

**BALMORAL GROUP HOLDINGS LTD**



**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL  
DEVELOPMENT AT  
321 HOUGH LANE, WOMBWELL,  
BARNSELY, S73 0LR**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**September 2017**

**Ryden LLP  
25 Albyn Place  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1YL  
Tel; 01224 588866  
Fax; 01224 589669**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Ryden LLP act as agents for Balmoral Tanks Ltd and their parent company, Balmoral Group Holdings Ltd. Balmoral Group Holdings Ltd acquired the business of Galglass Ltd, and their premises at 321 Hough Lane, Wombwell from administration in 2015.
- 1.2 Balmoral continue to operate the business, under the name of Balmoral Tanks Ltd from their existing premises at Wombwell. The company presently employs around 50 people, half of whom are employed on site at the manufacturing facility and the remainder are involved in the installation of manufactured products off site.
- 1.3 The company's existing premises at Wombwell, which are the subject of this application, are constrained for industrial purposes in terms of the layout of the site, the configuration of buildings and the fact it sits adjacent to residential properties. Storage space is also limited. The site extends to 1.485 hectares (3.67 acres) or thereby and lies within a predominantly residential area. The site is bound on three sides by residential development, the most recent of which was completed in the last ten years.



**Fig 1; Site as existing.**

- 1.4 The site is fully developed and the fact that it is bound by housing restricts the potential for further growth. The presence of that housing also imposes limitations on the operation of the business. Limited parking is available on site and the configuration of the access from Hough Lane limits HGV movements.
- 1.5 Having secured the business and embarked on a strategy of growth, Balmoral Tanks Ltd acquired land at Thurnscoe Business Park to develop a purpose built factory facility. Their site at Thurnscoe, which extends to 2.956 hectares (7.3 acres), will accommodate a new manufacturing facility, associated offices, car parking, and storage areas. Planning permission for their new facility (Ref No. 2017/0013) was

granted on 21 April 2017 and is currently nearing completion. It is anticipated that Balmoral Tanks will relocate from their existing site at Wombwell to Thurnscoe early in 2018.

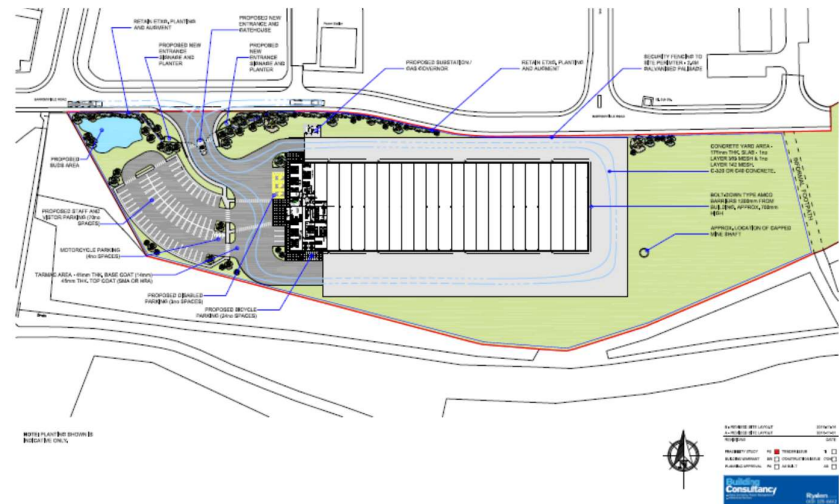


**Fig 2; Replacement premises at Thurnscoe Business Park.**

- 1.6 The company continues to grow at pace and further land has been reserved at Thurnscoe for future expansion of the facility. Following relocation their existing facility at Wombwell will become redundant and it is proposed that the site be redeveloped for residential purposes in keeping with the immediately adjoining uses. The monies from the sale of the Wombwell site will partially fund the delivery of the new premises at Thurnscoe.
- 1.7 This current application seeks outline planning permission for the redevelopment of their existing site at 321 Hough Lane, Wombwell for residential purposes. Their proposal is to utilise the existing access from Hough Lane to access a development of around 45 residential units comprising detached, semi-detached and terraced housing with associated infrastructure and open space provision. As the proposal constitutes a major development, pre-application advice was sought from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in January 2016. A pre-application meeting was held with the Council on 10 March 2016 and their formal response received on 24 March 2016. This application has been prepared having regard to the comments contained therein.
- 1.8 This Supporting Statement requires to be read in conjunction with the indicative plans accompanying the application. It provides background information on the Balmoral Group, their proposals for the redevelopment of the site and addresses the planning and economic considerations relative to the proposed development. It further assesses the proposals against current and emerging development plan policy. A range of additional supporting information accompanies the application, including;
  - Design & Access Statement, including Housing Sustainability Checklist;
  - Consultation Report;

- Transport Statement;
- Geo Environmental Desk Study Report;
- Drainage Assessment;
- Coal Mining Risk Assessment;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey; and,
- Tree Survey.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Established in 1980, Balmoral Group Holdings Ltd is a diverse company specialising in sub-sea buoyancy, flotation, insulation, elastomer, and renewable energy products, civil/environmental engineering, liquid storage and treatment solutions. Headquartered in Aberdeen, the company operates from premises in Barnsley, Cardiff, Houston, London, and Rio de Janeiro. Privately owned, it currently employs around 600 people.
- 2.2 Balmoral Tanks, a subsidiary of Balmoral Group Holdings Ltd, is a leading European Tank Design & Manufacturing company. The company produces what is believed to be the most comprehensive range of tank products available from a single source in the European Union.
- 2.3 Key sectors for the company include civil engineering, firefighting, potable/ non-potable water, anaerobic digestion, bio-fuel, bio-mass, waste water treatment, desalination and drainage. As well as manufacturing, Balmoral also offers a wide range of associated technical services, including installation, inspection, repair and maintenance of its products. Their existing premises at Wombwell currently focus on the manufacture and installation of waste water, processing and anaerobic digestion tanks.
- 2.4 The company acquired Galglass Ltd after it went into administration in 2014. That business, established in 1979, specialised in the design, manufacture, and installation of galvanised steel and concrete storage tanks and roof structures. At the time of its acquisition the company employed 11 people and that has since increased to around 50 with further growth projected.

## **3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 The site, which extends to approximately 1.485 hectares (3.67 acres) or thereby lies immediately to the south of Hough Lane to the west of Wombwell. Vehicular access to the site is taken from Hough Lane. The wider road network is accessed via Hough Lane with junction 36 of the M1 motorway approximately 3 miles away which, in turn, provides links to Leeds and the M62 to the north and Sheffield, London and the M18 to the south.

- 3.2 The site lies within close proximity of the rail network. Wombwell Station lies approximately 250m to the west of the site providing links to both Barnsley and Sheffield.
- 3.3 The site enjoys limited frontage to Hough Lane with the majority of it set back from the road. It is bound to the north by residential properties and areas of allotments; to the west, and for much of its southern boundary, it is abutted by residential development built on the site of the former Wombwell Foundry. The remaining southern and south eastern boundaries are adjoined by areas of undeveloped land, some of which is understood to be reclaimed land following earlier colliery operations.
- 3.4 With the exception of two residential properties fronting Hough Lane, the site itself is presently in industrial use and comprises a range of industrial, workshop and warehouse buildings with ancillary offices and areas of open storage. Having been developed over many years, the age and quality of the buildings vary considerably across the site. The main industrial unit sits to the rear of the site and comprises 3 inter-connected units of steel portal frame construction with concrete floor and over clad brick elevations. The rectangular shaped building extends almost the entire width of the site orientated east-west.



**Fig 3; Buildings owned by Balmoral Group either side of site access.**

- 3.5 The second main industrial unit lies to the east of the site entrance and has previously been used as a paint shop. Again, of portal frame construction with a concrete floor, it is finished with block and brick elevations under a corrugated cement roof. The third industrial unit sits to the west of the site entrance and is currently used as a maintenance workshop. It comprises two inter-connected buildings of varying age. The first building is of steel portal frame construction finished with corrugated sheeting under a corrugated aluminium steel roof. The second building is split over two levels and comprises brick construction under a corrugated asbestos roof.
- 3.6 Fronting the site to Hough Lane either side of the access are two further properties owned by Balmoral. To the west of the access lie two semi-detached residential properties currently used by Balmoral for staff accommodation. This comprises a red brick building with tiled roof over two storeys. To the west of the access lies the main reception and office building. It comprises of brick construction with a pitched

tilled roof. This building comprises 4 cellular offices, and reception room to the front elevation with ancillary staff facilities. Inter-connected to the rear are 3 detached pre-fabricated office buildings. These buildings comprise of render walls beneath a pitched corrugated roof.



**Fig 4; Buildings and yard area with new housing in background.**

- 3.7 Overall, the 3 industrial units extend to approximately 2,753 sq m (29,637 sq ft), whilst the office accommodation extends to 480.85 sq m (5,157.73 sq ft). The site is fully serviced with water and drainage, electricity, gas and fixed line telephone and internet services. A telecommunications mast occupies a small area to the south west of the site. The scope for the removal of this is currently being investigated.



**Fig 5; Buildings and areas of hardstanding within the site.**

- 3.8 The site comprises almost entirely of buildings and areas of hardstanding. Peripheral hard and soft landscaping partially screen the site from adjoining residential properties. In topographic terms the site generally falls from north to south with a more marked fall at its western and southern boundaries. The adjoining residential development on the former foundry site sits at a lower level.
- 3.9 The proposal involves the demolition of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide residential development comprising detached, semi-detached and terraced housing with associated areas of landscaping and open space provision. Development densities would be similar to the recent developments to the south and east and be a maximum of two storeys in height.



- *Conserve and improve the natural environment for its own sake and in order to maintain and increase the attractiveness of Barnsley as a place to live, work, invest and visit; and,*
- *Revitalise communities and lessen disadvantage.*

4.3 In terms of employment, the strategy objective was to concentrate employment development where it will;

- *Provide employment opportunities for local communities, especially where there are high levels of unemployment;*
- *Reduce journey to work distances;*
- *Link to public transport and lorry routes;*
- *Use derelict, degraded or vacant land, or, where such land is unavailable, on greenfield sites; and,*
- *Meet the needs of major employment creating industries.*

4.4 For housing, the strategy was to locate new housing development; where it will provide for locally generated housing needs; supporting local shopping/community facilities and employment opportunities; and will reduce the need to travel. It highlights the requirement to be near corridors well served by public transport and near to public transport centres; provide a balance of provision to support economic regeneration and meet market demands; also, to meet regional needs and stabilise the population. The purpose of the strategy for new housing was to meet a forecast requirement for 10,750 new dwellings in the Borough between 1986 and 2001. Wombwell falls within the Eastern Housing Strategy Area.

4.5 The Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map identifies the site as straddling two policy areas. The western portion of the site along with the former foundry is identified as an area to remain in employment use. Policy WW5/5 identifies 2.6 hectares south of Hough Lane as an existing employment area. It advises that the site adjoins the Sheffield - Barnsley railway line and is occupied by Wombwell Foundry and other industrial premises. It highlights that the proximity of the site to residential properties on Hough Lane will be an important factor in considering any development proposals.

4.6 That part of the site lying to the east and already developed is identified as being suitable for the expansion of the existing firms although not capable of independent development because of access and other constraints. Policy WW6/1 allocates 3.3 hectares of land to the rear of Wombwell Foundry and other industrial premises on Hough Lane and is intended to allow those uses to expand if necessary. The Policy

highlights that the proximity of residential premises on Hough Lane will be an important factor in considering any development proposals.

- 4.7 Policy ED7 of the Unitary Development Plan advises that areas defined on the Proposals Maps as employment policy areas will remain in employment use. Unless otherwise stated in community area volumes, development will normally be permitted for business, industry and storage & distribution. Policy ED4 provides guidance in relation to economic development and residential amenity. It advises that proposals for economic development adjoining or close to housing will be assessed with particular regard to the likely impact on residential amenity in terms of; air pollution including smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit; noise from operations on, or traffic entering or leaving, the site; and, visually intrusive buildings, plant, fencing, lighting or outside storage.
- 4.8 The Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted by the Council in September 2011, sets out the key elements of the Planning Framework for Barnsley and the approach to its long term phased development to achieve the Council's vision of what sort of place Barnsley wants to become. It establishes policies and proposals for the development of and use of land up to 2026.
- 4.9 Promoting sustainable development and reducing the Borough's impact on climate change are overarching principles of the Core Strategy. It highlights that the use and development of land will be assessed against the objective of securing sustainable development within Barnsley to meet its environmental, economic and social needs. Proposals will be supported where they deliver a range of benefits including the efficient use of land and infrastructure, particularly by utilising previously developed brownfield land, achieving housing density targets to minimise the use of greenfield sites and promoting appropriate mixed land uses integrated with existing built form; reductions in social inequalities and disadvantages within the community, particularly in relation to the location of employment, housing, shopping and other community facilities; and, convenient and integrated accessibility by public transport, cycle and foot and development located to reduce the need to travel.
- 4.10 The Core Strategy was prepared in conformity with the Yorkshire & Humber Plan; Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Whilst now revoked, it is considered by Barnsley Council to remain the optimum spatial strategy for Barnsley. It seeks to focus development in the following areas;
- Urban Barnsley;
  - The Principal Towns within the Barnsley Growth Corridor; and,
  - Peniston Principal Town.
- 4.11 Wombwell is identified as one of 5 principal towns in Barnsley. Along with urban Barnsley, these are the main local focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health, and cultural activities and facilities, and their roles as accessible

and vibrant places to live should be enhanced. The town also lies within the Barnsley Growth Corridor, which forms part of the Council's Spatial Strategy.

- 4.12 The Core Strategy Policy CSP8 identifies the principal towns as a priority for development and the main local focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health, and cultural activities and facilities. CSP10 anticipates 9,800 new homes for urban Barnsley over the Plan period. These homes are to be distributed amongst the towns, neighbourhoods using greenfield and previously developed safeguarded sites in proximity to good bus services. They are expected to respect established neighbourhood character and integrate new development into networks of greenspace incorporating cycle ways and footpaths. 2,000 new homes are allocated to Wombwell by Policy CSP10 over the Plan period. CSP12 also anticipates the allocation of between 10-15 hectares of employment land in Wombwell over the Plan period. The strategy advises that this is likely to include land in Wombwell which was previously allocated in the Unitary Development Plan for employment use, which is suitable for the continued allocation, and new employment land allocations.
- 4.13 In order to fulfil the spatial elements of the vision for Barnsley and the ambitions of the sustainable community strategy, the Core Strategy identifies a number of strategic objectives. Among these, Objective 1 seeks to focus development growth on urban Barnsley and the principal towns. Objective 3 seeks to secure safe, healthy and inclusive communities and promote well-being by a range of measures including making sure development takes place in settlements, and helping to create places where people want to live with convenient access to good quality local services, whilst Objective 4 seeks to make efficient use of land and infrastructure by delivering planned growth and providing guidance on where future growth should occur and utilising previously developed land and reusing existing buildings where possible in sustainable locations and making best use of existing and proposed infrastructure. It also emphasises the need to maximise opportunities to lever in investment to support growth. Objective 5 sets out a range of measures to accelerate economic growth, whilst Objective 6 seeks to ensure all new development is sustainably developed and built to the highest standards. Objective 7 relates to housing and endeavours to deliver a sufficient supply of housing to provide balanced mixed communities and support economic growth by a range of measures including providing for the release of sufficient land and buildings in the right places to meet requirements and giving priority to building housing on previously developed land where possible; providing a range of housing types and tenure to meet local need and widening housing choice to ensure all people are able to live in good quality affordable housing appropriate to their individual circumstances.
- 4.14 The Strategy advises that it is important to retain existing employment sites in order to maintain a range of types of available premises. Policy CSP19 addresses the protection of existing employment land. It advises that;

*Existing employment land, or land last used for employment purposes will be retained in order to safeguard existing or potential jobs. The redevelopment of employment land and buildings for non-employment uses will only take place if;*

- *Redevelopment would not result in a loss of existing jobs or employment potential; and,*
- *There will still be an adequate supply of employment land in the locality.*

*If the above criteria can be satisfied then redevelopment will be allowed where it can be demonstrated that;*

- *The buildings or land cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use.*

- 4.15 Tackling and adapting to climate change are considered key issues that need to be addressed through the Planning System. A range of detailed policies seek to minimise the Borough's contribution to climate change and these, along with others relating to renewables, sustainable travel, design, green infrastructure and contaminated land pollution have been addressed in the redevelopment proposals for the site. These include;

|       |                                            |
|-------|--------------------------------------------|
| CSP1  | Climate Change                             |
| CSP2  | Sustainable Construction                   |
| CSP3  | Sustainable Drainage Systems               |
| CSP4  | Flood Risk                                 |
| CSP5  | Including Renewable Energy in Developments |
| CSP14 | Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land      |
| CSP15 | Affordable Housing                         |
| CSP25 | New Development and Sustainable Travel     |
| CSP26 | New Development and Highway Improvement    |
| CSP29 | Design                                     |
| CSP36 | Bio-diversity and Geo-diversity            |
| CSP39 | Contaminated and Unstable Land             |
| CSP40 | Pollution Control and Protection           |
| CSP42 | Infrastructure and Planning Obligations    |

- 4.16 The Spatial Strategy and many of the above policies are carried forward into the 2016 Local Plan publication. Policy SD1 of the Local Plan applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This advises that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects this assumption and will work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. It stipulates that planning applications that accord with other relevant policies will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 4.17 The 2016 Local Plan publication is presently the subject of examination in public. It is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted in Spring 2018. Until that time the “Saved” Policies from the Unitary Development Plan will continue to form part of the policy context for planning decisions, together with the adopted Core Strategy policies highlighted above. Also of relevance are the joint Waste Plan and current National Planning Policies.
- 4.18 The Local Plan recognises Wombwell as a small, but busy market town which continues to be a well-defined centre. It notes that the area suffered from the decline of the coal industry and levels of new housebuilding have been historically low. It advises that Wombwell has a train station on the Wakefield to Sheffield line with a park-and-ride facility. This sits within 250m of the proposal site. The Plan advises that the Council want Wombwell to continue to flourish as one of the Borough's largest district centres offering a range of services and facilities.
- 4.19 Policy GD1 relates to general development and will be applied to all development within the Borough. It advises that proposals for development will be approved if;
- *There will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents.*
  - *They are compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of the neighbouring land.*
  - *They will not adversely affect potential development of a wider area of land which could otherwise be available for development and safeguards access to the adjacent land.*
  - *They include landscaping to provide a high quality setting for buildings, incorporating existing landscape features and ensuring that plant species and the way they are planted, hard surfaces, boundary treatments and other features appropriately reflect, protect and improve the character of the local landscape.*
  - *Any adverse impact on the environment, nature resources, waste, and pollution is minimised and mitigated.*
  - *Adequate access and internal road layouts are provided to allow the complete development of the entire site for residential purposes, and to provide appropriate vehicular and pedestrian links throughout the site and into adjacent areas.*
  - *Any drains and culverts are considered.*
  - *Appropriate landscape boundaries are provided where sites are adjacent to open countryside.*
  - *Any pylons are considered in the layout.*
  - *The existing trees that are to remain on site are considered in the layout in order to avoid over-shadowing.*
- 4.20 Further detail is set out in Policy D1 Design, which sets the overarching design principles for the Borough, and associated supplementary planning documents on

residential amenity and the siting of buildings, design, designing new housing development and advertisements.

- 4.21 The Local Plan acknowledges that Barnsley's economy is too small and needs to grow significantly if it is to fulfil its potential, benefit local people, and maximise its contribution to the Leeds and Sheffield city region economies. It advises that in order to create a larger and more diverse economy, more businesses and jobs are needed in the Borough. Policy E2 allocates 3.6 hectares of employment land to Wombwell. The Plan also seeks to safeguard, where appropriate, existing employment land. Policy E6 reflects the Core Strategy and requires that;

*Land or premises currently or last used for employment purposes will be retained in order to safeguard existing or potential jobs. The development of employment land and premises for non-employment uses will only take place if:*

- *Development would not result in a significant loss of existing jobs or employment potential; and*
- *There will still be an adequate supply of employment land or premises in the locality; and*
- *The land or premises cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use.*

*If the above criteria can be satisfied then redevelopment will be allowed.*

- 4.22 In respect of housing Policy H1 advises that the Council will seek to achieve the completion of at least 20,900 net additional homes during the period 2014-2033 and a minimum 5 year supply of deliverable sites will be maintained. Policy H2, which addresses the distribution of new homes indicates that 2,132 of those houses will be built in Wombwell. Of those, 634 already benefit from planning permission. The allocations are based on an indicative density of 40 dwellings per hectare.

- 4.23 The Plan recognises that whilst many homes in the Borough will be built on sites allocated for housing, other sites will also be suitable for residential development. It considers that these sites make a valuable contribution to the housing supply. It notes that sites in towns and villages can offer good opportunities for providing houses where other people already live, near to shops and services and developing these sites also reduces the need to provide new sites outside settlement boundaries. Policy H6: Residential Development on Large Non-allocated Sites advises that;

*Proposals for residential development on sites above 0.4 hectares which are not shown as housing sites on the Policy Maps will be given priority where they are:*

- *Located on previously developed land;*
- *Located within urban Barnsley or the principal towns as shown on the Proposals Maps.*

*If the above criteria are satisfied residential development will be allowed where it can be demonstrated that the site;*

- *Is located within the built up area;*
- *Is accessible by public transport; and*
- *Has good access to a range of shops and services.*

4.24 Policy H7 deals with housing mix and the efficient use of land. It advises that housing proposals would be expected to include a broad mix of house size, type and tenure to help create mixed and balanced communities. Homes must be suitable for different type of household and be capable of being adapted to meet the changing needs of the population. The Policy advises that a density of about 40 dwellings per hectare will be accepted with lower densities supported where it can be demonstrated that they are necessary for need, viability or sustainable design reasons. Policy H8 advises that 10% of houses built in Wombwell should be affordable.

4.25 Other relevant Policies, many of which reflect those in the Core Strategy, have been taken into consideration in the preparation of the proposals. These include;

|       |                                             |
|-------|---------------------------------------------|
| T3    | New Development and Sustainable Travel      |
| T4    | New Development and Highway Improvement     |
| D1    | Design                                      |
| BIO1  | Bio-diversity and Geo-diversity             |
| CC1   | Climate Change and Sustainable Construction |
| CC3   | Flood Risk                                  |
| CC4   | Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)         |
| CCAC1 | Water Resource Management                   |
| RE1   | Low Carbon and Renewable Energy             |
| CL1   | Contaminated and Unstable Land              |
| POLL1 | Pollution Control and Protection            |
| I1    | Infrastructure and Planning Obligations     |

4.26 The Local Plan Proposals Maps identifies the site, along with the adjoining residential developments as lying within the settlement, but with no specific allocation. It is not identified as land reserved for employment. The immediately adjoining land to the east and south east of the site is identified as a natural area of open space protected by Policy GI1, Green Infrastructure. Beyond that lies an area of Greenbelt to be kept free from development with encouragement given to the improvement of the natural environment.

## 5.0 POLICY JUSTIFICATION

- 5.1 The Unitary Development Plan Saved Policy WW5 identifies part of the site as falling within an employment policy area with the balance of the site identified for the expansion of existing firms under the terms of Saved Policy WW6. Those Policy designations have, however, been very much superseded by the redevelopment of the adjoining Foundry site. The Policies applied to that site as well as the proposal site and it has now been redeveloped for residential use. As a consequence, the proposal site is bound on three sides by residential development. The only remaining industrial use is that of Balmoral Tanks, which now remains as an anomaly in a predominantly residential area. Through the redevelopment of the Foundry site there is also no longer a need to reserve land for the future expansion of existing businesses. Balmoral Tanks themselves have outgrown the site and have been forced to relocate due to the constrained nature of the site, the lack of scope for future expansion and, the fact that their activities are limited due to the presence of adjoining residential uses.
- 5.2 The proposed redevelopment of the site for residential purposes fits with the goals of the Unitary Development Plan in that it involves economic restructuring and allows an existing business to grow and create additional employment opportunities. It further conserves and improves the natural environment by redeveloping a brownfield site and enhancing the amenity of adjoining residents. It also provides for locally generated housing needs in a sustainable location accessible by bus and rail services.
- 5.3 It satisfies the overarching principles of the Core Strategy by securing sustainable development and delivering a range of benefits including the efficient use of land and infrastructure, particularly by utilising previously developed land. It achieves appropriate housing densities and provides for a range of house types and sizes. The proposal also fits with the spatial strategy and strategic objectives of the Core Strategy which are also carried forward into the emerging Local Plan. As a principal town, Wombwell is a priority for development and focus for housing as well as employment development. Indeed, Objective 7 of the Core Strategy specifically relates to housing and endeavours to deliver a sufficient supply of housing with priority given to building housing on previously developed land as proposed in this instance.
- 5.4 Whilst currently in employment use it is contended that the site is no longer suitable for employment purposes. In this regard, the proposals must be assessed against Policy CSP19 of the Core Strategy and also emerging Local Plan Policy E6, which are similar in terms of their intention to protect existing employment land. It is firmly contended that the proposals at Hough Lane, Wombwell are in compliance with both Policy CSP 19 of the Core Strategy and Local Plan Policy E6. The loss of a relatively minor area of 1.485ha of employment land is fully justified in this instance and will not prejudice the strategic employment land supply nor the intent of policy.

- 5.5 Through retaining employment land the policy seeks to safeguard existing or potential jobs. In this instance the **“redevelopment of the site will not result in a loss of existing jobs or employment potential”** as required by Policy CSP 19. On the contrary, it will actually secure the long-term future of existing jobs and generate scope for significant growth and employment potential. Balmoral Tanks Limited can no longer operate effectively from their current premises at Hough Lane. A subsidiary of Balmoral Group Holdings Limited, Balmoral Tanks is an expanding business and acquired Galglass Limited in 2014. Staff numbers have risen to well in excess of 50 employees, and the company has now outgrown its current premises.
- 5.6 The business plans to relocate to a new, purpose built, facility at Thurnscoe Business Park in Spring 2018. An application for this development was approved in April 2017 under reference number 2017/0013 and construction is nearing completion. The proposal site at Thurnscoe Business Park extends to 2.96ha and will be occupied by an industrial unit with associated office, reception area and welfare facilities. The company's relocation to a site well in excess of twice its current premises illustrates the need for additional space and demonstrates the commitment of Balmoral Tanks Limited to becoming a prominent and continued presence in the BMBC area. This expansion will facilitate the growth of the business from a sustainable location and contribute positively to the local economy through the retention of existing employment in the area as well as providing the opportunity for additional job opportunities and income. Additional land adjoining the site has been reserved for further expansion and for the development of bespoke business units.
- 5.7 The redevelopment of the site at Hough Lane, Wombwell will enable the growth of an established business in compliance with the employment strategy objectives of the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This seeks to concentrate employment development where it will: provide employment opportunities for local communities, especially where there are high levels of unemployment; reduce journey to work distances; link to public transport and lorry routes; use derelict, degraded or vacant land, or where such land is unavailable, greenfield sites; and, meet the needs of major employment creating industries. The site at Thurnscoe, to where the business will relocate, lies within a designated business park developed on reclaimed colliery land. It provides employment opportunities in an area with high levels of unemployment and good access to the road network. The redevelopment of the proposal site will also provide employment opportunities through the construction of residential dwellings and support the local economy whilst raising finance for the public purse through council tax payments. The monies from the sale of the proposed redevelopment of the application site at Wombwell will partially fund the delivery of the new premises at Thurnscoe Business Park, ensuring monies are reinvested in the area.
- 5.8 It is clear that the relocation of Balmoral Tanks Limited to a new, purpose built facility on land allocated for business use will have a positive impact on the local economy in accordance with the aims and objectives of the UDP relative to employment development. The overall investment in terms of site acquisition, buildings and

equipment amounts to in excess of £8m. Turnover is expected to increase following relocation with the workforce projected to grow to between 60 and 70 people after five years with the majority drawn from the Barnsley area. There will also be substantial indirect benefits through purchases from local suppliers and spend by employees in the local area. This is likely to result in the support of existing and creation of further jobs in the area. Therefore the proposals are fully compliant with the first bullet point of CSP 19 in that the redevelopment 'would not result in a loss of existing jobs or employment potential'.

- 5.9 Secondly, it is firmly contended that **“there will still be an adequate supply of employment land in the locality”** post redevelopment of the proposal site at Hough Lane as required by Policy CSP 19. This requires assessment of the supply of employment land in the locality in the context of the existing development plan relative to Wombwell and its surroundings.
- 5.10 Policy ED1 of the Barnsley UDP allocated 323ha of land for employment purposes in the period 1991-2001. The Barnsley Employment Land Review (December 2016) notes that in the period to 2013, a significant proportion of this land has been taken up by 'Class B' employment land uses, with a substantial amount of land lost to alternative uses and essential infrastructure leaving an available employment stock of 121.84ha. Of this, 27.15ha is considered unsuitable for future development due to various constraints. This leaves 94.69ha of effective employment land available for development as of August 2016. In the period 1999-2017, a total of 173.9ha of land has been developed for employment uses, equating to an average take up of 10.23ha year. This has been driven in recent years by significant developments such as Aldi (c.20ha), ASOS (c.12ha), Ellbee (c.5ha) and Perrigo/Galpharm (3.5ha).
- 5.11 The UDP identified 25.5ha of new employment development land in Wombwell in addition to an existing 34.1ha of established employment sites. The Plan identified the application site at Hough Lane as part of a wider allocation for employment use under saved Policy WW5 and partly for expansion of an existing firm under Policy WW6. The expansion of the former Wombwell Foundry did not materialise and site WW5/5 South of Hough Lane has been developed for housing. The designation was not carried forward into the Core Strategy and is no longer allocated as employment land.
- 5.12 The adopted Barnsley Core Strategy (2011) notes Wombwell as 'a small but busy market town' which has 'suffered from the decline of the coal industry' and as a consequence, 'levels of new housebuilding have been historically low'. This summary illustrates market conditions influencing the changing circumstances of the area over time, with residential uses coming forward in order to address the historic shortfall of housing in the area. In addition to a target of building 2,000 homes up to 2026, the Core Strategy set a requirement of 350ha of employment land with 10-15 hectares of this to come forward in Wombwell.

- 5.13 This is a notable reduction to that brought forward by the UDP upon adoption in 2000 and is not site specific. The Reporter following examination of the Core Strategy stated that this relatively small allocation in Wombwell 'is justified by the historic pattern of coalfield towns and by the importance of maximising sustainability by minimizing travel distances to work'. It is acknowledged that Wombwell is not as readily accessible to junction 36 of the M1 which benefits the adjacent settlement of Hoyland to the west, where 50-65ha of employment land is allocated by the Core Strategy. Goldthorpe and Dearne Towns are also readily accessible to the A-road network and resultantly attract 50-65ha of allocated employment land. This demonstrates the Council's initiative of establishing new and expanding existing business parks in strategic locations in order to attract inward investment. Due to its location, Wombwell is not favoured as a strategic location for employment development and this site in particular, given its setting, is not well suited for continued employment use. Rather the focus should be on satisfying local housing need.
- 5.14 The Council's Economic Strategy 'Growing Barnsley's Economy (2012-2033)' sets out aspirations to grow the Borough's economy so that it is at least comparable to the Yorkshire and Humber regional average by 2033. The Strategy suggests that the area could be expected to capture around 40% of the South Yorkshire industrial/logistics land needs over the next Plan period owing to its accessibility coupled with emerging availability pressures in Sheffield and Rotherham. To this end, the Council propose job growth of approximately 30,000 in the Plan period of 2014-33 which will require a minimum of 291.2ha of employment land allocations as calculated by the Employment Land Review. This includes a 5ha per annum replacement measure for any loss of allocated employment land to alternative uses.
- 5.15 The emerging Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Local Plan proposes the allocation of 309.4ha of employment land in the area, 18ha greater than the requirement calculated by the Employment Land Review, in order to achieve a suitable mix and range of sites. Additionally, 98.4ha of green belt land is proposed to be held in reserve and only released in the circumstance of a proven need, providing a cumulative total of 407ha. This is considered as a substantial allocation in light of the take up of employment land in the period 1999-2017 which would equate to around 190ha over the Plan period without any flexibility added. It is acknowledged that BMBC have ambitions for extensive economic growth to 2033 and the aspirational employment land allocations are reflective of this. However, the development of these allocations is based upon a best-case economic scenario and are dependent on favourable market conditions and considerable levels of inward investment which, in reality, may not materialise.
- 5.16 The Local Plan allocates 3.6ha of employment land to Wombwell at W2 Everill Gate Lane, which exists as part of the established Valley Business Park. It is contended that this relatively low allocation of land for employment uses is illustrative of changing priorities in respect of Wombwell and indicative of reduced demand for employment land in the town. The proposal site is no longer partially allocated for

the expansion of an existing business and is therefore considered suitable for alternative development.

- 5.17 An Employment Land Evidence Report, published by Mott MacDonald & Colliers in April 2016, states that 'Barnsley has a sufficient supply of land to achieve its employment growth objectives and meet anticipated demand from investors'. In this regard, the allocations proposed by the finalised Local Plan are reflective of an ambitious growth strategy which identifies generous employment land with an additional 98.4ha held in reserve. Wombwell's neighbouring towns, such as Hoyland to the west and Goldthorpe (Dearne Towns) to the east, have been allocated 116.8ha and 80.9ha of employment land respectively by the Local Plan. Furthermore, the additional 98.4ha of reserve land at Dearne Valley Parkway lies adjacent to Wombwell and Darfield. This demonstrates an abundance of readily available employment land, totalling 296.1ha, in close proximity to Wombwell. Much of these allocations are strategically located in close proximity to prominent road and railway links and are highly accessible compared to the proposal site.
- 5.18 Arup were commissioned to carry out a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment update on the area and issued their report in July 2016. This involved the analysis of a large number of sites in order to assess their developable and deliverable attributes for employment use. The study found that 50 sites were considered to be available for employment development in the area, totalling 1,846,120 sqm, substantially in excess of the requirements of the Local Plan requirement of 309.4ha or approximately 1,308,000 sqm. A further 162 sites in addition to the 50 considered available were found to be suitable for housing and employment uses, totalling 7,564,920 sqm. This illustrates a substantial stock of available land for employment purposes with additional land anticipated as useable if required by demand. Based on take up trends between 1999 and 2017 it is unlikely that this potential stock of additional land will be required within the Local Plan in addition to that already allocated.
- 5.19 The proposal site at Wombwell extends to 1.485ha. This equates to only 0.39% of the employment land stock. The Council has not identified the site within the finalised Local Plan and to this end its loss to an alternative use will have no detrimental impact on maintaining an adequate supply of employment land in the locality. Accordingly, in light of all of the above, the proposals are considered compliant with the second bullet point of Core Strategy Policy 19 and the content of the finalised Local Plan.
- 5.20 Finally, it is firmly contended that **"the buildings or land cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use"** as specified in Policy CSP19. The site is currently served by a single access point from Hough Lane and is occupied by warehousing and workshop buildings utilised for the manufacturing and storage of tank products, mainly serving the wastewater, processing and anaerobic digestion sectors. The majority of the buildings were constructed in the 1970s and are of poor quality not suited to today's requirements. As a result, they are unlikely to appeal to prospective occupiers in future. Areas of hard standing car parking and external

storage are also accommodated within the site, which is bordered by trees and woodland around the majority of its perimeter. The site is bounded on three sides by residential development and to the north on Hough Lane accompanied by retail and hot food takeaway uses. Additionally, a recently completed residential development at Bellscroft occupies land to the west and south west. An area of protected woodland and open countryside exist to the south east.

- 5.21 As the proposal site at Hough Lane is located in a predominately residential area, any continued or intensification of the land for employment use has the potential to detract from residential amenity and conflict with pedestrian and vehicle movements in the area. The site's single access point restricts access and egress by heavy goods vehicles and any intensification of industrial use may disrupt traffic flows on the local network. This will limit the ability of the site to attract potential occupiers for continued employment uses.
- 5.22 As discussed above, the proposed site was partially allocated under Policy WW6 of the Barnsley UDP for the expansion of an existing business. This business was the Wombwell Foundry which has since been demolished and redeveloped for residential use. The proposal site has not been included in the finalised Local Plan as an employment allocation which suggests the Council themselves consider that the site is no longer suitable for employment uses. The retention of the site for industrial purposes has the potential to attract a 'bad neighbour' use detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties. Operational noise and extended working hours during evenings and weekends have the potential to impact upon the amenity and enjoyment of adjacent residential properties and further limit the site's ability to attract an occupier.
- 5.23 Paragraph 21 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), adopted in 2012, encourages Local Plans to support existing businesses and take cognisance of whether these are expanding or contracting. Local Plans should be responsive to changes in economic circumstances and promote the expansion of existing clusters of development. Paragraph 22 advises against the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. If this is proven to be the case, alternative uses should be considered on their merits. Therefore the fact that the site is no longer allocated is a clear indication of its potential for redevelopment as residential use which would be fully compatible with its surroundings.
- 5.24 It is also considered that the exclusion of the site from the Local Plan as a specific allocation for employment land is reflective of the Council's development priorities for Wombwell. As a Principal Town within BMBC, the Core Strategy expects 2,000 homes to be constructed in the town up to the year 2026. This requirement is carried forward by the finalised Local Plan with land allocated for 1,498 homes in Wombwell during the period 2014-33. This is in addition to existing planning permissions for 634 units, giving a projected total of 2,132 homes to be built. This is the fourth largest allocation of houses in the area and equates to 10% of the total construction figures

for BMBC within the Plan period. This focus on additional housing provision will go a considerable way to addressing the historic shortfall of homes in the area which arose as a result of the decline of the coal industry. The site should be considered as windfall development and contribute to achieving the aims of Policy H1 of the Local Plan which targets the construction of 20,900 homes in the Plan period. It also complies with Policy CSP8 in that it focusses development on a principal town.

- 5.25 On this basis of all of the above it is contended that the proposals for redevelopment of the site fully comply with Core Strategy Policy 19 and also with Policy E6 of the emerging Local Plan. It is clear that a continuation of employment use at the site has the potential to conflict with established neighbouring land uses and therefore limit market appeal for prospective occupiers. Generous allocations of strategically located, accessible employment land in the area offer an optimum environment for investors with good access to the surrounding road network. The proposals will facilitate the relocation and growth of an existing business and impact positively upon the local economy through job creation and associated benefits. The site's redevelopment for residential use is seen to be wholly appropriate when considered in the context of the site's surrounding land uses and the Council's development priorities for Wombwell as set out in the extant Development Plan and the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.26 Furthermore, the proposed reuse of the site for residential development is considered to comply with the criteria of finalised Local Plan Policy H6 Residential Development on Large Non-allocated Sites as this is:
- Located on previously developed land
  - Located within Urban Barnsley or the Principal Towns
  - Located within the built up area
  - Accessible by public transport; and
  - Has good access to a range of shops and services
- 5.27 It also fulfils the terms of Policy H7 in that it provides for a mix of house types, size and tenure helping to create a mixed and balanced community when taken with the existing residential developments around the site. The proposed houses will cater for a range of different households targeted to meet local housing needs. The density of the proposed development will reflect that of the adjoining developments and comply with Policy H7. Further details on density are provided in the Design & Access Statement.
- 5.28 Under the terms of the emerging Local Plan, Policy GD1 applies to all development. It is noted as the starting point for making decisions on all proposals and advises that development proposals will be approved if a range of criteria are satisfied. It is contended that the redevelopment proposals for the site fully satisfy those criteria. There will be no adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. In actual fact the proposed redevelopment will remove a "bad neighbour" use from a predominantly residential area and significantly

enhance the living conditions of those currently abutting the site. The development of the site for residential use is fully compatible with the neighbouring uses and will not prejudice the current or future use of any neighbouring land nor will they adversely affect the potential development of the wider area. The proposals incorporate existing landscape features on the periphery of the site and seek to enhance these through further landscaping and boundary treatments. Full consideration has been given to the environmental impacts of development and any necessary mitigation incorporated into the proposals as set out in the range of supporting documents. Adequate access and internal road layouts are provided and the proposals are supported by a Transport Statement which demonstrates that the traffic generated will not adversely impact on the area and that the site is readily accessible by public transport.

- 5.29 The site sits on a major bus route and lies within 250m of Wombwell Train Station. As highlighted above, a Transport Statement has been prepared which demonstrates that the development proposed can be satisfactorily accessed and accommodated within the existing road network. The layout meets the needs of pedestrians and cyclists and car parking provision meets the relevant standards set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. As such, the terms of Local Plan Policy T3 and Policy CSP25 are satisfied. The fact that no mitigation is required to accommodate the proposed development, as demonstrated by the Transport Statement, Policies T4 and CSP26 are also satisfied.
- 5.30 Whilst outline planning permission is sought, the indicative layout submitted with the application as well as the Design & Access Statement demonstrate that a high quality development is proposed in accordance with Policies D1 and CSP29 relative to design. The layout and the design of the proposals have regard to place making and respect the form of nearby residential development. In particular, they transform a brownfield industrial site to the benefit of existing residents in the vicinity of the site.
- 5.31 The amenity of those existing residents abutting the site is further protected by the proposals to retain much of the peripheral woodland areas and enhance this by further planting and landscaping works. Further biodiversity will be introduced to the site as a consequence of that enhanced landscaping and the formation of a detention basin created as part of the sustainable urban drainage measures required by Policy CSB3 and CSB4. This also helps address Policies CSP36 and BIO1.
- 5.32 The proposal involves the redevelopment of a brownfield site and will seek to minimise any adverse impact on the environment. It will not result in the loss of any natural resources and measures will be taken through the design and layout of the site to reduce potential impacts on climate change through sustainable construction as required by Policies CSP1, 2, 5 and CC1. The site does not lie within a functional flood plain and is not at risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application to clearly demonstrate this. A Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy, prepared in compliance with Policies CSP2 and CC4, and submitted in support of the application, ensures that surface water is adequately

managed thereby minimising any risk of flooding off site. As part of the Sustainable Urban Drainage measures a detention basin is created to the south of the site which, as highlighted above, will enhance the biodiversity of the site.

- 5.33 Requirements in respect of low carbon and renewable energy as set out in Policies RE1 and CSP5 are noted and will be fully addressed in the detailed design of the site. Affordable housing will also be provided as part of the development in accordance with Policy H8, which advises that 10% of houses built in Wombwell should be affordable. The form of that provision will be set out in a Section 106 Agreement.
- 5.34 Policy CSP39 and CL1 seek to ensure that any risk of contamination or ground stability are assessed and any mitigation necessary addressed and implemented as part of the planning process. The current occupation of the site has precluded invasive ground investigations to date. However, a geo-environmental desk study has been undertaken and submitted in support of the application. This addresses the potential of ground stability and contamination and recommends further investigation once the site has been vacated. These requirements can be addressed by condition and any mitigation arising from those further studies will be addressed at detailed design stage.
- 5.35 Policies POLL1 and CSP40 deal with pollution control and protection. The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes will significantly reduce the risk of pollution arising from the site. Currently in general industrial use, the site is incompatible with the predominantly residential uses in the immediately vicinity. The geo-environmental desk study accompanying the application highlights potential issues arising from the existing site which will all be addressed through the redevelopment of the site thereby resulting in significant improvements to the amenity of adjoining residential properties.
- 5.36 The need for new development to be adequately supported by appropriate infrastructure is recognised. Presently a brownfield site in industrial use, the nature of infrastructure required will change as a consequence of its redevelopment for residential use. The proposals make adequate provision for all onsite infrastructure and the Transport Statement highlights that no offsite mitigation is required to the road network. Impacts on social infrastructure will be considered as part of the planning process and the applicant will consider any requests for planning obligations to address any shortfall in social infrastructure provision.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Balmoral Group Holdings Ltd acquired the business of Galglass Ltd from administration in 2014. Balmoral continue to operate the business under the name of Balmoral Tanks Ltd. The company presently employs around 50 people. The company's existing premises at Wombwell are constrained in terms of layout of the

site, and the configuration of buildings. The existing site also lies within a predominantly residential area and provides no scope for expansion or redevelopment for industrial use.

- 6.2 Having now secured the business and embarked on a strategy of growth, Balmoral Tanks Ltd acquired a site at Thurnscoe Business Park to relocate their manufacturing facility to. Planning permission was secured for that site and construction of their new facility is nearing completion. The site also provides for the long term growth of the business.
- 6.3 The cost in relocation has been significant and Balmoral Group Holdings Ltd now seek outline planning permission for the redevelopment of their existing site to accommodate residential use. An indicative layout has been prepared which demonstrates the site capable of accommodating around 45 units in a mix of house types and sizes. Affordable housing will also be provided as part of the development in accordance with the requirements of the Council.
- 6.4 The proposals involve the redevelopment of a brownfield industrial site which currently detracts from the amenity of adjoining residential properties. Its redevelopment for residential use will significantly enhance the environment for the neighbouring residential properties. Supporting information submitted with the application demonstrates that the site can be redeveloped with minimal environmental impacts. Indeed, the redevelopment of the site will assist the regeneration of Wombwell and provide localised environmental improvements. It further contributes to the supply of housing land in Wombwell which, as a principal town, is a focus for development.
- 6.5 The loss of employment land as a consequence of redeveloping the site is minimal in the context of Wombwell and the wider Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council area. It is also more than offset by the development of a new bespoke manufacturing facility at Thurnscoe Business Park and the creation of additional employment that has followed from that. The business is committed to the Barnsley area and has demonstrated confidence in the area by the development of their new manufacturing facility. It is respectfully requested that that confidence should be recognised and support given to the redevelopment of the existing site at Wombwell for residential use.