

# Former Royal British Legion Towneley Road Longridge PR3 3EA

Proposed residential development of 12no. apartments following the demolition of the social club (Resubmission of LPA ref: 3/2020/0960)

**PLANNING STATEMENT**  
December 2023



# REPORT CONTROL

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**Appendix A** – Email from Ribble Valley Borough Council’s Head of Cultural and Leisure Services



## **/1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. PWA is retained by Touchline Developments ('the applicant') to progress a full planning application for the proposed residential development of 12no. apartments following the demolition of the social club ('the proposed development') on land associated with the Former British Legion, Towneley Road, Longridge, PR3 3EA ('the application site'). The apartments will be made available exclusively for retirement living and the applicants are willing for occupancy to be restricted via a suitably worded planning condition.
- 1.2. It is necessary to note that the application is a resubmission of LPA ref: 3/2020/0960 which was for the development of 13no. apartments following the demolition of the social club. The application was refused by Ribble Valley Borough Council and dismissed by the Inspector when an Appeal was submitted (Appeal ref: APP/T2350/W/22/3299/884). The sole reason for refusal was due to concerns over highway safety because of the lack of disabled parking and loading space.
- 1.3. Consequently, as a result of the refusal and dismissal, the Applicant has redesigned the development to include a disabled parking bay, parking bay and loading bay by removing one of the units from the original application (LPA ref: 3/2020/0960).
- 1.4. The proposed housing mix will offer a range of accommodation types and sizes, which will appeal to over 55's and address identified local needs identified within the Council's most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which is disused in greater detail later within this statement.
- 1.5. This planning application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council (the 'Local Planning Authority') as a full planning application and relates to the red edge application site boundary as illustrated on the submitted Location Plan (Drawing No. 100).
- 1.6. This Planning Statement provides a review of the site history, relevant policies at both a local and national level and provides a description of the proposed development, before appraising of the planning merits of the scheme. It should be read in conjunction with the following suite of supporting documents to ensure a full understanding of the development proposals:
  - 1 App Form, certificates and notices;



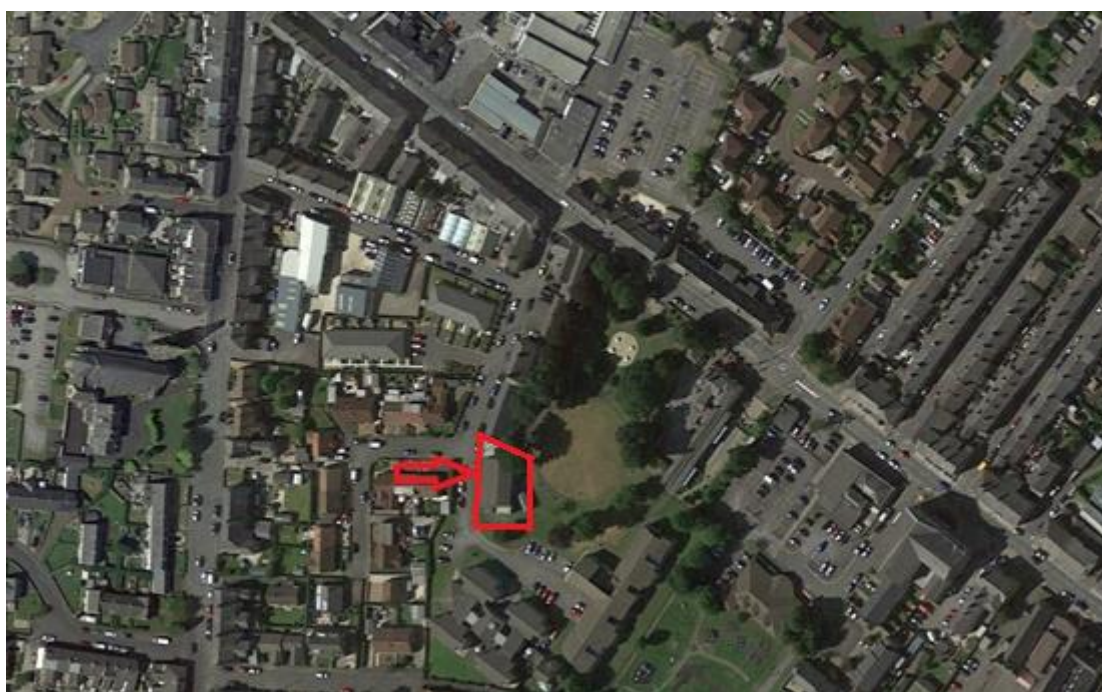
- Drawn information;
  - Location Plan (Drawing No. 100)
  - Existing Site Plan / Topographical Survey (Drawing No. 110)
  - Ground Floor Plan (Drawing No. 120 Rev B)
  - First Floor Plan (Drawing No. 130)
  - Second Floor Plan (Drawing No. 140)
  - Elevations and Images (Drawing No. 150)
- Heritage Statement;
- Preliminary Bat and Bird Roost Assessment Report;
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Transport Statement;
- Land Contamination Risk Assessment;
- Landscaping Plan;
- Flood Risk Assessment; and
- Drainage Strategy.

1.7. In summary, for reasons identified in this Statement it is considered that the proposed development is entirely appropriate and consistent with national and local planning policy. It will be demonstrated that the scheme represents sustainable development, and that full planning permission ought to be granted.



## /2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The site covers an area of 0.035 hectares (347m<sup>2</sup>) and comprises of the former British Legion Club, located within Longridge Town Centre. The immediate surroundings of the site are dominated by predominately residential properties, with a mixture of bungalows and a terraced bungalow to the west, including those off Auction Court beyond Towneley Road, terraced housing to the north and flats, known as Park House to the south, which has allocated visitor and resident parking. To the immediate west of the site lies Towneley Road, and an area of Public Open Space lies to the immediate east.
- 2.2. A Location Plan showing the site within its wider setting is provided with the supporting documents (Drawing No. 100) while an aerial image of the site within its immediate surroundings is provided at Figure 1 below.



*Figure 1 - Site within the Local Context*

- 2.3. A closer image of the site at present is provided by Figure 2 below, with the image taken from the adjacent Towneley Road.



**Figure 2** - Image of the Site taken from Towneley Road

- 2.4. A small communal courtyard area of for future residents will be formed to the rear. It will nevertheless seek to promote an open character, in keeping with the adjacent public open space.
- 2.5. The site is considered sustainable in locational terms: it is within easy walking distance to local shops, schools, restaurants, hospitals, public houses, petrol stations, cultural and community facilities, and areas of public open space including playing facilities. The closest bus stops to the site are both approximately 125m to the west and north of the site, along Derby Road (St Wilfrid's Church bus stop) and Berry Lane (Booths bus stop) respectively, which offer frequent services to the nearby areas of Preston, Blackburn, Whittingham, Goosnargh, Woodplumpton, Clitheroe, and Chipping amongst others.
- 2.6. The 'Northern Loop' cycle route is also accessed from Berry Lane, which is a 130-mile loop that runs through the Forest of Bowland, Blackpool, Lancaster, as well as Arnsdale and Silverdale, while also connects to National Cycle Routes 6 and 69.
- 2.7. The site does not contain any listed buildings; however, the eastern part of the site falls immediately adjacent to the Longridge Conservation Area.



- 2.8. The site is located wholly within Flood Risk Zone 1 where the risks of all types of flooding are at their lowest.
- 2.9. There are no known Tree Preservation Orders in place on the site, nor are there any other known technical constraints.





## **/3 PLANNING HISTORY**

### Site Planning History

3.1. A search of Ribble Valley Borough Council's online planning register has been carried out to understand the site's planning history, with multiple formal planning applications identified below:

- **3/2011/0400:** *Outline application with All Matters Reserved to reduce the size of the existing Royal British Legion Clubhouse by demolition of existing single storey gable extensions (extension to the South elevation to be rebuilt). Erection of 5no. typical terraced houses with yards on site of the existing car park and part of Clubhouse site.* Approved with Conditions 11th November 2011.
- **3/2014/0211:** *Reduce the size of the existing Royal British Legion Clubhouse by demolition of single storey gable extension, relocation of bowling pavillion, and the erection of five houses.* Refused 3rd July 2014.
- **3/2014/0722:** *Reduce the size of the existing Royal British Legion Clubhouse by demolition of single storey gable extension, relocation of bowling pavillion and the erection of four houses.* Approved with Conditions 14th November 2014.
- **3/2015/1014:** *Discharge of condition 3 (materials) 4 (section details) 5 (boundary treatment) and 6 (construction method statement) of planning permission 3/2014/0722.* Approved 11th January 2016.
- **3/2020/0960:** *Proposed residential development of 13 apartments following the demolition of the social club.* Refused 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
- **APP/T2350/W/22/3299884:** *Proposed residential development of 13 apartments following the demolition of the social club.* Dismissed 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

3.2. The history of planning applications at the site demonstrates how the private members club had been subject to a decline in trade, with attempts made to generate revenue through the sale of the private car park for housing. Whilst this was successful, the club eventually went on to change its name so that membership fees could be retained rather than being passed to a larger organisation of clubs. It is understood that because the bowling green forms part of a wider public open space, it was regularly subject to misuse and vandalism



by the public, and so members who enjoyed bowling would go elsewhere to other Longridge clubs with secure facilities. The club eventually closed its doors for the last time in May 2018 and has remained vacant ever since.

- 3.3. Prior to the application for the erection of 13no. apartments in 2020, a pre-application enquiry was submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council. A formal pre-application meeting took place on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 between representatives of PWA Planning and Laura Eastwood (Principal Planning Officer) of Ribble Valley Borough Council, to discuss all planning related matters. This meeting was allocated reference: RV/2020/ENQ/00039 by the Council.
- 3.4. The pre-application meeting and advice therein was generally positive with the LPA raising no issues regarding the principle of the development nor major issues with the layout, with a residential usage of the site supported.
- 3.5. It was agreed in the meeting that Bat and Bird Surveys, a Planning Statement, a Design and Access Statement and a Heritage Statement would be required within the formal submission. Moreover, further justification would be required to help overcome concerns relating to the lack of on-site car parking.

#### Full Planning Application and Appeal

- 3.6. Full Planning Application ref: 3/2020/0960 was refused on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, with one reason for refusal which is detailed below:  
  
*"The proposed scheme due to its scale and resultant lack of provision for disabled parking and delivery / loading bays within the site does not provide adequate or inclusive access to the site, Furthermore the lack of provision for deliveries and servicing would place increased pressure on the on street parking in conflict with other road users to the detriment of highway safety. As such the proposal would be contrary to policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy for the Ribble Valley and Para 130 of the NPPF."*
- 3.7. Following the above refusal, an appeal was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and assigned ref: APP/T2350/W/22/329988. As part of the appeal, a Transport Report and parking survey were undertaken, to further illustrate the level of servicing and delivery associated with the social club, as well as demonstrating that there is space available in the immediate vicinity for continued kerbside delivery and refuse collections, without incurring any issues.



3.8. However, at Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the appeal decision, the appointed Inspector concluded that:

*"the inability to provide any parking to enable disabled people to access the site and the lack of parking provision for deliveries and service vehicles would harm highway safety. (...) the proposal would be contrary to Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which says that development must consider potential traffic and car parking implications, and not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area."*

3.9. As such, the appeal was dismissed by the Inspector due to the perceived lack of disabled parking and parking for service and delivery vehicles, which were deemed to add additional pressures on the parking within the street that could harm highway safety.

3.10. This resubmission is deemed to address the identified issues with regard to both disabled parking and parking for service and delivery vehicles, which is discussed in greater detail within the following sections of this document.

#### Other relevant applications

3.11. Other applications of relevance to this application:

- **3/2016/1149:** *Conversion of dwelling into 2 self-contained flats.* Approved with conditions 2nd February 2017.
- **3/2019/0406:** *Proposed construction of two retail units, including ancillary office at first floor, and six residential apartments including rebuilding of front elevation to King Street using original materials.* Approved with conditions 17th June 2019.
- **3/2019/0964:** *Change of use from former bank (Use class A2) to podiatry/chiropractic treatment clinic (Use class D1) with ancillary retail space. Conversion of first and second floors to two self-contained apartments including rear infill two-storey extension to create new internal stair and meter room below.* Approved with conditions 26th November 2019.

3.12. It is pertinent to note that permissions Ref: 3/2019/0406 and 3/2019/0964 are recently approved planning applications within Ribble Valley Borough were similar in that the proposals were also for apartments that did not have any allocated on-site car parking.



- 3.13. Within the delegated reports for both the 3/2016/1149 and 3/2019/0406 permissions, it is noted that LCC Highways raised no objection to the developments, given that these sites benefit from being located within the town centres, which are sustainable and have good access to sustainable modes of transport and an array of services, therefore establishing a precedent.



## **/4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1. The proposed development is for the erection of 12no. apartments, which will be made available exclusively to retirement living, with an associated courtyard area, involving the demolition of the former British Legion Club, Towneley Road, Longridge, PR3 3EA. It is anticipated that any planning consent would be subject to the following draft condition to control occupancy:

*"The residential units hereby approved shall be restricted to occupancy by persons over the age of 55 years only and the widower or widow of such person."*

- 4.2. The proposed apartments are to be a mix of one and two-bedroomed units, with a communal courtyard area for the residents to enjoy. The apartments will be located on the grounds of the former British Legion and would front onto Towneley Road. It is considered the proposed housing mix offers a range of accommodation types and sizes, which will appeal to over 55's.
- 4.3. The ground floor contains four flats in total, comprising 3no. two-bedroomed flats (Flats 1, 2 and 4) and 1no. one-bedroomed flats (Flat 3). The first floor comprises 5no. flats with 3no. two-bedroomed flats (Flats 5, 7 and 9) and 2no. one-bedroomed flats (Flats 6 and 8). Finally, the second floor contains 3no. two-bedroomed flats (Flats 10, 11 and 12).
- 4.4. The revised proposals now incorporate private on-site parking, which includes a disabled parking bay, a car parking bay, and a delivery/servicing bay, located to the north of the site, facilitated through the removal of one of the apartments provided at the ground floor within the previous application at the site.
- 4.5. The applicants have considered a number of options to provide car parking at the site, or in proximity to the site. Within the previous application at the site, the applicants noted that they would be open to purchase the land due south from the Council to provide parking spaces, or purchase/lease spaces from the nearby apartment complex. Furthermore, the applicants also considered providing long-stay permits from the nearby Barclay Road car park. However, the Council and Lancashire County Council were not supportive of either of the three options presented. As shown within Appendix A, which contains an email from Ribble Valley Borough Council's Head of Cultural and Leisure Services, the Council is



unwilling to sell any land to the applicants and as such, every feasible option has been exhausted.

- 4.6. A Landscape Scheme is submitted with the application which denotes the existing trees and shrubs that are to be retained along the site's boundaries and provides details of the new landscape features that are proposed within the development. The retention of the trees at this location will also form visual linkages to the wider green and public open spaces beyond, softening any perceived impact of a larger built structure that is proposed. The trees located to the northeast of the site, shown as T1 and T2 within the Tree Survey help to soften the visual impact of the built form proposed, while also forming linkages to the existing green spaces.
- 4.7. The landscaping scheme contains a mixture of native and non-native flowers, trees, and shrub species, such as Thuja and Rhododendron Moerheim, which provide an attractive border between the site and the bowling green to the rear, attract biodiversity, and also providing the residents of the proposed with an attractive outdoor space.
- 4.8. Regarding materials, the main external materials include stone panels and render cladding, with a metal-clad pitched roof and attic dormers. The materials have been carefully chosen to reflect the surrounding built design, with particular attention paid to the palette and form of the adjacent Longridge Conservation Area, where stone buildings are prominent throughout. Accordingly, stone cladding for the proposed apartment building was considered to be sympathetic to the adjacent buildings, to reduce the impact of the built form, therefore avoiding appearing dominant, while still providing some visual interest.
- 4.9. With regards to bin storage, the development will provide ample space to store bins with access provided for all residents. The secure refuse storage will be located to the north of the site, adjacent to the proposed parking area, outside, within the southwestern corner of the proposed development on the ground floor.
- 4.10. In summary, the revised scheme now incorporates adequate parking within the red edge, which includes a disabled parking bay, a parking bay, and a servicing/delivery bay, whereas the previously refused proposals provided no parking at the site.
- 4.11. The site has been designed in a sensitive way, being sympathetic to the locality, while increasing the visual interest of the site as a whole. The choice of materials and colour palette seeks to complement and enhance the existing properties with close proximity to



the site, reflecting a sense of local character present within the neighbouring Conservation Area.



## **/5 TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1. This planning application is supported by a number of technical reports which demonstrate that the proposed development is capable of being implemented without significant adverse impacts arising from site constraints. These are summarised below.

### **Transport and Parking**

- 5.2. The application has been submitted alongside a Transport Assessment, which accompanied the previously refused application at the site. It is pertinent to note that since this assessment was undertaken, the proposals now feature one less apartment, while also providing a disabled parking bay, a loading/servicing bay, a parking bay with EV charging, and secure bicycle parking.
- 5.3. Nonetheless, the Transport Assessment which confirms how the site is located within walking distance of Longridge and the array of services which the Town Centre has to offer, which range from supermarkets and cafés to churches and a public library, amongst a plethora of others. Moreover, the site also has good public transport links, which help to connect the site to nearby settlements which include Preston and Blackburn.
- 5.4. The Transport Statement details that the quantum of vehicular trips generated by the proposed redevelopment will be minimal, and significantly less than the reuse of the site as a social club, that could host regular functions during times when existing local residential parking demand is expected to be at its highest. It is concluded that the proposal will not have a material impact on the operation of the local road network. Nevertheless, the revised proposals now provide a disabled parking bay, delivery/servicing bay, and parking bay (incorporating an EV charging point) to the north of the site within the application red line boundary, in line with the previous reason for refusal at the site.
- 5.5. Furthermore, the LPA has generally been supportive of other town centre apartments in similar circumstances where little/no car parking has been provided. This proposed development therefore goes further, providing adequate parking at the site.





## **Heritage**

- 5.6. A Heritage Statement has been prepared by Chris O’Flaherty, who has assessed the proposal, its layout and materials, as well as its impact on the Conservation Area and any Heritage Assets.
- 5.7. The report confirms that the site at present detracts from the neighbouring Conservation Area, with little heritage or conservation value at present. The assessment reinforces that the redevelopment of the site presents an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area as a whole, creating a replacement building which has been sensitively designed to respond to its local context and is in fitting with the area.
- 5.8. The above is demonstrated further as the Local Planning Authority and Inspector raised no objections to the design of the development within the previous planning application and associated planning appeal, with the proposals having no impact upon the Conservation Area.

## **Land Contamination**

- 5.9. The supporting Phase I Geo-Environmental Site Assessment considers the potential contaminated land and geo-technical issues associated with the development of the site for residential purposes. The report confirms that the site is suitable for residential development, with no issues identified.

## **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 5.10. The site falls within Flood Risk Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is at the lowest. A Drainage Statement, along with the SuDS pro-forma is submitted in support of this application. Both the foul and surface water flows generated by the new development will be discharged to the existing combined sewer.

## **Ecology**

- 5.11. A licensed bat and bird survey was undertaken on site, confirming that the Former British Legion has negligible potential for roosting bats, with no evidence found that suggested that bats were roosting within the building. At the same time, no evidence of nesting birds was found on site too, enforcing that the site has limited potential for either.



### **Arboriculture**

- 5.12. A tree survey has been undertaken and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been produced for the application, which details the state of each tree individually. The survey identifies three trees present within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site, with T1 a grade A1 Oak, T2 a grade B1 Sycamore, and T3 a grade B1 Oak; all three trees are to be retained.
- 5.13. The proposed development however infringes upon the root protection area for both T1 and T2, but the impact is determined to be 'relatively low' if adequate root protection precautions undertaken during site works, such as hand digging are followed.

### **Landscaping**

- 5.14. A landscaping design is submitted in support of this application, which outlines that the range of species that will be planted within this development. The landscaping scheme contains a mixture of native and non-native flowers, trees and shrub species, such as Thuja and Rhododendron Moerheim, which provide an attractive border between the site and the bowling green to the rear, attract biodiversity, and also provide the residents of the proposed with an attractive outdoor space.
- 5.15. The proposed landscaping in the development is considered to create visual benefits, as well as biological benefits, as a biodiversity net gain will be achieved at the site due to the absence of landscaping at the site currently, in line with Paragraph 120 of the NPPF.

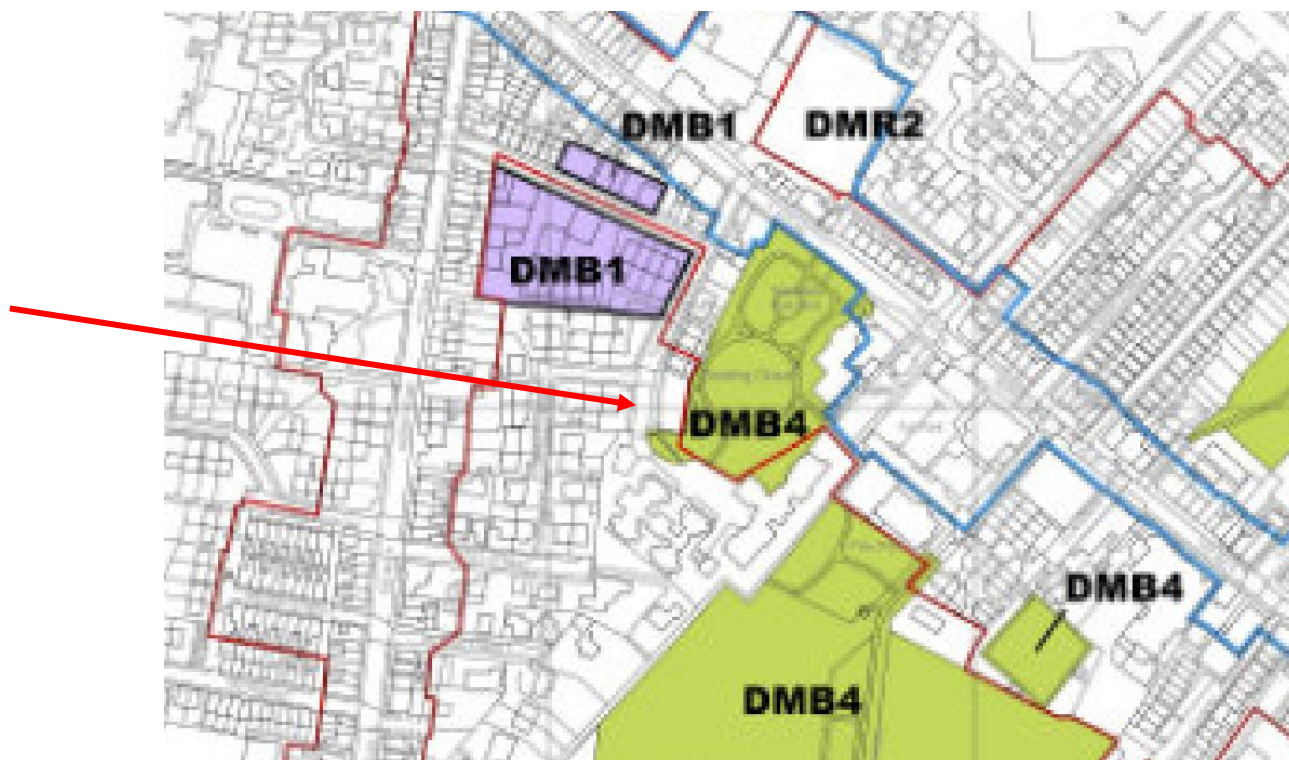


## /6 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that 'if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'. Said material considerations include any other supplementary / supporting planning documents and government guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

### **Development Plan**

- 6.2. The statutory Development Plan for the site comprises the Ribble Valley Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy (Adopted December 2014). This document establishes the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the area to 2028.
- 6.3. The statutory Development Plan also includes the Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan which was adopted in April 2019. The Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (2019) also forms part of the Council's adopted Development Plan but contains no policies considered relevant to the proposals.
- 6.4. Additionally, key policy documents that comprise 'material considerations' include the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF), and any local supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the proposal.
- 6.5. An extract from the Housing and Economic Development DPD Proposals Map is provided in Figure 3. As can be seen from the map, the site falls within the settlement boundary and very slightly within a Conservation Area (DME4) and Existing Open Space (DMB4), with the arrow indicating the location of the site.



*Figure 3 – Housing and Economic Development DPD Proposals Map Extract*

***Adopted Core Strategy (Adopted 2014)***

6.6. An overview of those planning policies as contained within the Development Plan considered most relevant to the principle of the proposed development is provided below:

- **Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy** – illustrates that the majority of new housing should be concentrated within the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley.
- **Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** – echoes the NPPF, showing how the Council will favour proposals which reflect sustainable development.
- **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.



- **Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change** – shows that the Council will seek to ensure all development is sustainable in its design and building standards, in order to address climate change.
- **Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity** – illustrates that the Council will seek to conserve and where possible, enhance the area’s biodiversity and geodiversity to preserve habits and species.
- **Key Statement NE5: Heritage Assets** – states that the Council will favour developments which work to conserve and where possible, enhance heritage assets and their settings, with development within Conservation Areas expected to respect and safeguard character, appearance and significance of the area.
- **Key Statement H1: Housing Provision** – asserts that the Council will put forward land for residential development, to ensure that they are able to meet their target of providing 5,600 dwellings by 2028.
- **Key Statement H2: Housing Balance** – shows that new residential development should deliver a suitable mixture of housing to meet local identified needs.
- **Key Statement H3: Affordable Housing** – states that within Longridge, housing developments of 10 or more units are expected to provide at least 30% of affordable housing provision on site. This policy also states that providing housing for the elderly is a priority for the Council, as shown in the Housing Strategy.
- **Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations** – illustrates that new development should be located to minimise the need to travel, especially by personal vehicle. All new developments should have convenient access to public transport, as well as pedestrian and cycle routes.
- **Policy DMG1: General Considerations** – states that new development should be of a high standard, being sympathetic to its surrounds.
- **Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations** – shows that proposals within the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley should consolidate, expand or round-off existing development, in keeping with the surrounds.



- **Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility** – evidences that proposals will be assessed against their availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure, to serve new residents.
- **Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands** – illustrates that the Council seeks to protect existing trees and woodlands, specifically those of great quality, and whereby possibly, the Council expects new development to enhance the landscape.
- **Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets** – evidences that the Council seeks to preserve heritage assets. With development proposals within Conservation Areas expected to conserve and where possible, enhance them.
- **Policy DMH1: Affordable Housing Criteria** – establishes the criteria for which groups of people new residential development should cater for, with (2) specifying for “older people currently resident in the parish or an adjoining parish.”
- **Policy DMB4: Open Space Provision** – illustrates that the Council wants to protect and whereby possible enhance local Open Spaces, to ensure that residents have good access to said facilities.

### ***Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 – 2028 (LNDP)***

- 6.7. The LNDP was adopted by the Council on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2019 and forms part of the statutory Development Plan and it utilised to help determine future planning applications within the Longridge Town Council area, which the application site lies within.
- 6.8. **Policy LNDP3: Longridge Design Principles** – states all new development proposals will be supported where they are of good design that responds positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the surroundings.
- 6.9. **Policy LNDP4: Conserving and Enhancing Our Designated Heritage Assets** – highlights the town’s conservation area will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 6.10. **Policy LNDP6: Landscape** – states development proposals should, conserve and enhance geodiversity and use native plant species appropriate to the location and setting in terms of type, height, density and the need for on-going management.



## Material Considerations

### ***National Planning Policy Framework (2023)***

- 6.11. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.
- 6.12. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in planning decisions as per Paragraph 2 of the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 6.13. The NPPF sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. **Paragraph 11** of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. 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, grant planning permission unless:
    - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significant and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework as a whole; or
    - Specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 6.14. Sustainable development is broadly defined in **Paragraph 8** of the Framework as having three overarching objectives:
- a) *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
  - b) *a social objective – 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; and*

*c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

- 6.15. **Paragraph 15** evidences that plans should address housing and economic needs within distinctive areas.
- 6.16. **Paragraph 20** states that strategic policies set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, providing for the needs of all
- 6.17. **Section 5**, 'Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes', demonstrates that one of the Government's central objectives is to increase the delivery of high-quality housing, which support the needs of local areas and relate to their surrounding context, with the Council providing sufficient provision of land for housing developments.
- 6.18. **Paragraph 60** of the Framework confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. It goes on to acknowledge the importance that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay
- 6.19. **Paragraph 65** of the Framework explains that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Exemptions to this 10% requirement should also be made where the site or proposed development, amongst other circumstances, provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly or students).
- 6.20. **Paragraph 83** indicates that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.





- 6.21. **Paragraph 110** clarifies that in assessing specific applications for new development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be, or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location. Later, at **Paragraph 111**, it is clarified that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 6.22. **Section 11** of the NPPF requires decisions to promote an effective use of land and requires decision makers to give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land for homes and other identified needs (**Paragraph 120**).
- 6.23. **Paragraph 126**, in relation to design, states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. This statement has considered the design principles in detail, ensuring that the proposed development is compliant with the requirements of the Framework in contributing positively to making places better for people.
- 6.24. **Section 16** of the Framework aims to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

#### ***Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)***

- 6.25. Paragraph 009 Reference ID: 63-009-20190626 Revised 26th June 2019 states in relation to specialist housing for older people as follows:

*What are the different types of specialist housing for older people?*

*There are different types of specialist housing designed to meet the diverse needs of older people, which can include (amongst others):*

- Age-restricted general market housing: This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens but does not include support or care services. \*(Other examples not included in the quote as they are not relevant).*

- 6.26. *There is a significant amount of variability in the types of specialist housing for older people. The list above provides an indication of the different types of housing available but is not definitive. Any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing. (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 63-010-20190626).*



- 6.27. While PPG advice does not have the status of national planning policy, it is an important material consideration in decision-making and the PPG advice is issued to give greater clarity to NPPF Paragraph 65(b), which relates to specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs. As such, the provision of specialist housing for the over 55s as proposed is a clear material consideration which should be given significant weight in the decision-making process.
- 6.28. To add to the above, the PPG also emphasises that *"the need to provide housing for older people is critical. People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing (...) Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking."* (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626).
- 6.29. One of the potential mechanisms noted that could assist in providing appropriate accommodation for the elderly are accessible and adaptable homes (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 63-008-20190626). This Paragraph of the PPG shows that *"Accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, while also saving on health and social costs in the future"* going on to state that *"It is better to build accessible housing from the outset rather than have to make adaptations at a later stage."* Therefore, at the national stage, there is a clear emphasis on the importance of this type and form of accommodation to meet the critical need for older persons accommodation.
- 6.30. Furthermore, Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 63-012-20190626 states that local authorities and their plans *"need to provide for specialist housing for older people where a need exists"* while Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626 illustrates that *"where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need."*
- 6.31. The above indicates that the onus is on the LPA to support proposals for specialist accommodation, especially whereby there is an unmet need for such housing. The PPG makes it very clear that in such circumstances, LPAs should take a positive approach to these forms of development.



- 6.32. Providing appropriate specialist accommodation for older persons has numerous benefits, with one of the main benefits being that it helps to free up housing stock locally, with older individuals able to downsize and move into more appropriate accommodation, without having to leave their local community. There are other benefits on an individual level, as accessible and adaptable housing allows them to live more independently, which saves on health and social costs in the future; thus, directly reducing the strain upon the National Health Service.
- 6.33. The benefits of providing housing for older persons and the delivery of such is further acknowledged by the announcement of a taskforce to address the improved delivery of specialist older persons housing in the Levelling Up white paper released in February 2022.

***Ribble Valley Borough Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Report, December 2008***

- 6.34. SHMA's are produced to assist in policy development, decision-making and resource-allocation. Ribble Valley Borough Council's most recent SHMA was adopted in December 2008.
- 6.35. The SHMA and the Housing Strategy both identify the need for development of extra care housing for the elderly, with *"30 elderly households requiring this support on the Housing Register (2002)"*. Moreover, *"The Need Surveys across the Ribble Valley parishes highlight(ed) elderly households housing needs in particular for one to two bedroom sheltered accommodation or bungalows, near to local services and family"*.
- 6.36. Page 44 of the SHMA identifies that *"the borough has slightly higher proportion of elderly residents, although the population is projected to age significantly in future years. This is likely to have a significant impact on different levels of the housing market, as well as on local service provision."*
- 6.37. Furthermore, the SHMA notes that *"The stakeholder event included within this Strategic Housing Market Assessment noted the perception that there was a lack of schemes available for older people if they wanted to downscale from their current home. In addition, it was noted that there was an increasing demand for adaptations and future builds to include the requirements of lifetime homes to meet the needs of the growing older population"*. Paragraph 100 of the SHMA establishes the conclusions of the report findings, asserting



that the LPA must understand *"the implications of a growing elderly population and meeting their needs and aspirations.*

***Ribble Valley Borough Council Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (SHENA) (April 2020)***

- 6.38. This document will be used by Ribble Valley Borough Council to inform the future review of its Local Plan. The SHENA presents evidence on the overall local housing need in Ribble Valley for the Council to draw upon in establishing its housing requirement in the emerging Local Plan. The assessment also separately considers how this overall need is segmented into a need for different types, sizes, and tenures of housing as well a more detailed consideration of the specific needs of individual groups in the local housing market.
- 6.39. Paragraph 7.6 of the SHENA demonstrates that within Ribble Valley *"the proportionate representation of all groups aged 65 and over is notably greater than that recorded in wider Lancashire and indeed the North West and England as a whole".* Paragraph 7.7 builds upon this, stating that *"in 2018 the number of Ribble Valley residents aged 65 and over accounted for circa 24% of the borough's total population, and it can be seen that the representation of older age-groups has increased steadily over time."*
- 6.40. Paragraph 7.13 estimates the rate at which those aged 75 and over require different forms of specialist housing provision and suggests that there could be demand for: *"125 sheltered housing units per 1,000 residents aged 75+; 20 enhanced sheltered housing units per 1,000 residents aged 75+; and 25 extra care units with 24/7 support per 1,000 residents aged 75+.*
- 6.41. Paragraph 7.14 states that the number of Ribble Valley residents aged 75 and over will *"increase by: 3,193 persons where provision is made for 148 dwellings per annum; and 3,610 persons where provision is made for 280 dwellings per annum."* Paragraph 7.12 asserts that the annual demand for specialist housing units to accommodate for the growth in older private household population will demand either *"36 or 41 specialist housing units, depending on the level of housing provision."*
- 6.42. Paragraphs 7.21 and 7.22 of the SHENA demonstrate that the above figures relate to the provision of C2 Use accommodation in terms of Residential Institutions, but it is nonetheless acknowledged that C3 Use Extra Care Housing can too be considered appropriate to meet the calculated demand.



6.43. At Paragraph 8.21 it is summarised that *"there is expected to be growth in the number of older people aged 65 and over in Ribble Valley over the plan period. The number of such residents is projected to grow by 33% where provision is aligned with the minimum need generated by the standard method and by 39% where a higher need for 280 dwellings per annum is met. This would be expected to respectively generate an annual demand for between 36 and 41 bedspaces in sheltered, enhanced sheltered or extra care accommodation, based on industry toolkits recommended in the PPG."*

#### ***Longridge Housing Needs Survey (February 2013)***

6.44. The Longridge Housing Needs Survey investigates and identifies the local housing needs within Longridge, through the distribution of questionnaires to local households. 7% of respondents indicated that they require an adaptation of their existing home to make it more physically accessible for themselves, while 18% of respondents stated that their current home was too large and expressed a wish to downsize. Finally, 3% households/respondents indicated a need for adaptation of their home to assist a physically disabled householder member.

#### ***Existing Local Provision of Older Person's Accommodation***

6.45. As aforementioned, the Ribble Valley Borough is projected to have a significant population growth within the age group 65+ over the next 15-year period, which will be disproportionate when compared to the overall population growth over the same period in time.

6.46. As of 2022, there were a total of 750no. units of 'Age Exclusive' or Retirement Housing available across the Ribble Valley Borough, inclusive of 27no. separate schemes. However, there is predicted to be a shortfall of at least 525no. retirement properties by 2035, when assessed against the requirements of the over 75s across the Ribble Valley Borough using the @SHOP methodology, or the alternative higher need of 1,086 using the Contact Consulting methodology.

6.47. As such, the future pipeline supply of such specialist accommodation for older persons within the Borough to address the projected growth is uncertain.



### ***Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2023 Health in an Ageing Society***

- 6.48. The Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report – Health in an Ageing Society ([Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2023 – Health in an Ageing Society \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115442/cmo-annual-report-2023-health-in-an-ageing-society.pdf)) was published earlier this year. The report aims to concentrate on issues which are about improving the quality of life in an adult's later years, rather than the quantity. The Chief Medical Officer's biggest concern for policymakers is the degree to which the population living in older age is concentrated geographically in the United Kingdom in general and in England specifically.
- 6.49. The report recognises that there is insufficient infrastructure designed for older adults, including housing. Additionally, the report notes much of the housing stock is designed for younger families rather than older adults, who sometimes live alone.
- 6.50. The Chief Medical Officer recommends that local governments start planning more systemically on the basis of where the population will age in the future, rather than where the demand was 10 years ago. This includes building or adapting housing to be appropriate for an older population.
- 6.51. The points made by the Chief Medical Officer in this report with regard to housing emphasise the importance of and need for building homes specifically for older people and their changing needs.



## **/7 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT**

### **Principle of Development**

- 7.1. It is pertinent to note that the principle of development at the site, i.e. the removal of the existing social club and erection of apartments was deemed to be acceptable within the most recent planning application made at the site (ref. 3/2020/0960). Given that there have been no significant changes to national or local planning policies since the above application was determined, it is trusted that the principle of development is acceptable.
- 7.2. Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG2 of the adopted Core Strategy identify that new development, which includes residential development, should be focused within the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley, with said development helping to expand, consolidate or round-off existing development, in keeping with the surrounds.
- 7.3. The proposed development would utilise a brownfield site, following the demolition of the existing run-down social club, as this usage of the site is no longer a viable option due to financial reasons and competition from other clubs with more secure playing facilities. Longridge will continue to benefit from the provision of other private members clubs. Moreover, there remains many other forms of community facilities within the town centre that provide a location to meet, eat and drink. As such, the loss of the club will not harm the vitality of viability of Longridge.
- 7.4. The usage of the site for residential purposes is in line with the surrounds of the site, with the club previously reduced in size to create space for the erection of four residential units, permitted under planning application reference 3/2014/0722; therefore, evidencing the suitability of the area for residential uses. The proposed development is therefore a logical way to utilise the space and consolidate development within Longridge, providing specialist accommodation for retirement living, within an established residential area, in line with Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG2.
- 7.5. Key Statement H1 is focused upon housing provision, and it states that the Council needs to allocate enough land to accommodate for 5,600 dwellings over the planning period, which runs until 2028; this is the equivalent of 280 dwellings per annum. The proposed development is for the erection of 12no. age-restricted and adaptable apartments, which would help to address a portion of this specifically identified need, which is likely to have only increased since the previous application. The proposed development is logical and



deliverable, located within a highly sustainable area and single ownership. As such, the apartments will likely be built within a year of planning permission being granted, helping to provide older persons accommodation in the short-term.

- 7.6. Key statement H2 states that new residential developments should deliver a suitable mixture of housing types and style to meet identified local needs. As aforementioned, the proposed development is for the erection of 12no. adaptable apartments, which will be exclusively for over 55's, with the Council identifying within their SHMA that providing housing for older people is a priority; particularly in locations that are close to local services and family.
- 7.7. In total, the proposed will provide 9no. two-bedroomed flats and 3no. one-bedroomed flats. Each flat will be self-contained, despite sharing some common areas such as stairs, and each will have its own designated kitchen, living/dining areas, as well as a bathroom which will contain a shower unit. The proposed development will therefore help to address a recognised need, providing attractive and specialist accommodation for over 55's within Longridge Town Centre. The associated social benefits of the scheme should consequently be attributed significant material weight, with the Planning Practice Guidance noting that the need to deliver such accommodation is critical, while the UK Chief Medical Officer's report further emphasises this growing need to accommodate for the UK's growing elderly population.

### **Amended Proposals**

- 7.8. As aforementioned, the sole issue identified within the previously refused application at the site (ref. 3/2020/0960) and the Planning Appeal at the site (ref. APP/T2350/W/22/3299884), relate to the perceived lack of both a disabled parking bay and a delivery/service bay.
- 7.9. Although the applicants sought to justify within both the planning application and associated appeal why the lack of provision would be acceptable within this highly sustainable town centre location, the proposals have been amended to address these concerns. More specifically, the proposals have removed 'Flat 1' from the Ground Floor, which was to be located to the north of the site. Through the removal of this flat, adequate space has been 'freed up', to allow for the creation of a parking bay, disabled parking bay, and delivery/service bay, as illustrated by the proposed site plan.





- 7.10. Given that no additional issues were raised in either the previous planning application or appeal at the site, it is trusted that the Council will be in a position to support the proposals.

### **Sustainable Development**

- 7.11. Key Statement DS2 echoes Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, establishing that the Council will favour development which reflect sustainable development. Considering the NPPF, 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)'*

- 7.12. Regarding the economic objective, the development will bring residential development to Longridge, making suitable use of a derelict and no longer viable brownfield site. The scale of development will mean that the construction period will bring revenue to the local economy and any contributions will add economic benefit to the Council. The residents of the proposed development will also significantly increase local spending power, using the array of services which Longridge Town Centre has to offer, to the benefit of local businesses.
- 7.13. The social objective of sustainable development is met since the development is to provide a decent number of high-quality apartments for over 55's to Longridge, a need which the Council have specified is in demand. This will allow older local residents to move into more suitable accommodation for themselves, whereby an array of services is within walking distance.
- 7.14. Environmentally, the site has little ecological value and it is considered that the introduction of apartments will have minimal effect on the site's current environmental value. As a result of the development, the site will be appropriately remediated; therefore, reducing any potential harmful pollutants from causing issues in the future which would otherwise not take place. The proposed development includes the planting of multiple different species which will be maintained appropriately along with the proposed landscaping at the site.



Therefore, the site is considered to have a positive impact upon the environment and will encourage biodiversity at the site.

- 7.15. In summary, by virtue of the site's location in the settlement boundary, on a disused site, and that the scheme would meet the three objectives of sustainable development, the principle of the proposed development is considered acceptable.

### **Affordable Housing Contributions**

- 7.16. Key Statement H3 and Policy DMH1 of the Adopted Core Strategy establish the amount of affordable housing which new residential developments should provide, either on site or off-site via contributions to the Council. However, Paragraph 65 of the NPPF, which was published more recently than the Core Strategy (in 2023) clarifies that exemptions to this requirement should be made where the site or proposed development, amongst other circumstances, provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the aging population).
- 7.17. Neither the NPPF or the Core Strategy define 'specialist' or 'purpose built' accommodation, and to provide clarity the National Planning Practice Guidance was updated in 2019. NPPG stresses the increasing complexities of an ageing population and provides an indicative list of 'what specialist housing for older people lies within the contemplation of planning policy'. This list includes age restricted general market housing for the over 55 and active elderly but without support or care, and separately extra care housing which offers independent care in usually adapted flats or bungalows with care available where necessary but not a pre-requirement. Importantly, age restricted housing accommodation for people aged over 55 squarely falls within this definition.
- 7.18. It is proposed that occupancy will be subject to a condition that limits occupation to a restricted sector of the market. As such the development sits firmly within the 'specialist housing' bracket, and whilst adopted local policy is clear that there is an affordable housing requirement, the later NPPF and PPG (2019) obviate the need for affordable housing – in the first instance to a reduced rate where relevant, but more importantly to zero when considering the exemption allowed for extra care and specialist schemes. In this case therefore it is considered that affordable housing on site is not required. It is further pertinent to note that the LPA or the appointed Planning Inspector requested the provision of affordable housing as part of the proposals, with this not forming a reason for refusal or dismissal.



## **Design and Layout**

- 7.19. The design of the proposed development largely resembles of that from the previous application at the site; however, the proposals now incorporate parking to the north of the site, as previously discussed. Within both the previous planning application at the site and Planning Appeal, no issues were raised with regard to the design of the proposals. Accordingly, it is trusted that the Council will raise no issues with the design of the proposed development.
- 7.20. Nonetheless, as discussed at the pre-application stage, the locality contains a mixture of different styles and eras of dwellings. To the west of the site beyond Towneley Road lies a mixture of bungalows, while reconstituted stone and rendered wall terraced housing lies due north, approved under planning application reference 3/2014/0722. Flats are located to the south.
- 7.21. It is proposed to use a mixture of materials that will be high-quality, durable, and sustainable for the development, that will reflect the character of the nearby dwellings and Conservation Area, while also adding visual interest to the site and the locality as a whole, in line with Policy DMG1, Key Statement EN3, and Policy LNDP3.
- 7.22. The design of the apartments has been informed by Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), to ensure that all dwellings meet these requirements. Each apartment is shown to be in accordance with NDSS on their individual plans, ensuring the longevity of the development in accordance with the Sustainable Design and Construction Guide. It is anticipated that the construction period will be undertaken in a sustainable manner as well as the dwellings being built to all necessary sustainable design codes, including Part L of the Building Regulations.
- 7.23. Within the previous application at the site, the Council sought clarification on how the apartments would be designed to accommodate over 55s, with reference made to the 'HAPPI principles'. These principles are based upon 10 key design recommendations, for the development of housing for older people, these include: Space and flexibility; Daylight in the home and in shared spaces; Balconies and outdoor space; Adaptability and 'care ready' design; Positive use of circulation space; Shared facilities and 'hubs'; Plants, trees, and the natural environment; Energy efficiency and sustainable design; Storage for belongings and bicycles; and External shared surfaces and 'home zones'.



7.24. The first HAPPI report was published in December 2009, while the most recent publication, referred to as HAPPI 5 – Rental Housing for an Ageing Population, was published in July 2019. The HAPPI principles do not form part of any national or local policy designations, while the HAPPI design recommendations are generic and are much less specific than Part M4(2) Building Regulations, which the proposals will strictly adhere to. Accordingly, Building Regulations Part M4(2) must be treated as a 'national standard' for specialist adaptable accommodation for the elderly. The implementation of such measures is deemed to satisfy the requirements of future inhabitants and provide the LPA with confidence that the accommodation will be adaptable to suit the changing needs of occupants.

### **Highways and Parking**

7.25. Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 state that new development should be located conveniently to minimise the need to travel, specifically by personal vehicle, while sites should also have convenient access to public transportation links, as well as pedestrian and cycle links. In this instance, the applicants perceive that the location of the site is perfect for the use proposed and the requirements of future occupants, who will wish to continue to live independently and form an active part of the local community.

7.26. The application has been submitted alongside a Transport Assessment which confirms how the site is located within walking distance of Longridge and the array of services which the Town Centre has to offer, which range from supermarkets and cafés to churches and a public library, amongst a plethora of others. Moreover, the site also has good public transport links, which help to connect the site to nearby settlements which include Preston and Blackburn, as well as good cycle links.

7.27. The site's central and convenient location to transport links and services means that there is less of a need for a personal vehicle. This is furthered by the fact that the proposed development is exclusively for those over 55, whereby the need for a personal vehicle is much lower, with schemes such as the 'older Person's free bus pass' scheme allowing elderly residents to travel on public transport for free.

7.28. There is limited car parking at the site due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the site is located within close proximity to Longridge Town Centre and the plethora of services available there, which would allow residents to easily and conveniently walk into the Town Centre. Secondly, the proposed development is exclusively for older people, who have less of a need for personal vehicles, especially when considering that the site has exceptional access



to bus and cycle networks. Cycle racks has been provided for residents within the bin storage area of the property.

- 7.29. Nevertheless, as aforementioned the revised proposals now incorporate a disabled parking bay, along with a parking bay and a servicing/delivery bay, which will allow delivery vehicles to park, unload, and leave without needing to park on-street; thus, adequately addressing the previous reason for refusal and dismissal of the planning appeal.
- 7.30. On-street parking will also be available for residents and visitors if necessary, and it is considered that local capacity exists without causing loss of amenity to existing residents. Furthermore, the Barclay Road short stay car park is approximately 80m due east of the site and provides further parking as required. Nevertheless, the Transport Statement clarifies that the quantum of vehicular trips generated by the proposed redevelopment will be minimal, and significantly less than the reuse of the site as a social club, which could host regular functions during times when existing local residential parking demand is expected to be at its highest.
- 7.31. It is concluded that the proposal will not have a material impact on the operation of the local road network. Moreover, the demand for on-street parking could be reduced in comparison to the fall-back position. The proposals are consequently perceived to be in line with Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3.
- 7.32. Section 3 of this Planning Statement also highlights other recently approved planning applications within Ribble Valley Borough which were also for apartments, which do not have any allocated on-site car parking. Within the delegated reports for both the 3/2016/1149 and 3/2019/0406 applications, it is noted that LCC Highways raised no objection to the developments, given that these sites benefit from being located within the town centres, which are sustainable and have good access to sustainable modes of transport and an array of services, therefore establishing the precedent.
- 7.33. The proposed development is evidently similar, as it is located within Longridge Town Centre, which offers an array of sustainable public transportation linkages, as well as a plethora of different services. Henceforth, there is no need for a large amount of private car parking within the proposed development, with the design making the most efficient use of the available space, while meeting a significant portion of the Council's identified need for older people.



## **Heritage**

- 7.34. Key Statement NE5, Policy DME4, and Policy LNDP4 all demonstrate how the Council want to conserve and where possible, enhance heritage assets, with development within or in close proximity to Conservation Areas expected to respect and safeguard the character, appearance, and significance of the area.
- 7.35. As previously noted, the site lies adjacent to the Longridge Conservation Area boundary. The Longridge Conservation Area appraisal document illustrates that the area is essentially urban in character, with 'Towneley Gardens' providing some green space within the area. The appraisal also states that most of the buildings within the area are built from local sandstone, with two and three-storey terraced houses the most prevalent.
- 7.36. Overall, the scale of the proposals, as well as the materials chosen, have been carefully designed and chosen to reduce the visual impact of the proposed, while also not detracting from Longridge Conservation Area. Again, within the previous application at the site, the Council raised no issues with regard to potential impacts upon the Conservation Area or any heritage assets.

## **Environmental Matters**

- 7.37. It is considered that the development has considered environmental matters appropriately. Policy DME1 aims to protect existing trees and woodlands, and where possible enhance them. The Tree Survey and Arboricultural Implications report highlights that the three nearby trees are all to be retained, with the proposed development having no impact on them.
- 7.38. Key Statement EN4 aims to conserve and where possible, enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, which is also reiterated in Policy LNDP6. The site has little biodiversity and geodiversity in its present form as confirmed by the bird and bat survey submitted in support of this application. Moreover, the proposed landscaping scheme is attractive and practical, providing an overall improvement in regard to biodiversity and geodiversity.

## **Drainage**

- 7.39. The submitted drainage impact assessment and sustainable drainage strategy document evidence that both the foul and surface water flows generated by the site will be discharge



to the existing combined sewer, which is deemed to be acceptable when viewed in the context of the existing building.

### **Open Space Provision**

- 7.40. Policy DMB4 illustrates that the Council wish to protect and where possible, enhance local Open Spaces, to ensure that residents have good access to these facilities. As aforementioned, to the immediate east of the site lies 'Towneley Gardens' which are designated as Essential Open Space and Protect Open Space as shown in the Districtwide Local Plan map.
- 7.41. Rather than to propose high boundary treatments that could nevertheless be installed under permitted development, the proposal will ensure a degree of openness, that promotes a sound relationship with the public open space. The proposal will also introduce a degree of natural surveillance over Towneley Gardens, which will be of benefit to all users, as it will help to deter anti-social behaviour.

### **The Planning Balance / Summary**

- 7.42. The application site is currently a wasted resource, given its highly accessible location and the major benefits that could accrue from its development. The site is within the settlement boundary of Longridge, a principal settlement whereby this type of development should be directed, and would represent the sustainable redevelopment of an unused and derelict Brownfield site that has been subject to vandalism.
- 7.43. Consideration has been given to the impact of the development on the built and natural environment and it is not considered that the development would give rise to any unacceptable impacts on the local highway network and matters of waste, car parking, flood risk, drainage, ecology, trees, and sustainability are all well considered.
- 7.44. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is fully consistent with the adopted Development Plan and would be clearly consistent with the thrust of the NPPF policy, particularly in terms of sustainable development and representing an effective use of land. In terms of economic benefits, the proposals would make a positive contribution to the local economy during the construction phase and upon occupation by residents. From a social dimension, the proposals would result in a contribution towards the area's housing stock and provide high-quality specialist accommodation for older people, a need that is growing not only nationally, but within the Ribble Valley Borough. In terms of the



environmental aspect, the proposals seek to respect the landscape and biodiversity and appropriate mitigation measures with respect to the latter will be put in place should planning consent be granted.

- 7.45. Evidently, the proposed development has taken on-board the feedback received within the previous application at the site and the associated planning appeal. As discussed, the proposals now contain a bay for servicing/delivery vehicles, along with a disabled parking bay, parking bay and cycle racks too. The previous reason for refusal at the site has therefore been adequately addressed and it is therefore considered that the Council will support the proposed development.





## **/8 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1. PWA Planning is retained by Touchline Developments to progress a planning application for the proposed residential development of 12no. apartments, which will be made available exclusively for retirement living, following the demolition of the social club on land associated with the Former British Legion, Towneley Road, Longridge, PR3 3EA. The application is a resubmission of LPA ref: 3/2020/0960 which was for the development of 13no. apartments following the demolition of the social club.
- 8.2. The principle of the proposed development is considered acceptable, representing the reuse of a site in a highly sustainable location within the settlement boundary of Longridge. The proposed development has been designed to be sensitive to local character and recognises the scale and palette of materials evident in the area. Consideration has been given to the impact of the development on the built and natural environment and it is not considered that the development will give rise to any unacceptable impacts on the local highway network and matters of waste, ecology, flood risk, drainage, trees, and sustainability are all well considered.
- 8.3. Importantly, the revised proposals have taken on board the previous reason for refusal and planning appeal dismissal, which both related to the lack of provision for a disabled parking bay and service/delivery loading/unloading bay. The current proposals have removed the most northerly located flat previously located on the ground floor, which has provided sufficient space to add in a disabled parking bay, delivery/servicing bay, parking bay and cycle racks too. Given that the previous application and appeal raised no other issues, it is trusted that the revised proposals have sufficiently addressed concerns and the development should therefore be wholly supported.
- 8.4. Indeed, the provision of older persons accommodation is referred to as a critical need within the Planning Practice Guidance, while the UK's Chief Medical Officer's report reaffirms this point, noting that the delivery of specialist accommodations for older people must be viewed as more of a priority, given the UK's ageing population. The proposed development will make appropriate use of the site, demolishing the existing tired social club, and erecting a number of older persons apartments within this highly sustainable location that benefits from services and public transport links within walking distance.



- 8.5. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is fully consistent with all aspects of the Development Plan and would be clearly consistent with the thrust of the NPPF policy, particularly in terms of sustainable development and representing an effective use of allocated and sustainably located land.
- 8.6. Given the above, the proposed development is considered acceptable and should be approved without delay.



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# Appendix A



## Robert Palmer

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**From:** Jane Hardacre <jane@touchlinefab.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 November 2023 12:29  
**To:** Matthew Wyatt  
**Cc:** Michael Sproston  
**Subject:** FW: Longridge Land

Hi Matt,

Please see the below response from the Head of Cultural and Leisure services following my further request to purchase land adjoining the former Royal British Legion for car parking.

Kind Regards

Jane Hardacre  
Director

T: 01772 796281 | E: [jane@touchlinefab.co.uk](mailto:jane@touchlinefab.co.uk)



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**From:** Mark Beveridge <Mark.Beveridge@ribblevalley.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 November 2023 11:10  
**To:** Jane Hardacre <jane@touchlinefab.co.uk>  
**Subject:** Longridge Land

Hi Jane

Hope you are well.

I have taken your request to purchase to our Corporate Management Team and their decision is the same as previously, the Council does not wish to sell any of our land. I appreciate this will not be the news you would wish to hear; in terms of your planning proposals you would need to speak with colleagues in Planning if you wish to amend those.

Regards

Mark

Mark Beveridge  
Head of Cultural & Leisure Services  
Ribble Valley Borough Council

Office 01200 – 425111  
Mobile 07958 657 875

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### **Tops for resident satisfaction – 79% of residents are satisfied with Ribble Valley as a place to live (Perception Survey 2018)**

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