

# Memo

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**To:** JOHN MACHOLC  
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**Date:** 18 JANUARY 2017



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council

[www.ribblevalley.gov.uk](http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk)

**Re: APPLICATION NO: 3/2016/0974/P  
OUTLINE PROPOSAL: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING THE ERECTION OF  
275 DWELLINGS, LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED  
LANDSCAPING/WILDLIFE INFRASTRUCTURE. GRIMBALDESTON FARM LONGRIDGE**

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The application is a resubmission, with a reduced number of dwellings of application number 3/2015/0393/P. That application was refused on the 5.1.16.

In terms of the Development Strategy the Core Strategy directs development to main settlements, such as Longridge. As previously indicated on the earlier application, my advice is maintained that in locational terms the site in principle is capable of being considered a sustainable location in strategic terms. The principal policy consideration was the harm to the Core Strategy as a result of surplus housing measured against the Core Strategy requirements. At the time of determination of application 3/2015/0393 the Council could demonstrate a 5 year land supply position, giving primary weight to the core strategy provisions.

Circumstances have since changed. Work in relation to submissions made to the Council's Regulation 18 consultation on the Housing and Economic DPD, means that there needs to be an adjustment made to the Council's housing land calculation in relation to the application of the 20% buffer. Extensive research has been undertaken to review changes to best practice since early 2016, and in particular the approaches taken by Inspectors reporting on Local Plans as well as reviewing relevant appeals as part of that evidence search. This has given rise to a need to revise the application of the buffer which in my view the Council will need to recognise. This issue has been discussed with the Development Plan Working Group in some detail at the meeting held on 12 January where the need to make an adjustment to the methodology was supported.

The net effect of this is to generate a revised 5 year supply figure of 4.99 years when measured against our most recent monitoring information. The significance being that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply and the implications of paragraph 49 of NPPF must be taken into account in making any decisions on the application.

NPPF Paragraph 49 states that:

*"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."*

Where the council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply the presumption is in favour of sustainable development.

The Council is required to deliver sustainable development and my view is that when looking at the implications of NPPF it is also important to have regard to the provisions of the Core Strategy which provides the Council's expression of sustainable development. As indicated, the location at Longridge is considered a sustainable location. Longridge is identified as a main settlement where housing is to be directed. The Core strategy recognises that the housing numbers are minimum requirements, but also seeks to manage the rate at which the settlements develop. The main issue is one of permitting a surplus against planned requirements and the impact this has upon controlling the underlying scale, delivery and phasing of growth. Notwithstanding that, the development would deliver additional housing which meets the Governments (and the Framework objective) of boosting housing supply, it would also deliver affordable housing both of which are significant benefits.

This application is for a reduced number of dwellings when compared to the previous application and if the identified residual is taken off, the relevant number of additional dwellings is in the order of some 250 dwellings. Taking into account the fact that this is an outline application and allowing for reserved matters and the sale of the site to be completed, delivery would be likely to be deferred following conventional practice, in my view, for up to 2 years. Assuming that a site of this nature would be developed by one developer on the basis of 30 units per annum, the total amount that would be added to our supply in the five year period (up to 2023) if this application was approved would be around 90 units. The immediate impact is therefore mitigated. Clearly if a second housebuilder was active on the site this mitigating effect would be less but the agent has indicated that a single developer will deliver the site.

Approving the site still generates a surplus. However taking account of the likely delivery the net impact of the units delivered in practice is reduced to a level where it would be difficult to demonstrate clearly that there is significant harm to the underlying Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy at Key Statement DS2 addresses the presumption in favour of sustainable development and in the circumstances where para 48 is applicable, the Core Strategy states; "... Where there are no policies relevant to the application **or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise** --- taking into account whether:

- any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework when taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

In the current circumstances I do not consider, in policy terms that there are any material considerations that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of boosting housing supply in these circumstances or delivering affordable housing. In a position where the council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply the Core Strategy directs towards the grant of permission. As a matter of policy principle the application is consistent with the Core Strategy.

In summary, the application has to be determined against the Council's ability to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, National Planning Policy and the consequent provisions of the Core Strategy. Having considered the relevant policy matters I raise no policy objections to the application.

Colin Hirst  
Head of Regeneration & Housing.