

Assessment

Principle of the development

1. Policy 1 (c) iii of the Adopted Core Strategy identifies Buckshaw Village as a location for strategic growth. Policy GN2 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review also applies to the Royal Ordnance Site. This states that high quality and phased development will be permitted for purposes appropriate to the concept of an Urban Village.

Background Information

2. When the reserved matters approval was granted in January 2009 (08/01100/REMMAJ) for the retail elements of the Southern Commercial Area a concurrent application was considered (08/01098/REMMAJ) for purely residential properties adjacent to the local retail centre. The scheme approved the erection of 84 apartments and 24 dwellinghouses on the site. The land has been subsequently divided between Redrow Homes and Barratt Homes.
3. Following this original reserved matters approval Redrow Homes submitted a reserved matters application for Parcel N which included their part of the land adjacent to the local retail centre. That application (12/00463/REMMAJ) amended part of the previously approved scheme. Last year Redrow Homes applied to amend this part of the Village again (13/00817/REMMAJ) however the application was subsequently refused. This application seeks to address the reasons for refusal and amend this part of the site. The changes are as follows:

Reserved matters application	One bed apartment	Two bed apartment	Two bed house	Three bed house	Four bed house	Total
08/01098/REMMAJ	24	0	0	0	14	38
12/00463/REMMAJ	0	42	4	0	0	46
13/00817/REMMAJ	0	4	0	11	3	18
14/00264/REMMAJ	0	4	6	9	0	19

Density

4. The application site covers 0.59 hectares. The proposed scheme equates to a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The previous approvals equate to 64 and 78 dwellings per hectare respectively, due to the fact that these schemes incorporated apartment accommodation.
5. Policy 5 of the Core Strategy relates to housing densities and states that the authorities will secure densities of development which are in keeping with local areas and which will have no detrimental impact on the amenity, character, appearance, distinctiveness and environmental quality of an area, consideration will also be given to making efficient use of land.
6. For the reasons set out below it is considered that the layout and scale of dwellings proposed should be amended to reflect both the character of the adjacent retail core and the dwellings close to the listed building. The changes suggested are likely to increase the density which would be more in character with the surrounding area.

Design

7. Within the Masterplan, approved as part of the outline planning permission and the Southern Commercial Design Code, this parcel of land is allocated as a mixed use area including housing.
8. The Southern Commercial Design Code seeks to ensure that the Village reflects a typical pattern of organic development that could have taken place over a long period of time with the oldest and most dense development in the centre with more recent development on the outskirts.
9. It is important that the end result created is a high quality place where development fits into the context, elements relate to one another and attention is paid to detail. The design

of the properties on this part of the site has previously been one of the key considerations. The Design Code confirms that the western side of the mixed use core will comprise housing. This is a key frontage and a strong design connection with the housing adjacent to the listed building will be required. The Design Code confirms that there will be no direct vehicular access to the dwellings from the distributor road.

10. The originally approved residential scheme for this parcel of land (along with the parcel directly to the north which Barratt Homes are responsible for developing) incorporated a much more dense form of development. The Committee report set out the following design considerations at that time:

The proposal incorporates a mixture of three storey apartment blocks and 2/ 2.5 storey terraced/ semi-detached houses. The Ambleside/ Buttermere apartment blocks are located on corner plots with open space and pedestrian access located to the front and side of the building. The buildings incorporate front projections, vertically proportioned windows and dormer style windows in the roof space. The Coniston apartments reflect large three storey dwellings with a mix of brick and render. The dwellings reflect more modern properties with dormer windows and front balconies.

The use of vertically proportioned windows, brick quoins and arched windows with the apartment buildings represent late 18th Century dwellings whereas the more modern dwellings with stone window surrounds and square windows represent mid 19th Century dwellings which accords with the Design Code for this area.

11. The original reserved matters approval was granted to Eden Park Developments, who are responsible for the development of the retail parade, and when Redrow looked at the parcel in more detail amendments were suggested via the submission of reserved matters application 12/00148/REMMAJ. Whilst this reserved matters application related mainly to the land adjacent to Buckshaw Hall this parcel of land adjacent to the retail parade was also included within the red edge. On consideration of the proposals the following concerns were raised in respect of this specific part of the site:

When the design of the properties adjacent to the local retail centre was considered the apartment blocks incorporated front projections, vertically proportioned windows and dormer style windows in the roof space. The dwellings reflected more modern properties with dormer windows and front balconies. It was considered that the use of vertically proportioned windows, brick quoins and arched windows with the apartment buildings represented late 18th Century dwellings whereas the more modern dwellings with stone window surrounds and square windows represent mid-19th Century dwellings. This was considered to be in accordance with the Design Code for this area and reflected the adjacent character of the retail centre. These features appear to have been reduced on the current proposals and I would advise reintroducing some of these features to ensure that the proposals reflect the aspirations of the Design Code and the character of the area.

12. The application was subsequently withdrawn and a revised reserved matter application submitted 12/00463/REMMAJ. The amended application incorporated a mixture of three storey apartment blocks and 2 storey maisonettes. The apartment blocks were located on corner plots with open space and pedestrian access located to the side and rear of the buildings. The approved dwelling houses were accessed via Buckshaw Avenue/Ordnance Road and parking was provided in the form of rear parking courts and parking to the front of the Evesham house type. The amended scheme ensured that the scheme reflected the adjacent character of the retail centre along with the houses approved close to the listed building and was granted reserved matters approval.
13. The current proposals incorporate a standard housing layout introducing Redrow's Abode range onto this parcel of land. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Southern Commercial Design Code is 8 years old now and the Design Codes at Buckshaw are ever evolving and developing documents to ensure that the developments reflect market/ design/policy changes the design and layout of this parcel of land is an important consideration. Whilst

it is acknowledged that the Design Code confirms that a strong design connection with the housing adjacent to the listed building is required this parcel of land is considered to be important to achieving a transition between the retail centre of the Village and the housing adjacent to Buckshaw Hall As such the design/ layout considerations are a key element of the proposals which reflects the Government's core land use planning principles of always seeking to secure high quality design. It is considered that the principles of the design code of securing a high quality design accord with the outcomes expressed within the Framework.

14. This principle is reflected within Policy 17 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy BNE1 of the emerging Local Plan which, since the publication of the Inspectors Partial Report, can be afforded significant weight. The Policy states:

Planning permission will be granted for new development, including extensions, conversions and free standing structures, provided that, where relevant to the development:

- a) 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.
- b) The development would not cause harm to any neighbouring property by virtue of overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing;
- c) 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;
- d) The residual cumulative highways impact of the development is not severe and it 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 Site Allocations Policy – Parking Standards, unless there are other material considerations which justify the reduction;
- e) The proposal would not adversely affect the character or setting of a listed building and/or the character of a conservation area and/or any heritage asset including locally important areas;
- f) The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on important natural habitats and landscape features such as historic landscapes, 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;
- g) The proposal would not cause an unacceptable degree of noise disturbance to surrounding land uses;
- h) The proposal includes measures to help to prevent crime and promote community safety.

15. This Policy is supported by the Central Lancashire 'Design Guide' Supplementary Planning Document which encourages high quality design of places, buildings and landscaping in the borough.

16. When the application was originally submitted concerns were raised in respect of the proposals as it was considered that they did not accord with the requirements of the Design Code for the Southern Commercial Area. It was acknowledged that the scheme was trying to reflect the development of parcel N however it was considered that this design and layout solution did not effectively provide a transition between the commercial

area and the residential area which is considered to be an appropriate design solution for this parcel.

17. Reserved matters approval (12/01001/REMMAJ) was granted earlier this year for 11 dwellings on the parcel of land immediately to the east of this application site. Formally offices were approved on this site however the land owners applied to erect dwellings on this site. The design and layout reflects an appropriate design solution for this part of the Village and it is considered that this design solution could be reflected within the parcel of land subject to this application. The design and height of the adjacent dwellings forms a transition from the taller commercial units with apartments above to the lower density housing outside the commercial core. The applicant was advised that the scheme should reflect the transition of the area, which would be considered similar to the approved scheme on the immediately adjacent piece of land, and in order to be in accordance with the Design Code should have no direct vehicular access to the dwellings from the distributor road.
18. Within this parcel of land it is considered that the most appropriate design solution would be to have dwellings sited on the corners of the development to provide a vertical emphasis and a frontage to the main public highway together with the properties being accessed via rear courtyard parking. The applicant considers that this design solution requires apartments which would be unsellable. However it is also noted that a recent S106A application by Redrow Homes within this part of the site (13/00785/S106A) which was approved by Members on 29th October specifically related to apartments. At this time Redrow acknowledged that the apartment market was very challenging however in that case the construction could proceed with Government initiatives such as Help to Buy. As such it isn't as 'clear cut' as saying apartments are unsellable.
19. It is not possible to develop this parcel of land with a standard housing layout whilst achieving the most appropriate design and layout solution. As such an innovative and non-standard solution needs to be considered. This approach has been established on the Barratts site, to the north of this parcel of land, where the recent replan (12/00787/REMMAJ) saw a reduction in the parcels density but incorporated Barratts contemporary first time buyer range which have a vertical emphasis and distinguish between the retail core and the more standard dwellings sited adjacent to the Listed Building.
20. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Abode house types proposed as part of this application vary to the Heritage range which Redrow have constructed elsewhere on the village they still represent a standard house type.
21. The applicant has been advised that a terraced block rising to 3 storeys would be a more appropriate design solution. Concerns have been raised by the Council's Policy and Urban Design Team Leader that there are no focal buildings and little interest created with the proposed design and layout. The Team Leader confirms that the proposals bear no relation to the Barratt Homes scheme adjacent to the site. These rise to 3 storey and create an 'edge' that is lacking in this proposal, which is essentially a suburban housing layout. It is considered that setting the 'Alton' block back, and presenting its car parking to the main road undermines what we are seeking to achieve here with the built form and is contrary to good design practice.
22. An apartment led solution could achieve all of the layout and design requirements however alternative solutions could also have the same result and compromises were discussed with the applicant which included relocating the apartments to front the distributor road, integrating three storey detached dwellings and town houses with integral garages. Elsewhere in the Borough Redrow Homes have successfully amended parts of approved housing estates from 100% apartment accommodation to a mix of apartments and houses to respect the character of the area (the former Lex site ref: 12/00392/FULMAJ) which demonstrates this way forward is a possibility. The suggested amendments would involve some innovation on the inclusion of the products that Redrow want to build if innovative parking solutions were considered (parking courts are not

considered favourably by the applicant). The applicant has decided however not to amend the plans and wishes for the application to be determined as submitted.

23. As part of the previous reserved matters application at this site the Council's Policy and Design Team Leader reviewed the proposals and considered that a scheme undertaken by Bardsley Homes at Worsley Village would be appropriate for this site as the detached dwelling successfully turn corners and the dwellings incorporate garage/ frontage parking whilst creating massing and scale.
24. In the case of the current proposals the Team Leader considers that the Design and Access Statement is inadequate, as is expected with such a poor design and layout. It does not make reference to the Framework, Policy 17 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Policy BNE1 of the Emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026, guidance contained within the Central Lancashire Supplementary Planning Document 'Design Guide' and the Buckshaw Village Southern Commercial Design Code. As such from a design perspective the proposals are considered to be unacceptable.

Impact on Neighbours

25. The site is currently occupied by an earth mound which has been produced from the neighbouring parcels of land however when the site is returned to its post-remediation state it is effectively a flat site. In respect of the layout the scheme works purely in respect of the relationship of the proposed properties and the amenities of the future residents.
26. The layout as proposed effectively results in private garden areas adjacent to the parking court of the adjacent dwellings of the neighbouring piece of land however this reflects the approved layout for the application site which detailed plots 1090-1093 with private garden areas immediately adjacent to the parking court on the adjacent piece of land.
27. The properties on plots 6-11 of the adjacent piece of land are sited over 21 metres from the garden boundaries of the proposed dwellings and even though plots 7-9 incorporate 2nd floor bedroom windows the spacing is considered more than adequate to ensure that no overlooking will be created to the detriment of the future residents.
28. The dwellings on plots 1076 and 1077, the properties closest to the adjacent rear garden boundaries, are two storey dwellings which incorporate 1 first floor rear bedroom window. The bedroom window secures the required 10 metres to the rear garden area of plot 1 on the adjacent piece of land ensuring the amenities of the future residents are protected.
29. The Barratts properties are located on the opposite side of the access road and the dwellings close to the listed building are located on the opposite side of the distributor road. As such it is not considered that the proposals will adversely impact on the amenities of the occupants of these dwellings.
30. In respect of the amenities of the existing and future residents it is not considered that the proposals will have an adverse impact.

Traffic and Transport

31. The scheme incorporates a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom houses. All of the houses incorporate parking in accordance with the Council's standards (2 parking spaces) and whilst the garage accommodation is slightly below the required 6x 3 metre dimensions as set out within Manual for Streets it is still considered that they are large enough to accommodate a car and storage.
32. The scheme also incorporates four 2 bedroom maisonettes which are effectively apartments. This part of the scheme only incorporates 150% parking provision whereas 200% parking is required in accordance with Emerging Plan Policy ST4. This parking provision does however reflect that previously approved within this parcel of land and due to this highly sustainable location a deviation from the standard is considered to be acceptable in respect of the criteria set out within Policy ST4.

33. As set out above the Highway Engineer at Lancashire County Council has no concerns with the proposals and as such from a highway perspective the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

Overall Conclusion

34. The proposals effectively create a standard housing layout on a parcel of land which is considered, from a design perspective, needs to act as the transition parcel between the commercial core and the residential areas adjacent to Buckshaw Hall. The proposed scheme would create a low density development within an area of the site where the character of the area is higher density. The use dwellings, on the adjacent piece of land, sited at the back of the road/pedestrian frontage effectively creates an enclosed more traditional space which is considered more appropriate for this parcel of land than the current proposals.
35. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is a degree of flexibility within the approved Design Code, as this document should be treated as an evolving guide, it is not considered that the scheme reflects the most appropriate design solution for this parcel of land.
36. The dwellings approved on the adjacent piece of land respect the character and design principles of the commercial area by siting properties on the prominent corners, creating a vertical emphasis and siting the dwellings close to the road. Additionally all of the parking is located to the rear of the dwellings reducing its prominence within the streetscene.
37. It is considered that a suitable compromise could be achieved on this site which meets the applicant's aspirations, creates an attractive commercial product and respects the character of this part of the Village. The scheme as submitted however does not respect the character of this part of the Village nor does it represent a fluid transition between the commercial and residential parts of the site.
38. Policy 17 of the Core Strategy requires the design of new buildings to take account of the character and appearance of the local area and Policy BNE1 requires the layout, design and landscaping to be of a high quality and respect the character of the site and local area. For the reasons set out above it is not considered that the proposals are the most appropriate solution for this site, act as an effective transition between the areas or respect the character of the area and as such the application is recommended for refusal.

Planning Policies

National Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework

Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review

Policies:

GN2: Royal Ordnance Site, Euxton

GN5: Building Design and Retaining Existing Landscape Features and Natural Habitats

GN9: Transport Accessibility

EP18: Surface Water Run Off

HS4: Design and Layout of Residential Developments

HS5: Affordable Housing

TR1: Major Development- Tests for Accessibility and Sustainability

TR4: Highway Development Control Criteria

TR18: Provision for pedestrians and cyclists in new developments

Central Lancashire Core Strategy

Policies to be given weight are:

Policy MP clarifies the operational relationship between the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. Planning policies that accord with the policies in the Core Strategy will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where

there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date the Council will grant planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise taking into account Policy MP a) and b).

Policy 1 Locating Growth

Policy 4 Housing Delivery

Policy 5 Housing Density

Policy 7 Affordable Housing

Policy 17 Design of new buildings

Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026

The Inspectors Interim Report is expected imminently and as such the following policies are afforded substantial weight in decision making:

Relevant Policies are:

V2: Settlement Areas

ST4: Parking Standards

HS1: Housing Site Allocations

BNE1: Design Criteria for New Development.

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

- Southern Commercial Design Code
- The Central Lancashire Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide (adopted October 2012) is relevant as it aims to encourage high quality design of places, buildings and landscapes in the Borough. This supersedes the Chorley Design Supplementary Planning Guidance (July 2004)

Planning History

97/00509/OUT: Outline application for mixed use development (granted in 1999)

02/00748/OUT: Modification of conditions on outline permission for mixed use development

07/00660/FUL: Proposed formation of a detention basin off Central Avenue, Buckshaw Village, Chorley. Approved July 2007

08/01098/REMAJ: Reserved matters application for the erection of 84 apartments and 24 dwelling houses at the Southern Commercial Area, Buckshaw Village. Approved January 2009

08/01100/REMAJ: Reserved Matters Application for the Southern Commercial Area, Buckshaw Village. Including retail uses, residential, car parking, related infrastructure and landscaping. Approved January 2009

10/00237/DIS: Application to discharge condition no. 3 attached to planning approval 08/01100/REMAJ. Discharged April 2010

10/00334/FULMAJ: Application under Section 73 to vary Conditions 1, 5, 6, 12, 13 and 14 as attached to Planning Permission Reference 08/01100/REMAJ. Approved July 2010

10/00379/DIS: Discharge of condition nos. 4, 7, 8, 10 and 16 attached to planning approval reference 08/01100/REMAJ Discharged July 2010

10/00381/MNMA: Application for Minor Non Material Amendments to planning application 08/01100/REMAJ (Tesco store) and 08/01099/FUL (Tesco filling station). Approved May 2010

10/00591/FULMAJ: Erection of a railway station, access road and associated car parking at Buckshaw Village including parking provision on the south side of the railway. Approved August 2010

11/00141/DIS: Application to discharge the planning condition of planning permission 10/00591/FULMAJ (for erection of a railway station, access road and associated parking and infrastructure at Buckshaw Village). Pending Consideration

12/00148/REMMAJ: Reserved matters application for the erection of 124 dwellings with associated garaging, bin / cycle stores, parking areas, landscaping, roads, drains, sewers and boundary treatments at the Southern Commercial Area, Buckshaw Village. Withdrawn

12/00463/REMMAJ: Reserved matters application for the erection of 123 dwellings with associated garaging, bin / cycle stores, parking areas, landscaping, roads, drains, sewers and boundary treatments at the Southern Commercial Area, Buckshaw Village (resubmission of application 12/00148/REMMAJ). Approved August 2012

13/00817/REMMAJ: Reserved matters application for the erection of 14 dwellings and 4 Maisonettes adjacent to the retail area of the Southern Commercial Area (replan of the dwellings approved as part of reserved matters approval 08/01098/REMMAJ and 12/00463/REMMAJ). Refused for the following reason:

The proposed layout, design and density of the dwellings proposed do not respect of character or appearance of the surrounding area or secure high quality design. It is important that this site provides a transition between the high density commercial centre and the dwellinghouses surrounding the Listed Building, Buckshaw Hall, which the proposals do not secure. As such the proposals are contrary to Government advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy 17 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Policy BNE1 of the Emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026, guidance contained within the Central Lancashire Supplementary Planning Document 'Design Guide' and the Buckshaw Village Southern Commercial Design Code.

Adjacent Parcels of Land:

Barratts

12/00787/REMMAJ: Proposed residential development comprising 82 dwellings and associated works. Approved November 2012

Eden Park

12/01001/REMMAJ: Reserved matters application for the erection of 22 dwellings at the Southern Commercial Area, Buckshaw Village (pursuant to outline permissions 97/00509/OUT and 02/00748/OUTMAJ). Approved January 2013

Suggested Reason of Refusal

The proposed layout, design and density of the dwellings proposed do not respect of character or appearance of the surrounding area or secure high quality design and fails to take the opportunity for improving the character and quality of the Southern Commercial Area and the way it functions. It is considered important from a design perspective that this site provides a transition between the high density commercial centre and the dwellinghouses surrounding the Listed Building, Buckshaw Hall, which the proposals do not secure. As such the proposals are contrary to Government advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies 5 and 17 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Policy BNE1 of the Emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026, guidance contained within the Central Lancashire 'Design Guide' Supplementary Planning Document and the Buckshaw Village Southern Commercial Design Code.