

**06/2010/0626 Former Ingol Golf Club, Tanterton Hall Road, Ingol, Preston - Outline application for the redevpt of 69.55 hectares of land and buildings for residential devpt. Representations on behalf of Ingol Golf Village Residents Association 20/11/2010**

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**(Covering Letter)**

Chris Hayward  
Assistant Director/City Planning Officer  
Preston City Council

By e-mail and post.

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your e-mail dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November further to my letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, e-mails dated 12<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November and our brief discussions at the Northern Area Forum. I am pleased to hear that the application will not now be considered until 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at the earliest.

I have now reviewed the supporting planning statement and Environmental Statement accompanying the above application and national policy guidance in PPG17 on behalf of the IGVRA.

My comments thereon (attached) are not exhaustive given the specialist technical nature of the ES. However they reinforce the concerns of the Association, not only that the proposals lack merit, but that the supporting statements are not robust and their accuracy and objectivity need to be rigorously challenged by the Council as Local Planning Authority, enlisting specialist external advice as necessary. I note from your e-mail that you are still considering whether to commission such advice in respect of course viability and marketing. I would respectfully urge you to do so.

These comments do not constitute the final professional representations on behalf of the Association. At the time of writing, key responses from the Highways Agency, the Highways Authority and, perhaps most importantly, the Council's own planning policy team remain outstanding.

I would wish to review these, any further submissions made by the applicant (who is undertaking further public consultation following failed earlier attempts to generate local support for the scheme) prior to finalising those representations.

I understand from Phil Cousins that, in order for the application to be considered on January 10<sup>th</sup> 2011, the report and recommendation would need to be finalised before Christmas. Given the number of outstanding issues (raised in this and past correspondence) and the stage of the Councils public consultation on the Site

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Allocations DPD, I do not see how a fully informed and robust assessment can be undertaken in this timescale.

Even if the recommendation is for refusal, I would respectfully suggest that the application not be considered until:-

- a) The claims made in the supporting submissions and the adequacy and objectivity of the Environmental Statement have been fully audited, drawing upon specialist advice as necessary.
- b) Further discussions have taken place in respect of the form and scale of affordable housing and other appropriate and necessary developer contributions - informed by an independent external assessment of scheme viability through open book accounting - as advocated in HCA Best Practice and
- c) there is greater clarity in respect of emerging local planning policy (not least the Council reaching a view on its 5 year housing requirement and it considering the response to its Site Allocations DPD consultation).

Could you please keep me informed of the progress of the application. As previously suggested, members of the Association and I would be happy to meet with you and Phil Cousins to elaborate upon the concerns expressed in our various representations to date if this would be helpful.

Yours sincerely  
Etc.

### **Comments on Supporting Planning Statement.**

- 1.5 **Pre-application consultation** on redevelopment commenced in May 2008, more than 15 months before the golf course was marketed and the leisure market assessment was undertaken. The decision to pursue redevelopment in advance of the leisure market assessment and the marketing of the course clearly indicates that these exercises were undertaken to support the case for a higher value land use NOT with the genuine intent to secure continued use of the course in golf or other recreational use.
- 1.7 **Retention of Open Space** - The retention of 74% of the site in open space use is misleading. Redevelopment of the majority of the open parkland areas is proposed.
- 2.15 **Positive Use** - It is essential that the site be put to positive use and managed but this does not mean that this has to take the form of built development. The first steps in line with the allocation of the site and guidance in PPG17 should be to explore fully the opportunity to retain its use as a golf course or in another open space recreational use.
- 2.26 **Covenants** - The claim that the omission of covenants was in recognition that the course concept was experimental is not backed up by any documentary evidence and should be challenged. By making this statement, the applicants are clearly seeking to insinuate that the Central Lancashire Development Corporation accepted the possibility that it may not prove viable in the longer term. I am advised by staff working for the CLDC at the time that this was not the case.
- The concept was already tried and tested in the USA and in mainland Europe. Any suggestion that the concept may not work in the UK was quickly dispelled by the club gaining a strong membership and establishing itself as a popular competition venue. For many years it competed successfully with the other long established golf courses in the Preston area. The concept has not failed.
- 3.3 **Need for Development** – The applicants have not demonstrated an oversupply of golf facilities in the Preston Area. The losses incurred by Ingol Golf Course are not in themselves evidence of oversupply (see PPG17 and comments by Sport England) but indicative of the failure of the owners and management to undertake the necessary investment to retain the strong membership base it originally enjoyed.
- 3.6 **Public Consultation** - As evidenced by the overwhelming written opposition to the development set out in the SCI, the public consultation events did not manage to persuade the local community of any benefits to the community from the proposals.
- 3.7 **The scale of development** may have been reduced from that originally proposed but remains the majority of readily developable areas of the site. Built community facilities are explicitly capped at a modest 500 sq metres on the application submission (see 3.10). This is an area of extreme deprivation and this is a modest level of provision.

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- 3.15 **Guild Wheel Cycle Route** – It is wrong to present the proposed cycle provision as a special community benefit or planning gain. The cost of such provision is extremely modest in the context of the scale of development proposed and its provision is an entirely reasonable requirement for a scheme of this scale, in line with established national and local planning policy. There is no physical impediment to this cycle route even if the Golf Course remained.
- 3.20 **Area for Community Facilities** - Area 4a, the existing clubhouse and squash courts is proposed for community uses but scant detail is provided.
- 3.22 **Affordable Housing & Other Developer Contributions** - 20% affordable housing is the minimum requirement under Interim Planning Statement 2. For some residential developments with relatively high scheme costs and modest end values the percentage affordable housing requirement established pre-recession in a more buoyant housing market (30% in Preston’s Local Plan) can impact unduly on developer profit margins and present an obstacle to schemes coming forward.
- This should not apply in this instance given that the site was acquired at open space value and is not burdened by the site costs associated with previously developed land. The % contribution to affordable housing should be considered in the context of a binding commitment to an independent assessment of scheme viability and balanced against other legitimate and reasonable planning requirements identified as part of the application and consultation process.
- 4.4 **Sustainable and Inclusive Patterns of Development** – The original design of this development as part of CLNT fully supports the aims of PPS1. The development proposed would detract from those principles.
- 4.11 **PPS3** - The site is a sustainable location for residential development in terms of being within the existing urban area of Preston (although not within a primarily residential area in the Local Plan) and close to local facilities but it is not accepted that it fosters the enhancement of the existing sustainable [local] community. It is not accepted that it will make the area more attractive as a place to live.
- 4.12 **PPS 9 Biodiversity** – Dr Sarah Manchester at LCC has requested further information. The application should not be determined until this has been provided and Preston City Council have carried out a full appraisal of the **Environmental Statement**. The adequacy and impartiality of the ES/EIA should be verified by specialists in this field such as IEMA (The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment). Brief comments and questions arising from the Environmental Statement are attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.26 **PPS17 Open Space, Sports and Recreation** – Sport England do not agree with this assessment (see later consideration of PPG17 ). The statement that the area will be safe from crime is unsupported with the Police reserving their position on this.
- 4.45 **Policy H5** – This policy applies to existing **primarily residential areas**. It does not apply to areas specifically allocated as open space and protected from development. As such its

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provisions and particularly the primacy attached to impact on residential amenity do not apply.

- 4.53 **Open Space Policy G6 Golf Courses** – explicitly remains relevant to this application notwithstanding that the golf course is no longer operational (see Section 5).
- 4.70 **Emerging Policy – Local Development Framework** - Coverage of the emerging Central Lancashire LDF is selective with no acknowledgement of the imminence of the Core Strategy Publication document or the Site Allocations DPD Issues and Options consultation. It is not accepted that the proposals would support the objectives of the plan in the round. The Policy Option extracts quoted focus exclusively on the importance of housing supply to the exclusion of other key objectives and the important wider considerations that apply in this case. The statement does not acknowledge that significant weight can be attached to emerging planning policy where this is well advanced and the existing development plan is out-of-date, as is true in this instance.
- 4.85 **Growth Point** - it should be stressed that the Central Lancashire and Blackpool Growth Point Programme of Development identified the potential to increase housing supply to 20% above RSS levels without the necessity to release this open space. With the [proposed] abolition of RSS, the deletion of RSS housing targets, and the determination of appropriate housing development levels at the local level, the Central Lancashire Authorities have reviewed their housing targets and now propose to consult on these being set at 20% below RSS figures (for at least the first 2 years).

#### PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.4 **National & Regional Context** - See 4.85 above. The Programme of Development indicated the scope for the Central Lancashire Authorities to allocate sufficient sites to meet the RSS requirement plus 20% even taking account of the underprovision against RSS targets since 2003. With the proposed abolition of RSS (the original abolition having been ruled recently by the High Court as unlawful) the latter requirement will cease to apply and, as noted, the Central Lancashire authorities propose to proceed initially on the basis of levels of housing development 20% below RSS.

Preston City Council, as Local Planning Authority, has yet to finalise appropriate levels of housing provision to be planned for in its Site Allocations Development Plan Document but early consultation on Issues and Options for this plan is indicating public concern over the ability of existing or improved infrastructure in North Preston (particularly highway capacity) to support housing growth. It should also be noted that the Inspector's Report on the Tithebarn Regeneration Area recommended refusal on transportation grounds because of concerns on this issue. With its approval by the Secretary of State, notwithstanding these concerns, the pressures on the local highway network will significantly increase.

- 5.5 **Local Housing Supply Position** – the figures that Drivers Jonas base their calculation of housing supply upon are now out-of-date both in respect of the SHLAA and Preston's annual requirement and supply. At the Central Lancashire LDF Joint Advisory Committee on 21<sup>st</sup>

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September Members unanimously resolved to support a revised short term housing requirement 20% below RSS levels . The report to the JAC states this is *considered appropriate given what we know at the moment about the local economic situation and the recent experience of housing delivery*. This gives a requirement for Preston of 406 and for Central Lancashire of 1072 units per year. The 2010 SHLAA concluded that Preston had only a 3.36 year supply but this was based on the RSS requirement of 546 units per year making allowance for underprovision 2003-2010. If the reduced requirement of 406 units is adopted for the whole 5 year period (which would not seem unreasonable) the supply at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 in Preston of 1832 gives approximately a 4.5 year supply. However this takes no account of the existence of >7.5 years housing supply in Chorley and 7 years supply in South Ribble if the 20% reduction is applied to those areas. Overall Central Lancashire has a reworked housing supply of almost 6.5 years at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. Bearing in mind that Central Lancashire operates as a single housing market (with sites within South Ribble falling within Preston's continuous urban area) this overall housing market supply is more relevant than looking at a single administrative area in isolation. Although the three local authorities have yet to finalise the housing requirements to be provided for in their Site Allocations DPD, current supply is clearly more than adequate to meet the short term requirements of a depressed housing market that will take time to recover. Housing delivery is not being constrained by a lack of sites but by market conditions. It is suggested that the granting of permission for development on the Golf Course will not boost housing completions but be at the expense of other sites .

The existence of a major, long established and allocated greenfield housing site in the immediate vicinity (Cottam Hall – 1300 homes) is directly relevant in this respect. This development represents the completion of a sustainable urban extension to Preston proposed initially as part of plans for Central Lancashire New Town (as indeed was Ingol Golf Course and surrounding residential development). Following Masterplan consultation in November 2010 a planning application is expected to be lodged in early 2011.

Although the HCA are being cautious in indicating the contribution that this will make to the 5 year supply (295 dwellings in the September 2010 SHLAA ) greenfield releases elsewhere will need to be very carefully controlled if Preston is not to exceed the limit of 30% on Greenfield development established in the Core Strategy. More importantly, if brownfield sites in Preston are to be successfully recycled for housing use in line with national and local policy, then tight control needs to be exercised over additional Greenfield allocations/permissions.

This reinforces the case for permission not to be granted to major currently unallocated Greenfield sites in advance of housing requirements being finalised and provided for through the Local Development Framework process. This is a view firmly supported by the Joint Advisory Committee on the Central Lancashire Local Development Framework.

At their September 2010 meeting members were unanimous in supporting the conclusion of the officer report that, taking into account the current position and advice in PPS3, ***“there is therefore no need to actively boost housing land supply by permitting significant housing***

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*proposals, in advance of new site allocations being adopted, as this would risk undermining the efficient and effective use of land.”*

The scale of development proposed at Ingol is unarguably significant. The IGVRA agree wholeheartedly with this conclusion. Any case for development of the golf course that Northern Trust present should be considered through the LDF process. This is an approach that the Secretary of State explicitly supported in rejecting an application for more than 1100 homes at Land South of Queensway, St Annes within Fylde Borough (APP/M2325/A/09/2103453) notwithstanding that Fylde Council have yet to make any progress in consulting upon a Core Strategy to replace Fylde Local Plan. Given the well advanced position relatively of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Site allocations DPD, this principle must surely apply in relation to this application.

- 5.15 **Creating Publicly Accessible Open Space – Policy G2.** The extent to which enhanced public access to the application site could provide additional benefits to the wider local community not delivered by existing public rights of way depends critically upon there being a robust management plan for the retained open space. It must also be stressed that the local community have long enjoyed significant unrestricted access beyond those rights of way and therefore the additional benefits claimed are overstated.

Whilst the ES outlines how planting, maintenance and management might mitigate the impact on visual amenity, it cannot be assumed that the development *will enhance the visual amenity of green space* as required by Policy G2 particularly bearing in mind that it involves the replacement of substantial areas of open space by built development thereby detracting from the visual amenity enjoyed by the local community in those areas. The derisory sum proposed by Northern Trust in the Draft Heads of Terms to enable Lancashire County Council to monitor the ecology of the site - approximately £525 total contribution over 5 years - gives little confidence that the applicants are committed to the funding needed to deliver a proper long term management plan for the area. This concern is expanded upon in the comments on the Environmental Statement at Appendix 1.

- 5.21 **Policy G6 Oversupply of Golf Facilities** – it is not accepted that this policy applies only to operational facilities. This is equivalent to saying that policies applying to the change of use of a shop do not apply if it falls vacant. This is clearly not the case.
- 5.22 The NPFA recommendation acknowledges that authorities should not count golf courses as counting towards their target for recreational greenspace. Clearly, given the area of golf courses, to do otherwise would be a nonsense creating the potential for an area to be woefully deficient in fully publicly accessible open space if golf courses counted towards provision. However this does not mean that golf courses do not make a very important contribution to open space provision not just for those who play but for the wider local community.

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- 5.24 The proposals clearly conflict with Policy G6. They do not complement the existing use of the site as a golf course. They not only reduce the extent of usage of the facility they eliminate any prospect of retention of such use even as a 9 hole facility.
- 5.26 **Golf Market Assessment** – It is not accepted that the Pan Leisure report establishes that there is an oversupply of golf courses serving the Preston area relative to other parts of the North West . This is a view shared by Sport England. The submissions fail to address the requirements of PPG17 in assessing need and the proposal conflicts with guidance regarding the consideration of proposals for the redevelopment of open space and sports facilities (see Appendix 2). The IGVRA contend that this has come about by a failure to invest in the course to maintain its attractiveness on a membership and latterly pay and play basis.
- 5.27 **Marketing Campaign** - The timing of the marketing campaign, more than a year after pre-application discussions had commenced, is a clear indication that the exercise was undertaken to support the case for higher value redevelopment and not as a genuine attempt to secure an operator.

The marketing details acknowledge that a lack of investment led to the course’s loss-making in recent years and closure. The absence of follow-up interest from the significant number of enquiries received (despite a short marketing period) raises questions as to whether the proposed terms and conditions of the leasehold disposal were reasonable and likely to secure an operator.

The inclusion of a break clause in the lease was cited by one interested party as a contributory factor. Clearly a break clause would be likely to deter operators given the investment required in the course because of past under investment.

Sport England are similarly unconvinced by the marketing. This is something that requires specialist independent assessment to establish whether there is genuinely no prospect of the course being returned to a successful facility as claimed at para’ 5.30.. Given Policy G6, and the important wider contribution that the course makes to the local community (as evidenced by public consultation) this has to be absolutely established before any consideration is given to allowing built development.

- 5.31 As previously stated the claims that the proposals will enhance visual amenity and deliver recreational benefits are not properly evidenced and certainly not shared by local residents (irrespective of whether they have any interest in golf) – See Appendix 1.
- 5.33 **Summary** - Contrary to the applicant’s assertions, the proposals are clearly contrary to Policies G2 and G6 and the latter policy remains directly relevant and cannot be set aside notwithstanding that the course ceases to be open.
- 5.51 **Sustainability** – The site is unquestionably a sustainable location for development in respect of access to local facilities, the City Centre etc., but this does not mean that it would contribute to the wider sustainable communities agenda, particularly place shaping and liveability. Many of the positive attributes in terms of location and accessibility could



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equally be claimed in support of proposals to develop parts of Moor Park for housing but such a prospect would, quite rightly, be utterly rejected.

5.59 **Highways and Accessibility** - The prospect and problems arising from increased vehicle movements down Walker Lane do not appear to be recognised. The views of both the Highway Authority and Highways Agency are awaited. The Homes and Communities Agency raise concerns over highway capacity in the context of long established proposals for Cottam Hall.

6.5 **Conclusions** –An extensive programme of pre-application consultation may have been undertaken but the applicants are unable to document any significant support for the principle of development. Indeed the position of the local community is one of almost unanimous objection.

6.8 **Policy Compliance** - The claims that the proposal complies fully with the schedule of policies listed (with the exception of G6 which is claimed not to be applicable) is rejected. There is at best tension and at worst clear conflict with a significant number of policies including :-

PPS1

PPS3

PPG17 (see Appendix 2)

Policy G2

Policy G6

[Policy H5 does not apply to this site]

The conclusions entirely ignore the emerging LDF policy framework and the compelling case supported by the SoS in appeal decisions that the site's development should be considered in the context of the review of policy and site allocations through the LDF rather than through granting planning permission for major housing developments contrary to the existing development plan.

6.9 **Housing Land Supply** - Contrary to claims that Preston has at most a 3 year supply, the emerging policy and housing supply position suggests a 4.5 year housing supply in Preston and in excess of 6 years supply across Central Lancashire. The Central Lancashire Authorities conclude that ***there is therefore no need to actively boost housing land supply by permitting significant housing proposals, in advance of new site allocations being adopted.***

6.11 **Land Use** – This refers only to Policies G2 and G6 despite suggestions in the supporting statement that Policy H5 applies to the site. The proposal clearly conflicts with policies G2 and G6 for the reasons given.

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- 6.12 **Landscape and Ecology** (see Appendix 1) – The applicant’s supposed commitment to these important considerations is at direct variance with the derisory sum they propose for ecological monitoring and the absence of any detailed proposals for long term site management. Such commitment would be best demonstrated through a willingness to transfer land ownership of the open space areas to a public authority or charitable trust with the provision of a substantial commuted sum to fund its future management. The applicants are intent on retaining ownership raising serious concerns over the ambitions they may harbour for further site development.
- 6.16 **Sustainability** - The applicants rely heavily on the credentials of their proposals in terms of sustainable construction and accessibility but fail to consider sustainability and the sustainable communities agenda in the round.

## APPENDIX 1

### COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

#### Non Technical Summary

1.20 & 1.23 It is not accepted that a no built development scenario is *not an option* or that housing choice and supply to meet needs cannot be provided on other sites. It is not accepted that alternative sites are inferior in terms of sustainability when this is considered properly, in the round, rather than narrowly in terms of location and accessibility. The alleged additional community benefits are not defined and ignore the role played by the club house and the explicit limitation of 500 sq metres placed on such provision in the application.

2.2 The conclusions of the reviews that the proposals are *fully in accordance with adopted and emerging planning policy* are fundamentally flawed. Nothing could be further from the case. In addition to clear conflicts with saved policies in the Local Plan, there is a potential major conflict with the identification of the area as strategic open space in the emerging Core Strategy although the boundaries of that space have still to be defined through the Site Allocations DPD.

3.2-3.8 The claims of a *moderate beneficial impact* are disputed. No evidence has been provided to support the assertion that that the development will provide any lasting permanent local employment opportunities to offset those lost as a consequence of the closure of the golf course, squash courts and clubhouse. Whilst the introduction of additional owner occupied properties may reduce the proportion of local residents in deprived circumstances, no explanation is provided as to how it will improve the quality of life for those in this situation or help to reduce their number. Similarly how the establishment of a “bridge between wards” will generate any local benefits is unexplained. There is no evidence that the existing local community see any benefit in this so-called *bridge*.

#### Environmental Statement

##### **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.12 The onus is on the LPA to *critically evaluate the statement, seeking further information from the applicants if necessary and taking into account additional*

*consultations and representations.* As stated in the comments on the supporting assessment, proper critical evaluation of the ES requires input going beyond seeking the views of standard consultees such as the Highway Authority. LCCs ecology team and others. What is needed is an audit of the adequacy of the ES, as a whole, by an organisation specialising in this field such as the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). Can you please advise what further information has been requested and how the Council is evaluating the ES?

## **2 EIA METHODOLOGY**

- 2.7 It is worthy of note that the conclusions of the assessment are caveated by the information available at the time of writing and that no survey of ground conditions was possible because of the course being in use.
- 2.12 It is claimed that full details of the feedback from pre-application consultation is included in the SCI. This is not the case. The SCI sets out no details of the pre-application response from anyone other than local residents and organisations. There is no note of the feedback from organisations including the English Golf Union, and Sport England.
- 2.16 & 2.17 The feedback from the consultation indicates that the local community is virtually unanimous in its opposition to the proposals. It is disingenuous for the ES to make play of the extent of public consultation but omit any reference to the clear message resulting from that consultation, hiding this away in Appendices. The impression that the application has been informed by extensive pre-application consultation is grossly misleading. If it had been so informed the development proposal would not have been pursued. This is particularly relevant in the context of the requirements of national planning policy in PPG17 (see Appendix 2).
- 2.18 The suggestion that the proposal could add c 300 dwellings to Preston's 5 year housing supply is considered optimistic in the light of market conditions and reserved matter requirements. This figure exceeds the estimated 5 year supply from Cottam Hall a development proposal that has been many years in development.

### **3 APPLICATION SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.14 The acceptance of an oversupply of golf facilities is disputed (see comments of Sport England and failure to comply with PPG17 – Appendix 2).
- 3.15 The development takes in the majority of the course when wooded areas are excluded.
- 3.31 Includes recognition that the phasing is indicative. As stated the projected unit completion is considered optimistic.
- 3.35 The intention to demolish the clubhouse fails to act on suggestions by community representatives that this should be retained (see SCI Appendix 11). It also goes against the fundamental principles of sustainability to seek to reuse existing buildings wherever this is possible.

### **4 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES**

- 4.4 & 4.5 The claim that the closed golf course could give rise to additional crime problems contradicts the statement made by the police at Appendix 11 when Inspector Morley confirmed that he did not see the undeveloped site posing more of a crime risk than if it were to be developed.
- 4.13 As concluded in the report to the JAC there is not a pressing need to grant permission to further major housing sites in advance of the LDF process.
- 4.16 Housing Supply – see planning statement comments.
- 4.17 Oversupply of golfing facilities – see comments by Sport England and Appendix 2 PPG17 comments.
- 4.18 The alleged excessive costs of managing the whole site in open space use ignore the potential to re-establish the golf course operation or to derive income from some other commercial recreational or other use of the open space. The submissions do not establish that such possibilities have been fully explored.

### **5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 5.4 The Interim Planning Statements are NOT Development Plan Documents for the purpose of considering the application. They are a material consideration to be taken into account only after compliance with the Development Plan has been considered.

- 5.33 & 5.34 The proposal conflicts with Policies G2 and G5. As previously noted, Policy H5 should not be referred to as the site is not in an area allocated as primarily residential within the Local Plan.
- 5.45 It is highly questionable that the proposed development would contribute to the character and identity of the area (requirement a of Policy D12). That identity and character is most strongly distinguished by the Golf Course and surrounding open land and will be eroded by the development.
- 5.62 IPS 2 requires a **minimum** of 20% affordable housing. The commitment to provide 20% does not satisfy this IPS, unless the viability of the development is such that it is unreasonable for only the 20% contribution to be made.
- 5.66 The proposed development does not comply with IPS 5 because the site is unsuitable. In any event the provisions of IPS 5 should only be accorded limited weight because they are not part of the Development Plan.

## **6 SOCIO-ECONOMIC**

- 6.54 The conclusion that granting permission would represent a major beneficial impact in respect of the housing property market is disputed. For the current and foreseeable future the delivery of additional dwellings and affordable units will be constrained by market conditions not by a lack of housing supply. Completion and occupation of units here is likely to be at the expense of progress on other sites most notably Cottam Hall, rather than providing any significant net benefit. In terms of affordable housing, the applicant has only committed to provide the basic 20% requirement.
- 6.56 The completion of facilities at Cottam Brickworks and progress on the already allocated Cottam Hall, in line with established planning policy, will have the most beneficial effect for the area.
- 6.59-6.61 See comments on socio-economic impact in non-technical summary
- 6.62 **Moderate** Beneficial Impact contradicts the claims of a **major** beneficial impact at 6.54.
- 6.64 The claim that *the proposed development accords with and complements a range of economic development and regeneration policies, having a major beneficial impact in this regard* is not supported by any evidence and is wholly disputed.

## 7 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

- 7.12 The development proposals do not, in practice, increase open space provision. They reduce it albeit formalising the rights to a level of public access that to a degree the local community has long enjoyed informally. It is not accepted that *the underlying principles of Greenspace provision are an integral part of the proposed development*. This is not true of local planning policy, or of national planning policy, as set out in PPG17 (see Appendix 2).
- 7.69 The conclusion that the proposals will have only a moderate to negligible adverse impact on landscape and visual amenity in the long term, is entirely dependent on the success of mitigation measures, particularly planting and landscaping, upon which the application itself contains few details. Without this mitigation and, in the short term, before planting and landscaping matures, the impact on Walker Lane is judged as major adverse. The longer term moderate to negligible adverse impact overall is argued to be acceptable in the context of an alleged major beneficial impact on landscape and visual amenity arising from the extension of public access. This argument is not accepted. Site characteristics in terms of landscape quality and visual amenity are not directly influenced by public access. They should be judged independently and objectively with any recreational benefits of increased public access considered separately.

## 8 ECOLOGY AND NATURE CONSERVATION

- 8.78 **Management, monitoring and funding** – this section sets a number of pre-requisites to the proposals benefitting the ecology of the site. These are largely reliant on the significant commitment of resources to this end. Details of the extent of Northern Trust's commitment in this regard are sparse but the identification in the Heads of Terms of just £525 to cover ecological monitoring of the site over 5 years inspires little confidence. This is a matter of considerable importance that needs to be addressed at this stage and not deferred to reserved matters when the principle of development has been accepted.

## 9 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

The absence of comments from the Highways Agency and the Highways Authority at the time of writing makes it difficult to express a view on the suggestion that the scheme should be allowed to proceed with only very modest proposals to enhance highway infrastructure.

It is apparent from public consultation on the Site allocations DPD that local residents are worried that any substantial further development will exacerbate problems of congestion and delay on the network and should not be allowed without commensurate investment in improving highway capacity. The HCA are naturally concerned that the development would make claims on infrastructure capacity without contributing to its improvement resulting in a situation in which this burden falls on the Cottam Hall development. This must not be allowed to occur, reinforcing the need for any discussion of developer contributions to be informed by open book accounting as advocated in HCA Best Practice

[http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/Investment\\_and\\_planning\\_good\\_practice\\_note.pdf](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/Investment_and_planning_good_practice_note.pdf)

## **12 GROUND CONDITIONS**

- 12.11 It is noted that *No physical ground investigations have been undertaken to date due to the site currently been in use* –presumably because the work was undertaken while the course was still in use i.e. before January 2010. The preparation of an ES is a costly item and the fact that Northern Trust commissioned this and other work in advance of the marketing of the site as a golf course must place a large question mark over the seriousness of its efforts to secure a course operator.

## **16 SUMMARY OF RESIDUAL IMPACTS**

Given the specialist technical nature of the ES it has not been possible to undertake a fully informed and exhaustive analysis of all of its findings. However even within these constraints a worrying number of instances have been identified in which the ES appears to be neither robust nor properly impartial as statutorily required.

The summary of residual impacts is considered to understate very seriously the detrimental overall impact of the scheme and this and the ES as a whole should be the subject of very rigorous scrutiny by the LPA calling upon the advice of specialists in the field of environmental impact assessment.



## APPENDIX 2

### **COMPLIANCE OF THE PROPOSALS WITH PPG17 AND ITS COMPANION GUIDE**

The supporting submissions quote selectively from PPG17 in seeking support for the proposed development. To provide balance, attention is drawn to the following extracts from the PPG and its companion guide. The highlighting is not from these documents, but to draw attention to statements of particular importance. Particular attention is drawn to Diagram 1. This highlights that, even if the primary golf course use is surplus to requirements and there is not a deficiency in any other form of open space and sport or recreation provision (which is not accepted by IGVRA), development proposals should still be refused if :-

- The land provides an important local amenity and offers play and recreation opportunities or
- The land provides an important community resource and can be used for formal and informal events or
- The land particularly benefits wildlife and biodiversity.

This is unquestionably the case in this instance.

### **PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE 17: PLANNING FOR OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION.**

*Open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people's quality of life. Well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are therefore fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives*

*Green spaces in urban areas perform vital functions as areas for nature conservation and biodiversity and by acting as 'green lungs' can assist in meeting objectives to improve air quality.*

*Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion - well planned and maintained open spaces and good quality sports and recreational facilities can play a major part in improving people's sense of well being in the place they live. As a focal point for community activities, they can bring together members of deprived communities and provide opportunities for people for social interaction.*

*2. As a minimum, assessments of need should cover the differing and distinctive needs of the population for open space and built sports and recreational facilities.*

*Maintaining An Adequate Supply Of Open Space And Sports And Recreational Facilities*

**10. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements. For open space, 'surplus to requirements' should include consideration of all the functions that open space can perform.**

*In the absence of a robust and up-to-date assessment by a local authority, **an applicant for planning permission may seek to demonstrate through an independent assessment that the land or buildings are surplus to requirements. Developers will need to consult the local community and demonstrate that their proposals are widely supported by them.***

*13. Equally, development may provide the opportunity to exchange the use of one site for another to substitute for any loss of open space, or sports or recreational facility. The new land and facility should be at least as accessible to current and potential new users, and at least equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality*

*16. The recreational quality of open spaces can be eroded by insensitive development or incremental loss of the site. In considering planning applications - either within or adjoining open space - local authorities should weigh any benefits being offered to the community against the loss of open space that will occur.*

*17. Local authorities should:*

***i. avoid any erosion of recreational function and maintain or enhance the character of open spaces;***

***18. Where recreational land and facilities are of poor quality or under-used, this should not be taken as necessarily indicating an absence of need in the area.*** Local authorities should seek opportunities to improve the value of existing facilities. Usage might be improved by better management or by capital investment to secure improvements.

## **ASSESSING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES : A COMPANION GUIDE TO PPG17**

*3.1 The main purpose of undertaking a local assessment is to plan positively, creatively and effectively to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality greenspaces, civic spaces and sport and recreation facilities to meet the needs of local communities and visitors. PPG17 also sets out clear policy guidance for authorities when considering planning applications which involve the redevelopment of an existing open space or facility. Diagram 1 summarises the approach to development control set out in PPG17 for such applications and makes clear that authorities will be able to follow its policy requirements only if they have undertaken a comprehensive local assessment.*

*3.2 Where a local authority has not undertaken its own assessment, paragraph 10 of PPG17 allows an applicant for planning permission to 'seek to demonstrate through an independent assessment' that a particular site or area of land is surplus to requirements. In the interests of transparency and good practice, **it will be desirable for any developer wishing to undertake such an assessment to agree the proposed methodology in advance with the relevant planning authority. It should keep the authority and the local community fully informed as the assessment proceeds. This should help both to avoid criticism and comply with the requirement in PPG17 that developers consult the local community and are able to demonstrate that their proposals are widely supported.***

**06/2010/0626 Former Ingol Golf Club, Tanterton Hall Road, Ingol, Preston - Outline application for the redevt of 69.55 hectares of land and buildings for residential devt. Representations on behalf of Ingol Golf Village Residents Association 20/11/2010**

