intention than any firm proposals or business plan.

8.21 Policy G1 does specify that “*there are a number of major developed employment sites within the Green Belt. These sites can be developed within their curtilage. These major developed employment sites should continue to secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt*.” This site is not considered to be a major employment site with this part of policy G1 relating to sites such as the brewery on Cuerdale Lane or BAe Systems. There is nothing in Policy G1 that allows for a minor employer to justify such a large building in the Green Belt and proportionately

8.22 In terms of the apiary, whilst this is a worthwhile intention and consistent with Green Belt activities, this aspect of the supporting statement is not considered relevant to this application for a new storage and workshop building and in itself does not require planning permission as the apiary’s are moveable structures. However, it is questioned how this proposal fits in with the main use of the site and the proposals for a workshop and storage building. The supporting statement indicates that this would be a teaching apiary with the intention for members and local students to visit the apiary to learn how to keep bees and, in addition will provide access to members of the public. This proposal would raise issues of health and safety for visitors to the apiary but without any real information or details other than the location within the site, which is some 26m to west of the proposed workshop/storage building. It is considered this aspect of the proposal cannot be fully assessed as no firm proposals have been provided.

**8.23 Drainage**

Within the site is the Thirlmere Viaduct, a large diameter high pressure water pipe which runs across the site between the showroom building and the storage building.

United Utilities has reviewed the documents submitted for this full planning application and has confirmed that the applicant is aware of the significant water infrastructure that falls within the site boundary. However, the exact location of these water mains must be confirmed in order to establish if the easement distances shown on the submitted plan ‘Proposed Showroom and Storage Building’, Reference: 10/010/P10, dated 05/02/19, are acceptable. Should the location of the mains differ, then it may impact on the deliverability of the proposed buildings. United Utilities also request additional information be provided with regards to the proposed ‘teaching apiary’ as this encroaches into the water main easement. Until the information is submitted, United Utilities objectto this proposal.

**8.24 Ground Water Protection Zones**

United Utilities has abstraction boreholes used for public water supply in the vicinity of this

application which could be affected. The prevention of pollution to drinking water supplies is

critical. The Environment Agency has a series of published position statements documenting

their approach to managing and protecting groundwater. These are outlined in The Environment Agency’s approach to groundwater protection. Table 1 in this document indicates the position statements (including restrictions or extra controls) applicable to certain activities within a Source Protection Zone 1 (SPZ1) of a groundwater source, which are designed to protect groundwater intended for human consumption. SPZs identify the groundwater catchment areas of sources of potable water and show where they may be at particular risk from polluting activities on or below the land surface.

**8.25 Surface Water Drainage**

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the site should be drained on a separate system with foul water draining to the public sewer and surface water draining in the most sustainable way. The NPPG clearly outlines the hierarchy to be investigated by the developer when considering a surface water drainage strategy. We would ask the developer to consider the following drainage options in the following order of priority:

into the ground (infiltration);

to a surface water body;

to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;

to a combined sewer.

United Utilities recommend the applicant implements the scheme in accordance with the surface water drainage hierarchy outlined above.

**8.26 Foul Water Drainage**

If the applicant intends to offer wastewater assets forward for adoption by United Utilities, the proposed detailed design will be subject to a technical appraisal by an Adoptions Engineer as they need to be sure that the proposal meets the requirements of Sewers for adoption and United Utilities’ Asset Standards. The proposed design should give consideration to long term operability and give United Utilities a cost effective proposal for the life of the assets. Therefore, should this application be approved and the applicant wishes to progress a Section 104 agreement, we strongly recommend that no construction commences until the detailed drainage design, submitted as part of the Section 104 agreement, has been assessed and accepted in writing by United Utilities. Any works carried out prior to the technical assessment being approved is done entirely at the developers own risk and could be subject to change.

**8.27 Water supply**

If the applicant intends to obtain a water supply from United Utilities for the proposed

development, we strongly recommend they engage with us at the earliest opportunity. If

reinforcement of the water network is required to meet the demand, this could be a significant project which should be accounted for in the project timeline for design and construction.

**8.28 United Utilities’ property, assets and infrastructure**

Large diameter trunk mains cross the site and United Utilities will not permit building over them. As they need access for operating and maintaining them, they will not permit development in close proximity to the mains. An access strip of no less than 10 metres, measuring at least 5 metres either side of the centre line of the pipe is required.

8.29 The applicant must comply with United Utilities standard conditions for work carried out on, or when crossing aqueducts and easements. This should be taken into account in the final site layout or a diversion may be necessary at the applicant’s expense. Given the size and nature of the water main in this location it is likely that the cost of this would be prohibitive.

8.30 Should the Council deem it appropriate to grant planning consent irrespective of the objection, United Utilities require pre-commencement conditions be included on the Decision Notice in respect of the submission of a Risk Assessment Method Statement (RAMS). The statement should outline the potential impacts/ risks from all construction activities and detail the protection measures for the existing water mains and any associated apparatus lying within the site boundary that will be required for both construction phase and the lifetime of the development, with particular regard to the load bearing impacts of materials/ heavy duty vehicles, changing land levels, vibration, disturbance and health and safety considerations. The protection measures should be in line with the guidance found within United Utilities Standard Conditions for works adjacent to Pipelines (dated July 2015). All mitigation measures must be implemented in accordance with the approved details. This is to ensure that the existing UU infrastructure and public drinking water supplies for the wider area are protected.

8.31 Following United Utilities consultation response, the applicant contacted UU and provided some additional information, including plans. Essentially, the location of the pipes was ascertained in 2009 when they were exposed, and their locations marked with pegs. A topographical survey was then produced which indicates the pipe levels. To ensure there was no surcharge on the pipes, the Structural Engineers designed the existing road that goes over the pipes as a bridge. Also, the foundations for the Showroom and Storage buildings were designed as raft and pile construction. The works were undertaken in compliance with the 2007 UU Guidelines.

8.32 The applicant advises that the south east corner of the closest proposed building is 12.42m from the sewer and therefore is a lot further away from the pipes than the existing buildings.

8.33 United Utilities ???

**8.34 Contaminated Land**

Environmental Health have advised that this former service station site has been the subject of numerous reports about contamination associated with its past activities. Extensive remediation work has physically removed the source of contamination and a verification report has demonstrated that the site is now suitable for commercial end-use. Although Environmental Health are satisfied that the site is suitable for commercial end-use, the possibility of contamination remaining on site cannot be discounted. Therefore, a condition is recommended to ensure that once works commence on the site, should site operatives discover any adverse ground conditions and suspect it to be contaminated, they should report this to the Site Manager and Environmental Health for action. Should no adverse ground conditions be encountered during site works and/or development, a Verification Statement should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation of the building which confirms that no adverse ground conditions were found.

1. **Conclusion**
   1. There is a clear balance between the impact the proposed building will have on the openness of the Green Belt and the expansion of an established business in the Green Belt. On balance, it is officer view that the applicant has not demonstrated sufficient very special circumstances that would outweigh the harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of included land within it that the construction of this substantial building would have. Additionally, it is considered that there would be conflict between the two elements of the proposal, that of a workshop and storage building to enable the expansion of this business and the teaching apiary which would attract visiting members of the public, students and bee keepers.
2. **Recommendation**

10.1 The proposed development by virtue of its size, scale and location would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it and the very special circumstances offered by the applicant are not considered to outweigh the harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy G1 in the South Ribble Local Plan and the application is recommended for refusal.

**Relevant Policy**

**G1 Green Belt**

**G17 Design Criteria for New Development**

**Rural Development Supplementary Planning Documents**