

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION  
BY  
OAKMERE HOMES LIMITED**

**TO  
RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**FOR  
A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (COMPRISING 20  
DWELLINGS, 3 EXTRA CARE APARTMENTS AND A 60 BED  
CARE HOME)**

**AT  
LAND AT CHATBURN ROAD, CLITHEROE**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**OCTOBER 2013**

**Janet Dixon**

TOWN PLANNERS LIMITED

**Mike Gee BA(Hons) MRTPI  
Janet Dixon Town Planners Ltd.  
10A Whalley Road  
Clitheroe  
Lancashire  
BB7 1AW**

**01200 425051**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This Planning Statement is in support of an outline planning application submitted by Oakmere Homes Limited for a residential development (comprising 20 dwellings, 3 extra care apartments and a 60 bed care home) on land at Chatburn Road, Clitheroe. The proposed development would also include the laying out of an amenity open space area alongside the brook.

## **2. THE APPLICATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

2.1 This is an outline application, with all matters reserved for future consideration.

2.2 An illustrative layout plan indicating how the site could be developed accompanies the application, along with an illustrative access plans and streetscenes. The illustrative plans show:

- twenty dwellings are proposed, along with three extra care apartments associated with a sixty bed care home
- the vehicular access would be from near to the mid-point on the site's Chatburn Road frontage approximately;
- the dwellings would be laid out around a cul-de-sac road layout, with the care home having a dedicated car park;
- trees and hedges to the site's external boundaries frontage and within the site would be kept where possible. Additional planting would be provided within and to the outer edges of the development;
- six dwellings and one extra care apartment would be made available on an affordable rent basis (representing 30% of the total units), to help meet the housing needs of the area. The units will be delivered through a Housing Association;
- an amenity open space would be provided alongside the brook, to complement the site's features and for the benefit of future residents; and
- the discharge of surface water from the development would be throttled to avoid any risk of flooding downstream.

2.3 The illustrative layout plan also illustrates how an area of adjoining land in separate ownership may be developed in conjunction with the application site.

2.4 In addition to this Statement, and the indicative layout drawings already referred to, the application is accompanied by:

- Design and Access Statement – Condy and Lofthouse Ltd;
- Transport Assessment – DTPC;
- Trees Survey – PDP Associates;
- Habitat and Protected Species Assessment – Penn Associates Consulting Ltd;
- Ground Investigation Report – Thomas Consulting Ltd;
- Flood Risk Assessment – Thomas Consulting Ltd;
- Drainage Option Assessment – Thomas Consulting Ltd;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – PDP Associates; and
- Topographical Survey – RJP Surveying Consultants Ltd.

### **3. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

3.1 The site is located on the northern edge of the Clitheroe, some 1km to the north east of the town centre. The land comprises two pasture fields of broadly rectangular shape and 1.82ha in area. An intermittent remnant hedge crosses the site in a north west – south east direction, marking the field division. A brook passes through the north west part of the site on a north east – south west orientation. The site generally slopes down in level from the south east to the north west, rising again in the area beyond the brook. A small animal housing adjacent to Chatburn Road is the only building present on the site.

3.2 The south west site boundary is marked by a hedge. To the south west of the site is a field of approximately 0.79ha, beyond which is a well established housing area, with houses on Kiln Close and Cringle Way. To the south east of the site is Chatburn Road, with the boundary marked by a stone wall. To the north east of the site are further pasture fields, with the boundary marked by a hedgerow. To the north west of the site is a railway, the boundary to which is marked by a further hedgerow, with established housing and the former Coplow Quarry beyond. More generally in the locality are further areas of established housing, employment areas including Salthill Industrial Estate 500 metres to the south, Clitheroe Hospital 150 metres east and Clitheroe Grammar School 200 metres to the south.

3.3 Clitheroe is the main settlement within Ribble Valley. Clitheroe has a wide mix of house types and ages and range employment opportunities. A wide variety of facilities and services are to be found in Clitheroe town centre. These include food stores, a wide range of comparison goods shops, including clothes and DIY, plus a post office, medical centre, dentists, opticians, pharmacies, hairdressers, cafes, pubs, restaurants, takeaways, banks and other financial services, solicitors, library, churches and Council offices. Clitheroe also benefits from good public transport and highway links. There is a bus station in the centre of Clitheroe, with services connecting to towns such as Preston, Skipton, Longridge, Blackburn, Accrington, and Burnley. Clitheroe rail station, some 1km from the site, has direct hourly services running to Blackburn and Bolton with connecting services to Preston and Manchester. There is ready road access to the A59 with links east and west to Preston, Skipton, towns further afield and the motorway network, and with links south to the towns of east Lancashire.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 There is no relevant planning history relating to the site.

#### **5. PLANNING POLICY**

5.1 The relevant part of the Development Plan for the purposes of this application is the Ribble Valley Local Plan (adopted in June 1998).

##### Ribble Valley Local Plan

5.2 The following saved policies of the adopted Ribble Valley Local Plan (which was written to cover the period 1991-2006) are relevant to the proposal.

5.3 Policy G1: Development Control – all development proposals will be expected to provide a high standard of building design and landscape quality. The various detailed criteria to be applied in deciding planning applications are set out in the policy.

5.4 Policy G2: Settlement Strategy – developments will be mainly directed towards land within the main settlements (of which Clitheroe is one), including consolidation and

expansion of and rounding off of development. This to be on sites within the settlement boundary and must be appropriate to the town's size and form.

- 5.5 Policy G5: Settlement Strategy – outside of the main settlement boundaries and the village boundaries planning consent will only be granted for small scale developments.
- 5.6 Policy ENV3: Open Countryside – development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape area and should reflect local vernacular.
- 5.7 ENV7: Species Protection – development proposals which would have an adverse effect on wildlife species protected by law will not be granted planning permission;
- 5.8 Policy H2: Dwellings in the Open Countryside – outside the settlement boundaries residential development will be limited to specific categories including agricultural workers' dwellings, conversion of existing buildings and that intended to meet a proven local need.
- 5.9 Policy H19: Affordable Housing – the Council will promote the provision of affordable housing. In main settlements this will be achieved by negotiating for the inclusion of a proportion of affordable housing in all new planning consents for suitable sites.
- 5.10 Policy H21: Affordable Housing – requires details of who the development will be expected to accommodate the methods by which the accommodation will be sold or let, managed and retained as suitable for its original purpose.
- 5.11 Policy RT8: Open Space Provision – on all residential sites of over 1ha the layout will be expected to provide adequate and usable public open space.
- 5.12 Policy T1: Transport – in deciding planning applications the Council will attach considerable weight to various criteria. The criteria include the availability and adequacy of public transport and the location of development in areas which

maintain and improve choice to walk, cycle or catch public transport rather than drive between homes and facilities.

- 5.13 Policy T7: Parking Provision – all development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space.
- 5.14 The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies the application site as land outside of (but immediately adjoining) the main settlement boundary of Clitheroe (Policy G2) and within open countryside (Policy G5 and ENV3).

#### National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.15 The relevant policies and provisions of the national Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012, are identified below.
- 5.16 The NPPF clearly states *‘that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’* (paragraph 6). Paragraph 197 confirms that *‘in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development’*. Paragraph 14 states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. It goes on to say that *‘for decision-taking this means:*
- *Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
  - *Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:*
    - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework as a whole; or*
    - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted’.*
- 5.17 At paragraph 7, the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are outlined. An elaboration of the Government’s view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system is detailed later in the NPPF. Relevant parts are referred to at paragraph 5.22 below.

- 5.18 The NPPF (paragraphs 2, 11, 12 and 196) confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, ie the development plan is the starting point for decision making.
- 5.19 The NPPF, published in March 2012, highlights the importance of development plans being kept up to date (paragraph 12). Decision taking in the absence of an up to date development plan is addressed at paragraph 14 (see 5.16 above). At paragraph 214 it is confirmed that *‘for 12 months from the day of publication, decision-takers may continue to give full weight to relevant policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a degree of conflict with this Framework’*. Paragraph 215 continues by stating that *‘in other cases and following this 12-month period, due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to the degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater weight that may be given)’*. Paragraph 49 provides further guidance on the matter. It states *‘housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites’*.
- 5.20 Paragraphs 2, 8, 13, 196 and 212 confirm that the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.21 The main body of the NPPF addresses the components of sustainable development. Those most relevant to the application are:
- ‘promoting sustainable transport’ – decisions should take account of whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and development should only be refused where the residual impacts of development are severe (paragraph 32);
  - ‘delivering a wide choice of high quality homes’ – local planning authorities are expected to boost the supply of housing (paragraph 47). In this regard, local planning authorities should *‘identify and update annually a supply of*

*specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements*'. Paragraph 47 goes on to require an additional 'buffer' of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Local planning authorities should increase the 'buffer' to 20% where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing;

- 'requiring good design' – developments should add to the quality of the area, and reinforce local distinctiveness;
- 'meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change' – it is expected that *'inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk'* (paragraph 100) and that *'when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere'* (paragraph 103);
- 'conserving and enhancing the natural environment' – in deciding planning applications local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying various principles including resisting development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (paragraph 118);
- 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' – the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal should be identified and assessed. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset (paragraph 128).

## **6. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS**

### Ribble Valley Borough Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment

- 6.1 The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in December 2008. It concluded that Ribble Valley has high levels of owner-occupation, with considerable numbers of large detached houses and a relatively small social housing stock. The Borough's population is growing and average household sizes continue to shrink. More housing needs to be constructed, but it must be of the right tenure, size and quality to meet the needs of residents. The lack of affordable housing may be beginning to create problems for the indigenous workforce and the local economy. In short, the SHMA points to a need to increase the supply of market housing and to provide more social housing.



- 6.2 A housing requirement update report was prepared in May 2013 and published for consultation as part of the Core Strategy evidence base in August / September 2013. The report assesses new evidence, including the 2011 Census and ONS population projections. It identified an increased housing need within the Borough.
- 6.3 The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was approved in November 2009. The application site was assessed, under site reference 142. A copy of the assessment sheet for the application site is attached (Appendix A) for information. The assessment concluded that site 142 to be available, deliverable and achievable in the 0-5 year period. The sustainability score for the sites was 76, which compares favourably with many sites. The Council carried out a review of its SHLAA in 2013. The application site was put forward by the applicant as a suitable and available site for housing development. The application site was assessed, under site reference 142. A copy of the assessment sheet for the application site is attached (Appendix B) for information. The assessment concluded that site 142 to be available and achievable, with delivery in the 6-10 year period. The site failed one of the tests of suitability, based upon a small part of the site being within a flood risk area. The sustainability score for the sites was 82, which compares favourably with many sites. The 2013 SHLAA update was consulted upon in August / September 2013 as part of the Core Strategy evidence base. Representations submitted by the applicant are attached (Appendix C) for information. The representations sought to correct matters of fact and demonstrated that the site was suitable for development in the 0-5 year period and deserved a higher sustainability score.

## **7. EMERGING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

### Ribble Valley Core Strategy

- 7.1 In summary, the Core Strategy is currently at the submission stage. However, the Inspector appointed to examine the soundness of the Core Strategy has highlighted the need for evidence documents to be updated. The Council subsequently requested a suspension of the examination process. By letter dated 9 January 2013, the Inspector agreed to suspend the examination until July 2013. By a further letter

dated 3 July 2013, the Inspector agreed to suspend the examination until September 2013. Dates for a public examination hearing have yet to be set.

7.2 The Council has engaged in a process of evidence gathering and produced a six page Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation leaflet in late 2007. In August 2010, a Core Strategy consultation document was published. The consultation document included three optional strategies for the distribution of housing development, along with key statements on a variety of planning issues and draft development management policies. The consultation document confirmed the level of housing provision to be at least 161 dwellings per year (ie as per the housing provision levels contained in the approved Regional Spatial Strategy), and the requirement for affordable housing to be 30% of site yield. A further round of consultation took place in July / August 2011. The consultation document included an additional five optional strategies for the distribution of housing development, along with revisions to the key statements on a variety of planning issues and the draft development management policies. The consultation document re-confirmed the level of housing provision to be at least 161 dwellings per year (ie as per the housing provision levels contained in the approved Regional Spatial Strategy), and the requirement for affordable housing to be 30% of site yield. During 2011 the Council commissioned Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) to prepare an evidence based report to assist it in further consideration of the issue of housing land requirements. The Council published the report for consultation in late 2011. The NLP report presented a range of housing requirement figures for the next 20 years based on a number of scenarios. The NLP report concluded the average dwelling requirements for Ribble Valley Borough should be in the range of 190 to 220 dwellings per annum between 2008 and 2028. Furthermore, any figure significantly lower than this 190 – 220 range would be unlikely to allow for the provision of a suitable level of affordable housing in the borough; nor would it allow the borough to pursue its economic growth objectives without potentially encouraging unsustainable levels of in-commuting from neighbouring districts. Following consultation, the Council's Planning and Development Committee resolved to adopt a housing requirement figure of 200 dwellings per year for the Core Strategy plan period 2008 – 2028.

- 7.3 The optional strategies for the distribution of housing development as included in the August 2010 Core Strategy consultation document made provision for housing at Clitheroe of between 330 and 675 dwellings. In turn, the additional options included in the July / August 2011 consultation made provision for either non-specified numbers of dwellings or between 657 and 1553 dwellings at Clitheroe.
- 7.4 A publication draft of the Core Strategy was approved by the Council's Planning and Development Committee at its meeting on 4 April 2012. The document was published for consultation in May / June 2012. An updated document was subsequently submitted (October 2012). Subsequent to the submission and suspension of the examination further evidence has been gathered. That evidence gathering exercise has resulted in the Council approving an increased housing requirement figure of 250 dwellings per year for the Plan period. In August 2013 the Council published proposed modifications to the submitted document. These provide for 2767 dwellings over the plan period to 2028, additional to those dwellings for which planning permission had been granted at 31 March 2013. The planned distribution for those dwellings is as follows:
- Standen Strategic Site (edge of Clitheroe) – 1040;
  - Clitheroe – 230;
  - Longridge – 550;
  - Whalley – 215; and
  - 'Other settlements' – 732.
- 7.5 With the exception of the Standen site no site allocations are made by the Core Strategy. These are to follow in a Site Allocations DPD. The Council has not published a consultation draft Site Allocations DPD.
- 7.6 The following policies of the submitted Core Strategy are relevant to consideration of the proposal – DS1 (Development Strategy), DS2 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), EN3 (Sustainable Development and Climate Change), H1 (Housing Provision), H3 (Affordable Housing), DMI2 (Transport Considerations), DMG1 (General Considerations), DMG2 (Strategic Considerations), DMG3 (Transport and Mobility), DME1 (Protecting Trees and Woodlands), DME2

(Landscape and Townscape Protection), DME3 (Site and Species Protection and Conservation), DMH1 (Affordable Housing Criteria) and DMH3 (Open Countryside).

- 7.7 Policy DS1 provides for the majority of new housing development to be concentrated at the Standen strategic site and the main urban areas.
- 7.8 Policy DS2 reflects the central theme of sustainable development within the NPPF.
- 7.9 Policy H1 provides for 250 dwellings per year, with the planned distribution as set out at 7.4 above.
- 7.10 Policies H3 and DMH1 seek the delivery of affordable housing on housing developments of 10 or more units (or sites of more than 0.5ha) within Clitheroe at a rate of 30% of units delivered. A reduction in this level of provision, to a minimum of 20%, may be made only where supporting evidence, including a viability appraisal, fully justifies such a lower level of provision. In addition, 15% of the units delivered will be sought for elderly provision. Within this 15% figure a minimum of 50% would be affordable and be included within the overall affordable housing threshold of 30%. The remaining 50% to be for market housing for the elderly. Guidance is provided on the groups of people for whom the affordable housing would be for.
- 7.11 Policy DMG2 provides the general policy context. It states that development proposals in defined settlements (such as Clitheroe) should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement.
- 7.11 The other submitted Core Strategy development management statements and policies identified at 7.6 above generally re-affirm those identified as relevant in the Local Plan.

## **8. OTHER RELEVANT POLICY DOCUMENTS / INFORMATION**

Addressing Housing Needs in Ribble Valley – Housing Policy

8.1 The document was approved by the Council’s Health and Housing Committee on 19 January 2012. It is stated to be complementary with and supplementary to the relevant Development Plan policy. The document is directed at addressing identified housing needs in the Borough, most particularly relating to issues of affordability and suitable accommodation for the elderly. The document states that outside within Clitheroe, for developments of 10 or more dwellings, the Council will seek 30% affordable units on the site. The form of affordable housing to be provided and the mechanism by which it will be secured will be determined by negotiation between the Council and the developers. The housing type will be determined on a site-by-site basis using the housing needs information. This will take into account the extent and nature of local needs and have regard for location of the site relative to local services and facilities, access to public transport, scheme economics, and other planning objectives of the site. Any affordable housing provided under the terms of this policy should be available for those in local need, to initial and successive occupiers, for as long as the local need exists. On sites of 30 units or more, a requirement for 15% to be for the elderly is stipulated. This would be achieved by;

- (of the 15% elderly accommodation) a minimum of 50% would be affordable and included within the affordable offer of 30%; and
- the remaining 50% of the elderly accommodation could be market housing to be sold at market value or rent.

#### Housing Needs Survey

8.2 The Council published the results of Housing Needs Survey for Clitheroe in 2012. The sample size and survey return rate limits the validity of the results and it was not possible to accurately identify exactly what the housing needs are. Nevertheless, the survey indicates there to be unmet housing needs, including access to suitable accommodation due to affordability issues.

#### Housing Land Supply

8.3 There has been a longstanding recorded shortage of housing land within the Borough. The Council’s most recently published information (October 2013) relating to the Borough’s housing land supply shows a supply equating to 4.25 years’ supply

based on the 250 dwellings per year Core Strategy provision levels and applying the appropriate Sedgefield approach.

## **9. CONSULTATION**

9.1 The applicant consulted with the Council and other agencies at an early stage in the formulation of proposals for the site. The results of those consultations are summarised below.

### Ribble Valley Borough Council

9.2 The Council's response is attached (Appendix D) for information. It advised that development of the site for housing is considered acceptable in principle.

## **10. PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

10.1 Having regard to the nature of the proposal, its context, relevant national and local planning policies, the main planning issues for consideration, are as follows:

- the status of the adopted Ribble Valley Local Plan having regard to the NPPF and housing land supply;
- assessment of adopted Local Plan policies relating to the application site and Clitheroe;
- the benefits of the development in relation to NPPF;
- highways, access and accessibility;
- layout, design and landscape impact;
- affordable housing;
- neighbour amenity;
- flood risk and drainage;
- trees, nature conservation and ecology; and
- other miscellaneous matters.

10.1 Each of these issues is addressed in turn below.

### The status of the adopted Ribble Valley Local Plan having regard to the NPPF and housing land supply

10.2 The usual starting point for decision making is the Development Plan (see paragraph 5.18 above). However, it is evident from the Council's monitoring that

there has been a persistent under delivery of housing land with less than a five year supply of housing land within the Borough. Accordingly, a 20% buffer has to be adopted in calculations of housing land supply. A 4.25 year supply of housing land is now claimed by the Council (see paragraph 8.3 above). However, it is unclear whether the Council has carried out a full assessment of the deliverability of sites it has included in the housing land supply calculations. Thus, even this figure can not be regarded as wholly reliable.

- 10.4 In any event, it should be noted that there is no local or national planning policy basis upon which to resist development even if there is a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. That is, the Core Strategy figures are not a maximum or ceiling. Rather, the principle of the development needs to be considered in relation to the NPPF (and emerging Core Strategy) presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 10.5 Given the provisions of NPPF (see paragraph 5.15 to 5.21 above), and having regard to the above, the relevant Local Plan (adopted in 1998) policies for the supply of housing and the specific Local Plan policy designations relating to the application site can not be considered up to date or consistent with the NPPF. Indeed, the Council accepts the Local Plan settlement boundaries to be out of date. Accordingly, minimal weight can be given to the specific adopted Local Plan policy designations relating to the application site and it is submitted that it would be inappropriate to consider the proposal in that context. Rather, greater weight should be given to the policies of the NPPF and its presumption in favour of sustainable development. Specifically, whether there are any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits associated with the development, in particular the delivery of additional and needed housing.

Assessment of adopted Local Plan policies relating to the application site and Clitheroe

- 10.6 Notwithstanding the conclusion reached in the previous section in respect of the status to be accorded to the Local Plan, the Local Plan policies relating to the application site and Clitheroe are reviewed and further consideration given to how appropriate it is to consider the proposal against Local Plan policies.

- 10.7 The site lies outside of (but well related to) the settlement boundary of Clitheroe. As such, it is subject to Local Plan policies G5, H2 and H20, which seek to limit development outside of settlement boundaries. These policies do not preclude housing development. However, to accord with the policies any housing development would be restricted to that intended to meet a proven local need. The scheme proposed is, in part (seven units) for affordable local needs housing. However, to secure funding and delivery of this, market housing is also proposed at the site. The weight to be given to these policies has to be considered in relation to other matters. Irrespective of any lack of a five year supply of housing land the Council acknowledges that the Local Plan period (1991 – 2006) has now long-expired. The contextual circumstances and policies have since changed since adoption of the Local Plan in 1998. There is a need for further land releases for housing beyond the Local Plan settlement boundaries and on greenfield sites.
- 10.8 In more detail, and in addition to the housing land supply factors reasons referred to in the previous section, the reasons why the specific Local Plan policies G5, H2 and H20 should not be given any significant weight in deciding the application are set out below:
- where the site has a clear relationship to an existing settlement and substantial grouping of properties, as is the case with the application site, the approach outlined in paragraph 3.1 of the Addressing Housing Needs in Ribble Valley – Housing Policy is the appropriate policy basis to determine the amount of affordable housing to be provided (ie 30% of site yield);
  - the Local Plan only provides for development needs for the period up to 2006. That the Local Plan is ‘out of date’ has been confirmed by the Council. A report to the Council’s Planning and Development Committee on 17 June 2010 acknowledged that there is ‘*very limited capacity (for development and growth) within existing tightly drawn settlement boundaries and (there are) no further (Local Plan) allocations of housing land in particular to be brought forward*’. The report also states that Core Strategy options developed so far would require the release of extensive areas of greenfield land;
  - circumstances have changed considerably since preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan was prepared in the context of the then current



Lancashire Structure Plan (1991-2006). That document has since been superseded by the Lancashire Structure Plan Review (2001-2016) and, in turn, by the now revoked RSS (adopted in 2008), which provided for higher levels of housing growth in the Borough; and

- on the basis of latest evidence, and for the purposes of its Core Strategy, the Council has adopted a higher housing provision figure (250 dwellings per year) than within the RSS and within the originally submitted Core Strategy.

10.9 In the circumstances outlined, it is more appropriate to look beyond the site specific Local Plan policies cited above and consider the wider development strategy. The Local Plan sets out a hierarchy of settlements. Clitheroe is at the top of the hierarchy, reflecting the fact that it is the main and largest settlement within Ribble Valley. Policy G2 provides for the following scale of development at Clitheroe - consolidation and expansion of development and rounding off development. It is clear that the scale and the general location of the application proposal (ie well related to the settlement area of Clitheroe) accords with the overall development / settlement strategy for the Borough as set out in the Local Plan.

10.10 It is significant to note that the proposal is consistent with the emerging Core Strategy in respect of the spatial distribution of housing development, as detailed at paragraph 7.4 above. This envisages at least a further 230 dwellings in Clitheroe, which is the largest settlement in the Borough. As such, and whilst no Site Allocations DPD has yet been prepared (or in prospect), the Core Strategy provides for additional housing in Clitheroe. The proposal is of insufficient scale to in any way be considered premature or prejudicial to the emerging Core Strategy or any future Site Allocations DPD.

10.11 To conclude, Policies G5, H2 and H20 can no longer be regarded as an appropriate basis for an assessment of the application proposal. The proposal does, however, accord with the overall development strategy for the Borough as set out in the Local Plan and the emerging Core Strategy.

10.12 Against this background, what also becomes central to the decision-making process is the statement at paragraph 14 of NPPF (see paragraph 5.16 above) and not the

specific but out-of-date provisions of Local Plan Policies G5, H2 and H20. That is, the proposal should be considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development and planning permission should be granted unless there are specific adverse impacts that outweigh the benefits or that specific policies in the NPPF indicate that the development should be restricted. The benefits of the development are considered in the following section. Issues drawn from NPPF policies and relevant aspects of sustainable development are examined in the subsequent sections.

#### The benefits of the development in relation to NPPF

10.13 The proposal represents sustainable development and there are benefits associated with the development as summarised below:

- economic – the construction of new housing would contribute to economic growth during the construction phase and through the introduction of new households to the area;
- social – the proposal would contribute to the provision of both market and affordable housing, for which there is a need; and
- environmental – the proposal provides an opportunity to deliver development on a site which has no particular wildlife value and in a manner that would have no harmful impacts on the built and historic environment.

#### Highways, Access and Accessibility

10.14 A Transport Statement accompanies the application. It concludes that the site is in a sustainable location for development with ready access to services etc on foot, by bike and public transport. Good visibility is available at the access point and the relatively low traffic flows associated with the development would have little or no impact on the highway network.

#### Landscape Impact

10.15 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been carried out to assess the development's impact on the character and appearance of the locality and the wider landscape.

10.16 The assessment concludes that development of the site would cause limited landscape and visual impact. The site already has a suburban context / character by reason of nearby development and any landscape impacts maybe mitigated through additional planting and retention of an open area alongside the brook.

#### Layout and Design

10.17 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. This more fully describes the scheme and the process that has led to the submitted illustrative layout. However, all matters of detail are reserved for subsequent consideration and the layout and design is for illustrative and indicative purposes only.

10.18 Briefly, the main considerations that have underpinned the design process are the need to have regard to various site features, including:

- the fall in levels across the site;
- the lack of visibility of most of the site from Chatburn Road;
- the flood risk evident at a small part of the site;
- the line of the brook crossing the site;
- existing vegetation,

along with the suburban form of development nearby. These considerations have resulted in the adoption of the following approach to design of the development:

- a building form along Chatburn Road reinforcing the road line and the building line of the housing to Kiln Close;
- the spine access road into the site leading to an open aspect across the brook to open space beyond;
- the scale of the Care Home is reduced incrementally to create a natural step down in scale;
- the housing is located in cul-de-sacs in smaller groups to provide a sense of community and security;
- parking is integrated into individual plots, so as to avoid on street parking.

The care home to have dedicated parking provision.

10.19 To conclude, the layout and design of the development represents a considered and appropriate response to the characteristics of the site and its context.

### Affordable and local needs housing

- 10.20 In the first instance, it should be noted that the provision / delivery of affordable housing is a key ambition of the Council, as expressed through the Ribble Valley Borough Council Local Plan, Ribble Valley Sustainable Community Strategy and reaffirmed in other policy documents including the Addressing Housing Needs policy document and within the Core Strategy. The applicant is committed to the provision of affordable housing as part of the development and, thus, will assist in the Council meeting its ambitions.
- 10.21 Housing Needs Surveys show there to be a continuing need for both affordable housing and specialist housing to meet the needs of the elderly. The proposal provides for six affordable housing units and one affordable extra care apartment. It is proposed that the units be made available on an affordable rent basis and delivered by St Vincent's Housing Association Ltd (the applicant's preferred partner). This level of provision would accord with the Council's policies. The proposal also provides for accommodation for the elderly, to accord with Council policy, through provision of a 60 bed care home and three extra care apartments associated therewith. To secure delivery of the affordable housing a planning condition is suggested as per the draft provided at Appendix E.

### Neighbour Amenity

- 10.22 The field parcels upon which the proposed development would stand are set away from nearby housing. As such, the proposal would result in no detriment to the amenities of the occupiers of the Cringle Way and Kiln Close properties by reason of overlooking, loss of privacy or overbearing impacts. The relatively low traffic generation associated with the development would, in the context of traffic flows on Chatburn Road, have an imperceptible impact on local amenity.

### Flood Risk and Drainage

- 10.23 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Options Assessment accompany the application. The site is located in Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3, with by far the greater part of the site within Flood Zone 1. All of the proposed built development would be delivered within that part of the site identified as Flood Zone 1. Site levels adjacent to the brook will remain unaltered and, as such there would be no reduction in flood

capacity. Surface water run-off would be throttled to not exceed natural run-off rates. Thus, the development would not result in an increase in surface water run-off and, thus, flood risk elsewhere. Foul water would be discharged to the nearby public sewer which has adequate capacity for the anticipated flows.

#### Trees, Nature Conservation and Ecology

- 10.24 A Tree Survey / Arboricultural Impact Assessment is submitted with the application. This shows there to be no category A trees at the site. All category B trees would be retained as part of the development, along with other trees / hedgerows to the site's boundaries. Additional planting would be provided as a part of the development.
- 10.25 An Ecological Survey Report is submitted with the application. No evidence was found of any protected species occurring on the site or the surrounding areas which would be negatively affected by the proposed site development. Enhancement of the site through landscaping, tree planting and provision of an open area alongside the brook would result in ecological enhancements at the site.

#### Other Miscellaneous Matters

- 10.26 The illustrative plan submitted demonstrates that the layout has been designed to facilitate development of the adjoining land, between the site and Kiln Close / Cringle Way, thus ensuring that a comprehensive rather than piecemeal approach to development has been adopted.
- 10.27 The only substantive constraint to the delivery of housing at this site is the present lack of a planning permission. Should planning permission be granted the site would be available and contribute positively to increasing the supply of housing land, for which there is an identified need.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 The site lies near to, but beyond, the Local Plan settlement boundary of Clitheroe within an area designated as subject to countryside policies, as shown by the adopted Local Plan. As such, the site's development for housing would represent a departure from Local Plan Policy G5, H2 and H20. It has been demonstrated that there are sound planning reasons why these policies should not prevail. The site is

well related to the settlement of Clitheroe and the Local Plan period (to 2006) has now long expired and no longer an appropriate basis for consideration of this proposal. The Borough has persistently under-provided for housing land and continues to have less than a five year supply of housing land. The Council has acknowledged that the provision of adequate housing land to meet needs would require the release of greenfield sites beyond the Local Plan settlement boundaries.

11.2 Having regard to the provisions of the NPPF and the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, (irrespective of the under-supply of housing land within the Borough) the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply and consideration given to whether there are any adverse impacts associated with the development which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Such considerations and impacts have been assessed. It is demonstrated that the proposal has benefits in relation to the three pillars of sustainable development.

11.3 The development would assist in boosting the supply of housing in a sustainable and accessible location, being well located in relation to local services and facilities, and in a manner which is compliant with the NPPF and the development strategies of both the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Core Strategy.

12.4 It is submitted that:

- the low levels of trip generation attributable to the proposal would be accommodated without detriment to highway operation or safety;
- the access arrangements would provide for adequate visibility and the safe movement of traffic;
- the scale, layout and design of the proposal would be complimentary to and integrate well with the locality;
- there would be no harm to the amenities of local residents;
- the proposal would cause no harm to interests of nature conservation or loss of significant trees; and
- the proposal would deliver an appropriate level and type of affordable and specialist housing to help meet local needs and satisfy policy requirements.

12.6 As set out in this Statement, the proposal constitutes sustainable development, for which there is a national planning policy presumption in favour, that would benefit the local economy and there are no adverse impacts which would outweigh the benefits of the development. For these reasons, the Council is respectfully invited to grant outline planning permission for this development proposal.

## **12. APPENDICES**

Appendix A: SHLAA 2009, site 142 assessment sheet;

Appendix B: SHLAA 2013 update, site 142 assessment sheet;

Appendix C: Applicant's response to SHLAA 2013 update consultation, site 142;

Appendix D: RVBC pre-application advice letter dated 15 March 2012;

Appendix E: PINS model affordable housing condition.

## APPENDIX E

### Planning Inspectorate Model Condition – Provision of Affordable Housing

The development shall not begin until a scheme for the provision of affordable housing as part of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The affordable housing shall be provided in accordance with the approved scheme and shall meet the definition of affordable housing in Annex B of PPS3 or any future guidance that replaces it. The scheme shall include:

- i. the numbers, type, tenure and location on the site of the affordable housing provision to be made which shall consist of not less than X% of housing units/bed spaces;
- ii. the timing of the construction of the affordable housing and its phasing in relation to the occupancy of the market housing;
- iii. the arrangements for the transfer of the affordable housing to an affordable housing provider [or the management of the affordable housing] (if no RSL involved) ;
- iv. the arrangements to ensure that such provision is affordable for both first and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing; and
- v. the occupancy criteria to be used for determining the identity of occupiers of the affordable housing and the means by which such occupancy criteria shall be enforced.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate/inspector/modelconditions#afford>