

APPLICATION REPORT – 21/00461/OUT

Validation Date: 14 April 2021

Ward: Chorley North East

Type of Application: Outline Planning

Proposal: Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of up to four dwellings and associated infrastructure following demolition of existing buildings on site

Location: Withnell Barn Farm Chorley Road Withnell Chorley PR6 8ED

Case Officer: Johndaniel Jaques

Authorising Officer: Adele Hayes

Applicant: J Vallance

Agent: Mr Chris Betteridge, De Pol Associates

Consultation expiry: 1 June 2021

Decision due by: 17 August 2021 (Extension of time agreed)

RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that outline planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION

2. The application site is located in the Green Belt at the end of a rough track off Chorley Road, Withnell. On the site, and owned by the applicant, are stables set out in a 'U' formation, with an adjacent steel portal framed building to its west. To the south of the stables is a barn with hayloft, built of block and render, equivalent to two storeys in height with a shallow mono-pitched corrugated sheet roof. To the south west of the site is a small two storey stone built dwelling that was permitted to be converted from a barn following a planning appeal under reference 92/00205/FUL.
3. The woodland which includes trees in the western part of the site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (Chorley BC TPO 13 (Withnell) 1991). A Public Right of Way runs from the end of the rough track leading to the site from Chorley Road in a south westerly direction. The site also lies within the Coal Low Risk Zone.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4. The application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to four dwellings and associated infrastructure following demolition of existing buildings on site. All matters are reserved.

REPRESENTATIONS

5. Two representations have been received. Both welcome the proposal which would improve the appearance of the area but make some requests as follows:

- The access to the site is a restricted width track and Public Footpath that is in private ownership, and its use for construction vehicles would not be safely or easily accommodated up to the proposed development site.
- Once completed any vehicles using the access track should be subject to a speed limit.
- It is important that delivery and bin lorries can turn around within the site once it is developed.
- People using the livery do not drive up the access track and park away from the site. The use of the access by occupiers of dwellings and associated traffic would require the upgrading of the access track. The cost of this and ongoing maintenance would need to be agreed between the parties involved.
- Utilities in the track that serve residential properties must be protected.
- Is the existing dwelling to be demolished as it seems to be retained?
- Can it be assured that all equestrian use on the site will cease as the application states?
- There is scope for further development in the area and there should be no increase in the number of dwellings being sought, nor should the openness of the Green Belt be compromised.

CONSULTATIONS

6. Withnell Parish Council – No comments have been received.
7. Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highway Services – Recognise that the site is accessed from Chorley Road via an existing unadopted access road, which is also a Public Right of Way. They note that the first 45m of the access road from Chorley Road is narrow and not up to the width required to allow two vehicles to safely pass each other. Although the access road has no footways, but is of 'straight' alignment, it provides good forward visibility to allow pedestrians and vehicles entering to be seen by traffic leaving the site in order to give way at the wider section of the access road.
8. There is adequate visibility at the junction and the most recent 5-year accident record shows no personal injury accidents.
9. As this is an outline application the proposed number of bedrooms for each dwelling is not stated, however, 2no. car parking spaces are shown within each curtilage with space for turning. The proposed parking provision should accord with the Local Authority Parking Standard.
10. LCC Highway Services confirm that the submitted indicative layout is acceptable in principle and recommend an informative regarding any right of way.
11. Lancashire County Council Public Rights of Way – No comments have been received.
12. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) – Recommend conditions for replacement planting for lost trees; a requirement for a further inspection of the trees to be felled for bats and installation of new bird nesting (4 boxes) and bat roosting (2 bat roost boxes) opportunities, and an informative regarding actions if bats are found during any works.
13. Council's Trees Officer – Notes that the proposal includes the removal of four trees which would have a significant level of impact on levels of visual amenity, so a replanting condition is recommended, as is adherence to the relevant British Standard (BS5837:2012) to provide protection for retained trees off site.
14. United Utilities – Comment that the applicant should drain the site in accordance with national guidance so it should be drained on a separate system, with surface water draining in the most sustainable way. They also comment on water supply and their property, assets and infrastructure.
15. Waste and Contaminated Land Officer – Recommend that a report is submitted to identify potential sources of contamination and any remediation measures as necessary.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

16. The application site is located within the Green Belt and falls within the definition of previously developed land provided within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Section 13 of the Framework confirms that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
17. Development will only be permitted within the Green Belt, in accordance with the Framework, if it is considered appropriate development or where very special circumstances can be demonstrated. The Framework confirms that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
18. Paragraph 149 of the Framework states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt but lists a number of exceptions. One exception listed at paragraph 149 of the Framework of development that need not be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt is the 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.
19. The site is considered to be previously developed with stables granted planning permission on appeal (89/00241/FUL) and a storage barn for animal foodstuffs subject to a condition that the building shall only be used for purposes ancillary to the permitted use of the site for the breeding and rearing of horses.
20. Whilst the test for previously developed sites such as this relates to the impact on openness, the Framework does not contain a specific definition of 'openness'. It is a subjective judgment which is considered further below, along with objective criteria in making that assessment. It is considered that in respect of the Framework, the existing site currently has an impact on the openness of the Green Belt. However, it is important to note that merely the presence of an existing building on the site currently does not justify any new buildings. The new buildings must also not "have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt".
21. To engage with the exceptions of paragraph 149 of the Framework, which is reflected in policy BNE5 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026, the test relates to the existing development. The openness of an area is clearly affected by the erection or positioning of any object within it no matter whether the object is clearly visible or not. The openness test relates to the whole of the site.
22. This part of Withnell is not specified as an area for growth within Core Strategy Policy 1 and falls to be considered as an 'other place'. Criterion (f) of Core Strategy Policy 1 reads as follows:

"In other places – smaller villages, substantially built up frontages and Major Developed Sites – development will typically be small scale and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need, unless there are exceptional reasons for larger scale redevelopment schemes."
23. Policy BNE5 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 relates to the redevelopment of previously developed sites in the Green Belt and states that redevelopment of previously developed sites in the Green Belt will be permitted providing that the appearance of the site as a whole is maintained or enhanced and that all proposals, including those for partial redevelopment, are put forward in the context of a comprehensive plan for the site as a whole.

24. Whether harm is caused to openness depends on a variety of factors, such as the scale of the development, its locational context and its spatial and/or visual implications. At present, the site is occupied by a number of buildings which are spread across the site, and associated hardstanding areas, as well as paddocks. The presence of this existing development already causes harm to openness by its mere existence; and case law has established that for there to be a greater impact, there must be something more than merely a change.
25. The proposal involves the demolition of a number of (in some cases unsightly) buildings on the site, which helps to offset the harm caused to openness which would arise from the proposed development. For clarity, the dwelling referred to in a representation is not within the red line but within the blue line, indicating it is within the ownership/control of the applicant, so it would be retained.
26. When assessing volumes of proposals national policy allows for the replacement of a building provided, among other things, that they are not materially larger. The Council considers that a volume increase of up to 30% is not 'materially larger'. In this case the volume of the proposed buildings is only indicative given that the scheme is outline with all matters reserved. However, the final volume can be assessed under a reserved matters application to ensure that it is consistent with this outline application. In this case the applicant has indicated that there would be a slight reduction in the overall volumes of buildings on the site from the existing 2102 cubic metres to 1840 cubic metres. As such there would be no material increase, rather a decrease, when considering the impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
27. In addition, the dwellings themselves could potentially be provided within the footprint of the existing buildings on the site, although parking spaces serving them as shown on the indicative layout plan would not. Gardens to serve the dwellings would be provided within the extent of the previously developed land, and would not incur further into the Green Belt. As such it is not considered that the proposal would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.
28. The proposal is considered to accord with exception (g) of paragraph 149 and is not, therefore, inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
29. In relation to the scale of development in an 'other area' as identified by Policy 1(f) of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy the proposed development is not major development and, therefore, falls to be considered small scale. As such it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with Policy 1(f) of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.
30. Although the existing use of the site provides an element of employment given the site is used for the care and breeding of horses/a livery, it is not considered that this would be an employment use of a type that would necessitate the application to be supported by additional detailed information as required by Policy 1 of the Core Strategy, as it would not be contrary to it.
31. The proposal is, therefore, considered acceptable in principle subject to conditions requiring the demolition of the existing buildings and removal of the paddock areas within the red line. This would ensure that the equestrian use on the site itself cannot continue as a representation refers to.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

32. Policy BNE1 (Design Criteria for New Development) of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 -2026 stipulates that planning permission will be granted for new development, including extensions, conversions and free standing structures, provided the proposal does not have a significantly detrimental impact on the surrounding area by virtue of its density, siting, layout, building to plot ratio, height, scale and massing, design, orientation and use of materials; and that 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 respect the character of the site and local area.

33. The application site has a generally tired and unkempt appearance which detracts from the overall appearance of the area especially when viewed from the public footpath.
34. It is, therefore, likely that new dwellings on the site would improve the overall appearance of the site and the area it is located within. However, detailed design considerations would be dealt with at the reserved matters stage.
35. The proposed development is considered to accord with policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 -2026 in respect of design considerations.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

36. Policy BNE1 (Design Criteria for New Development) of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 -2026 stipulates that planning permission will be granted for new development, including extensions, conversions and free standing structures, provided that, where relevant to the development the proposal would not cause harm to any neighbouring property by virtue of overlooking, overshadowing, or by creating an overbearing impact; and that the proposal would not cause an unacceptable degree of noise disturbance to surrounding land uses.
37. Given this is an outline application the impact of the proposals on neighbours' amenity would be a detailed matter which would be assessed at reserved matters stage. However, the indicative layout plan shows that it is likely that the site could be designed to ensure that there would not be a major loss of amenity to those living near the site, with the nearest properties being Withnell Barn Farm (which is in the ownership/control of the applicant) and The Lodge to the south west of the site.
38. The proposed development is considered to be a compatible use with its surroundings and would not give rise to adverse impacts of noise and disturbance given the small-scale domestic nature of the proposal.
39. The proposed development is considered to accord with the provisions of policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 20126 in respect of amenity.

Highway safety

40. LCC Highway Services consider that the access serving the site whilst not being to the usual standard provides good forward visibility so that pedestrians and vehicles entering could be seen by traffic leaving the site, so that they could give way at the wider section of the access road. The junction with Chorley Road provides adequate visibility. Sufficient parking and manoeuvring space is likely to be able to be provided within the site and it is considered that the submitted indicative layout is acceptable in principle. The maintenance of the access is a civil matter which cannot be considered in determining the application. LCC have not requested any speed limits to be introduced, and as such it is not considered this is required. Overall, it is considered that the indicative access and parking arrangements are acceptable in principle and highway impacts would not be significantly adverse. As such the proposal accords with Policy 3 of the Core Strategy and policies ST1 and ST4 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 - 2026.

Ecology/Trees

41. Policy 22 of the Core Strategy seeks to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and policies BNE 9, 10 and 11 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 seek to protect biodiversity and nature conservation assets including trees. The application is accompanied by a baseline ecological survey and impact assessment of the site. The ecological survey says that it is reasonable to assume that there would be no likely negative impact upon bats or great crested newts of other protected species resulting from the

proposal, although precautions are advised due to the potential for bird nesting and bat roosting and compensatory provision should be provided

42. The ecological report has been reviewed by the Council's ecology advisors (Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)) who raise no objections. However, they recommend conditions requiring replacement planting for lost trees; a requirement for a further inspection of the trees to be felled for bats given these have moderate bat roosting potential, and installation of new bird nesting (4 boxes) and bat roosting (2 bat roost boxes) opportunities, and an informative regarding actions if bats are found during any works. With these controls in place through conditions, it is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on bats or birds or other protected species.
43. In relation to trees a total of four trees would be felled as part of the works. The Council's Tree Officer considers that this would have a significant level of impact on levels of visual amenity but has not raised an objection to the proposal. It is considered that the benefits of bringing forward the scheme would outweigh the loss of visual amenity that the trees provide and, therefore, it is appropriate to recommend that a replanting condition, along with adherence to the relevant British Standard (BS5837:2012) to provide protection for retained trees off site.
44. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal accords with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2018 as amended, policy 22 of the Core Strategy and policies BNE9, BNE10 and BNE11 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 -2026.

Public open space

45. Policy HS4 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 requires public open space contributions for new dwellings to be provided in order to overcome the harm of developments being implemented without facilities being provided.
46. Until recently the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) previously set out a threshold for tariff-style contributions, stating that planning obligations should not be sought from developments of 10 or less dwellings and which have a maximum combined floorspace of no more than 1000 square metres. This guidance has been removed from the latest NPPG and has been replaced with a requirement that planning obligations for affordable housing should only be sought for residential developments that are major developments.
47. Specifically, the guidance was derived from the order of the Court of Appeal dated 13 May 2016, which gave legal effect to the policy set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of 28 November 2014 which has not been withdrawn and which should, therefore, clearly still be taken into account as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications.
48. To this end whilst it would normally be inappropriate to require any affordable housing or social infrastructure contributions on sites below the thresholds stated, local circumstances may justify lower (or no) thresholds as an exception to the national policy. It would then be a matter for the decision-maker to decide how much weight to give to lower thresholds justified by local circumstances.
49. Consequently, the Council must determine what lower thresholds are appropriate based on local circumstances as an exception to national policies and how much weight to give to the benefit of requiring a payment for 10, or fewer, dwellings. The Council has agreed to only seek contributions towards provision for children/young people on developments of 10 dwellings or less.
50. There is currently a deficit of provision in Brindle and Houghton in relation to this standard, a contribution towards new provision in the ward is, therefore, required from this development. However, a financial contribution for off-site provision can only be requested if there is an identified scheme for new provision and none are identified at present.
51. Therefore, a public open space commuted sum is not requested for this scheme.

Sustainability

52. Policy 27 of the Core Strategy requires all new dwellings to be constructed to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes or Level 6 if they are commenced from 1st January 2016. It also requires sites of five or more dwellings to have either additional building fabric insulation measures or reduce the carbon dioxide emissions of predicted energy use by at least 15% through decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources. The 2015 Deregulation Bill received Royal Assent on Thursday 26th March 2015, which effectively removes Code for Sustainable Homes. The Bill does include transitional provisions which include:

“For the specific issue of energy performance, local planning authorities will continue to be able to set and apply policies in their Local Plans which require compliance with energy performance standards that exceed the energy requirements of Building Regulations until commencement of amendments to the Planning and Energy Act 2008 in the Deregulation Bill 2015. This is expected to happen alongside the introduction of zero carbon homes policy in late 2016. The government has stated that, from then, the energy performance requirements in Building Regulations will be set at a level equivalent to the (outgoing) Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. Until the amendment is commenced, we would expect local planning authorities to take this statement of the government’s intention into account in applying existing policies and not set conditions with requirements above a Code Level 4 equivalent.”

“Where there is an existing plan policy which references the Code for Sustainable Homes, authorities may continue to apply a requirement for a water efficiency standard equivalent to the new national technical standard, or in the case of energy a standard consistent with the policy set out in the earlier paragraph in this statement, concerning energy performance.”

53. Given this change, instead of meeting the code level, the dwellings should achieve a minimum dwelling emission rate of 19% above 2013 Building Regulations in accordance with the above provisions. This can be controlled by condition.

54. In addition, it is considered that the dwellings should be provided with an electric vehicle charging point to enable the use of alternative fuels for transport purposes in order that sustainable travel alternatives needs are supported and promoted within the development in accordance with Policy 3 of the Core Strategy.

Contamination

55. Paragraph 183 of the Framework sets out that sites should be suitable for the proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. The Waste and Contaminated Land Officer has said that due to the sensitive end-use of the development (residential housing with gardens), the applicant should submit a report to identify potential sources of contamination and any remediation measures as necessary. A suitable condition is recommended.

Drainage

56. Policy 17 of the Core Strategy promotes designs that will be adaptable to climate change and adopting principles of sustainable construction including Sustainable Drainage Systems. United Utilities have been consulted on this application and raise no objections. They have made comments, but not recommended conditions in this case. As such the points they raised will be dealt with by an informative.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

57. The Chorley CIL Infrastructure Charging Schedule provides a specific amount for development. The CIL Charging Schedule was adopted on 16 July 2013 and charging commenced on 1 September 2013. The proposed development would be a chargeable

development and the charge is subject to indexation in accordance with the Council's Charging Schedule.

CONCLUSION

58. The proposal accords with the exception of paragraph 145 (g) of the National Planning Policy Framework and is not, therefore, inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposal would result in the loss of some trees on the site which provide a high contribution to levels of visual amenity, but the benefits of bringing forward the scheme would outweigh the loss of visual amenity that the trees provide which would be replaced appropriately. The proposal would not prejudice highway safety and would not be detrimental to nature conservation interests or European protected species. Contamination and drainage issues can be dealt with by the use of conditions/informatives. The proposed development would make a small contribution to the Council's housing land supply. The application is considered to accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE

Ref: 89/00209/FUL **Decision:** REFFPP **Decision Date:** 5 September 1989
Description: Siting of a mobile home for a temporary period

Ref: 89/00241/FUL **Decision:** REFFPP **Decision Date:** 5 September 1989
Description: Single storey stable block for the care and breeding of horses

Ref: 90/00461/FUL **Decision:** REFFPP **Decision Date:** 4 September 1990
Description: Conversion of existing stone barn to dwelling

Ref: 90/01001/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 5 February 1991
Description: Erection of storage barn for animal foodstuffs

Ref: 92/00205/FUL **Decision:** REFFPP **Decision Date:** 1 September 1992
Description: Conversion of existing redundant barn to living accommodation

Ref: 15/01234/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 18 February 2016
Description: Demolition of existing barn and existing residential dwelling and replacement with a single residential dwelling

RELEVANT POLICIES: In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposal has had regard to guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the development plan. The specific policies/guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.

Suggested conditions

1. An application for approval of the reserved matters (namely the access, appearance, layout, scale and landscaping of the site) must be made to the Council before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and the development hereby permitted must be begun two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by the provisions of Article 3 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 and Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans below:

| Title | Plan Ref | Received On |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Site Plan | WFBD Amended 5/7/2021 | 25 June 2021 |

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The outline planning permission hereby approved relates to the erection of up to four residential units. The application for reserved matters shall not exceed four residential units.

Reason: In the interests of the appropriate development of the site, to prevent intensification in the development of the site and in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

4. As part of the first application for reserved matters or prior to the commencement of the development the following details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- a) Details of the colour, form and texture of all external facing materials to the proposed dwellings.
- b) Details of the colour, form and texture of all hard ground-surfacing materials.
- c) Location, design and materials of all fences, walls and other boundary treatments.
- d) The finished floor level of the proposed dwellings.

The development thereafter shall be completed in accordance with the approved details. Prior to the first occupation of the dwelling hereby permitted all fences and walls shown in the approved details to bound its plot shall have been erected in conformity with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities and character of the area and to provide reasonable standards of privacy to residents.

5. The buildings and paddock areas on the site shall be demolished/removed prior to commencement of development of any dwellings on the site.

Reason: To ensure that the equestrian use on the site ceases.

6. Before any tree felling is carried out full details (including species, number, stature and location) of the replacement tree planting shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The replacement tree planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within nine months of the tree felling and retained thereafter.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

7. Any works to trees shall be undertaken in accordance with British Standard BS 5837:2012 or any subsequent amendment to the British Standards.

Reason: To safeguard the health and appearance of off-site trees that are to be retained.

8. Prior to any works to the trees that are to be felled being undertaken, they shall be inspected further immediately prior to their felling by a suitably qualified person. Prior to any works to the trees that are to be felled being undertaken a scheme of new bird nesting and bat roosting opportunities on or near the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall provide a minimum of 4 bird nesting boxes and 2 bat roosting boxes. The scheme shall be carried out fully in accordance with the approved details prior to any felling works to trees commencing.

Reason: To ensure protected species are not detrimentally affected by the proposals.

9. Due to the sensitive end-use of the development (residential housing with garden), the development hereby permitted shall not commence until the applicant has submitted to and had

approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a report to identify any potential sources of contamination on the site and where appropriate, necessary remediation measures.

The report should include an initial desk study, site walkover and preliminary risk assessment. If the initial study identifies the potential for contamination to exist on site, the scope of a further study must then be agreed in writing with Local Planning Authority and thereafter undertaken and shall include details of the necessary remediation measures. The development should thereafter only be carried out following the remediation of the site in full accordance with the measures stipulated in the approved report.

Reason: To protect the environment and prevent harm to human health by ensuring that the land is remediated to an appropriate standard for the proposed end use.

10. Prior to the construction of the superstructure of any of the dwellings hereby permitted or with any reserved matter application, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that each dwelling will achieve a minimum Dwelling Emission Rate of 19% above 2013 Building Regulations. The development thereafter shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Policy 27 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy requires new dwellings to be built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 however following the Deregulation Bill 2015 receiving Royal Assent it is no longer possible to set conditions with requirements above a Code Level 4 equivalent. However, as Policy 27 is an adopted Policy it is still possible to secure energy efficiency reduction as part of new residential schemes in the interests of minimising the environmental impact of the development.