



LAND TO THE SOUTH OF WHITEACRE LANE, BARROW  
OUTLINE PROPOSAL FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

## PLANNING STATEMENT

on behalf of  **REDROW**

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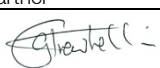
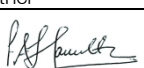
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### Document Control

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# **1 Introduction and the Purpose of the Statement**

- 1.1 The purpose of this Statement is to show that, taking into account planning considerations, the proposed development is sustainable and in accordance with planning policy and sound planning practice.
- 1.2 The Statement will start with a brief overview of the subject land in Barrow. It will then examine the relevant aspects of planning policy which will influence the decision on the outline planning application for housing development.
- 1.3 A significant planning objective is to secure a sustainable pattern of development. This will be assessed in the context of both Barrow as a whole and the proposed housing on land at Whiteacre Lane.
- 1.4 Alongside the objective of sustainable development, it is necessary to consider other material considerations. These considerations are reviewed with cross reference to companion documents which have been provided to support this outline planning application.

## **Pre-Application Advice**

- 1.5 Redrow Homes sought pre-application advice from Ribble Valley Borough Council ('the Council'). This was provided by way of a letter dated 16 December 2013 (Appendix A). The letter provides support for the proposed housing development and the subject land and also indicates the range of material that is needed to support an outline planning application.

## **Planning Application Material**

- 1.6 With the benefit of pre-application advice, it has been agreed with the Council that the package of information to support the outline planning application is as follows:
  - 1 Planning Statement
  - 2 Design and Access Statement
  - 3 Flood Risk Assessment
  - 4 Landscape and Visual Assessment
  - 5 Tree Report
  - 6 Noise Assessment
  - 7 Transport Statement
  - 8 Ecology Statement
  - 9 Draft Planning Obligation.

## **Planning History**

- 1.7 The relevant planning history includes an extant outline planning permission for residential development on land which is part of the subject land. This was granted on 22 August 2012 (Appendix B). It relates to that part of the subject land which follows the Whiteacre Lane frontage. The illustrative layout provided in support of this application shows seven units. In the determination of this application it was resolved that 30% affordable should be applied. This is addressed in a S106 Agreement.

## **2 The Site and Its Surroundings and the Proposed Development**

### **The Site**

- 2.1 The subject land comprises two field units on the south side of Whiteacre Lane in Barrow. It is around 1.49ha in extent. To the east is the A59 in a deep cutting, to the west is a complex of residential apartments and to the north is a linear housing development (The Acres). As a consequence, the subject land is well contained. Only the southern boundary has an interface with open countryside.
- 2.2 The subject land is, to a large extent, open pasture but it is enclosed by hedgerows and trees (for more detail refer to the Landscape and Visual Assessment and the Tree Report).

### **The Surroundings**

- 2.3 Barrow is an expanding village. It is well located along the A59 corridor – the key route through the Ribble Valley. It also benefits from proximity to the higher order settlements of Clitheroe and Whalley. There are public transport routes between Barrow, Clitheroe and Whalley.
- 2.4 Barrow is one of the larger villages in Ribble Valley. There is a commensurate range of facilities and services. There is a primary school, public houses and a nursery. Significantly, there is also the Barrow Enterprise Park – a strategic location for employment in the Ribble Valley. The original permission for the Barrow Enterprise Park was for around 46,500 square metres of business floorspace across an area of 20 hectares. However, as this development has evolved a range of other uses have been introduced including a restaurant, a logistics unit, a co-operative petrol filling station and convenience store and residential development.
- 2.5 Through appeals, outline planning permission has also been granted for significant new residential development to the south west of Barrow (appeal reference APP/T2350/A/13/2190088, 20 February 2014). The development is for up to 504 dwellings with associated infrastructure.

### **The Proposed Development**

- 2.6 The planning application is submitted in outline with only the means of access fixed at this stage. Other matters are reserved for approval at a later point.
- 2.7 The outline planning application is for the use of the land for residential development. For the purpose of assessment it is assumed that the capacity of the subject land is for around 25 houses.

### 3 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The remaining element of the development plan is the saved policies of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (1998) (LP).
- 3.2 The subject land is not in the settlement boundary of Barrow as defined in the LP. It lies on the very edge of the settlement. However, it has been widely accepted in a range of planning appeals that the settlement boundaries in the Ribble Valley district (including that at Barrow) are significantly out of date. They reflect the context of the 1990s and the now revoked Lancashire Structure Plan.
- 3.3 A draft Core Strategy (CS) is being prepared. This was submitted but the examination was suspended to allow further examination of the evidence base, particularly in relation to housing land supply. New evidence was issued to the CS Inspector. Examination Hearings were held in January 2014. Main modifications to the CS are currently subject to consultation.
- 3.4 There are outstanding objections to the CS including policies relating to housing land supply and the distribution of housing. In the light of this only limited weight can be given to the CS in so far as it relates to housing supply and distribution.
- 3.5 Notwithstanding this, the modified CS proposes a housing figure of 5,600 dwellings over the period 2008 to 2028 with an annual average completion target of 280 dwellings per year. This represents a significant increase as the submitted CS proposed 4,000 dwellings and an annual completion rate of 200 dwellings per year.
- 3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration.
- 3.7 In this instance the NPPF should be given great weight as the development plan (the LP) is out of date, especially in relation to housing policies. In assessing the proposed development against the NPPF the key points are:
- The importance of significantly boosting housing and economic growth.
  - The presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 14). In the case of Ribble Valley the development plan policies relating to housing supply and housing distribution are out of date and as such permission should be granted unless:
    - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.
    - Specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
  - The need to determine the development against the three strands of sustainable development in the NPPF – economic, social and environmental.
- 3.8 Some of the saved policies of the LP are of relevance.
- Policy ENV1 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – For clarification the subject land falls outside the AONB.
- Policy ENV3 – Development to reflect the character of the landscape in the open countryside outside the AONB.
- Policy ENV7 – Conservation of wildlife species protected by law.
- Policy ENV13 – Protection of landscape features of particular value.
- 3.9 In addition, an 'Affordable Housing Memorandum of Understanding' is treated in Ribble Valley as a material consideration. The Council seeks affordable housing provision at a level of 30% of the total number of units.

### **Housing Land Availability**

- 3.10 The latest housing land availability schedule was issued in July 2014. The date of survey is 30 June 2014.
- 3.11 The planned provision for the period 2008 – 2028 is 5,600 units. The annualised requirement is 280 units. Taking into account a 20% buffer to allow for the past under-delivery of housing, completions and the shortfall then the five year requirement is 2,590 units – an annual requirement of 518 units. The identified supply of housing land is 2,642 units. This gives 5.10 years of supply.
- 3.12 However, 1,889 units in the identified supply relate to sites with outline planning permission and, of these, 600 units are anticipated in the five year period on two large sites at Higher Standen Farm/Littlemoor Farm, Clitheroe and on land to the south west of Barrow. In relation to these large sites in particular the assumed delivery of housing numbers is over-optimistic. The need for reserved matters approvals and for infrastructure will delay the point when housing will start and rate of delivery of 100 units on each of the sites for the latter three years of the five year period is not realistic.
- 3.13 In these circumstances there will not be a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against housing requirements: Paragraph 49 of NPPF is engaged. This renders any relevant policies for the supply of housing out of date if a five year supply of deliverable housing sites cannot be demonstrated and brings forward the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### **Interim Conclusions Based on the Planning Policy Context**

- 3.14 The housing policies of the LP are out of date. Furthermore, the five year housing land supply position is based on unrealistic assumptions. The evidence points to a deliverable supply of less than five years. Because of this planning permission should be granted unless adverse impacts would outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in NPPF.
- 3.15 The presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in NPPF has a considerable bearing on this planning application. This will be considered in the next section of this Statement.

## 4 A Sustainable Form of Development

- 4.1 From the perspective of locational sustainability Barrow scores well. Evidence for this appears in the form of the Council's report 'Development Strategy: Defining the More Sustainable Settlements and Patterns of Housing Development' (April 2014). It shows Barrow as a Tier One village and 'one of the more sustainable settlements'.
- 4.2 The same conclusion was reached by the Secretary of State in the recent appeal decision which grants outline planning permission for residential development of up to 504 dwellings on land to the south west of Barrow (APP/T2350/A/13/2190088).
- 4.3 The proposed development itself also scores highly when judged against the definition of sustainable development in the NPPF.
- (1) In terms of the social aspect of sustainability the development would strengthen the existing community of Barrow providing much needed market and affordable housing. The delivery of affordable housing at the site is particularly important. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008) calculates that the outstanding need for affordable or social rented housing is for an additional 264 units per year across the borough. However, the Housing Land Availability Schedule of July 2014 shows affordable completions at an average of less than 40 each year over the past seven years. There is a pressing need to increase the number of affordable housing units in the borough of Ribble Valley. The new residents of both affordable and market housing will support those services which exist in Barrow and those at a distance, many of which are accessible by public transport.
- (2) With regard to the environmental role of sustainable development it is evident that there will be an impact on the countryside at the edge of Barrow. However, as is shown by the Landscape and Visual Assessment, the subject land is well contained by existing buildings and infrastructure and the magnitude of impact on the character of the countryside is limited. In any event, land at the edge of settlements in the district of Ribble Valley will need to be developed in order to meet a pressing housing need. The development on the subject land can be assimilated with limited impact, in contrast to the majority of settlement expansion options. There is no landscape, ecological or heritage designation that will be affected. The better quality trees and hedgerows can be retained as part of the development. There will be no harm to the conservation status of protected species or important wildlife habitats.
- (3) The Barrow Enterprise Park is the strategic location for employment in Ribble Valley. New housing in Barrow will complement the development of the Enterprise Park where opportunities for local employment will be generated. In this way the proposed housing is consistent with the economic role of sustainable development. The construction of houses also brings direct and positive economic benefits through the creation of construction jobs.

## 5 Other Material Considerations

- 5.1 It has been shown that the proposed development is sustainable. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. Planning permission should be granted unless there are adverse impacts that demonstrably outweigh the benefits of boosting the supply of housing.
- 5.2 In order to show that there are no adverse impacts of overriding significance, the proposed development has been assessed in terms of its impact on:
- Landscape and visual character of the area
  - Flood risk
  - The noise environment
  - Transportation and traffic
  - Habitats and species
  - Trees.
- 5.3 There are companion reports to address each of these material considerations. These reports do not indicate that the development should be restricted although they do highlight factors to be taken into account as the detailed design is progressed.
- 5.4 In brief, the impact on the landscape and visual character of the area is not significant as the site is well-contained by existing development. There will be no significant risk of flooding. The impacts of noise on future residents can be addressed by suitable mitigation measures. Access can be designed to meet relevant safety standards. There are no protected species or habitats that will be affected to an unacceptable degree and the better quality trees can be assimilated at the stage of detailed design.
- 5.5 There are no local or national policies to suggest that the development should be restricted. The examination of other material considerations has led to the conclusion that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should stand.



## 6 Affordable Housing and the Planning Obligation

- 6.1 The Memorandum of Understanding on affordable housing sets the level of affordable housing provision at 30% for developments of three or more houses in locations outside of Longridge and Clitheroe.
- 6.2 In locations outside of Longridge and Clitheroe the Council will use the available housing needs evidence to determine the tenure mix of affordable housing.
- 6.3 The form of affordable housing will take account of the site location, access to services and facilities, access to public transport as well as the housing needs evidence. The Strategic Housing Officer at the Council has confirmed in correspondence following the receipt of pre-application advice (Appendix A) that the offer of seven bungalow units is acceptable. These are to be sold at a discounted market rate..
- 6.4 The affordable housing will be secured through a planning obligation. The main provisions will be:
- Seven two bed bungalows.
  - To be made available at a discounted market rate.
  - The affordable housing is to be delivered by a key trigger point in the construction of the approved development.
  - The affordable housing should be made available to those in local need and to initial and successive occupiers as long as that local need exists.
- 6.5 An assessment of education provision and need was carried out at the pre-application stage by Lancashire County Council. The outcome of this assessment suggests a requirement for a contribution towards 10 primary school places but no contribution for secondary school places.
- 6.6 The education assessment acknowledges that a discount should be applied to the calculated education contribution as the extant planning permission for part of the site does not carry such a contribution. The discount will apply to seven houses which is the indicative capacity in the extant outline planning permission.
- 6.7 However, this is an outline planning application. The detailed layout and scheme design will come at a later stage. In these circumstances, it is convention to allow for a reduction in the education contribution which takes into account a review at the time of the reserved matters application or the start of the development. The review will take into account the availability of places in existing and proposed primary schools for which forecasts are available and the expected number of pupils in local schools resulting from the implementation of planning permissions and the number of pupil places to be funded by any such planning permissions.
- 6.8 The education contribution will be paid at an agreed trigger point in the construction of the development and will be used for the provision of primary school places in the vicinity of the subject land.
- 6.9 A draft planning obligation has been submitted as part of the planning application package.

## 7 The Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 7.1 The policies in the development plan for Ribble Valley as far as they relate to housing land supply and housing distribution are out of date because of the context in which the development plan was drafted and because there are failings in the way in which the five year supply of deliverable housing sites has been arrived at. As a consequence considerable weight needs to be given to the advice in the NPPF. It introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development, particularly in circumstances where relevant policies of the development plan are out of date.
- 7.2 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is the overriding planning consideration.
- 7.3 It has been shown that the proposed development is sustainable in itself and that the village of Barrow is one of the most sustainable locations for new housing in the district of Ribble Valley. It has also been shown that there are no material considerations to indicate that the proposed development should be restricted. Individual assessments of traffic and transportation, landscape, trees, noise, flood risk and ecology have not highlighted any reasons to restrict the proposed development in principle.
- 7.4 The proposed development will boost the supply of housing in the district of Ribble Valley. This is a fundamental requirement of the NPPF. The housing is deliverable. There are no significant impediments to development and there are no factors that will require a long lead time to the commencement of construction. New housing at this site will add to the residential yield in the district of Ribble Valley in the short term. This is particularly important as Ribble Valley has a persistent record of under-delivery of housing particularly affordable housing. This has contributed to considerable weakness in the supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against the housing requirement. Through the main modifications to the CS the housing requirement has been increased. Taking this into account and allowing for a 20% buffer (as a consequence of persistent under-delivery of housing) then there is an urgent need to take action to boost the supply of housing. The proposed development will make a valuable contribution to the supply of deliverable housing opportunities.
- 7.5 The new development will also bring additional benefits which are material to the outcome of the planning application. The New Homes Bonus associated with new housing will bring a sum which is available to invest in the infrastructure and environment in the vicinity of the site. In addition, the development will include much needed affordable housing and a contribution towards primary education places to reinforce the social sustainability of the development.
- 7.6 It is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted without delay.