



The Eagle at Barrow, Clitheroe Road, Barrow

Planning Statement

On behalf of **Fence Gate Ltd.**

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1 Introduction

1.1.1 Stantec has been instructed by Fence Gate Ltd (the 'Applicant') to prepare and submit a full planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for development at The Eagle at Barrow, Clitheroe Road, Barrow (the 'Site').

1.1.2 This application seeks full planning permission for a two-storey, 38-bedroom hotel development within the curtilage of The Eagle at Barrow public house car park. The description of development is as follows:

'The erection of a hotel development (Use Class C1) with associated parking and landscaping'

1.1.3 This Planning Statement seeks to assess the proposed development against relevant Development Plan policies and other material considerations, including emerging planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Contextual Background

1.1.4 Tourism is a crucial component of the Ribble Valley economy, with the visitor economy accounting for 13% of total employment, higher than both county and national averages. However, sectoral analysis reveals that whilst the accommodation and food services sector is one of the most specialised industries in the local economy, it has been experiencing a gradual decline.

1.1.5 To take advantage of local economic strengths, and to arrest the decline, the Applicant, Fence Gate Ltd, is proposing a new, modern hotel facility to serve the area. The development will contribute to local economic sustainability through job creation and increased visitor spending.

1.1.6 Given the importance of the visitor economy and wedding tourism to the Ribble Valley, the expansion of The Eagle through the addition of a hotel represents a significant opportunity to boost the area's economic prospects and long-term prosperity.

1.1.7 Over the years, the Applicant has observed that the existing car park at The Eagle consistently operates well below capacity. Furthermore, The Eagle has become a popular location for functions, yet there is no overnight accommodation conveniently available in Barrow. To make the most of this business opportunity, and to serve the local tourist industry, as well as to make more effective use of the underutilised car park and other available land, the Applicant proposes to diversify the Site by introducing a hotel development.

Applicant

1.1.8 The Applicant, Fence Gate Ltd, has successfully served Pendle and the Ribble Valley for over three decades through their two public houses and country lodge establishments. This includes The Eagle at Barrow gastropub which sits to the immediate north of the Site, The Fence Gate, and the Fence Gate Lodge.

1.1.9 The Applicant has the expertise and experience to build a successful business here and aims to leverage its hospitality industry knowledge to enhance Ribble Valley's tourist offering.

Pre-application Engagement

1.1.10 The Applicant has carried out formal pre-application engagement with the Council to ensure that a high quality scheme can be delivered which aligns with the Council's vision for the Site and applicable planning policies. The Applicant also appreciates the importance of pre-application engagement in front-loading issues ahead of an application submission.

- 1.1.11 Through pre-application advice Council officers were receptive to the principle of a hotel development, subject to detailed design considerations and the submission of supporting documentation relating to local economic need. Further information on the Applicant's approach to pre-application engagement is provided at Section 4.

Scope of Submission

- 1.1.12 The application submission comprises a suite of documents derived from a review of the validation checklist and from our due diligence. The supporting documents have also been agreed through formal pre-application feedback from planning officers and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement. Table 1 below identifies each of the submission documents and their author:

Table 1.1 Submission Documents

Submission document	Prepared by	Reference
Application forms and fee	Stantec	-
Location Plan	Frank Belshaw Building Surveyors Ltd.	2023/91/01 Rev A
Existing Site Plan		2023/91/01 Rev A
Proposed Site Plan		2023/91/02 Rev F
Proposed Floor Plans		2023/91/03 Rev E
Proposed Roof Plan and Elevations		2023/91/04 Rev E
Existing and Proposed Site Sections and Street Scene		2023/91/05 Rev B
Design and Access Statement		-
This Planning Statement	Stantec	-
Economics Justification Report	Stantec	-
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Urban Green	UG_2650_ARB_AIA_01 Rev. P02
Biodiversity Net Gain Metric		-
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment		UG_2650_ECO_BNG_02
Landscape General Arrangement Plan		UG_2650_LAN_GA_DRW_01 Rev P03
Soft Landscaping Plan		UG_2650_LAN_SL_DRW_02 Rev P02
Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan		UG_2650_ECO_HMMP_02
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal		UG_2650_ECO_PEA_03
Indicative Foul and Surface Water Drainage Plan	PJA	08336-500-P2
Drainage Technical Note		
Transport Statement	Stantec	
Lighting details and scheme		

Structure

- 1.20 The Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2 - The Site and Surroundings** - describes the application site, its immediate surroundings and wider context, and planning history.

- **Section 3 - Proposed Development** - summarises the proposed development including the proposed quantum of development, scheme layout, access and car parking, and landscaping strategy.
- **Section 4 - Development Plan** - sets out relevant Development Plan policies against which the development proposals will be determined.
- **Section 5 - Material Considerations** - sets out the material considerations which should be considered when determining the application.
- **Section 8 - Assessment of the Scheme Proposals** - assesses the proposed scheme against Development Plan policies and other relevant material considerations.
- **Section 9 - Summary and Conclusions** - summarises the main findings of the Planning Statement, establishes the planning balance, and concludes on the overall merits of the scheme.

2 Site Context

2.1 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1.1 The application Site extends to 0.42ha and comprises The Eagle at Barrow public house car park and perimeter grass verges. A small extent of unnamed brook partially flows through the Site to the north.
- 2.1.2 To the immediate north of the Site is The Eagle at Barrow public house building, beyond which are residential buildings. Access is obtained off Clitheroe Road which bounds the Site to the east. This also acts as the primary road leading into and out of Barrow. Beyond Clitheroe Road are commercial and residential properties.
- 2.1.3 The land to the south and west of the Site is characterised by agricultural fields. The Bramley Brook Cottage Bed and Breakfast also sits adjacent to the Site to the west.
- 2.1.4 The Site is situated in a sustainable and accessible location, with two bus stops located immediately adjacent to the Site on Clitheroe Road, serving Clitheroe, Burnley, Preston, Blackburn, and Shadsworth. Whalley Train Station is approximately 6 minutes via bus or a 20-minute walk from the Site and offers train services to and from Manchester, Clitheroe, Rochdale, and Blackburn.
- 2.1.5 The Site is also advantageously located with respect to the local highway network, with the A59 a 3-minute drive away, providing convenient onward travel to Clitheroe and the M6 and M65 motorways.
- 2.1.6 In terms of statutory designations:
- **Flooding:** The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and thus situated in an area with a low risk of flooding.
 - **Tree Preservation Orders:** There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) currently in effect at the Site or within the vicinity.
 - **Heritage:** The Site is not subject to Listed Building, Conservation Area, or Schedule Ancient Monument heritage constraints.
 - **Public Rights of Way:** There are no public rights of way at the Site.

2.2 Relevant Planning History

- 2.2.1 A search of the Council's online planning register has been undertaken and no planning applications of relevance to the proposed development have been identified at the Site .

3 Proposed Development

3.1.1 This section details the key elements of the proposed development. Further information is provided within the submitted plans and Design and Access Statement, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

3.1.2 This application seeks full planning permission for a two-storey hotel development within the footprint of the existing Eagle public house car park and adjacent grassed area. The description of development is as follows:

'The erection of a hotel development (Use Class C1) with associated parking and landscaping'

3.2 Scale, Massing, and Layout

- 3.2.1 The application proposes the erection of a 2-storey, 38-bed hotel development. There is no spa, leisure, restaurant, function rooms or conferencing facilities within the proposed hotel, because food will be available at The Eagle.
- 3.2.2 14no. rooms will be located at ground floor level and 14no. on the first floor, each with an ensuite bathroom. A central corridor will provide access to these bedrooms at each level.
- 3.2.3 At ground level, a reception office, desk and seating area are to be located by the main entrance to the building, along the eastern elevation. 1no. accessible toilet, 2no. female toilets, and 3no. male toilets are also positioned here, along with 2no. storerooms and a plant and meters room.
- 3.2.4 Stairs are positioned at either end of the building, with a lift by the main reception. Secondary staff entrances are positioned at the northern and southern ends of the building.
- 3.2.5 A porte-cochere covered vehicular entranceway is proposed at the main entrance. This will not only weather-proof the arrival experience, but also create a welcoming focal point to the building, emphasising the significance of this primary elevation onto Clitheroe Road.
- 3.2.6 To the south of the proposed hotel is an external plant area, which will contain the buildings air conditioning and extraction units. Also here is the proposed bin store. A 1.8m high timber fence enclosure is to be positioned around this area.

3.3 Materials and Appearance

- 3.3.1 The proposed materials include white painted textured render finish with stone plinth, along with natural stone to match the main public house materiality. A natural blue slate roof tile is proposed, with rainwater gutters and natural stone capping around the perimeter.
- 3.3.2 UPVC windows will have natural stone heads, sills, jambs and mullions. The front door will be constructed with decorative redwood stone and window surrounds.
- 3.3.3 The car park will be surfaced with black pedestrian and vehicular asphalt surfacing. Paving and surrounding hardstanding will be concrete plank, flag and tactile paving. New and repositioned car parking spaces will be surfaced with permeable block paving.

3.4 Access and Parking

- 3.4.1 The existing public house and proposed hotel will effectively work as a single entity, with patrons visiting both enterprises in a single visit. The two establishments will share 78no.

parking bays, including 8no. accessible and 2no. EV charging spaces. Also proposed immediately outside the hotel building are 6no. Sheffield cycle stand spaces.

- 3.4.2 A new pedestrian access is proposed from Clitheroe Road and will lead to the hotel's front entrance via a marked pedestrian crossing. This will provide a safe route for patrons to walk from the public footpath towards the hotel.
- 3.4.3 A visibility splay of 2.4m x 43m is achievable at the Site's access in both directions, in accordance with the Manual for Streets for roads with a 30mph speed limit.
- 3.4.4 Refuse servicing will be obtained via the existing entrance off Clitheroe Road. The hotel's bins will be stored within the timber enclosure to the south of the building but will be moved by hotel employees to the north of the building for refuse collection before being returned to the enclosure. Details of waste disposal are contained within the Transport Statement.

3.5 Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

- 3.5.1 The existing brick wall to the front elevation, along Clitheroe Road, will be repaired and retained, with new concrete copings on top. Here, the scheme also proposes the introduction of species rich grass, and rain garden planting.
- 3.5.2 To the west and south of the building, the proposal seeks to introduce semi-native shrub planting and a native hedge. Beyond this, a timber post and rail fence is proposed to replace the existing.
- 3.5.3 Strips of species rich grass and ornamental shrub planting are proposed within the car park, and a total of 16no. trees will be introduced across the Site perimeter. All existing trees will be retained, save for one small tree (T2) which has been identified by the consultant arboriculturist as being dead and recommended for removal in accordance with best practice.
- 3.5.4 Along with the 16no. trees proposed, the scheme also proposes the introduction of 18no. shrubs; 110m of native hedge mix; 174sqm of semi-native shrub mix; 78sqm of pollen and nectar wildflower mix; 65sqm of purple and white rain garden mix; and 110sqm of ornamental low mix. This is detailed within the submitted Soft Landscaping Plan.

3.6 Drainage

- 3.6.1 Pre-application engagement was undertaken with United Utilities to agree upon the drainage solution within the Site. United Utilities confirmed that the preferred option here would be to pump surface water discharge into the watercourse rather than an outfall into the combined sewer. The drainage strategy has therefore been developed based around a pumped discharge into the watercourse.

3.7 Signage

- 3.7.1 The submitted elevation plans detail two areas on the proposed building that can accommodate fascia signage. The principal signage will be positioned on the primary elevation facing onto Clitheroe Road, and a second smaller sign is to be positioned along the entrance elevation to the north.
- 3.7.2 A separate advertisement consent application will be submitted by in due course.

4 Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.1.1 The purpose on this Section is to explain the pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant prior to the submission of the application. There is no statutory requirement to undertake pre-application consultation for the proposed development; however, the Applicant was keen to engage with the Council to address any issues prior to the submission of the application.
- 4.1.2 The Applicant is committed to working with Council Officers to realise a sustainable development at the Site and this is reflected in the comprehensive pre-application discussions which have taken place between the Applicant and Planning Officers over many years.

4.2 August 2016 Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.2.1 Formal pre-application advice was first sought from the Council in August 2016 with respect to a proposal to submit an outline planning application for a hotel development of up-to 40 bedrooms at the Site. A meeting with the Planning Officer and Consultant Team was arranged in September 2016, with follow-up written advice received soon after.
- 4.2.2 The broad principle of development was supported by the Officer. The Officer relayed that the key considerations that an application would be assessed against include the building's appearance, materials, siting, and impact on neighbouring residential amenity. To reduce visual dominance, it was recommended that the building be set further back from Clitheroe Road, with soft landscaping along the frontage to screen parking. Additionally, the design should incorporate contextually sensitive materials sourced locally.

4.3 March 2024 Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.3.1 A re-designed scheme was formally brought to the Council in March 2024. This time feedback was sought in relation to the submission of a full planning application for a proposed hotel development.
- 4.3.2 The revised approach to the design relocated the building to the rear of the Site, away from Clitheroe Road, as requested in the 2016 response.
- 4.3.3 The pre-application feedback received provided advice on the key planning policies relevant to the proposal, the principle of development, key planning considerations, and a list of submission requirements.
- 4.3.4 Once again the Officer was receptive to the principle of a hotel development at the Site subject to detailed design considerations and the submission of supporting documentation relating to local economic need in the context of Core Strategy Policy DMG2.

5 Planning Policy

- 5.1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("The Act") establishes the legislative framework for town planning in England and Wales. For decision-taking, Section 38(6) of The Act requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.2 The Statutory Development Plan documents of relevance to the proposed development comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014) and the Housing and Economic Development DPD (HE DPD) (2019).
- 5.1.3 As denoted on the adopted Proposals Map which supports the HE DPD, the application Site is not allocated for a specific land-use and adjacent to the Barrow settlement boundary. It can therefore be described as being in the open countryside.
- 5.1.4 A summary of site specific and relevant spatial policies are set out below, and we assess the proposals against these policies in Section 8 of the Planning Statement.

Relevant Spatial and Site Specific Policies

- 5.1.5 The Council's spatial strategy is set out at Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy. Policy DS1 directs development proportionately to the Borough's most sustainable locations, as defined by the settlement hierarchy and corresponding settlement boundaries.
- 5.1.6 Policy DMG2 Strategic Considerations sets out how development outside defined settlement boundaries must meet certain criteria. One such criteria which would justify development in the open countryside is where development should be essential to the local economy. In addition, development in the open countryside will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting.
- 5.1.7 Policy DMB3 relates to the recreation and tourist development and states that permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough, subject to the following criteria being met:
- 1) *'The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan;*
 - 2) *The proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available;*
 - 3) *The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;*
 - 4) *the proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposal should be well related to the public transport network;*
 - 5) *The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscape areas; and*
 - 6) *The proposal must take into account any nature conservation in pugs using suitable survey information and where possible seek to incorporate any important existing*

associations within the development. Failing this then adequate mitigation will be sought'.

- 5.1.8 Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy will be encouraged, as set out at Policy EC3. In the Policy EC3 justification text, the Council sets out how gap analysis is required in order to encourage new investment within hotel accommodation as appropriate.
- 5.1.9 In addition to the policies above, a range of other Core Strategy policies are relevant to the proposed development. These other relevant Core Strategy policies are listed below and summarised at Appendix A:
- Policy EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Policy EC3 – Visitor Economy
 - Policy DMI1 – Planning obligations
 - Policy DMI2 – Transport considerations
 - Policy DMG1 – General considerations
 - Policy DMG3 - Transport and mobility
 - Policy DME1 – Protecting trees and woodland
 - Policy DME2 – Landscape and townscape protection
 - Policy DME3 – Site and species protection and conservation
 - Policy DME6 – Water management
 - Policy DMB5 – Footpaths and bridleways

6 Material Considerations

6.1.1 In addition to the development plan policies set out above, the following documents are material considerations and should be taken into account by the Council in determining the planning application:

- Draft Ribble Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan
- National Planning Policy Framework
- National Planning Practice Guidance

6.1.2 Of the above material considerations, the Draft Ribble Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan is of particularly relevance to this application and are therefore summarised within this section below. A summary of other material considerations identified is provided at Appendix B.

6.2 Draft Ribble Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan (2024)

6.2.1 Ribble Valley has developed a Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP). Initially produced in 2017, it has been refreshed in 2024, and is designed to lead, influence and coordinate the management of all aspects of the local visitor economy. It outlines the strategic context, value and profile of the tourism to the area, and identifies actions to maximise the potential of the sector in Ribble Valley.

6.2.2 Page 9 of the DMP states that the visitor economy in Ribble Valley in comparison with many destinations is relatively buoyant. Ribble Valley brand awareness has moved significantly forward in recent years, but there is still potential to get the area recognised as a first-class tourism destination.

Accommodation

6.2.3 Accommodation in Ribble Valley is generally high quality, as evidenced by accreditations, with many award-winning and highly rated businesses. The sector is dominated by larger hotels and self-catering units, with a good geographical spread, though some gaps exist, particularly during peak times. This is set out within Page 11 of the document.

6.2.4 Hotels report high occupancy levels, and there is unmet demand across the wider accommodation sector, especially during peak periods such as the wedding season. Businesses offering flexible booking models are benefiting from new business, while the local wedding industry is driving bookings and encouraging repeat visits.

Weddings

6.2.5 Page 13 of the document goes on to write that the demand for high-quality wedding venues has grown rapidly, and in response, Ribble Valley Council and its partners established a unique collaboration of licensed wedding venues in 2014. Believed to be the only partnership of its kind in the UK, it promotes Ribble Valley as the perfect wedding destination through a strong shared brand. The partnership's success is driven by the area's stunning landscapes, a local authority committed to collaboration, and the recognition that all members benefit from increased tourism, whether through dining, accommodation, or related services.

6.2.6 The diversity of venues - from castles and abbeys to country house hotels and barns - offers couples a wide range of options, all maintaining high standards of quality and customer service. The group has played a key role in shaping wedding law reforms and has undertaken various promotional efforts, including launching a website, hosting journalists, attending

national wedding fairs, and organizing the first valley-wide wedding fair. A high-quality Ribble Valley Wedding Guide serves as a comprehensive resource for prospective couples.

- 6.2.7 Despite the challenges of the pandemic, bookings have increased, and wedding patterns have shifted, now taking place year-round and on various days of the week rather than just weekends. The economic impact extends beyond the venues, benefiting local businesses, suppliers, accommodation providers, and restaurants. Weddings also drive tourism by attracting first-time visitors, many of whom return for longer stays, contributing further to the local economy

Summary

- 6.2.8 Ribble Valley's accommodation sector benefits from a wide variety of options and good geographical coverage, with occupancy rates above the national average. However, there are capacity shortages in certain types of accommodation during peak times, creating challenges for visitors. Opportunities exist to maximise off-peak and off-season demand while developing new facilities to address capacity issues. However, the risk remains that excessive demand during peak periods could lead to lost business if availability cannot meet visitor needs.

7 Economics

- 7.1.1 This next section provides a summary of the Socio-Economic Technical Note submitted in support of the application.

Hotel Expansion Socio-Economic Justification Technical Note Summary

- 7.1.2 In 2022, total employment in the Ribble Valley area stood at approximately 32,000, reflecting an 8% increase since 2015, consistent with national trends. The region's Gross Value Added (GVA) reached £2 billion in 2022, representing a 35% increase over the past decade, slightly below the national growth rate of 38%. Sectoral analysis reveals that manufacturing remains the dominant industry. Accommodation and food services sector, despite being one of the most specialised industries in the local economy, has been experiencing a gradual decline in employment since 2015. While external factors such as Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic have influenced economic trends, the sustained downturn in this sector suggests structural challenges.
- 7.1.3 Despite the retraction, however, the growth rate of the accommodation and food services sector since 2012 has been double the rate of growth seen in the local economy. Alongside this the sector locally has marginally outgrown the sector at a national level alongside contributing 0.7% more to local GVA than the sector does nationally, showing the relative importance of the industry to the local economy.
- 7.1.4 Tourism is a crucial component of the Ribble Valley economy, with the visitor economy accounting for 13% of total employment, higher than both county and national averages. However, unlike Lancashire and the rest of the UK, where tourism employment has grown, Ribble Valley has seen a 3% contraction in this sector since 2015. Policy documents, including the Lancashire Tourism Growth Strategy and Ribble Valley Economic Plans, emphasise the need for additional accommodation to increase overnight stays to boost visitor spending.
- 7.1.5 A significant focus of the report is the importance of the wedding sector to the Ribble Valley and the wider North West. The UK Wedding Sector Report highlights that 11% of all UK weddings take place in the North West, making it one of the most significant wedding destinations in the country. Ribble Valley, in particular, has positioned itself as a premier wedding location, with an estimated 2,000 weddings held annually, three times more than other parts of Lancashire. This level of activity generates approximately £36.4 million in local spending each year, covering venue hire, catering, accommodation, and other associated services. The Ribble Valley Wedding Heaven initiative, launched in 2014, continues to promote the area as a leading wedding destination. However, a shortage of on-site accommodation remains a limiting factor for further growth in this sector. It is estimated that approximately 40-50% of couples value venues with overnight accommodation included or onsite accommodation as one of the biggest selling points.
- 7.1.6 The economic impact of the proposed hotel has been assessed using Stantec's in-house economic impact tool, PLACED. The operational phase of the development is expected to generate 29 gross on-site jobs, with 11 net additional jobs contributing to local employment after accounting for displacement and other economic factors. The construction phase is also anticipated to create temporary employment opportunities and inject investment into the local economy. Over a ten-year period, the hotel is projected to contribute £3.8 million to GVA, with additional unquantified benefits stemming from increased visitor spending in the region.
- 7.1.7 Beyond direct employment and economic output, the development would support the broader visitor economy. Increased overnight stays would generate further spending in local businesses, including restaurants, retail outlets, and transportation services. Additionally, the enhancement of wedding tourism through the provision of on-site accommodation is expected

to drive further demand, reinforcing Ribble Valley's reputation as a premier wedding destination.

Summary

- 7.1.8 The Socio-Economic Technical Note concludes that the proposed hotel at The Eagle is a strategically important development that helps to address the decline in the accommodation and food services sector, supports tourism growth, and has the potential to strengthen the wedding industry. By aligning with regional policy priorities, the project will contribute to local economic sustainability through job creation, increased visitor spending, and enhanced infrastructure. Given the importance of the visitor economy and wedding tourism to the Ribble Valley, the expansion of The Eagle through the addition of a hotel represents a significant opportunity to boost the area's economic prospects and long-term prosperity.

8 Planning Assessment

8.1.1 The planning considerations relevant to the proposed development relate to:

- The Principle of Development
- Design
- Highways
- Ecology, Arboriculture, and Landscaping
- Drainage
- Noise and amenity

8.2 Principle of Development

8.2.1 The Site is not allocated for a specific land-use and is situated immediately to the south of the Barrow settlement boundary. It is therefore in the open countryside.

8.2.2 Core Strategy Policy DMG2 requires development outside defined settlement boundaries to meet certain criteria to be considered acceptable. Policy DMG2 is worded in such a way that only one criterion needs to be met in order to meet the policy test. One such criteria which would justify development in the open countryside is where development would be essential to the local economy.

8.2.3 As summarised in the previously section, the Socio-Economic Justification Technical Note submitted in support of the application identifies the accommodation and food sector as one of five specialised industries in Ribble Valley. The growth rate of the accommodation and food services sector since 2012 has been double the rate of growth seen in the local economy, and has marginally outgrown the sector at a national level, showing the relative importance of the industry to the local economy

8.2.4 However, despite being one of the most important sectors in the local economy, it has been experiencing a gradual decline since 2015. In light of the accommodation and food service sector's importance to the local economy, it is essential that the relative decline in the sector is arrested. To arrest this decline, it is essential that Ribble Valley maximise its tourism potential by delivering modern hotel facilities to increase its tourist offer and meet demand.

8.2.5 One area in particular which the proposed hotel development can contribute to maximising Ribble Valley's potential as a tourist destination is providing much needed accommodation for a burgeoning wedding sector. The demand for high-quality wedding venues has grown rapidly, and in response, Ribble Valley Council and its partners established a unique collaboration of licensed wedding venues in 2014. The Ribble Valley Wedding Heaven initiative, launched in 2014, promotes the area as a leading wedding destination. However, as set out in the Draft Ribble Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan, there are accommodation capacity shortages which risks lost business and missed opportunities for growth (page 20).

8.2.6 The Technical Note therefore concludes that there is a demonstrable economic need for additional accommodation facilities within the area. The proposed development is essential to the local economy due to its ability to support the visitor economy and the accommodation and food services sector in particular. The new hotel would also contribute to the delivery of Ribble Valley's strategic objective, as set out within the DMP, of maximising the opportunities of wedding tourism by ensuring there is sufficient accommodation to attract and serve those looking to host their wedding in the locality.

- 8.2.7 It is considered that the contribution the proposed hotel can make to arresting the relative decline of a vitally important sector in the local economy, and a sector that is crucial to the ongoing success of the local economy, means that it is essential. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DMG2 by meeting the requirements of criterion 1.
- 8.2.8 By virtue of the proposed development's accordance with criterion 1 of Core Strategy Policy DMG2, the support provided to tourism development by Core Strategy Policies EC3 is engaged. Core Strategy Policy EC3 states that proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities.
- 8.2.9 Core Strategy Policy DMB3 also provides policy support to tourism development, subject to criteria being met. How the proposed development accords with each criterion of Policy DMB3 is set out in Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1: The proposed development accords with each criterion of Policy DMB3

Criteria	Accordance
1. The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan.	In the context of Core Strategy Policy DMG2, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable because it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is essential to the local economy.
2. The proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available.	The proposed development is situated adjacent to a settlement boundary and in close proximity to existing buildings. Existing buildings are present to the north and west, and beyond Clitheroe Road to the east. It is considered that the proposed development would not result in a protrusion into the open countryside, for it is physically well related to existing built form, underlined by how it is proposed on an underutilised car park of an adjacent building.
3. The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design	The proposed development is 2-storeys in height, consistent with the scale of adjacent buildings. It is set back from Clitheroe Road to minimise the building's visual dominance, as suggested by planning officers during pre-application engagement. High-quality materials are proposed, including natural stone and natural blue slate roof, to ensure that the development is consistent with the prevailing character of Barrow. The proposed hotel is also of a high-design quality, incorporating features and detailing which create visual interest, such as a porte-cochere covered vehicular entranceway and a front door constructed with decorative redwood stone. In addition, the proposed development incorporates a comprehensive landscaping strategy to ensure the new hotel can be sensitively introduced at the Site, which includes 16 new trees and 110

	sqm of native hedge mix around the Site perimeter.
4. The proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network.	The proposed development is supported by a Transport Statement which demonstrates that the proposed development is in a sustainable location with no local highway safety issues. It also demonstrated that the traffic impact associated with the proposed development will be negligible.
5. The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscaped areas; and	As set out in the accompanying Transport Statement, the proposed parking provision is adequate to meet the maximum parking demand that could be generated by The Eagle public house and the proposed hotel simultaneously. The Transport Statement includes swept path analysis which demonstrates that the proposed development can be adequately served by delivery and refuge vehicles. A landscaping strategy is also proposed as part of the hotel development which achieves a 10% net gain in biodiversity.
6. The proposal must take into account any nature conservation impacts using suitable survey information and where possible seek to incorporate any important existing associations within the development. Failing this then adequate mitigation will be sought.	The proposed development is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which concludes that no Phase 2 ecology surveys are required to determine presence or absence of protected species, nor is ecological mitigation required for the proposal will not lead to any harm on any protected species or conservation designations.

8.2.10 Accordingly, in addition to the support provided by Core Strategy EC3, the support provided to tourism development by Core Strategy Policies DMB3 is also engaged.

8.2.11 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with the development plan. In light of this, whilst a hotel is deemed a main town centre use, there is no requirement to undertake a sequential test or impact assessment, as set out at paragraphs 90 and 94 of the NPPF.

8.2.12 It should also be borne in mind that Fence Gate Ltd is seeking to invest and expand its business operations at an underutilised brownfield site, to make the most of growth opportunities and to build upon on the area's tourism strengths to secure its future prosperity. These factors should be afforded significant weight in the determination of this application, as set out at paragraphs 85, 87, and 124-6 of the NPPF. In particular, paragraph 125 emphasises that planning decisions should promote and support development on car parks to ensure effective land use.

Summary

8.2.13 In summary, it is considered that the contribution the proposed hotel can make to arresting the relative decline of a vitally important sector in the local economy, and a sector that is crucial to the ongoing success of the local economy, means that it is essential. The proposed

development is therefore in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DMG2 by meeting the requirements of criterion 1.

- 8.2.14 By virtue of the proposed development's accordance with criterion 1 of Core Strategy Policy DMG2, the support provided to tourism development by Core Strategy Policies EC3 and DMB3 is engaged.
- 8.2.15 It is therefore considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the Council's development plan and is acceptable in principle.
- 8.2.16 The proposed development aligns with the Ribble Valley development plan in principle, therefore a sequential test or impact assessment is not required under NPPF paragraphs 90 and 94, despite the hotel being a main town centre use. Additionally, Fence Gate Ltd's investment in an underutilised brownfield site should be given significant weight (NPPF paragraphs 85, 87, 124-126), particularly as paragraph 125 encourages development on car parks to optimise land use.

8.3 Design

- 8.3.1 The Council's approach to design is outlined at Core Strategy Policy DMG1. Developments should adhere to high design standards and be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of scale, style, and materials. Development should also be of an appropriate density, layout, and achieve visual harmony with its surroundings, and not have an adverse impact on existing amenities. Sustainable construction techniques should be utilised where possible.
- 8.3.2 The design of the proposed hotel has been arrived at following close assessment of the prevailing character of the locality, and having incorporated feedback received during pre-application engagement.
- 8.3.3 The proposed hotel building has been designed to a high standard using good quality materials, including natural stone and natural blue slate at the roof. It is in-keeping and sympathetic to the local character of Barrow, including the existing Eagle restaurant to the immediate north. Elevational cues from The Eagle have been employed to create a cohesive and responsive design.
- 8.3.4 The eastern elevation, facing Clitheroe Road, is the proposed hotel's primary frontage. To emphasise this, and to create visual interest, a porte-cochere covered vehicular entranceway is proposed. Furthermore, the proposed hotel is set back from Clitheroe Road to reduce the visual prominence of the building.
- 8.3.5 It is considered that the proposed development has been designed to a high standard, befitting of its position at a gateway location to Barrow, and sensitive to the character of neighbouring buildings and the prevailing character of Barrow. It is therefore in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DMG1 paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF.

8.4 Highways

- 8.4.1 Policy DMG3 requires that proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. and should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network, and development sites should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking and service areas.

- 8.4.2 This application is supported by a Transport Statement which considers the highways impacts of the proposed development and has been produced in accordance with the requirements of Lancashire County Council, as Local Highway Authority, and transport Policy DMG3 of the Council's development plan.
- 8.4.3 The Transport Statement forecasts that the proposed development would generate a total of 10 vehicle trips during a weekday morning peak hour and 15 vehicle trips during a weekday evening peak hour. This level of trip generation equates, on average, to one additional vehicle trip every six minutes in a weekday morning peak hour and approximately one additional vehicle trip every four minutes in a weekday evening peak hour. The additional number of vehicle trips generated by the proposed development will have a negligible traffic impact on the wider highway network during the weekday peak hours and thus no further assessment is required.
- 8.4.4 In addition, the Transport Statement also concludes that there are no inherent road safety issues associated with the existing highway layout in the vicinity of the Site.

Parking

- 8.4.5 A total of 78 car parking spaces are proposed to be shared between the existing public house and the proposed hotel. A total of eight disabled parking spaces will also be provided across the Site as well as two electric vehicle charging point (EVCP) spaces. Cycle parking provision of six cycle spaces, in the form of three Sheffield stands, is proposed for the development.
- 8.4.6 There are currently 111 parking spaces provided at the existing site and therefore the proposed development would lead to the loss of 33 car parking spaces. A parking accumulation assessment is provided at Section 7 of the Transport Statement and demonstrates that 78 spaces would be sufficient to accommodate the anticipated demand for both the existing public house and the proposed hotel simultaneously.

Access

- 8.4.7 The main pedestrian and vehicular access to the site will be taken via the existing access from Clitheroe Road. Pedestrian access to the Site will be retained from the existing main site access on Clitheroe. A visibility splay of 2.4m x 43m is achievable at the Site's access in both directions, in accordance with the Manual for Streets for roads with a 30mph speed limit.
- 8.4.8 An additional pedestrian access is proposed approximately 40m south of the existing site access on Clitheroe Road.
- 8.4.9 Swept path analysis demonstrates that the proposed development can be adequately served by delivery and refuge vehicles.

Summary

- 8.4.10 It is concluded that there would not be an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the additional number of vehicle trips generated by the proposed development will have a negligible traffic impact on the wider highway network. The 78 car parking spaces proposed would be sufficient to accommodate the anticipated demand for both the existing public house and the proposed hotel simultaneously. Accordingly, the proposed development is therefore considered acceptable with regard to local planning Policy DMG3 and paragraphs 116-118 of the NPPF

8.5 Ecology, Arboriculture, and Landscaping

Ecology

- 8.5.1 The Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity, as set out at Core Strategy Policy EN4. Development proposals that would adversely affect protected species and conservation sites will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances, as described by Core Strategy Policy DME3.
- 8.5.2 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted in support of the application concludes that there are no habitats at the Site which contain value for protected species and therefore no further ecology surveys or mitigation is required. The Site is located within the Impact Risk Zone of Little Clough SSSI but a sufficient distance away so that no impact from the proposed development is anticipated.
- 8.5.3 The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain assessment and metric concludes that the proposed development can demonstrate a net gain of 0.12 habitat units (16.43%), 0.37 hedgerow units, and no net loss in watercourse habitat units.
- 8.5.4 The proposed development complies with local and national planning policy for area habitats and linear hedgerow units. A statutory 10% net gain in watercourse units will be secured off-site via planning condition and Section 106 agreement.

Arboriculture

- 8.5.5 At Core Strategy Policy DME1, the Council describes how it will oppose the clearance of broad-leaved woodland for development and promote sustainable woodland management to protect structure, biodiversity, and visual amenity. Successional tree planting is encouraged to maintain long-term tree cover. Developments affecting trees must include detailed arboricultural surveys and tree constraint plans, outlining the impact on both on-site and neighbouring trees.
- 8.5.6 The proposed development will not require the removal of any trees, tree groups, or hedgerows. However, the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment recommends the removal of one tree (Tree T2) due to its poor condition and location in accordance with best practice.

Landscaping

- 8.5.7 Core Strategy Policy DME2 states how the Council will seek, wherever possible, to enhance the local landscape.
- 8.5.8 The proposed development incorporates a comprehensive landscaping strategy to ensure the new hotel can be sensitively introduced at the Site.
- 8.5.9 Strips of species rich grass and ornamental shrub planting are proposed within the car park, all existing trees will be retained, and a total of 16no. trees will be proposed at the Site perimeter.
- 8.5.10 Along with the 16no. trees proposed, the scheme also proposes the introduction of 18no. shrubs; 110m of native hedge mix; 174sqm of semi-native shrub mix; 78sqm of pollen and nectar wildflower mix; 65sqm of purple and white rain garden mix; and 110sqm of ornamental low mix.

Summary

- 8.5.11 In summary, there are no habitats at the Site which contain value for protected species and, therefore, no further ecology surveys or mitigation is required. The proposed development incorporates a comprehensive landscaping strategy to ensure the new hotel can be sensitively introduced at the Site, which includes 16 new trees and 110 sqm of native hedge mix. It is therefore considered that the proposed development is in accordance with Core Strategy Policies EN4, DME1, DME2, and DME3.

8.6 Drainage

- 8.6.1 Core Strategy Policy DME6 states that development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere. All applications for planning permission should include details for surface water drainage and means of disposal based on sustainable drainage principles.
- 8.6.2 A Surface Water Drainage Strategy has been prepared to demonstrate that a sustainable drainage solution can be provided for the proposed development. The proposed surface water drainage system will pump attenuated surface water runoff to the north of the proposed development, discharging to the unnamed ordinary watercourse at 2.0l/s in accordance with the advice outlined by United Utilities via a pre-development enquiry. Attenuation storage will be provided in the form of geocellular tanks, including addition storage in case of pump failure.
- 8.6.3 Foul water flows from the south of the Site will discharge via gravity to an existing United Utilities public combined sewer, situated along the western boundary of the Site, as agreed as part of a pre-development enquiry.
- 8.6.4 The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DME6.

8.7 Summary

- 8.7.1 The planning assessment in this Section demonstrates that the proposed development accords with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would weigh against the grant of planning permission for the proposed development.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of Fence Gate Ltd in support of a Full planning application for development at The Eagle at Barrow, Clitheroe Road, Barrow. The application seeks Full planning permission for a two-storey, 38-bedroom hotel development within the footprint of the existing The Eagle at Barrow car park.
- 9.1.2 Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 9.1.3 The proposed development has been progressed with careful consideration given to the Site's surrounding context and it is considered that a proposed scheme has been arrived at which sensitively balances the constraints and opportunities of the Site. Prior to submitting the application, the Applicant undertook comprehensive pre-application discussions with the Council and has incorporated this feedback into the proposed scheme.
- 9.1.4 The Socio-Economic Justification Technical Note submitted in support of the application identifies the accommodation and food sector as one of five specialised industries in Ribble Valley. However, despite being one of the most important sectors in the local economy, it has been experiencing a gradual decline since 2015.
- 9.1.5 The contribution the proposed hotel can make to arresting the relative decline of a vitally important sector in the local economy, and a sector that is crucial to the ongoing success of the local economy, means that it is essential. There is a demonstrable need for additional accommodation facilities within the area, and the new hotel would contribute to the delivery of Ribble Valley's strategic objective of maximising the opportunities of wedding tourism by ensuring there is sufficient accommodation to attract and serve those looking to host their wedding in the locality.
- 9.1.6 As the proposed development is essential to the local economy, it is in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DMG2 by meeting the requirements of criterion 1. By virtue of the proposed development's accordance with criterion 1 of Core Strategy Policy DMG2, the support provided to tourism development by Core Strategy Policies EC3 and DMB3 is engaged.
- 9.1.7 The proposed development is supported by a suite of technical reports which demonstrate that there is no technical reason to preclude or refuse development at the Site.
- 9.1.8 In conclusion, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at paragraph 11 of the NPPF, it is respectfully requested that the proposed development be approved without delay.

Appendix A Other Relevant Development Plan Policies

In addition to the development plan planning policies set out at Section 4, Table A.1 below provides a summary of other development plan policies relevant to the determination of the planning application.

Table A.1: Other Relevant Development Plan Policies

Policy Reference	Summary
Core Strategy	
Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity	The Council aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity while preventing habitat fragmentation by supporting green corridors and cross-boundary collaboration where necessary. Development proposals should avoid negative impacts on biodiversity, particularly on sites of recognized environmental importance. Where adverse effects are unavoidable, developers must demonstrate mitigation measures or, as a last resort, compensation. Applications must include appropriate survey information and ensure a net biodiversity enhancement. Protected sites include SSSIs, LNRs, CBHs, SACs, SPAs, Local Geodiversity Heritage Sites, Ancient Woodlands, and priority habitats and species under UK and European legislation. For non-statutory sites, compensation may be managed through biodiversity offsetting mechanisms.
Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy	Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities through the conversion of existing buildings or associated with existing attractions. Significant new attractions will be supported, in circumstances where they would deliver overall improvements to the environment and benefits to local communities and employment opportunities.
Key Statement DMI1: Planning Obligations	Planning Obligations will ensure that developments contribute to local community needs and sustainable growth, either through in-kind support or financial contributions with a transparent audit trail. Negotiated on a site-by-site basis, contributions will prioritize affordable housing, essential highway safety improvements, open space, and education. Where viability is a concern, developers must adopt an open-book approach, covering the Council's costs for independent evaluation. Additionally, the Council will explore a Community Infrastructure Levy to support infrastructure delivery.
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations	New development should be located to minimise the need to travel. Also it should incorporate good access by foot and cycle and have convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car. In general, schemes offering opportunities for more sustainable means of transport and sustainable travel improvements will be supported. Sites for potential future railway stations at Chatburn and Gisburn will be protected from inappropriate development. Major applications should always be accompanied by a comprehensive travel plan.

<p>Policy DMG1: General Considerations</p>	<p>All development proposals must adhere to high design standards, considering the eight Building in Context principles and ensuring compatibility with surrounding land uses in terms of scale, style, and materials. Density, layout, and visual relationships between buildings must be carefully planned, with a focus on landscape impact and existing amenities. Sustainable construction techniques and energy efficiency measures should be incorporated, aligning with national standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes.</p> <p>Access considerations must include traffic and parking implications, safe and suitable access for expected traffic levels, and the protection of public rights of way. Developments should not negatively impact surrounding amenities, ensuring adequate daylight, privacy, and public safety while mitigating air quality concerns.</p> <p>Environmental factors must be assessed, particularly regarding designated sites such as SSSIs, Local Nature Reserves, and protected habitats. The mitigation hierarchy should be followed, prioritizing environmental enhancement, impact avoidance, and damage compensation. Heritage assets and their settings must be protected and enhanced, and risks from former coal mining should be addressed through mitigation measures. Land use should be efficient, favouring the redevelopment of previously developed sites over Greenfield land where possible.</p> <p>Infrastructure considerations include preventing the net loss of valuable open spaces unless deemed surplus to needs, ensuring access to key infrastructure, and evaluating impacts on social infrastructure. Finally, developments must not hinder future projects that could deliver significant environmental or amenity benefits.</p>
<p>Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility</p>	<p>When assessing development proposals, the Local Planning Authority will prioritise factors such as public transport availability, site connectivity to primary and strategic road networks, and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and those with reduced mobility. Preference will be given to developments in well-connected urban areas, particularly those that reduce car dependency by promoting access to public transport and essential services. Proposals that enhance town and village centres, improve sustainable travel options, and limit parking to discourage car reliance will be favoured. Major developments should support increased use or improvements to bus and rail services, while all proposals must meet approved parking and servicing standards. The Council will protect designated land for potential rail station openings at Gisburn and Chatburn, resisting developments that could hinder their future use. Additionally, it will oppose any development that compromises opportunities for rail freight transport</p>
<p>Policy DME1: Protecting trees and woodland</p>	<p>The Council will have a presumption against the clearance of broadleaved woodland for development purposes. The Council will seek to ensure that woodland management safeguards and protects the structural integrity and visual amenity of valued</p>

	woodland, enhanced biodiversity and provides environmental health benefits for residents.
Policy DME2: Landscape and townscape provision	Development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape or landscape features. The Council will seek, wherever possible, to enhance the local landscape in line with its key statements and development strategy.
Policy DME3: Site and species protection and conservation	<p>Development proposals that are likely to adversely affect projects species will not be granted planning permission. Exceptions will only be made where it can clearly be demonstrated that the benefits of the site outweigh both local and wider impacts.</p> <p>Planning conditions or agreements will be used to secure protection or, in the case of any exceptional development as defined above, to mitigate any harm, unless arrangements can be made through planning conditions or agreements to secure their protection.</p>
Policy DME6: Water management	<p>Development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere. Applications for development should include appropriate measures for the conservation, protection and management of water such that development contributes to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preventing pollution of surface and / or groundwater 2. Reducing water consumption 3. Reducing the risk of surface water flooding (for example the use of sustainable drainage systems). <p>All applications for planning permission should include details for surface water drainage and means of disposal based on sustainable drainage principles. The use of the public sewerage system is the least sustainable form of surface water drainage and therefore development proposals will be expected to investigate and identify more sustainable alternatives to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding and environmental impact.</p>
Policy DMB5: Footpaths and bridleways	The borough council will seek to ensure the retention, maintenance and improvement of by-ways and un-surfaced/unclassified roads as part of the public rights of way network.

Appendix B Material Considerations

The following documents are material considerations of relevance to the proposed development and should be taken into consideration by the Council in determining the planning application.

- Draft Ribble Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan
- National Planning Policy Framework
- National Planning Practice Guidance

Key paragraphs from the Draft Ribble Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan are set out in section 6 of this Statement. Relevant NPPF and NPPG paragraphs are set out in turn below.

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF was published by the Government in December 2024. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The sections set out below are considered of particular relevance to the proposed development.

The Government is clear at paragraph 7 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- **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;
- **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 well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy (paragraph 8).

At paragraph 10, the Government states that, so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination (paragraph 11).

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development, permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan if material considerations indicate that the plan should not be followed (paragraph 12).

Decision Making

Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (paragraph 39).

With respect to pre-application advice, early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community (paragraph 40). For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process (paragraph 42).

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 48).

Building a strong, competitive economy

Planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future (paragraph 85). Linked to this, planning decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors (paragraph 87).

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

At paragraph 90, the Government set out how planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date (paragraph 91).

At paragraph 94, the Government state that when assessing applications for leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate floorspace threshold.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

At paragraph 110, the Government set out how Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.

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 (paragraph 116). Within this context, applications for development should:

- give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements and secondly to facilitating access to high quality public transport;

- address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- create places that are safe, secure, and attractive and which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;
- allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations (paragraph 117).

All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed (paragraph 118).

Making Effective Use of Land

Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions (paragraph 124).

Planning decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed-use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains, and promote and support under-utilised land and buildings (for example building on car parks) (paragraph 125).

Planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types development and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it; local market conditions and viability; the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use; the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places (paragraph 129)

Achieving Well-Designed Places

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 131).

Development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development, and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being (paragraph 135).

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate (paragraph 157). At paragraph 162 the Government set out how, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or

viable, and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

With respect to drainage, the Government states that major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should take account of advice from the lead local flood authority, have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards, have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development, and where possible, provide multifunctional benefits (paragraph 175).

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia):

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; and
- preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans (paragraph 187).

If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate (paragraph 193).

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where a development is likely to have a significant effect on a habitat site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the development will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site (paragraph 195).

With respect to ground conditions and pollution, planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination (paragraph 196).

Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rest with the developer and/or landowner (paragraph 197).

Planning decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development (paragraph 198).

The focus of planning decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes) (paragraph 201).

National Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was first published in 2014. The NPPG provides supplementary guidance on the application of policy contained in the NPPF and is periodically updated to reflect changes in national planning policy.

The NPPG clarifies that it is for the decision maker to decide what weight is to be given to the material considerations in each case (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 21b-009-20140306).

NPPG guidance in relation to the following has been taken into consideration as part of this Application:

- Before Submitting an application
- Design
- Determining a planning application
- Effective use of land
- Flood Risk and Coastal Change
- Making an Application
- Natural Environment
- Noise
- Travel Plans, Transport Assessment and Statements