



Land off Whalley Road, Mellor Brook, Blackburn, BB2 7LB

Stage 1 Permission in Principle: Application for up to 7 no. dwellings

PLANNING STATEMENT

December 2019



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/1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. PWA Planning is retained by Mr Morini ('the Applicant') to progress a Stage 1 Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the development of up to 7 no. dwellings ('proposed development') on land off Whalley Road, Mellor Brook, Blackburn, BB2 7LB ('application site').
- 1.2. The PIP application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority) and relates to the red edge application site boundary defined by the submitted Location Plan.
- 1.3. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement will look to demonstrate that the proposals accord with the provisions of the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and moreover that there are other significant material considerations which indicate that permission in principle ought to be granted.
- 1.4. This Planning Statement, alongside a review of the site history and relevant policies, provides a description of the proposed development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the principles of development.
- 1.5. The remainder of this report is structured as follows: -
 - Section 2 – Site Description;
 - Section 3 – Planning History;
 - Section 4 – Permission in Principle;
 - Section 5 – Proposed Development;
 - Section 6 – Planning Policy Context;
 - Section 7 – Planning Policy Assessment;
 - Section 8 – Conclusions.

/2 **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1. The application site is located off Whalley Road, to the north east of the village of Mellor Brook and covers a total area of 0.2 hectares. The site comprises a thin piece of land running adjacent to the road, which is currently vacant, being occupied by vegetation namely shrubs with trees noted around the site periphery. From its frontage onto Whalley Road, the site drops down notably toward the watercourse which runs along the site's southern boundary. The land has been historically associated with the existing dwelling to the south west, known as Brookside, as part of the dwelling's wider curtilage.

- 2.2. The site lies to the immediate north-east of the settlement of Mellor Brook, abutting the village's settlement boundary. Neighbouring each side of the site are two single residential dwellings. Immediately opposite the site, on the other side of Whalley Road, five dwellings are currently being constructed following their approval as part of application 3/2018/1080. The wider context to the north and east of the site is characterised by agricultural land. A location plan showing the site within its wider setting is provided within the supporting documents and for an aerial image of the site within its closer setting please see Figure 1 over page.



Figure 1: Aerial image showing the location of the site (not to scale)

- 2.3. The site lies within a sustainable location for residential development, with local amenities available in Mellor Brook, such as a local pub and community centre. Further services are available approximately 1km to the east of the site in the neighbouring village of Mellor. The nearest bus-stop is located approximately 250m to the west of the site on Myerscough Smithy Road. Bus services from here provide frequent and direct services to larger nearby settlements, such as Preston. The A59 to the north of the site also provides easy access to the M6 motorway.
- 2.4. There are no ecological or landscape designations associated with the site. The site is located wholly within Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flooding is at its lowest. There are also no active Tree Preservation Orders associated with the site. With regards to heritage designations, there are no heritage assets within the site or in the site's locality.

/3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1. The site and its immediate surroundings have been subject to a planning history search on Ribble Valley Council's planning register. No past planning applications have been identified on the site itself. However, the below application for the residential development of 5 dwellings has been approved on land to the north of the site between Whalley Road and Longsight Road.

- **3/2018/1080** *Construction of five new dwelling houses (Resubmission of planning application 3/2018/0069). Approved 8th March 2019.*

3.2. In determining the above application, the Council acknowledge there was a residual need for dwellings in the settlement. However, in addition to this justification they also noted the following within the Officer's Report:

"As mentioned above the application site is located very close to the existing settle boundary, and is enclosed on three sides by existing highways (Whalley Road and the A59) and to the west by a wooded area, and consequently the release of this land for housing would infill a section of land on the edge of the settlement and not provide an obvious gateway for further development beyond the boundary of the application site.

In summary, whilst the application site is located outside the settlement boundary, and therefore within the open countryside, there is a need for additional housing in Mellor Brook that is unlikely to be provided within the settlement boundary and therefore this site is considered to be the most viable, both in terms of its distance and access to the settlement boundary and the enclosed nature of the site which would prevent further expansion in the future.

In view of the above, it is considered that in this particular case the benefits of the proposal outweigh the site's location just outside the settlement boundary and the small scale residential development of this site would not cause significant harm to the

overall Development Strategy for the Borough as set out in Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy.”

- 3.3. The above assessment in relation to impact and appropriate location for development are equally attributable to the application site at hand. Whilst other applications exist locally, there are no other applications evident from the planning register which are deemed relevant to the current proposals to which this planning application relates.

/4 PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

- 4.1. The PIP consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development.
- 4.2. The relevant legislation and guidance on this route is taken from the following:
- Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017; and
 - National Planning Policy Guidance – Permission in Principle
- 4.3. The former came into force on the 1st June 2018, whilst the latter was most recently updated in the same month. As such it is considered, whilst a relatively recent application route, up to date guidance is readily available with regard to such proposals. This section of the statement seeks to summarise the relevant provisions of the above to enable the authority to better understand the proposals.

Process

- 4.4. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages:
- Stage 1: establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle;
 - Stage 2: ('technical details consent') is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This is much like a reserved matters application.
- 4.5. The process for Stage 1 varies depending on the scale of the proposed development and whether it relates to Greenfield land or land classed as previously developed. For minor forms of development i.e. less than ten units, an application must be submitted to the local planning authority; this applies whether the site is greenfield or previously developed.

- 4.6. For major development on previously developed land, the site must be entered to the local planning authority's brownfield land register; which in turn grants a PIP. It is not possible to gain a PIP consent for major development on a Greenfield site.

Requirements for a Valid Permission

- 4.7. The requirements for a valid PIP are laid out in Article 5D of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017.
- 4.8. In order to meet the requirements of a valid PIP application the following information must be provided:
- Completed application form
 - A plan to which identifies the land to which the application relates
 - The correct application fee (discussed below)
- 4.9. The scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the permission in principle stage. Other matters should be dealt with at the technical details consent stage of the application. Local authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for PIP in the same way they can for applications for planning permission.
- 4.10. Once a valid application for PIP has been received, the local planning authority should make a decision on the proposal as quickly as possible, and in any event within the statutory time limit of 5 weeks unless a longer period has been agreed in writing with the applicant.

Planning Considerations

- 4.11. Proposals are determined in accordance with the Development Plan and NPPF. Although the scope of the local planning authority assessment of the first stage is limited to location, land use and amount of development.
- 4.12. The NPPG details that statutory requirements like those related to both listed buildings or protected species are only applicable to Stage 2 Technical Consent applications (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 58-003-20190615). As stated above, local authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for PIP in the same way they can for applications for planning permission. Equally it is not necessary to provide a suite of technical reports at Stage 1, like you would for a full or outline application.

Implementation Period

- 4.13. Where Stage 1 permission is granted via an application, an applicant would have a further 3 years to apply for the Stage 2 Technical Details. The default duration of the permission is 3 years. The local authority cannot add further conditions to the grant of permission under Stage 1.
- 4.14. Where PIP is granted through allocation on a brownfield land register, the default duration of that permission is 5 years.

Determination Time Limits

- 4.15. The statutory time limit for a local authority to determine a Stage 1 application is 5 weeks. The statutory time limits for Stage 2 technical details is also 5 weeks (or 10 weeks for major development on previously developed land). The consultation process for applications is like that of a normal planning application.

Summary

4.16. The PIP application is a relatively new route to planning permission and as such examples of such applications are not plentiful. However, from the examples reviewed there does seem to be some confusions as to what matters can be considered.

4.17. In this context it is clear that whilst such applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, policies related to technical matters do not represent valid considerations for the purposes of a Stage 1 application. In the context of this application it is therefore prudent to note that policies relating to the following matters which could preclude the granting of a standard planning application should not be considered as part of this submission:

- Ecology;
- Transport;
- Heritage.

4.18. These matters will however be considered as part of any future Stage 2 application.

/5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1. It is proposed to develop land associated with land off Whalley Road, Mellor Brook, Blackburn, BB2 7LB to provide up to 7 no. dwellings. As noted, the application is submitted as a Stage 1 PIP application and the description of development as stated within the application form is as follows:

"Stage 1 Permission in Principle planning application for the erection of up to 5 no. dwellings"

5.2. As the application is submitted as a PIP application, the proposed development is not supported by a proposed site plan or an associated elevation/floorplan drawing. However, the application boundary is clearly of a size which would permit for the construction of 7 dwellings which has the potential to respect the vernacular and enhance the local sense of character. Therefore, any future Stage 2 technical application will seek to ensure the design of the properties will fit well in the rural setting and nearby properties, as will the choice of materials. In addition, any final scheme will also seek to ensure that the amenities of existing and future residents will not be compromised by the proposals.

5.3. Access is likely to be provided via a new access road off Whalley Road.

/6 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

"Where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

Development Plan

6.2. In this instance, the statutory Development Plan for the application site comprises of the Ribble Valley Borough Core Strategy 2008-2028 (Adopted 2014). Key policy documents that comprise 'material considerations' include to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and any local supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the proposal.

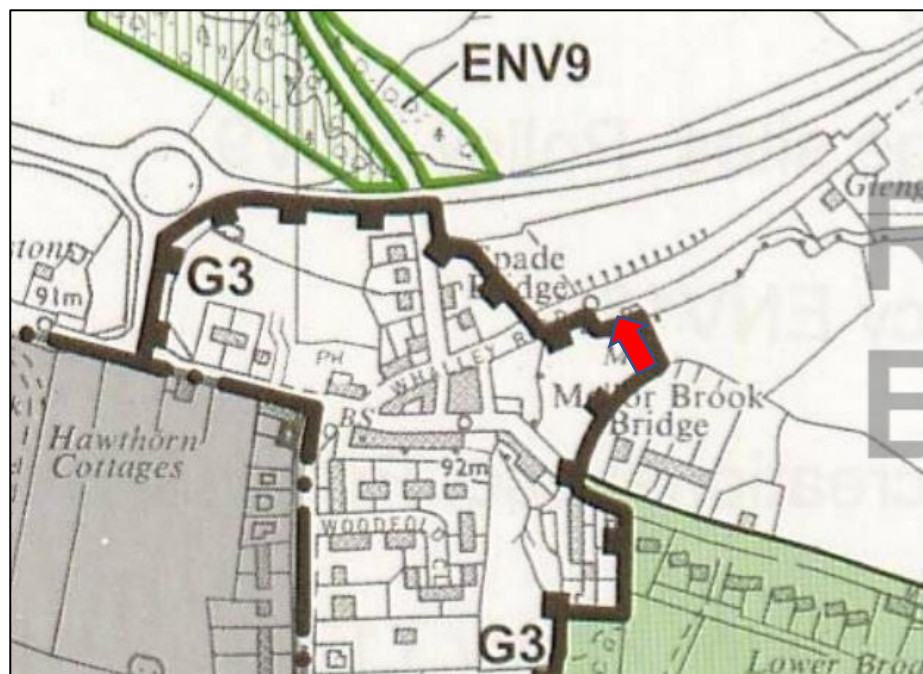


Figure 2: Extract from Adopted Policies Map

6.3. According to Ribble Valley Borough Council's policy map, the site is allocated as within Policy ENV3 Open Countryside. This policy is no longer applicable in accordance with the Core Strategy, being replaced by Policy EN2 Landscape and Policy DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection. As this policy map remains the adopted policies map an extract is included above in Figure 2. Within the recently adopted Housing and Economic Development DPD Proposals Map the site is designated as Policy EN2 Landscape.

Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028

6.4. The Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 was adopted in December 2014 and therefore can broadly be regarded as containing relevant and up to date policies in the consideration of this application. It sets out priorities for future planning and development of the borough and is used when determining planning applications. The following policies are considered relevant for a PIP application:

- Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy;
- Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development;
- Key Statement EN2: Landscape;
- Key Statement H1: Housing Provision;
- Key Statement H2: Housing Balance;
- Key Statement DMG1: General Considerations;
- Key Statement DMG2: Strategic Considerations;
- Key Statement DME2: Landscape and Town Protection;
- Key Statement DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside & The AONB.

6.5. **Key Statement DS1:** Development Strategy, seeks to outline the locations in which growth will be focused. Whilst the Statement refers to strategic sites already allocated for development, it also infers that in addition to the principle settlements development will be focused towards the Tier 1 Villages, which Mellor Brook is one.

- 6.6 **Key Statement DS2:** Sustainable Development looks to mirror Paragraph 11 of the NPPF which details the sustainable development principle that seeks to guide both authorities and developers. The Statement details that:

"When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the Framework. The Council will always work proactively with applicants jointly 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.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and where relevant, policies in the neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

- 6.6. **Key Statement EN2:** Landscape, mainly focuses on protection of the Forest of Bowland AONB through ensuring development contributes to the conservation of the area by enhancing and protecting the landscape and character. The statement does offer more general coverage by linking the policy to the protection of all landscapes outlining that the Council expects all development to be in-keeping with the character of the local landscape.

- 6.7. In the Council's justification for the policy they state that:

"The Council will also seek to ensure that the open countryside is protected from inappropriate development. Developers should adopt a non-standardised approach to design which recognises and enhances local distinctiveness, landscape character, the quality of the built fabric, historic patterns and landscape tranquillity."

- 6.8. **Key Statement H1:** focuses on housing provision; it states that the requirement for new homes will be delivered in line with the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability

Assessment. Further to this it states the Council will adopt a 'plan-monitor-manage' approach to ensure a rolling five-year land supply is achieved and maintained.

6.9. **Key Statement H2:** Housing Balance, follows on from the above policy to outline that planning permission will be granted when the proposal is in line with local demand as evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

6.8. **Key Statement DMG1:** General Considerations assists in ensuring that development proposals are in line with numerous broad criteria by providing a series of overarching considerations regarding the quality of developments. The policy categorises the criteria under 6 headings which are as follows:

- Design;
- Access;
- Amenity;
- Environment;
- Infrastructure;
- Other.

6.9. **Key Statement DMG2:** outlines further strategic considerations. The policy assists in the interpretation of the Development Strategy and underpins the settlement hierarchy for the purposes of delivering sustainable development. Part 1 relates to Tier 1 villages, of which Mellor Brook is one, the policy states that:

"Development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge, and Whalley and the Tier 1 villages 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."

6.10. **Key Statement DME2:** Landscape and Town Protection states development proposals which significantly harm important landscape, or their features will be refused.

- 6.11. **Key Statement DMH3:** Dwellings in the open countryside outlines that residential development within the open countryside will be limited to the following:

"Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers' dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied"

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

- 6.13. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Framework sets out the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11) whereby developments which correctly balance the requirements of economic, social and environmental issues should be granted planning permission unless there are strong reasons that permission should not be granted.
- 6.14. Sustainable development is broadly defined in Paragraph 8 of the Framework as having three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental.
- 6.15. Paragraph 38 directly refers to PIP applications stating:
- "Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area."*
- 6.16. Section 5 details the need to continually deliver a sufficient supply of homes. The section details guidance on affordable homes, small and medium development sites and rural

housing amongst other matters. This section of the NPPF represents the most up to date guidance on matters related to housing supply calculations.

6.17. Paragraph 63 makes clear that affordable housing will not be sought for minor developments, as is the case in this instance.

6.18. Paragraph 68 details that 10% of new homes should come from sites which are no larger than one hectare in size, whilst Paragraph 84 within the following section (Building a strong, competitive economy) states:

"Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport."

6.19. Section 6 of the Framework is concerned with building a strong, competitive economy, with specific guidance in relation to supporting a prosperous rural economy.

Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017

6.20. The relevant provisions of the Order are summarised in section 4 of this statement.

National Planning Policy Guidance

6.21. The relevant provisions of the NPPG are summarised in section 4 of this statement.

Mellor Housing Needs Survey (2014)

6.22. Ribble Valley Borough Council and Mellor Parish Council surveyed the housing need of Mellor Parish in 2014. The survey found an identified housing need among within the Parish, with 47% of people wanting a 2 bed-roomed property 27, 36% a 3 bed-roomed property, 8% a 4 bed-roomed property and 9% a 1 bed-roomed property. Most people

in housing need would prefer to own property but the high prices of property make it difficult for those on average incomes to afford housing on the open market in the area.

Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (HED DPD) (2019)

- 6.23. The document sets out the key housing and economic issues including housing and economic land allocations, town centre policies and settlement boundaries. Alongside the Core Strategy the plan completes the Development plan and will guide development in the borough until 2028. Within Mellor, Policy HAL1: Land at Mellor Lane allocates a site for 19 dwellings, which could only be achieved through a high-density scheme on site.

/7 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 7.1. Although the site is designated within the Open Countryside where Policy DH3 is relevant, the site benefits from close ties with the settlement of Mellor Brook, with the settlement boundary abutting the western boundary of the application site. Mellor Brook is designated as a 'Tier 1' settlement in Key Statement DS1, such locations are the focus for the majority of growth which is proposed to take place outside of the principle settlements. Given the application site's proximity to the settlement, it is deemed to form a logical point for residential development, negating the need for housing development in more isolated rural locations and helping meet local need.

- 7.2. Further support is offered by Key Statement DMG2 which states in Tier 1 villages development proposals should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas. Dwellings are located to each side of the site along Whalley Road and 5 no. dwellings are currently being built out just to the north of the site on the other side of Whalley Road (Application ref. 3/2018/1080). The development of the site is therefore deemed to represent a logical rounding off of development in this area of Mellor Brook, consolidating development along Whalley Road which closely relates to the main settlement in accordance with the requirements of DMG2.

- 7.3. In the context of the above it is also pertinent to have regard for the conclusions of the Officer's Report associated with the aforementioned application on the opposite side of Whalley Road (3/2018/1080). In this instance the officer noted that any housing need for Mellor Brook would have to be delivered on sites outside the settlement boundary due to the constraint nature of the existing settlement. In this context and based on the consenting and implementation of the above application, development of the site in question would not result in the extension of development further into the open countryside, given development would not extend beyond the line of built development established opposite the development site. Moreover, Whalley Road is a cul-de-sac and as such the consenting of this application would not result in further development

pressure along the road given such development plots do not exist. This further qualifies the point that the development would facilitate the rounding off of development in this location.

- 7.4. Irrespective of the site's open countryside location, as discussed in the earlier sections of this statement, it is maintained that the site represents a sustainable location for residential development due to its location adjoining the settlement of Mellor Brook. Regular bus routes are offered from Feilden Arms bus stop, less than 300m from the site, which offers quick and easy access routes to Preston City Centre and other surrounding settlements. Services are also available within walking distance of the site in Mellor Brook itself, including a local pub and community centre. Further services are available in Mellor and Preston which are both accessible by sustainable means. Given the array of amenities and services accessible via sustainable means the site should be considered a sustainable location for residential development.
- 7.5. Table 4.12 relating to Key Statement DS1 details the number of houses required for each settlement in the Borough over the plan period. Whilst it is noted that the Council consider Mellor Brook to be currently meeting its identified housing need, the neighbouring settlement of Mellor which lies within less than 800m from the site does have a residual housing need. Given the proximity of the site to Mellor, the proposed development site offers the opportunity to alleviate the housing requirement of the village through a site which is developable now in a sustainable location.
- 7.6. It is acknowledged and accepted that the Council have attempted to address this issue through Policy HAL1 in the HED DPD which allocates land to the north of Mellor Lane for 18 dwellings. However, to achieve 18 units on the site would result in a distinctly high-density development, whereby it would be one dwelling (including parking and curtilage) per 0.016 ha (160sqm). This is of further pertinence given the Mellor Housing Needs Survey (2014) detailed that 44% of people need a 3 or 4 bed dwelling, whilst only 9% required a 1 bed unit. Moreover, irrespective of the allocation, any application would still be subject to consideration against the Development Plan polices. Policy DMG1 provides a plethora of considerations relevant to the determination of planning

applications, such considerations extend to density, amenity/privacy distances and intensity. In this context, there is a realistic likelihood that a proposal on the allocated site of the necessary density would not be viewed favourably by Officers. To an extent this is acknowledged within the DPD, see below excerpt:

The site area is approximately 0.29ha. It is recognised that the requirement of 18 dwellings could result in a high-density scheme on the site. The density and dwelling type will be determined to best meet needs identified in accordance with H2 of the Core Strategy and in accordance with Development Management criteria. If the density is considered too intensive, then the remaining requirement for the settlement will need to be met through windfall development during the plan period.

- 7.7. It can therefore be reasonably assumed that there is some doubt as to if 18 dwellings can be delivered within the allocated housing site without permitting for a scheme which would be detrimental to the character of Mellor. The application site is therefore well placed to relive any shortfall in housing in Mellor given its close links to both the settlements of Mellor and Mellor Brook. In exploring this line of justification, it is again key to have regard for the low impact and logical nature of the proposed development site, which is already somewhat evidenced by the positive determination of the application on the opposite site of Whalley Road.
- 7.8. Considering the NPPF in the round, it is important to note that Paragraph 7 of the NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At Paragraph 8 it states that: "*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)*".
- 7.9. The first objective is with regards to the economy, where the planning system should help to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. The second objective is a social objective where

by the planning system should help to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being. Finally, an environmental objective, whereby the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and minimising waste and pollution.

- 7.10. The proposals would see the development of a parcel of land which benefits from close ties to the settlement of Mellor Brook. The scheme would deliver up 7 no. dwellings, of which the scale and appearance will be saved for a future Stage 2 technical details submission. Given the nature of the scheme as a minor development, it is considered more than likely that before and during construction, the development would contribute to the local economy directly through the employment of local companies to facilitate the build. This would include planners and architects/designers as part of the Stage 2 application process, local contractors involved in the physical build and the local supply chain through the provision of materials. Once occupied, new residents of the proposals would use and support the growth of local services. It is considered that the proposed development would therefore assist in achieving the economic aims of sustainable development.
- 7.11. The application is not accompanied at this stage by the technical assessments which would allow for adherence to the environmental aims of sustainable development to be demonstrated. It should be again reiterated that such matters are not relevant to the application at hand.
- 7.12. The location of the site is considered sustainable in the context of the NPPF given it lies in close proximity to the settlement of Mellor Brook. Suitable transport links to the

larger settlements of Preston, Blackburn and Mellor are available, either by car or via the bus route close to the site.

7.13. The Framework also clarifies support for small to medium sized sites in Paragraph 68, detailing that 10% of a Council's housing requirement should be delivered on sites no larger than 1 hectare. PWA Planning are not aware of any statement made by the Council which suggests they are in a position to meet this requirement. As such it stands to reason that 10% of the annualised requirement, will need to come forward as windfall sites that the Council are yet to account for. Consequently, the application at hand can be considered to make a valuable contribution in aiding the Council to meet this requirement.

7.14. Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would constitute sustainable development in the context of the NPPF and Policy DS2 of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, the above analysis would also suggest the proposals can be viewed positively in the context of the adopted Development Plan.

Design and Technical Considerations

7.15. Further to the information detailed in Section 4 of this statement it is again important to reiterate that design and technical matters are not appropriate/relevant considerations to the application at hand. The nature of PIP applications infers that development could be permissible at Stage 1 but subsequently fail to gain Stage 2 consent. Whilst this is correct, concerns regarding technical matters such as heritage or ecology should not form part of the determination of this application. It is only when the Council have the technical information provided as part of a Stage 2 application that an informed position on such matters can be reached.

7.16. This is of increased relevance to the site at hand as it is acknowledged that more detailed discussion regarding the design of the units will be need at Stage 2, due to the topography of the site. However, on this note regard should be had for the existing

dwelling, Brookside, which has been constructed in a similar to that which would be adopted for the proposed properties.

The Planning Balance

- 7.17. This section of the Planning Statement has succinctly detailed how the proposed development can be adjudged as acceptable in the context of the Development Plan and the Framework. With regard to development within the countryside the proposal can be considered positively in that the application site represents a development plot with close ties to the settlement of Mellor Brook. Equally the proposal will support development within the wider area and represent an acceptable scale of development for the site.
- 7.18. Whilst a conflict with the Development Plan has been identified by virtue to the location of the site in the countryside, the site's location adjacent to the settlement boundary of Mellor Brook means it forms a logical extension and rounding off of the settlement. The proposal is deemed to constitute a scheme far preferable to sporadic development in more rural areas or smaller settlements. The site is in walking distance of local public transport links and services available in Mellor Brook and should be viewed as a sustainable location for residential development.
- 7.19. This Stage 1 PIP application asks the Council to consider the submission in the context of location, land use and amount of development and in relation to all three variables, the proposals are considered acceptable in principle.

/8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1. PWA Planning is retained by Mr Morini to progress a PIP application for up to 7 no. self-build dwellings at land off Whalley Road, Mellor Brook, Blackburn, BB2 7LB.
- 8.2. The site is located just to the east of the settlement boundary of Mellor Brook. Although the site is currently designated as countryside where development is not generally focused, the site is considered to be located in a sustainable location for development and forms a logical rounding off of development for the settlement. The proposed development is considered to constitute sustainable development and the limited harm as a result of the scheme is not considered to demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme which include significant social and economic benefits.
- 8.3. At this first stage of PIP development, it is only the relevant location plan and application form that are submitted alongside this application. Other relevant technical considerations are not applicable at this stage, with this information to be submitted at the technical consideration stage of the application.
- 8.4. The works would result in a number of key benefits which are deemed relevant to the determination of the application, namely: -
- Delivery of up to 7no. much needed new homes, assisting the Authority in meeting its objectively assessed needs;
 - Support for existing businesses and suppliers in the area during construction, contributing to the local economy;
 - A small yet valuable contribution to meeting housing need within Mellor Brook and supporting Mellor in meeting its need.
- 8.5. For the reasons identified within this Statement, it is considered that PIP for the proposed development should be granted, and the application is commended to the authority.



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