

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 26th June 2018

Application	06
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Application Number:	17/02717/OUTM	Application Expiry Date:	08 th February 2018
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Application Type:	Major
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Proposal Description:	Outline application for residential development (with means of access to be agreed).
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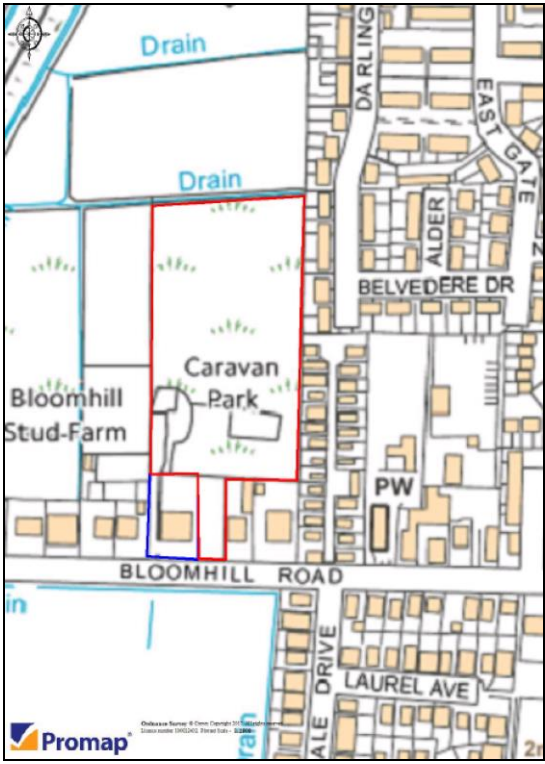
At:	Land to the rear of Rivendell, Bloomhill Road, Moorends
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For:	DLP Planning
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Third Party Reps:	Petition (200) and 22 in opposition with 27 in support.	Parish:	Thorne Town Council
		Ward:	Thorne And Moorends

Author of Report	Mel Roberts
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MAIN RECOMMENDATION:	PLANNING PERMISSION BE REFUSED
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1.0 Reason for Report

1.1 This application is being reported to planning committee at the request of Councillor Susan Durant and because of the number of letters in support of the application.

2.0 Proposal and Background

2.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for residential development with the means of access to be agreed at this stage and all other matters to be reserved. An indicative layout has been submitted which shows a development of 59 dwellings comprising 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties (see Fig 1).

2.2 Access to the site is to be taken directly from Bloomhill Road. The proposed access to the site runs from Bloomhill Road and into the side garden of a bungalow called Rivendell and then carries on to serve the land to the rear. There is another bungalow called Green Acres that sits on the other side of the proposed access road. The indicative site plan shows that a landscaping strip is proposed between the access road and Green Acres. The indicative layout has been designed to allow for access to adjoining parcels of land.

2.3 At the point of access into the proposed housing site (and further beyond to the west), Bloomhill Road is a narrow carriageway with no footpaths either side and is different in character to the road further along to the east (beyond the residential park site), which has a typical width carriageway with footpaths either side.

2.4 The application site comprises a single parcel of Greenfield land which measures approximately 1.72 hectares in size. The site comprises a single field which is level in terms of topography and is vacant and unused.

2.5 Existing dwellings lie on the southern boundary on Bloomhill Road and to the east on Darlington Grove with the back gardens bordering the site. Mount Pleasant also exists to the east, which is a residential park site and accommodates 26 pitches. To the west and north are open fields with some minor vegetation in the form of young trees and shrubbery.

2.6 The properties to the south of the site on Bloomhill Road are predominately bungalows with some having accommodation within the roof space. The properties on Mount Pleasant are single storey caravan type units with flat roofs and small plots. Darlington Grove forms a cul de sac off a wider residential estate and is made up of semi-detached dormer bungalows and houses.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

3.1 There is no relevant planning history.

4.0 Representations

4.1 The application has been advertised in the press, on site and with letters sent to all properties bordering the site.

4.2 A petition with 200 signatures has been submitted in opposition to the application on the basis that the development will have an adverse impact on the surrounding areas, roads and all infrastructure.

4.3 An additional 22 letters of objection have been received and the comments can be summarised as follows:

- i) The site has a poor access and infrastructure and Bloomhill Road cannot cope with traffic from another 59 homes.
- ii) There is no need for any more houses in this area.
- iii) The site is Greenfield land and should therefore be protected.
- iv) Building more properties is going to add even more volume to existing sewers and drains that cannot cope in heavy rainfall.
- v) The land is continually waterlogged and the water from the development will be forced onto the adjacent caravan site.
- vi) Schools, doctors and hospitals are all stretched to capacity and cannot cope.
- vii) If the attenuation tank overflows then it could flood the adjacent property.
- viii) The proposal will devalue surrounding properties.
- ix) The site has ecological value and there are likely to be Great Crested Newts on site.
- x) There will be a loss of privacy to surrounding properties.
- xi) There will be noise from construction of the development.
- xii) Upon looking at the representations for this application, there are 8 in favour from 3 different families giving their address as Rivendell.

4.4 27 letters of support have been received and the comments can be summarised as follows:

- i) More housing is needed in Moorends.
- ii) The development will attract investment into the local community.
- iii) The parcel of land is a natural progression of the existing developed area and so should be supported.
- iv) The site is located close to local amenities.
- v) The development will bring much needed affordable housing.
- vi) This land has previously had planning permission granted when Thorne Rural District Council and Doncaster Corporation was the Planning Authority.
- vii) The land was the most heavily promoted land through the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Process and is the most appropriate development site in Moorends.
- viii) The land has no agricultural value and is constantly subject to fly tipping and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

4.5 It should be noted that of the 27 letters received in support of the application, 9 of those are from people who share the same surname as the owner of the land and a further 5 are from people who give their address as Rivendell.

5.0 Town Council

5.1 The Town Council has been consulted, but no response has been received.

5.0 Consultations

5.1 The Environment Agency has raised no objections subject to a condition requiring finished floor levels to be set no lower than 3.5m above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

5.2 Yorkshire Water has raised no objections subject to conditions.

5.3 The Council's Drainage section has raised no objections subject to conditions.

5.4 Transportation has responded and has raised no objections.

5.5 Highways have raised no objections subject to a number of conditions.

5.6 The Urban Design Officer has raised no objections in principle and has suggested a number of amendments to the indicative playout plan which are more relevant for any subsequent reserved matters application.

5.7 The Open Space Officer has indicated that the Moorends Community Profile Area is deficient in 2/5 Open Space typologies, including informal open space. In line with UDP Policy RL4, 10 per cent of the site should be laid out as useable informal Public Open Space, suitable for children's play, or a commuted sum in lieu of this.

5.8 The Ecology Officer is satisfied that no protected species are at risk from the proposed development and has therefore raised no objections subject to a condition requiring an Ecological Enhancement Plan.

5.9 The Tree Officer has responded and has raised no objections subject to a landscaping scheme being submitted. This would be dealt with under reserved matters if outline approval were given.

5.10 South Yorkshire Archaeology Service has been consulted and has not responded.

5.11 Environmental Health has raised no objections subject to conditions that would control noise and dust during construction of the development.

5.12 The Air Quality Officer has raised no objections subject to a condition requiring electric vehicle charging points within the site.

5.13 Pollution Control has commented that although there is no evidence of any previous industrial or other potentially polluting use of the land, further investigation of possible contamination should be secured by a condition given the sensitive nature of the end use as residential. Given that there is no evidence of any previous potentially contaminating uses then such a condition is not considered necessary.

5.14 Public Rights of Way has raised no objections as there are no recorded rights of way affected by the proposed development.

5.15 Education has requested a contribution of £164,673 to be put towards school places for Trinity Academy Secondary School which will be over capacity with the additional 9 school places that the development will create.

7.0 Relevant Policy and Strategic Context

National Planning Policy Framework

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that planning law requires that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states in paragraph 49 that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

7.2 The NPPF states that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised. It states that decisions on applications that generate significant amounts of movement should take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up and whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved. Other areas covered by the NPPF include the need for good design, flooding and ecology.

Doncaster Core Strategy

7.3 Policy CS2 identifies Moorends as a Renewal Town, which together with the other Renewal Towns of Denaby, Edlington and Carcroft/Skellow is to provide up to a total of 1660 houses over the plan period. In Renewal Towns the priority will be regeneration and housing renewal rather than market-led growth.

7.4 Policy CS3 states that Doncaster's countryside will be protected and enhanced. It cites a number of examples of development that would be acceptable in the countryside and these do not include major housing schemes. Proposals which are outside of development allocations will only be supported where they would: retain and improve key green wedges; not be visually detrimental; not create or aggravate highway or amenity problems and preserve the openness of the Countryside Protection Policy Area.

7.5 Policy CS4 seeks to direct development to areas of lowest flood risk and ensure that mitigation measures are in place to ensure that developments do not flood. Developments within flood risk areas will be supported where they pass the Sequential and/or Exceptions Test.

7.6 Policy CS9 states that new developments will provide, as appropriate, transport assessments and travel plans to ensure the delivery of travel choice and sustainable opportunities for travel.

7.7 Policy CS10 sets out the phasing of new houses to be built and states that new urban extension allocations to the Renewal Towns will be released from 2021 onwards (provided that suitable sites can be identified).

7.8 Policy CS12 states that sites of 15 or more houses will normally include affordable houses on-site with the proportion, type and tenure split reflecting the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, except where a developer can justify an alternative scheme in the interests of viability.

7.9 Policy CS14 relates to design and sustainable construction and states that all proposals in Doncaster must be of high quality design that contributes to local distinctiveness, reinforces the character of local landscapes and building traditions, responds positively to existing site features and integrates well with its immediate and surrounding local area.

7.10 Policy CS16 seeks to protect Doncaster's natural environment, particularly where protected species may be affected.

7.11 Policy CS18 states that Doncaster's air, water and land resources will be conserved, protected and enhanced both in terms of quantity and quality, including the need to protect high quality agricultural land.

Unitary Development Plan

7.12 Policy ENV4 establishes the purposes for which development in the Countryside Policy Area is likely to be permitted. Major residential developments do not fall into any of the identified categories of development deemed to be acceptable.

7.13 Policy ENV53 states that the scale of new development must have regard to its wider visual impact. It should not have a significant adverse visual impact on views from major transport routes; or views across open countryside; or views of important landmarks.

7.14 Policy RL4 seeks the provision of local public open space or a commuted sum in lieu of this on new developments of 10 or more family dwellings.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

7.15 The Town Council has produced a draft Thorne and Moorends Neighbourhood Plan, but little weight can be attached to the document given its early stage in the process.

8.0 Planning Issues and Discussion

8.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the starting point for consideration of this application is the development plan. All decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Principle of the Development

8.2 The site lies within the Countryside Policy Area as allocated in the Doncaster UDP and also lies within the broad extent of the Countryside Policy Protection Area as defined in the Core Strategy. Therefore the proposal should be primarily judged against Core Strategy policies CS2 and CS3 and policy ENV4 of the UDP. These policies are designed to protect the countryside from development that would not be appropriate such as large scale housing proposals and so the proposed development would not comply with these policies.

8.3 Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy defines Moorends as a Renewal Town and sets a housing target of up to 1600 to be built across Moorends and the other three defined Renewal Towns (Denaby, Edlington and Carcroft/Skellow) over the plan period. Policy CS2 explains that in Renewal Towns, the priority will be regeneration and housing renewal rather than market led-growth.

8.4 Core Strategy policy CS10 states that sufficient land will be provided to deliver housing targets according to a phasing strategy. In Renewal Towns, it is envisaged that the potential for delivering urban extension allocations (provided suitable sites can be identified) will be delayed until after 2021. Release of this site for housing now would be contrary to Policy CS10 in that it would be 3 years earlier than the earliest date for the release of new Greenfield urban extensions to the Renewal Towns, including Moorends. Any approval of an application at this stage would undermine the phasing policy of the Core Strategy and possibly set a precedent for other similar applications to the detriment of the aims of the Core Strategy.

8.5 The Core Strategy has not been accompanied by the anticipated Sites and Policies Document and so new allocations for the settlement have not been defined. Therefore, an argument may be made that the proposal would be supportive of the Core Strategy's Growth and Regeneration Strategy as set out in policy CS2. However, housing monitoring data (at 1st April 2017) for net completions (370 units) and outstanding permissions (745 units) show that 70 per cent (or 1115) of the Renewal Towns' target for up to 1600 dwellings has already been achieved in the first 7 years of the Core Strategy plan period, with a further 10 years of the period remaining. There is a very realistic prospect that the strategy for Renewal Towns will be achieved in the next 10 years and there is therefore no pressing need to release the site for housing at present.

8.6 To be compliant with policy CS2 of the Core Strategy, proposals for housing development in this Renewal Town should demonstrate how the proposal is contributing to regeneration. As a market-led development, the development does not achieve this and does not attempt to provide other means of contributing to the objectives of policy CS2, such as, for example, provision of a commuted sum towards a regeneration project in Moorends. The only contribution would be indirect by the arguable provision of a new wider choice in house types and affordability in the settlement. The proposal does not therefore comply with policy CS2 of the Core Strategy.

8.7 The site is located close to services within the centre of Moorends. It has one edge along the boundary of the built up area of Moorends. The ribbon of houses

along Bloomhill Road lie within the countryside. The development is not infill. If there was a need to allocate a site for an urban extension to deliver more houses as part of the future Local Plan then the site might have locational merit, but would need to be considered against other sites and planning criteria as part of the due process of the Local Plan preparation, having regard to the fact that the site lies within flood zone 3.

8.8 The applicant's Planning Statement suggests that the Council does not have a five year housing land supply following the appeal decision for a site off Westminster Drive, Dunsville, which allowed permission for 97 dwellings. This appeal decision was challenged by the Council through a Judicial Review. The conclusion of this process was that in reaching her conclusion on the Council's housing requirement for the 5 year housing land supply, the Inspector made an error on the Council's assessment of its 'objectively assessed need.' It therefore remains the Council's position that it continues to determine planning applications on the basis that it can demonstrate a sufficient supply of housing land as shown in its latest published 5 Years Housing Land Supply Statement in August 2017. As such, the provisions of NPPF paragraph 49 (which states that, "Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.") do not apply and the Council's Development Plan policies relevant to the supply of housing are not considered to be out-of-date, contrary to the claims by the applicant.

Flooding

8.9 A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application. The Environment Agency flood maps indicate that the site is wholly located within Flood Zone 3. The main potential source of flooding to the site is tidal flooding, but the risk is low due to the protection offered by flood defences. The risk of flooding to the site is residual and attributed to possible failure of flood defences and pumping stations.

8.10 The Topographical Survey shows that site levels vary from a low of 1.46m AOD in the centre of the site to approximately 2m AOD in the northern part of the site. The report concludes that the residual flood risk could be mitigated by raising ground floor levels to 3.5m AOD. A higher finished floor level of 4.1m AOD is not considered feasible given the existing ground levels of the site and 3.5m AOD is consistent with nearby recently approved residential development in the Isle of Axholme area.

8.11 A finished floor level of 3.5m AOD will be achieved by raising site levels in the location of individual plots. This will entail raising ground levels to 3m AOD (approximately 1m – 1.5m of ground raising) and raising finished floor levels by 0.5m. Ground raising at individual plots can be achieved through ramping up driveways and gardens. This approach is recommended to prevent any structural issues associated with pressure of water against walls. Flood resilience and resistance measures will also be incorporated into the design. The report concludes that the raising of land levels to facilitate raised floor levels would have negligible impact on flood risk elsewhere and would not increase tidal flood levels at nearby properties.

8.12 The proposed development would introduce impermeable drainage areas in the form of buildings and roads. This will result in an increase in surface water runoff. In order to ensure the increase in surface water runoff will not increase flood risk elsewhere, flow control can be used and attenuation provided on site to accommodate storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 30% climate change. Attenuation can be provided within a pond, basin or an underground tank. Yorkshire Water have confirmed that foul flows can discharge to the 225mm public combined sewer in Bloomhill Road.

8.13 The development is classed as a more vulnerable use of the site and therefore the Sequential and Exceptions Tests must be applied and passed.

8.14 In terms of the Sequential test, the area of search can be limited to Moorends given the need for housing as set out in policy CS2 and this approach has been accepted on other recent applications made in the area. Moorends is wholly located within Flood Zone 3 and so by default there are no alternative sites with a lower flood risk classification. As such, it is considered that there are no alternative sites within Moorends at a lower flood risk and the Sequential Test is passed.

8.15 The Exception Test aims to ensure that more vulnerable property types are not allocated to areas at high risk of flooding. For the Exception Test to be passed it must be demonstrated that:

- a) the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where one has been prepared;
- and
- b) a site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its uses, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

8.16 The proposal meets part b) of the Exceptions Test because the Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that with the increase in floor levels and other measures proposed that the development will be safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. In terms of part a) however, although the site is located close to Moorends, the fact that the proposal lies in the countryside and is not currently needed, it is considered that the proposal fails to provide the sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk. There are no exceptional reasons to allow this housing within flood zone 3 and the proposal therefore does not pass the Exceptions Test.

8.17 Although the proposal passes the Sequential Test and provides a suitable Flood Risk Assessment to demonstrate that the proposal will not flood and will not cause flooding elsewhere, it does not pass the Exceptions Test and is therefore contrary to parts of policy CS4 of the Core Strategy and guidance within the NPPF relating to Exceptions Tests.

Character and appearance

8.18 The applicant has submitted a Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA). The report appraises the landscape and visual baseline within which the application site is located and considers the changes which might arise as a result of the proposals.

8.19 The LVA generally concludes that the impact of the development on the immediate site context and landscape character area is moderate/minor adverse during the construction period to minor adverse in the longer term when the site has matured with landscaping. The greatest significance of visual change would be restricted to existing dwellings immediately to the south and east of the site. The significance of visual change upon these dwellings has been generally assessed as major/moderate adverse during construction and moderate adverse in the longer term. The LVA also indicates that the significance of visual change decreases with distance from the site and properties at the western end of Broomhill Road, the northern end of Darlington Grove and at the southern end of Broomhill Court will experience moderate or minor adverse change during construction and minor or negligible change in the longer term. Boundary landscaping to the south and east of the site could be employed in mitigation if deemed necessary.

8.20 Fundamentally however, the original LVA that was produced had no regard for the need to raise floor levels of the properties by 1.5 to 2 metres as required by the Environment Agency. The author of the LVA revisited the report and concluded that the raising of the ground levels of the site to 3.5m AOD would not change the significance of visual change from the evaluation recorded in the original LVA and that boundary treatment could be employed in mitigation if deemed necessary.

8.21 The site and surrounding area is a relatively flat landscape and it is considered that the introduction of a development of around 60 houses with floor levels much higher than surrounding properties is bound to have an impact on the character and appearance of the area. The applicant has produced sections showing how the development might appear against existing properties that surround the site (see fig 2). The sections show that the proposed houses in the northern half of the site would be of similar height to the dormer bungalows on Darlington Grove even though ground levels on the application site will be 1.28m higher than the adjacent land. The proposed houses will be over 5 metres higher than the caravans on the residential caravan site. The proposed houses will be around 1.4 metres higher than Rivendell, (one of the tallest bungalows along this part of Bloomhill Road) with ground levels 1.24m higher than the garden of this existing bungalow.

8.22 The sections do indicate that there will be differences in heights between the proposed houses and surrounding properties on account of the higher floor levels. The proposed house types used in the sections are 7 metres in height and have very shallow pitches of between 20 and 28 degrees and are not in keeping with the pitches of roofs in the surrounding area and so are probably not indicative of the likely house type that would come forward at detailed application stage.

8.23 It was suggested to the planning agent that they try and negotiate lower floor levels with the Environment Agency, especially as levels of between 2.8m AOD and 3.1m AOD have been accepted close by on Marshland Road (under reference 15/00878/FULM) due to planning constraints. The agent has not gone back to the Environment Agency to try and justify lower land levels and so the proposal must be

assessed based on the levels currently agreed. The proposed dwellings need to be either houses or dormer bungalows because the Environment Agency has indicated that it would not support single storey properties in flood zone 3, which do not have a first floor for sleeping accommodation.

8.24 Although the LVA concludes that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the area, there is some doubt over this. The sections produced subsequent to the LVA indicate that properties will be higher than surrounding dwellings. The fact that Moorends has a typically flat topography and houses are at a similar ground level, there is genuine concern that a development of around 60 houses with floor levels up to 2 metres higher will not be in keeping with the character of the area and will be visible especially when viewed from the south over the open fields. Landscaping would take many years to establish and it is unlikely that this would mitigate against the harmful visual impact that the development will have. The application does therefore not comply with policy CS14 of the Core Strategy and policy ENV53 of the Doncaster UDP.

Residential amenity

8.25 The proposal is not seeking to agree layout and appearance at this stage and so matters such as possible overlooking or overshadowing of properties surrounding the site is not a consideration. If outline permission is granted then the layout and appearance of the development can be agreed at reserved matters stage to ensure that there is no impact on the amenity of surrounding properties by for instance maintaining adequate separation distances.

8.26 The main consideration at this stage is the possible impact that the new access road will have on the adjoining residential properties. The new access road will be only 6m from the side elevation of Rivendell and there is clearly going to be additional noise and disturbance to the occupants of this property from what currently exists given the number of comings and goings from the development. There are windows on the side elevation of Rivendell, which will exacerbate the impact on this property. The possible impact on the occupants of Rivendell is less of a consideration however given that they own the application site and are agreeable to allowing the access to run through their garden.

8.27 Consideration needs to be given to the possible impact on the occupants of Green Acres in terms of noise disturbance from vehicles and people using the access road. The access road will be 10.5m from the side of the bungalow. As with the case of Rivendell, there is likely to be an increase in noise and disturbance to the occupants of Green Acres given that there are side windows facing the access road and the back garden runs parallel with the road. The plans do however show a landscaping strip between the access road and Green Acres, which together with an acoustic fence (that could be secured by a planning condition) could mitigate against any noise disturbance to the occupants of Green Acres to an acceptable level. It is not uncommon to see an access road serving an estate which passes front houses in this way. Although there will be an impact on residential amenity from noise arising from use of the access road, it is considered on balance that this would not in itself be a sufficient reason to refuse the application.

Transport

8.28 A Transport Statement has been submitted with the application. The report demonstrates that the site is within walking distance of the local centre; this reduces the need for private car travel with ease of access to the nearby services and bus routes which connect to employment locations further afield.

8.29 The report states that the proposed development is forecast to generate 9 arrivals and 35 departures during the morning peak hour and 26 arrivals and 14 departures during the evening peak hour, which is negligible.

8.30 In order to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the proposal, Bloomhill Road will require widening where it narrows. A plan has been submitted showing that the road will be widened up to and slightly beyond the access point into the site with a footway provided on the northern side of the road (see fig 3). There is highway land available to accommodate the widening of the road and these works could be secured by a Grampian condition. The plans also show that a suitable visibility splay can be achieved and the plans have been tracked to ensure that refuse vehicles can access the site safely. The application therefore accords with policy CS9 of the Core Strategy.

Ecology

8.31 An Ecological Appraisal has been submitted with the application. The report concludes that the majority of the habitats on the site are of negligible or low ecological value. The site consists of a residential garden and a field consisting of species-poor semi-improved grassland and an area of marshy grassland. A partially dry ditch runs to the north of the site bordered by dense scrub and a mature hedgerow runs along the border to the west. The hedgerows are species poor and the dense scrub is mainly comprised of bramble and nettles, but will provide limited habitat for breeding birds.

8.32 The report states that a number of birds were observed at the site and it is likely that some species will be nesting in the hedgerows and dense scrub. House sparrows, starlings and red-listed birds of conservation concern were recorded foraging on the site.

8.33 Common pipistrelle and noctule bats were recorded foraging over the site. Buildings were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. No evidence of reptiles or badgers was found. The report recommends that development works seek to retain the native hedgerow that runs along the western boundary and incorporates native wildlife friendly planting into the landscaping scheme.

8.34 A pond 720 metres from the site at Thorne Railway Delves does have Great Crested Newts present. However there are no ponds within the site or the immediate area and given that they normally stay within 250m of the breeding ponds they are not considered to be present at the site. The application therefore accords with policy CS16 of the Core Strategy.

Loss of agricultural land

8.35 Agricultural land classification maps (Natural England – Yorkshire and Humberside ALC) indicate that the soil quality within the site is Grade 3B ‘moderate.’ The land has negligible agricultural value given its size and proximity to existing built form and is not currently in agricultural use. There is therefore no loss of high quality agricultural land and the proposal complies with policy CS18 of the Core Strategy.

Benefits of the proposal

8.36 The proposal would clearly add to the housing mix in Moorends. The proposal would create temporary construction jobs. The proposal could also create affordable housing (subject to viability) and the indicative layout includes provision for 16 affordable homes, which equates to a 27 per cent on site contribution. The applicant has not submitted a viability statement at this stage, but could do so at any point in the future should the development be found unviable owing to the requirement for 26 per cent affordable housing, 10 per cent of the site area for open space (or a commuted sum in lieu of this), £164,673 of education contributions, road widening works and the significant costs to achieve required floor levels.

9.0 Overall conclusions

9.1 The site lies within an area shown as countryside both in the Core Strategy and the UDP, where policies do not normally allow for developments such as large scale housing schemes and the proposal is therefore contrary to CS3 and ENV4. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy identifies Moorends as a Renewal Town and sets a housing target of up to 1600 to be built across Moorends and the other three defined Renewal Towns (Denaby, Edlington and Carcroft/Skellow) over the plan period up to 2028. Policy CS10 however states that urban extension allocations to Renewal Towns (provided suitable sites can be identified) will be delayed until after 2021. The release of this site for housing now would be contrary to policy CS10 and would undermine the phasing aims of the Core Strategy. There is no pressing need to release this site for housing because 70 per cent of the housing target for Renewal Towns is accounted for, with still another 10 years of the plan period left to run. As a market-led development, the proposal is not compliant with policy CS2, which seeks to promote regeneration and housing renewal. The Council can demonstrate that it has a 5 year housing supply and so the policies within the development Plan are up-to-date. Although the site is within a location close to the centre of Moorends, its suitability for housing should be considered as part of the due process in preparing the Local Plan or the Thorne & Moorends Neighbourhood Plan. However, its location in flood risk zone 3 heavily weighs against its potential allocation.

9.2 The applicant has shown that the site can be mitigated against flooding with the raising of floor levels to 3.5m AOD and that the development will not cause flooding to surrounding properties. The proposal passes the Sequential Test on account of there being no other sites in Moorends that are at a lower risk of flooding. The proposal does not however pass the Exceptions Test given that despite the site being located close to amenities in Moorends, there is no pressing need to release this site for housing in flood zone 3 and does not therefore provide the wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk.

9.3 Although generally finding no significant visual harm from the development, the LVA accepts that there will be a moderate adverse impact to residential properties to the south and east of the site in the longer term and this is without even having considered the impact of the development with floor levels raised between 1.5m and 2m from current ground levels. The sections that have been provided indicate that even with houses that have very shallow pitches at 7m in height, the development will still rise above existing properties that surround the site. Although scale and appearance are not a consideration at this stage, there is concern that allowing a development of 2 storeys with floor levels of 3.5m AOD will result in harm to the character of the area, especially when viewed from the south. Any landscaping proposed will take time to mature and is unlikely to mitigate against the visual impact that this large development will have.

9.4 Although the position of the access so close to the existing properties is likely to result in increased noise disturbance, this type of arrangement is not uncommon and can be mitigated with the provision of an acoustic fence and landscaping and is not in itself a sufficient reason to refuse the application. The Transport Statement shows that the site can accommodate the extra traffic generated particularly with the widening of Bloomhill Road as indicated on the plans. The ecological value of the site is low and can be mitigated against and the site is not high quality agricultural land.

9.5 There would be some benefits arising from the proposal including the provision of affordable housing (subject to viability) and the creation of jobs during construction of the development, but these material considerations do not outweigh the fact that the proposal is contrary to the Development Plan in that the site is countryside and is within flood zone 3 and there is no pressing need to release this site for housing at this stage.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1 Planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- 1) The application is contrary to policies CS3 of the Core Strategy and policy ENV4 of the Doncaster UDP which do not normally allow for housing developments in the countryside. The application is also contrary to policy CS10 of the Core Strategy which states that housing allocations in Renewal Towns such as Moorends are not intended to be released until 2021 onwards. The proposal is not a market-led development and does not offer any regeneration benefits to Moorends and is also therefore contrary to policy CS2 of the Core Strategy.
- 2) The application does not pass the Exceptions Test because there is no need to release the site for housing within flood zone 3 and the proposal does not therefore provide the wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk contrary to policy CS4 of the Core Strategy and guidance set out in the NPPF.

- 3) Although not seeking to agree scale and appearance at this stage, the proposal will be out of character with the surrounding area at the floor levels of 3.5m AOD required to mitigate against flood risk, especially when viewed from the south and the application is therefore contrary to policy ENV53 of the Doncaster UDP.

The above objections, considerations and resulting recommendation have had regard to Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998. The recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

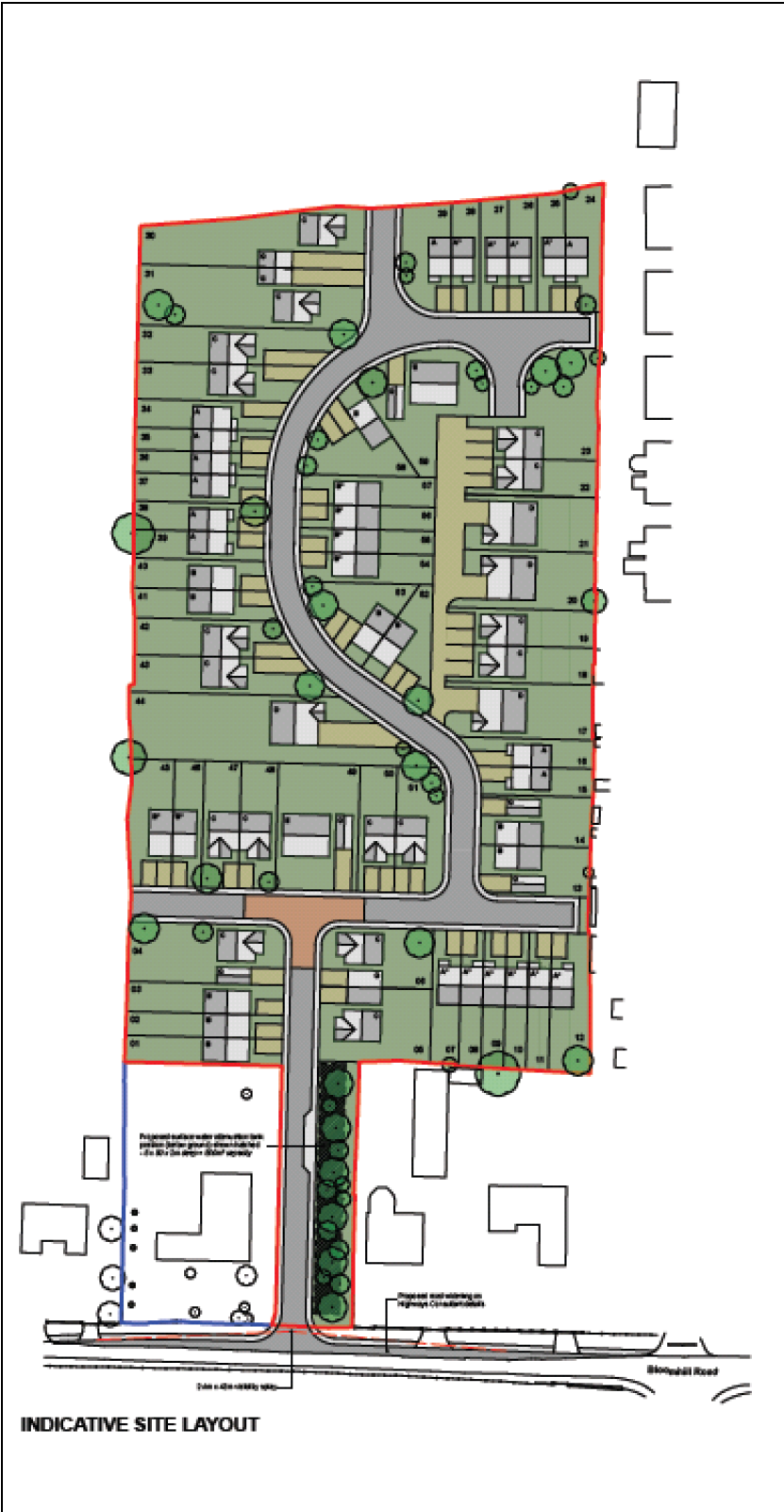


Figure 1: Indicative site layout plan.

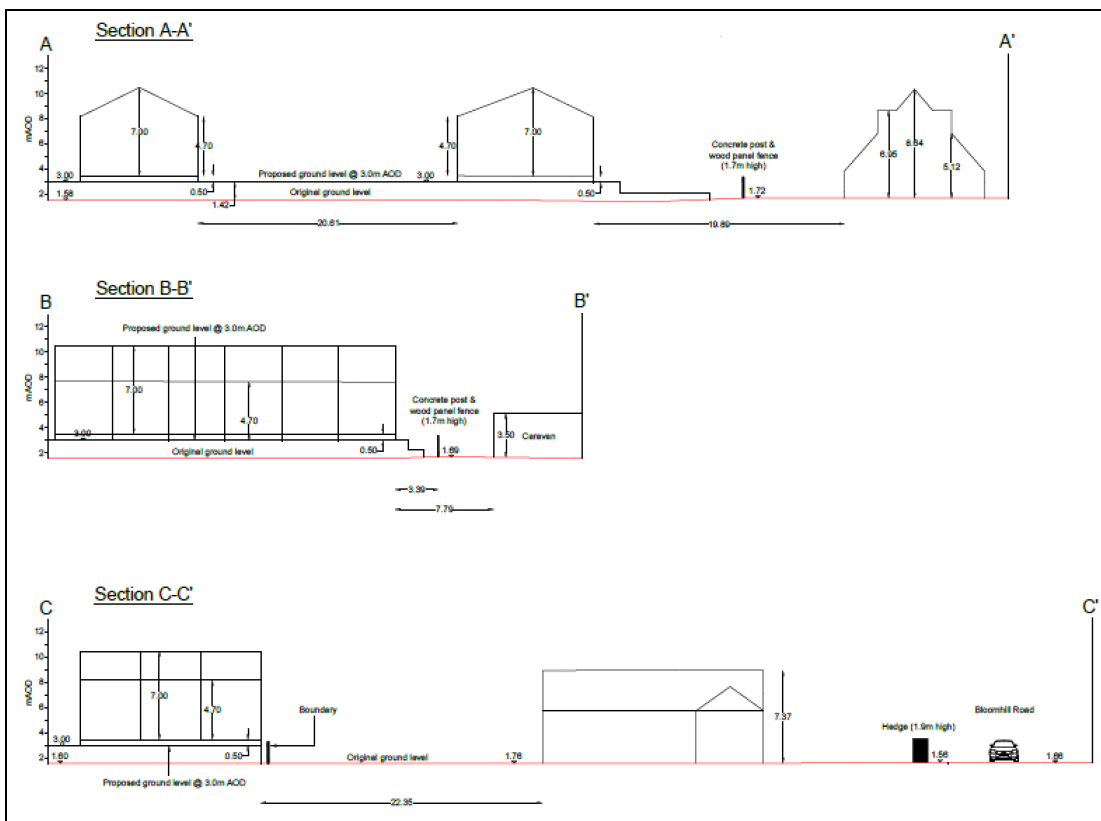


Fig 2: Proposed indicative sections of the site.

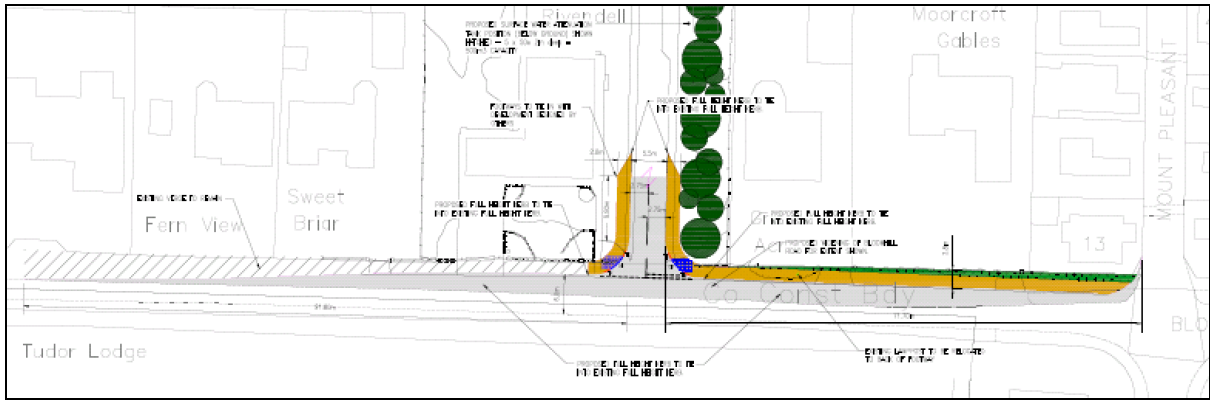


Fig 3: Proposed access arrangements.