
EIA Screening Opinion Request

Land West of New Street, Littleborough

On Behalf of Russell Homes

July 2022

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Project Ref:	31816/A3/JC	31816/A3/JC	31816/A3/JC	31816/A3/JC
Status:	Draft	Draft	Draft	Final
Issue/ Rev:	01	02a	02b	03
Date:	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022	July 2022
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Ref: 31816/A3/JC/GD
Date: July 2022

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APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Barton Willmore, now Stantec on behalf of Russell Homes ('the Applicant') to support a formal request for the adoption of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion by Rochdale Borough Council ('the Council') in relation to the proposed development of up to 62 dwellings with associated access, landscaping, open space and SuDS on land west of New Street, Littleborough ('the Site')
- 1.2 This report includes an EIA Screening Checklist in Section 3 that reflects the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017) (as amended) (the 'EIA Regulations'). The Screening Checklist contains a comprehensive review of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment and should be read in conjunction with the main body of this report.
- 1.3 The purpose of this request for a Screening Opinion is to determine whether the proposed development constitutes EIA development.
- 1.4 In accordance with Regulation 6 of the EIA Regulations, this report contains:
- a plan sufficient to identify the land;
 - a description of the development, including in particular:
 - a description of the physical characteristics of the development; and
 - a description of the location of the development.
 - a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development; and
 - a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from:
 - the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
 - the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land water and biodiversity.
 - such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

EIA Regulations

1.5 In order to determine whether the proposed development is 'EIA development', regard must be had for the EIA Regulations and Planning Practice Guidance.

1.6 EIA development is defined by the Regulations as development:

"likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location."

1.7 EIA development falls into two Schedules of the EIA Regulations. EIA is mandatory for development listed within Schedule 1. Schedule 2 developments require EIA if they would lead to likely significant effects on the environment.

1.8 In deciding whether a Schedule 2 development is EIA development, Regulation 5(4) states:

"Where a relevant planning authority ... has to decide under these Regulations whether Schedule 2 development is EIA development, the relevant planning authority ... must take into account in making that decision-

(a) Any information provided by the applicant;

(b) The results of any relevant EU environmental assessment which are reasonably available to relevant planning authority...; and

(c) such of the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as are relevant to the development."

1.9 The selection criteria specified in paragraphs 1 to 3 of Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations refer respectively to the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the characteristics of the potential impact.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

1.10 Paragraph 024, Reference ID: 4-024-20140306 of PPG states:

"each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. There are occasions, however, when other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. The local planning authorities should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development."

- 1.11 Paragraph 057, reference ID: 4-057-2070720, and 058, reference ID: 4-058-20150326, of the PPG provide guidance to help determine whether significant adverse effects are likely. In general, the more environmentally sensitive the location, the lower the threshold will be at which significant effects are likely.
- 1.12 To allow the Council to determine the need for EIA this report provides a description of the Site and proposed development, a completed EIA Screening Checklist, and a Site Location Plan (included at **Appendix 1**).

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

Policy Context

- 2.1 The Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted more than 12 years ago but the Proposals Map remains in operation. On the Proposals Maps of the UDP, the Site lies outside the defined urban area and is identified as Protected Open Land and Greenspace Corridor. A detailed description of the Site is provided below.

Site Context

- 2.2 The Site is located to the west of New Street and to the south of New Road (A58) in Littleborough. The Site lies approximately 1.5km to the south-west of Littleborough Town Centre and approximately 4.5km to the north-east of Rochdale Town Centre.
- 2.3 The Site measures approximately 3.47 hectares and comprises a well-contained parcel of greenfield land.
- 2.4 The extent of the Site to which this Screening Opinion Request relates is shown on the enclosed Site Location Plan (see **Appendix 1**) and on the extract below at Figure 1, identified by the redline boundary.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



- 2.5 The Site is bound by residential development to the east and west and is bound by Stubley Mill Road to the south. The land to the north of the Site comprises open space, landscaping and tree cover.
- 2.6 The southern and eastern boundaries of the Site are defined by a combination of timber and wire fencing and tree cover. The western boundary of the Site is mainly demarcated by timber fencing and interspersed tree cover which separates the Site from the adjacent properties. The remainder of the Site largely comprises grassland with little amenity value and clusters of trees.
- 2.7 Vehicular access will be obtained from the Applicant's adjacent residential development at Stubley Meadows to the east (currently under construction in accordance with Rochdale Council planning permission reference. 20/00607/FUL).
- 2.8 The Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone Map confirms the Site lies in Flood Zone 1 and so is at the lowest risk from fluvial flooding. The centre of the Site is shown as having a high risk from surface water flooding. However, we note that this was due to a blocked culvert on New Street which has now been cleared and the previous pond on the Site as, therefore, drained.
- 2.9 The Site does not lie within a Conservation area and there are no designated heritage assets on-site. The nearest heritage assets are the Grade II* listed Stubley Old Hall approximately 250m to the north-east, and the Grade II listed '18, 20 and 22, New Road' approximately 150m to the north-east.
- 2.10 A Public Right of Way runs to the south of the Site along Stubley Mill Road, and to the east of the Site along New Street.
- 2.11 There are no landscape designations that affect the Site.

Proposed Development

- 2.12 The Applicant is requesting a screening opinion from the Council for the proposals detailed below:

- Up to 62 new dwellings (including 10 affordable dwellings);
- An area of Public open space to the west of the existing properties on New St;
- Vehicular access from the Applicant's adjacent residential development to the east;
- Pedestrian and cycle access links to the south, east and west;
- Landscape and planting provision;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS); and
- Other supporting infrastructure.

2.13 It should be noted that as the design of the proposed development continues to evolve and therefore the precise quantum and form of development applied for may vary from that stated in this EIA Screening Request.

Mitigation

2.14 A number of mitigation measures have been included within the scheme in order to reduce the impact of the proposed development. This includes adherence to best practice measures during the construction phase, such as through measures set out in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) – which can be secured via a tried and tested planning condition (that could be attached to any future grant of planning permission).

2.15 Mitigation measures also include the following:

- Retention of existing trees where possible together with additional planting throughout.
- Incorporation of SuDS feature to the south.
- The inclusion of measures to encourage biodiversity.

Site History

2.16 The northern part of the Site was previously identified as an area subject to open space enhancement as part of an outline application for up to 110 dwellings on the adjacent site to the east. However, this scheme was not included as part of the detail planning application for the land to the immediate east of the Site.

- 2.17 Said detailed planning application (reference. 20/00607/FUL) was approved on 27th January 2021. This approved the construction 100 new dwellings together with associated access, earthworks, landscaping, and public open space. This residential scheme is known as Stubley Meadows. Stubley Meadows is nearing completion and is expected to be completed in 2023.
- 2.18 Access to the Site will, therefore, be obtained via the Applicant's residential scheme to the east instead of being accessed along New Street which will be used as an access for emergency vehicles only.

Committed Developments

- 2.19 A review of committed developments within 2km of the Site has been carried out. The review has identified the following schemes:

Stubley Meadows

- 2.20 As discussed above, the land immediately to the east of the Site (Stubley Meadows) benefits from planning permission for 100 dwellings (20/00607/FUL). Circa. 55-60 homes have been constructed and the development is nearing completion.
- 2.21 An EIA Screening Request was submitted for the above site at New Road (19/00259/SO). In response to the Screening Request, the Council reviewed the information submitted and reached the conclusion that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effect on the environment and so did not comprise EIA development. A negative EIA Screening Opinion was issued and an Environmental Statement was, therefore, not required.

Former Akzo Nobel Site

- 2.22 A planning application was submitted to the Council in September 2021 at the former Akzo Nobel Site, Hollingworth Road, Littleborough for a residential development comprising up to 127 dwellings including new vehicular access points, footpaths, cycle paths, boundaries, landscaping, creation of open space, a pumping station and other associated works (21/01146/FUL). However, the application is currently pending determination.

- 2.23 The above application followed a previous planning application at the site for the development of 174 dwellings which was approved on 27th March 2015 (11/D55085)
- 2.24 An EIA Screening Opinion was submitted in relation to the proposals for 174 dwellings and the Council considered that it did not comprise EIA development and so an Environmental Statement was not required.

Land West of Smithy Bridge Road

- 2.25 An application was submitted to the Council in August 2019 for the construction of 200 dwellings with associated public open space and landscaping (19/00881/FUL). However, the application is awaiting determination.
- 2.26 Two EIA Screening Opinions have been submitted for this Site. The first was for 250 dwellings (18/00682/SO) and the Council decided on 23rd July 2018 that this did not comprise EIA development. The second was in relation to a proposed residential development of up to 199 dwellings (22/00828/SO) whereby the Council also decided this did not comprise EIA development on 8th July 2022.

EIA Screening History

- 2.27 The Site has not been previously screened for EIA development.

3.0 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Introduction

3.1 In determining whether the proposed development constitutes EIA development, consideration should be had for the following:

- If the proposed development is of a type listed in Schedule 1;
- If not, whether it is listed in Schedule 2;
- Is it located within a sensitive area;
- If it meets any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 2; and/or
- If it would lead to likely significant effects on the environment.

3.2 These points are explored in further detail in this section of the Screening Report with reference to the EIA Regulations and supporting PPG.

Schedule 1

3.3 EIA is mandatory for projects listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 1 developments are large scale projects for which significant effects would be expected and comprise developments such as new airports and power stations.

3.4 The proposed development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1.

Schedule 2

3.5 EIA is discretionary for projects listed in Schedule 2. If the development proposed is of a type listed in Schedule 2 then it may be classified as EIA development depending on the location of the development (i.e. if it is within a sensitive area) and/or whether it meets any of the relevant thresholds or criteria in Column 2.

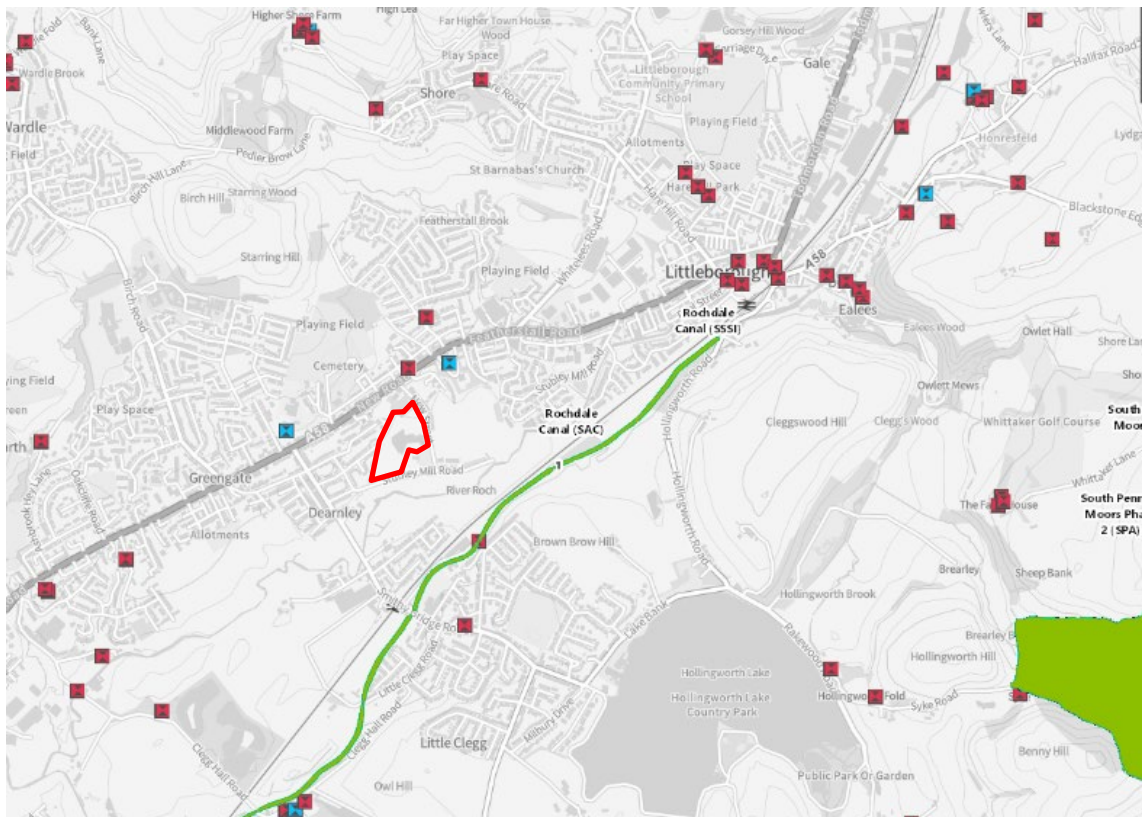
3.6 Accordingly, it is necessary to consider whether the development is in a 'sensitive area' as defined by the EIA Regulations and whether the proposals are likely to have a significant environmental effect considering the selection criteria set out at Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.

3.7 Sensitive Areas are defined in the EIA Regulations as:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European Sites;
- National Parks, the Broads, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- World Heritage Sites and Scheduled Monuments.

3.8 A map extract generated by MagicMap is provided in Figure 1. The map layers have been set to highlight the 'sensitive area' designations listed above.

Figure 1: Magic Map Extract



3.9 Figure 1 confirms that the Site is not within, or directly adjacent to a sensitive area. The nearest sensitive area to the Site is the 'Rochdale Canal' SSSI located approximately 400m to the south. The South Pennine Moors SSSI is also located approximately 3km to the east of the Site.

3.10 The distance and intervening infrastructure, development and landscape features between the Site and the above means the 'sensitive areas' will remain unaffected by the proposed development. Notwithstanding this, the Schedule 2 thresholds still apply.

- 3.1 The proposed development falls within category 10 of Schedule 2, 'Infrastructure Projects', sub-section (b) 'Urban Development Projects'. The Site is not located in a sensitive area and therefore the thresholds should be applied. The thresholds for residential developments as set out in Schedule 2 relate to developments that:

"includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development, more than 150 dwellings or the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares".

- 3.2 The proposed development covers an area of approximately 3.47 hectares and includes 62 residential dwellings. The proposed development, therefore, does not exceed the thresholds set out in Schedule 2, 10 (b) of the EIA Regulations. However, a precautionary EIA Screening Opinion Request is submitted to the Council due to the Site's proximity to committed developments outlined in Section 2 (Paragraph 2.20-2.27) above.

- 3.3 Regulation 5(4) states that where the local planning authority must decide whether Schedule 2 development is EIA development, they should take into account the following:

- a) Any information provided by the applicant;
- b) The results of any relevant EU environmental assessment which are reasonably available to the relevant planning authority or the Secretary of State;
- c) Such of the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as are relevant to the development.

- 3.4 Set within this context, this Screening Assessment seeks to determine whether the proposals would be likely to result in significant cumulative effects. To achieve this, Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations needs to be considered.

Schedule 3

- 3.5 Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations sets out selection criteria which relate to specific matters including the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and characteristics of potential impact. The factors should be taken into account as part of the screening process and are set out below:

1. Characteristics:

- a. The size and design of the whole development;
- b. cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;
- c. the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- d. the production of waste;
- e. pollution and nuisances;
- f. the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;
- g. the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

2. Location:

- a. The existing and approved land use;
- b. the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground; and
- c. The absorption capacity of the natural environment.

3. Potential Impact:

- a. The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- b. the nature of the impact;
- c. the transboundary nature of the impact;
- d. the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- e. the probability of the impact;
- f. the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- g. the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;
- h. the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

3.6 Table 1 below sets out a review of all of the above criteria and requirements and specifically the proposed development at the Site.

1. Characteristics of the Development

(a) Size of the development

Will the development be out of scale with the existing environment?	The Site comprises a parcel of land located to the south of New Road, Littleborough and the west of New Street. The Site comprises of a well-contained parcel of greenfield land which is bound by residential development to the east and west and is bound by Stubley Mill Road to the south. While the proposed development will result in a change in land use, the overall scale of the proposed development (i.e. the delivery of 62 dwellings) is not considered to be out of character with the surrounding area which features existing highways infrastructure to the north, and extensive residential development to the east and west. The proposed development is, therefore, not of a scale that would warrant EIA development.
Will it lead to further consequential development or works?	No. The extent of the proposed development subject to this Screening Request includes all necessary works, including access and will not directly lead to further consequential development.

(b) Accumulation with other development

Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development or development not yet begun but for which planning permission exists?	As set out within this report, we have identified existing and approved schemes within a 2km radius of the Site which warrant consideration. This includes the approval of 100 dwellings at Russell Homes adjacent site at New Road adjacent to the Site (20/00607/FUL) whereby the Council did not consider this to constitute EIA development. The other committed development identified at the former Akzo Nobel Site for 174 dwellings (11/D55085) and the Council also did not consider this to comprise EIA. With the exception of the above, there are no existing or committed major developments in the vicinity of the Site that in combination with the proposed development would result in significant environmental effects warranting consideration of EIA. The scale and magnitude of the proposed development is not considered likely to give rise to significant cumulative effects to warrant EIA development because the development will be constructed within 5 years of starting on Site with its effects limited to a relatively small area and controlled by the adoption of a CEMP.
Should the application for this development be regarded as an integral	Russell Homes' residential development to the east of the Site is approaching completion, with 55-60 homes now built. Although the proposed development would connect to

part of a more substantial project? If so, can related developments which are subject to separate applications proceed independently?	the adjacent scheme via the internal spine road, it forms a separate application.
(c) Use of natural resources	
Will construction or operation of the development use natural resources such as land, water, material or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Inevitably, due to the construction and operation of the proposed development, there will be some increase in the use of natural resources (such as water, land, materials and energy). However, any potential impacts can be mitigated through the use of sustainable construction materials where possible. This is not deemed to represent a significant adverse effect. The operational phase also has the potential to place additional on existing infrastructure and the natural environment. However, the proposed development will be designed to reduce any likely significant effects on natural resource consumption and make adequate provision for new highways and drainage infrastructure in accordance with local and national planning policy and in accordance with building regulation requirements. A suite of technical documents which assess these impacts will be submitted in support of the planning application.
(d) Production of waste	
Will the development produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Construction waste would be reused and recycled where possible. Waste generated post construction would be managed by measures in accordance with the Council's waste management practices.
(e) Pollution and nuisances	
Will the development release any pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	The proposed development will not create any significant concerns in respect of pollution or hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to local air quality. The Site is not located within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Notwithstanding this, an Air Quality Assessment is submitted as part of the planning application to confirm that the development will not have a significant environmental effect in terms of air quality. During the construction phase of the proposed development, dust would be generated. Dust generation would be managed in accordance with standard best practice measures, enforced through tried and tested procedures set out in the construction environmental management plan (CEMP). The generation of dust will be local to the Site and will not be sufficient to generate significant adverse effects.

	There would also be emissions associated with plant and vehicles during the construction phase and from vehicles during the operation of the proposed development. The number of vehicles travelling to and from the Site during the operational phase would be associated with approximately 62 dwellings. The proposed development is for residential use which is not associated with hazardous substances or toxic emissions to air. There is not anticipated to be a requirement to store large volumes of hazardous materials. Any such materials would be stored and handled in accordance with relevant legislation.
Is there a potential risk from leachates or escape of wastes of other products/by-products that may constitute a contaminant in the environment?	Appropriate measures, in accordance with all relevant legislation, would be used to prevent accidental spillages of contaminants during the construction or operational phases of the proposed development. The existing and proposed land uses are not highly contaminative, and it is not expected that there is a high risk of contaminants being released into the environment.
Will the development cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	The potential exists for noise effects to result from the construction processes associated with the proposed development. These effects will be managed in accordance with best practice measures, implemented through the CEMP and are not anticipated to generate significant adverse effects. Residential development is not considered to be a significant emitter of noise. The effects of residential development are typical for an urban / suburban environment and are not considered to be significant in EIA terms. The proposed residential development is supported by a noise assessment which confirms that the nature of the proposals is such that it would not warrant EIA when considering the cumulative effects of the development on noise. Lighting would be designed carefully in accordance with relevant British Standards and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2011) Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light. The impact of light pollution will be lessened due to the surrounding suburban context of the Site. No electromagnetic radiation, heat or energy releases are expected other than those associated with normal residential development.
Will the development lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the	Surface water run-off and foul water drainage will be managed on the Site during the construction and operational phases.

ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	The Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1. SuDS will be located to the south of the Site to prevent any risk of surface water flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment will support the planning application to assess any risk of flooding.
(f) Risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used	
Will there be a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which would have effects on people or the environment?	During the construction phase, the contractor will implement measures in accordance with Health and Safety legislation/requirements, and best practice to minimise the risks of accidents that could have effects on people or the environment. All such measures would form part of the CEMP. There are no anticipated significant risks of accidents during operation because the proposed development does not involve users dealing with hazardous substances.
Will the development involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to people or the environment (flora, fauna, water supplies)?	During the construction phase, certain materials may be present on the Site which may be harmful to the environment. However, appropriate environmental control measures in line with the relevant legislation will be implemented. The operational development is not expected to involve the use, transport or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to the environment.
Other characteristics	
Potential physical changes (topography, land use, changes in water bodies etc) from construction, operation or decommissioning of the development?	The construction and operational phase of the development will change the land use from vacant greenfield land for residential purposes. Landscaping and tree planting is proposed throughout the development, and details are to be provided within the application. Overall, the physical changes to the Site would not be out of character with the surrounding area and is not considered significant to warrant EIA development. Tried and tested planning conditions can be agreed (and attached to any future grant of planning permission) to control landscaping and tree planting as part of the planning application process.

2. Location of the Development

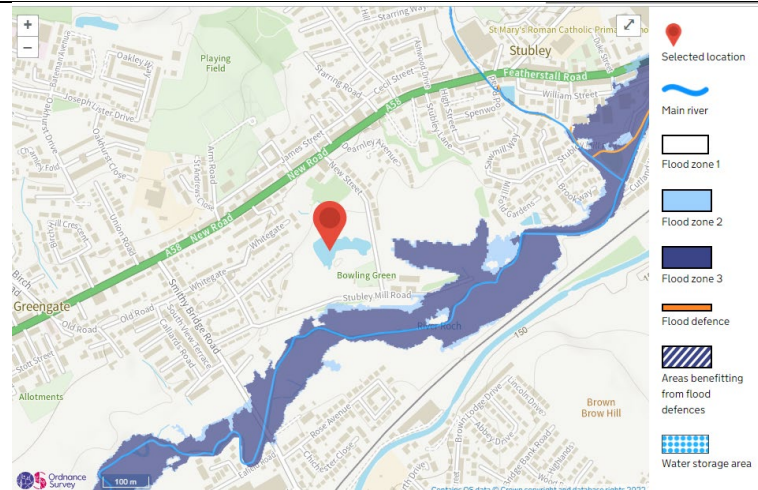
(a) Existing land use

Are there existing land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the development, e.g. residential, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying?	The Site comprises a parcel of greenfield land which is of little amenity value. The area surrounding the Site is mainly characterised by residential development and the open space that follows the River Roch to the south. The Site is located directly adjacent to the built-up area of Littleborough. The development of the Site would be visible to residents and users the public rights of way which run adjacent to the Site, along New Street and Stubley Mill Road. As such, the visual impact of the proposed development will be localised and will not result in any major effects on landscape character. The proposed landscaping and planting within and around the Site will help to soften views of the proposed development. Notwithstanding this, the Site would be seen in the context of existing urban development. As such, the effect on these land uses would be limited and does not warrant consideration in an EIA.
Is the development located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes, the development of the Site would result in the loss of greenfield land. However, the Site is directly adjacent to the existing urban area and is well contained by existing residential development and highways infrastructure.

(b) Relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area*

Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the development? • soil • land • groundwater resources • surface waters • biodiversity • forestry • agriculture • fisheries	The Site is identified as Non-Agricultural Land which is 'Land predominantly in urban use' on Natural England's (1:250 A0 scale) Agricultural Classification Map. The proposed development would, therefore, not result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land. The Environment Agency ("EA") Flood Risk Zone map confirms the Site is located entirely within Flood Zones 1 which is at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. This position is presented on the EA flood map below. We note that the light blue area shown on the Site where the red pin is from the base map and relates to a former body of standing water on the Site which formed as a result from a blocked culvert on New Street. The blocked culvert has been cleared and so this body of water is no longer present at the Site.
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- tourism
- minerals



Notwithstanding this, a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy will support the planning application to confirm the proposed drainage scheme.

In terms of biodiversity, the Site is not located within an area of biodiversity value. Whilst tree loss is proposed, this will be compensated by replacement planting and landscaping. The loss of existing trees and landscaping on Site is therefore not considered significant to warrant EIA development.

The proposed development will also result in a net gain in biodiversity.

The Site is not located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area.

The Site is not considered to hold tourism value.

If appropriate further detailed geo-environmental investigation is undertaken, this further work will follow tried and tested procedures to identify any risks. It is likely that they can be dealt with by routine construction and/or remediation measures employed on development Sites across the UK.

(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment**

Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the development?

The Site is not located within a Conservation Area nor are there any Scheduled Monuments, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks, Registered Battlefields, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar Sites, located in close proximity to the Site.

The nearest heritage assets are Stubble Old Hall (Grade II*) and the Grade II listed No. 18, 20 and 22 New Road. However, due to the separation distance and intervening features, the proposed development would not result in a change in the setting of these assets. There would be no direct impact on the asset and the setting is already experienced in the context of existing residential

	development. As such, it is not considered to be a significant impact that would warrant EIA development. Furthermore, the planning application will be supported by a Heritage Statement which assesses the significance of the relevant designated assets and the contribution of setting to that significance. It will also consider the impact of the proposed development upon the relevant assets in accordance with relevant legislation and national and local policy. The Site is located to the north of Rochdale Canal SSSI / Special Area of Conservation which will not be impacted directly by the development or from impacts in terms of runoff.
Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of: • Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; • coastal zones and the marine environment; • mountains and forest areas; • nature reserves and parks; • European Sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation; • Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; • Densely populated areas; • Landscapes and Sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	As set out above, the Site is located to the north of Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation / SSSI. Notwithstanding this, this will not be impacted directly by the development. Furthermore, the submitted FRA and Drainage Strategy will demonstrate that the proposed development will not impact on the River Roch or Rochdale Canal.

Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected?	The Site is not subject to any formal ecological designation, nor are there any formal ecological designations which exist in close proximity to the Site which could be affected by the proposed development. As demonstrated in the Ecology Appraisal which will support the forthcoming planning application, great crested newts are absent from the Site. The Site has been considered suitable for nesting birds and nesting boxes are recommended. Four trees were identified as providing low bat roosting potential. Further bat roosting opportunities can be incorporate into the proposals such as bat boxes. Further mitigation and replacement planting is also proposed. As stated above, the loss of trees on the Site is not considered significant to warrant EIA development and the accompanying tree report and ecology update confirms that the proposed works are acceptable subject to mitigation measures. The considered impacts of the proposed development are likely to be temporary and largely associated with the construction phase. Mitigation measures will be required to be employed through the scheme layout and design to minimise the impact on local habitats and species.
Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected?	According to the Environment Agency website, the Site is located within Flood Zone 1. A flood attenuation pond is proposed to the south of the Site in the event of any surface water flooding. The River Roch runs approximately 50m to the south of the Site the Rochdale Canal is approximately 100m to the south-east. It is not expected that the proposed development will have an effect on these waters. A comprehensive Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy will support the planning application.
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	The Site is not located within a groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ).
Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected?	The Site is not identified as a valued landscape. The nearest designations close to the Site are Rochdale Canal SAC / SSSI. The character of this landscape designation will not be affected by the development.

	A Landscape and Visual Appraisal which has been prepared for the Site confirms that the proposed development will not generate any significant levels of adverse landscape effect on the existing landscape receptors/resource.
Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected?	Existing Public Rights of Way run along Stubley Mill Road outside of the Site boundary to the south of the Site and New Street to the east of the Site. However, the proposed development seeks to protect these routes and provide new connecting pedestrian footpaths to the PROWS to the south and east. There is also a stables and bowling green to the south-east of the Site. However, the proposals will not affect the operations of these facilities. The proposals would not be out of character with the surrounding area and the impact of the development on routes and facilities would not be significant to warrant EIA.
Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected?	The Site is located in a highly sustainable location, within easy walking distance of other uses in the immediate surroundings and public transport services including bus stops. The Site is also located within close proximity to National Cycle Network route 66 along the Rochdale Canal which will encourage trips by bicycle. A Transport Assessment will accompany the planning application. The proposed development is not of a scale that is anticipated to result in significant adverse effects on transport routes in the local area. Furthermore, access will be obtained from the Applicant's residential development to the east which will prevent vehicle trips along New Street. The availability of public transport and accessibility of services and nearby facilities will help reduce the need to travel to and from the Site by car. However, the Applicant is committed to providing financial contributions to mitigate any impact on the highway network should this be justified, for example towards the Smithy Bridge Relief Road identified in the PfE Plan. These local works can be agreed during the planning application process. The net increase in traffic from the proposed development is not considered to cause sufficient impact on highway capacity to warrant consideration of an EIA.
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	The potential for local views of the Site exists from the residential properties that overlook the Site, the PROW, and Smithy Bridge. The proposed development would be viewed in the context of existing urban development screened by existing and proposed planting. It not anticipated that there will be an adverse impact on the nearby built-up area.

	Topography changes and intervening features means that the Site is not visible from the north along the A58 (New Road) and beyond.
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected?	The Site itself does not contain any listed structures, nor does it lie within a Conservation Area. However, there are heritage assets within the vicinity of the Site. The nearest heritage assets are Stubley Old Hall (Grade II*) and No. 18, 20 and 22 New Road (Grade II). However, there would be no direct impact on the assets and their setting in the context of existing residential development. The impact on designated heritage assets is localised and is not significant enough to warrant EIA development. As set out above, the planning application will be supported by a Heritage Statement which would assess the significance of the relevant designated assets and the contribution of setting to that significance. It will also consider the impact of the proposed development upon the relevant assets in accordance with relevant legislation and national and local policy. The impact on assets of historic and cultural importance will be localised and there would be no significant impact that would warrant EIA development.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected?	The Site is located adjacent to the built-up area of Littleborough. The density of development in this area is suburban. Set against this context, a sensitive design of the proposed development will ensure that the scheme complements the existing settlement form and character of Littleborough and the wider Pennines Area.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected?	None known.
Is the location of the development susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions?	No. See comments above in relation to flood risk.

3. Characteristics of the Potential Impact

(a) Extent of the impact

Will the effect extend over a large area?	The Site has a total area of 3.47 hectares which is proposed to be developed for residential use with an area of public open space and landscaping. Littleborough is an established populated residential area, and the development would be of a commensurate scale to the existing settlement.
Will many people be affected?	The proposals will make a positive contribution towards local priorities for economic development, without infringing on land that is identified as being particularly sensitive. The development will provide for a mix of tenures attracting skilled workers into the area, who will help to support and the type of businesses desired in Littleborough in the future. Local jobs will be created through the construction process and new residents will contribute towards a rise in expenditure to support the local economy and generate additional council tax receipt. Residents adjacent to the Site will be affected by the proposed development during the construction phase. Adverse effects would be minimised through the implementation of a CEMP. It is considered that people would not be significantly affected by the proposed development once operational.

(b) Transboundary nature of the impact

Will there be any potential for transboundary impact? (n.b. Development which has a significant effect on the environment in another Member State is likely to be very rare. It is for the Secretary of State to check Environmental Statements to decide whether there is likely to be such an effect in each case).	No.
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(c) Magnitude and complexity of the impact

Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?	It is considered unlikely that there will be a large change in environmental conditions because the proposed development is of a residential nature and is of a scale that it is commensurate with Littleborough.
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	A degree of change will take place during the construction and operation of the development. However, the effects of this upon the environment will not be significant and any local or minor changes can be mitigated on Site through tried and tested construction techniques and the provision of compensatory open space, landscaping and vegetation as part of the overall design of the development.
Will the effect be unusual in the area or particularly complex?	No. The proposal borders a predominantly residential area.
Will many receptors other than people (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?	No.
Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?	No. No minerals or sand or gravel safeguarding areas are affected. The Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Site Assessment concludes that coal outcrops are recorded on Site and an area of underground workings is recorded across the western side of the Site. Mine shafts are recorded circa 120 – 140 m to the west/ northwest. If valuable or scarce resources are found during the course of development, this can be dealt with by way of routine construction and/or remediation measures employed on development Sites across the UK.
Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?	It is not anticipated that environmental standards will be breached as a result of the development.
Is there a risk that protected Sites, areas, features will be affected?	As detailed above, any loss of trees will be compensated by extensive new planting across the Site. The effect of the proposed development is not deemed significant to warrant EIA development. A Tree Survey and Ecology Update Report will be prepared and submitted in support of the application.
d) Probability of the impact	
Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?	As discussed above, the proposals are not likely to cause significant effects and any impacts will be mitigated appropriately.
Is there a low probability of a potentially highly significant effect?	See above.
(e) Duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	
Will the effect continue for a long time?	Construction effects will be temporary in duration and the operational effects will be permanent.

Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?	See above.
Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?	Construction – intermittent /temporary Operation – continuous
If intermittent, will it be frequent rather than rare?	Frequent but temporary construction work.
Will the impact be irreversible?	Construction – No Operation – Yes
Will it be difficult to avoid or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?	No significant effects are predicted. Effects that are predicted can either be mitigated or addressed via tried and tested construction methods. In summary, the proposed development is not considered to generate and significant environmental effects.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 This EIA Screening Assessment has considered whether the proposed development of up to 62 new dwellings and associated access and supporting infrastructure on Land West of New Street in Littleborough would result in likely significant effects on the environment to warrant assessment through an Environmental Statement.
- 4.2 Having regard to the above detailed consideration of the relevant criteria and the thresholds set out and explained within the EIA Regulations, it is evident that the proposed development is not an EIA Schedule 1 development.
- 4.3 The proposed development falls within Schedule 2, 10 (b) of the EIA Regulations, as an urban development project. The Site is not located within a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations, and the proposed development falls below the screening thresholds of more than 5 hectares in area or 150 dwellings. However, a precautionary EIA Screening Opinion Request is submitted to the Council due to the Site's proximity to committed developments outlined in Section 2.
- 4.4 With regard to the indicative criteria and thresholds identified at Paragraph 057 of the PPG, it has been demonstrated that the proposals (when considered cumulatively with other proposed and permitted development) would not exceed the 1,000 dwelling threshold and falls under the 10,000 sqm of commercial floorspace threshold. The proposed development would also be in keeping with the current nature and scale of the surrounding development and would not result in significant effects in an already urbanised area.
- 4.5 It is considered that the principal environmental effects will relate to the height of the proposed buildings, construction and operational increases in traffic movements and associated noise and air quality emissions could be managed in accordance with standard methods, including the implementation of a CEMP.
- 4.6 In summary, the screening assessment has identified that significant effects on the environment **are not** considered likely. As set out above, the proposal has been considered cumulatively with other committed future developments. The location of the Site has good access and is within an urban residential area. The effects that may arise could be appropriately managed in accordance with standard methods. The proposed development is therefore not considered to be formal EIA development as defined by the EIA Regulations.

4.7 The forthcoming full planning application will be supported by a suite of environmental reports, including:

- Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy.
- Design and Access Statement.
- Arboricultural Impact and Method Statements.
- Crime Impact Statement.
- Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity.
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report.
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.
- Archaeological Assessment.
- Heritage Statement.
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- Phase 1 Site Investigation Report.
- Noise Assessment.
- Transport Assessment.
- Air Quality Assessment.

4.8 Standard planning conditions, financial contributions and modern development techniques can also be utilised (and attached to any future grant of planning permission) to address the effects of the proposed development on the environment.

4.9 This report has taken into account the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. It is concluded that the proposed development **does not comprise** 'EIA development' as defined by the Regulations.

4.10 Rochdale Council (as the Local Planning Authority), is therefore, requested to adopt a screening opinion to confirm that an Environmental Statement is not required.

APPENDIX 1:
SITE LOCATION PLAN

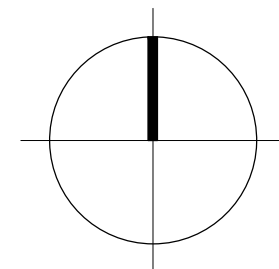


New Street, Littleborough



1:1250

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KEY:



Red line denotes application site boundary.

Rev	Date	Revision	Initial
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+ Client



Russell Homes

+ Drawing Title

SITE LOCATION PLAN

+ Project

Proposed Residential Development
New Street, Littleborough

Job No 19060	Drg No 00	Drawn slr	Rev --
Scale 1:1250 @ A2	Date MAY 2021	Stage FOR PLANNING	

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