

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**REFUSAL**

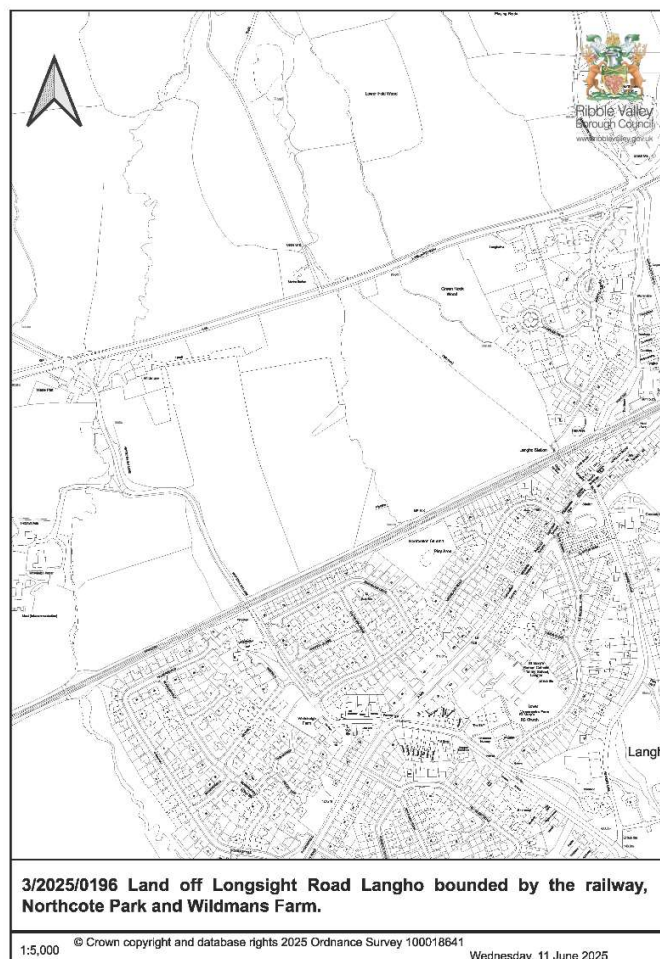
**DATE:** 26<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025  
**REF:** KH  
**CHECKED BY:** LH

**APPLICATION REF:** 3/2025/0196

GRID REF: SD 370230 434438

**DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:**

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR UP TO 300 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS, ASSOCIATED ACCESS, RAIL STATION CAR PARK, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS) ON LAND OFF LONGSIGHT ROAD, LANGHO BOUNDED BY RAILWAY, NORTHCOTE PARK AND WILDMANS FARM.



## **CONSULTEE RESPONSES/ REPRESENTATIONS MADE:**

### **BILLINGTON AND LANGHO PARISH COUNCIL:**

Strongly object to the development proposal.

The proposal would involve an increase of over 30% in the size of Langho village and at this date has attracted written objections from around 15% of households, the number of objections being the largest numeric figure of any planning application during the Council Year 24/25.

The proposal site is exclusively outside of any settlement area in the Open Countryside, without any exceptional planning reason given to justify such a development. The Landscape section of the application includes a misleading front cover showing houses built adjacent to the site, saying that any problem with the countryside would be swiftly overtaken by beautiful landscaped houses! The front piece of the application should show a typical view of the green fields that would be obliterated by the proposal.

Tourism in Ribble Valley is estimated to be worth 4,000 jobs – every time more estates are built, the area becomes less attractive to visitors. The proposal site is also very close to the Bowland A.O.N.B., whose setting it will threaten.

Bus Transport provision in Langho is grossly overstated in the proposal. The applicant clearly knows so little about the bus services, that he has included several student-only buses in his list. No. 22, 280 and 25 are the only public buses serving the proposed site, the most frequent being the 22, which is unavailable easily to disabled users, because of lack of pedestrian access to the A666. There is no bus service linking Langho village with this proposed development.

Train Transport provision in Langho. The application puts a positive emphasis upon the site's closeness and access to Langho railway station. Langho Station is not accessible for those with limited mobility. The 19 steep steps at Langho railway station effectively prevent disabled train access. In addition, the only direct access to the village of Langho and its facilities from the proposed development is via a very dark, often flooded and narrow underpass – which ends on the southern exit with another set of several steps – this barring the route to those with limited mobility, carrying goods or pushing prams. There is no room for an alternative route.

Whitehalgh Lane is the most direct access to Langho village centre from the proposed site. However, it is narrow and would have serious difficulty in accommodating up to 1,000 extra trips a day from the 300 proposed homes in the site. The proposed pedestrian access to Whitehalgh Lane would be seriously dangerous for pedestrians to walk to the village centre; there is insufficient room on the carriageway to take a pavement to allow safe walking. To travel with children/pram/wheelchair/along any new and narrow, due to Langholm's walls being close to the main trunk road, is dangerous and pedestrians would really have to walk in single file. It has heavy traffic moving at the legal speed limit of 60mph. This is followed by a walk-up Northcote Road South which whilst being a cul-de-sac, has no street lighting or pavements at its northern end.

Langho lacks basic infrastructure, like a doctor's surgery and a pub or café in the village centre. Its one claim to fame is the 6 hair-stylist/beauty parlours in the main street, where parking is frequently difficult during the working day. The nearest GP surgery is in Whalley and has a four week wait time for an appointment and which is not taking on new patients. The nearest dentists are also in Whalley.

Infrastructure School Places. Primary school places are already becoming unavailable this September; St. Leonards is already full, whilst St. Mary's only has 10 spaces. New or existing children in the village needing places, would be obliged to go outside the village, difficult for parents without private transport. Both schools have been extended in recent years to cope with increased capacity, these extensions are at the expense of the play areas offered to the children at both schools. It would take several terms for Section 106 monies to be obtained from developers and then for classroom building to be completed again reducing the playing out space for the children.

Infrastructure – sewage and rain runoff provision. The existing sewage provision is failing to cope with regular discharging of sewage and rain runoff into Bushburn Brook. There is documented evidence of United Utilities reporting itself to the Environment Agency for sewage onto agricultural land. The remote monitors placed by United Utilities to monitor this failed due to too many reports being generated. An extra 300 homes with sewage and rain runoff would cause a more frequent discharge of sewage. The cast iron manhole covers for the sewage system are being lifted by the sheer volume of flow. Bushburn Brook is polluted and dead – this discharges into the River Calder. Residents regularly see raw sewage discharged into the river.

Prime Agricultural land. This land has been farmed for years, during the war the fields were used for allotments. Once built on this agricultural green space will disappear forever.

Finally, the Parish Council asks Ribblesdale to refuse the application, as it did 11 years' ago on an adjacent site (for only 132 houses) under reference 2014/0687.

#### **WILPSHIRE PARISH COUNCIL:**

Object to this outline application for the following reasons:

The land is in open countryside.

The land is not within the settlement boundary.

The land is not identified within the 5 year supply.

Highway Safety concerns with additional traffic from the development entering and exiting the busy A59 highway.

#### **LOCAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY (LCC HIGHWAYS):**

Does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the impact of the proposed development traffic can be sufficiently mitigated on the surrounding highway network. A number of conditions are recommended together with the following contributions to mitigate the impact of the development on the highway network:

- 1 Travel Plan support £18,000. Circa £250 per dwelling to support a modal shift agreed and linked to the Travel Plan SMART targets.
- 2 Public Transport support £175,000 every year for 5 years = £875,000

The following comments are offered:

#### **Sustainability:**

A Framework Travel Plan is submitted and sets out details of the full travel plan proposals and timetable for implementation to support sustainable travel modes at the site.

Lancashire County Council offer a Travel Plan support service. To provide this service we would request a contribution of £18,000, based on the number of dwellings, via a S106 agreement.

Within the Travel Plan we would seek to secure measures to support sustainable travel modes for residents at the site with contributions paid directly to each dwelling upon occupation of each dwelling (or group of dwellings triggers to be agreed in the full travel plan) within a S106 agreement should the modal shift targets not be met. The contribution of circa £250 per dwelling will fund a bus pass for a period of 3 months or a cycle voucher.

Bus services 25 (Clitheroe Blackburn) and 280 (Preston Skipton) run along the A59 past the site. To support sustainable travel at the site for all users, two new quality bus stop standard bus stops in both east and west bound directions on the A59 are proposed. The bus services are both LCC subsidised services and we would request a contribution to support the running of these services to support sustainable travel at the site in the future.

Bus service 22 (Clitheroe Shadsworth) runs along Whalley Road with bus stops within approximately 400m from the centre of the site and accessed via public footpath 03-06006a and Olive Bank. It is noted that this route has steps on the north side of the railway. To support sustainable travel at the site for all users, the nearest two bus stops will be upgraded to quality bus stop standard bus stops in both east and west bound directions on Whalley Road.

The indicative layout includes a new car park to accommodate circa 40 vehicles to park and ride from Langho Railway Station. It is noted that this is supported by Northern Trains Ltd and Community Rail Lancashire Ltd and that there is potential for the landowner to provide land for the future provision of a ramped access to the platforms so access for all users can be provided as set out in the Department for Transport 'Option selection report DfT 'Access for all' Programme Langho Station'. The provision of high quality secure and covered cycle parking at the station would support further sustainable travel.

LCC will not formally adopt the car park, therefore future maintenance and management will need to be secured by another authority or third party.

There is a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Policy (LCWIP) for Ribble Valley published March 2024. Whalley Road is identified as a strategic route between Whalley and Langho with measures identified for improvement.

The nearest Primary School is located approximately 800m from the centre of the site, walking via FP030600a, Olive Bank and Whalley Road. This route has steps therefore may not be suitable for prams or those with limited mobility, the alternative route is via Whitehalgh Lane. There is a zebra crossing on Whalley Road and a central refuge near the primary school which will be upgraded to provide the latest specification to provide a high-quality provision for pedestrians. Secondary school bus services run on the A59 and Whalley Road.

The nearest food shop is located on Portland Road and is located approximately 800m from the centre of the site, walking via Whitehalgh Lane, Whalley Road, Portland Road. Measures to mitigate the impact of development traffic on Whitehalgh Lane to reduce the vehicle speeds and to promote speed compliance to provide a suitable environment for walking and cycling are considered necessary and are outlined below.

All the dwellings will be required to provide secure and covered cycle storage/parking and all new dwellings are required to provide an electric vehicle charging points under building regulations.

The guidance for walking and cycling distances between the centre of the site and the nearest bus stops (400m), education, local facilities and employment centres (800m walking/5km cycling) are considered suitable. Measures of mitigation to enhance the routes between the site and these centres are sought to be secured by the Highway Authority to support residents to travel safely by sustainable modes, without the reliance on the private car.

Subject to the mitigation measures identified above being implemented we consider that residents have the option to travel sustainably between the site, local facilities and employment centres.

#### Traffic Impact:

The impact of the development traffic upon the surrounding highway network has been undertaken in accordance with our advice at pre-application stage and national policy.

The nationally agreed software TRICS has been used together with our advice on the trip rates used to estimate traffic generation at the site. The AM and PM trip rates have been agreed at 0.585 and 0.663 and are estimated to generate 176 and 199 trips in the peak hours respectively.

Classified turning count surveys and queue length surveys (5-minute intervals recorded) have been undertaken on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024 covering the AM and PM peak periods (as 07:00 to 09:00 and 15:00 to 18:00 respectively) for the junctions listed below.

The peaks are identified as 08:00 to 09:00 and 16:30 to 17:30.

Committed development at Salesbury Enterprise Zone and Cuerden Garden Village has been included in the assessment with a future year of 2030.

The following junctions 1-4 have been assessed using nationally agreed Junctions 10 software and junction 5 TRANSYT.

1. Site access/A59 Longsight Road Priority junction
2. A59 Longsight Road /A666/C548 Whalley Road - Roundabout
3. A59 Longsight Road /Whitehalgh Lane/Chapel Lane Priority junction
4. A666/Whitehalgh Lane/York Lane - Double mini roundabout
5. A59 Longsight Road/B6245 Ribchester Road - Signalised junction

The above junctions are demonstrated to operate within capacity in the future assessed year 2030 without any mitigation required. We do not dispute this.

#### Construction traffic:

A new temporary access on the A59 for construction traffic would be acceptable to allow works on site to commence. The detailed design of the temporary access must be agreed within a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) at condition discharge stage and be implemented under an agreement with Lancashire County Council. The visibility splays, geometry and surface will be matters to agree and it will be necessary to limit HGV movements to the off-peak movements 9.30am - 2.30pm with wheel washing and hard standing for operative parking and

HGV turning to allow all vehicles to exit the site onto A59 in forward gear. Temporary traffic management may be required on the A59 to facilitate the construction vehicle movement, and this will be agreed within the CTMP and Phasing plans.

#### A59 Longsight Road / New Site Access:

A new access on the A59 to serve the development is proposed comprising a priority junction with right turn ghost lane with central pedestrian refuges to both sides, new shared cycle/footways along the A59 on the frontage of the site. The site access itself will provide a right and left turn exit lanes.

The proposed layout is shown on drawings Hydrock drawings 4094/100/P001 and 4094/100/P002. A swept path analysis for a 11.2m long refuse vehicle is provided on drawing 4094/100/P003.

Visibility splays of 2.4m by 171m to the east side and 160m to the west side are proposed in accordance with the 85<sup>th</sup>ile speeds recorded on with 54.3mph and 52.1mph respectively. The splays will lie within the newly aligned highway.

To mitigate the impact of the development traffic, the speed limit on the A59 Longsight Road between Whitehalgh Lane and the roundabout with Whalley Road A666 will be reduced from the national speed limit to 40mph speed limit with associated gateway feature signage and road markings provided to promote speed compliance.

To ensure the development traffic generated at the site, particularly pedestrian and cycle movements are safely accommodated on the A59 a new signalised toucan crossing on the A59 is proposed for access to the bus stops and wider footway network.

New connections onto the highway drainage system in the A59 will not be permitted. There are 2 watercourses running across the site which are culverted under the A59 on the frontage of the site.

The formation of the new access and off-site highway works will be undertaken with a S278 agreement with Lancashire County Council and be subject to a detailed design process and safety audit.

#### Whitehalgh Lane:

A new pedestrian and cycle access onto Whitehalgh Lane is proposed to ensure connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists onto the surrounding highway network. We would request that the timing of construction of this link is provided in accordance with the phasing plan for the site by condition.

To mitigate the impact of the development traffic, the speed limit on Whitehalgh Lane will be reduced from the national speed limit to a 30mph speed limit and have physical traffic calming measures and street lighting installed to promote speed compliance and use by pedestrians and cyclists.

#### Whalley Road:

The existing zebra crossing near Olive Bank and the existing central pedestrian refuge near the school will be upgraded to the latest specification.

Whalley Road is identified in the LCWIP for walking and cycle upgrades.

#### Internal layout:

The first section of the estate road will be circa 8m wide carriageway narrowing to the standard width 5.5m after the first junction.

The bus which travels along the A59 will not re-route into the estate due to delays and new bus stops on the A59 will provide residents with access to these services.

The estate roads will need to be suitable for the 11.2m long refuse wagon and the links and turning heads will need to have a swept path analysis to support this.

The estate roads and associated infrastructure should be built to adoptable standards and we would seek to formally adopt the roads under S38 Highways Act 1980.

Due to the size of the site and the potential to come forward in separate phases/separate developers we will seek a phasing condition to ensure details of each phase are submitted and that the infrastructure on that phase provides sufficient infrastructure particularly connectivity to the surrounding network on Whitehalgh Lane and Whalley Road and a suitable running surface, lighting and a suitable turning head for the refuse vehicles.

The pedestrian/cycle link on Whitehalgh Lane and pedestrian link to Whalley Road via the public footpath will need to be completed within an agreed timeframe in accordance with the phasing plan and reserved matters application/s.

The length of the temporary closure of the public footpath which crosses the site must be minimised where possible.

#### Parking:

Each dwelling will require 1 car parking space for 1 bedroom, 2 spaces for 2-3 bedrooms and 3 spaces for 4+ bedrooms and secure covered cycle parking. Garages should measure 3m by 6 internally to count as a car parking space and secure cycle parking. Each dwelling will require secure and covered cycle storage/parking and an electric vehicle charging point.

#### Off-site highway works:

To mitigate the impact of the development on the highway network the following offsite highway works are proposed and are considered necessary.

1. New site access on A59 and associated works shown on drawing Hydrock drawings 4094/100/P001 and 4094/100/P002 including new footway/cycleways on the A59, new signalised toucan crossing, reduction in speed limit to 40mph with enhanced gateway features and associated signing/lining.
2. New pedestrian/cycle link on Whitehalgh Lane with reduction of speed limit to 30mph with associated lighting and traffic calming measures.

3. Upgrade of zebra crossing and central pedestrian island on Whalley Road near Olive Bank and the primary school.
4. The upgrade/provision of 4 quality bus stops (2 x Whalley Road A666 and 2 x Longsight Road A59) to support all users to travel to/from site sustainably.

The off-site highway works will be constructed under a S278 agreement with LCC and shall be constructed prior to first occupation.

#### **LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY (LCC EDUCATION):**

An education contribution is not required at this stage in regard to this development. Latest projections for the local primary schools show there to be 143 places available in 5 years' time and 103 places available in 5 years time for local secondary schools. The projected yield from this development is 114 primary school places and 45 secondary school places (this is assessed on a worst case scenario assuming the dwellings are all 4 bedroom houses).

Officers have asked LCC to confirm which schools are included within their assessment to ensure they are all in the Ribble Valley and this will be reported on the Late Items Sheet.

#### **LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY (LLFA):**

No objection subject to conditions relating to final surface water sustainable drainage strategy, construction surface water management plan, sustainable drainage system operation and maintenance manual and verification report of constructed sustainable drainage system.

Comments provided that are specific to this site about what the LLFA would expect to see in a detailed drainage scheme.

#### **LCC ARCHAEOLOGY:**

The application is accompanied by a short Heritage Assessment which summarises the evidence from the Lancashire Historic Environment Record and a small number of other sources. It correctly notes that we have some concerns about the accuracy of the reported prehistoric findspots from the east side of the site and concludes that evidence for early occupation is ambiguous. We would agree with their conclusion that "... rather than a real absence of archaeology, the paucity of evidence may be due to a lack of fieldwork in the area ...". We note the discovery of the Bronze Age cremation cemetery on the housing site at Higher Standen Farm (c.75km to the northeast) was the result of evaluation of a large housing site crossed by a Roman road, rather than investigation of a previously known site. Despite extensive further trenching, however, no evidence of any settlement associated with the cemetery has been encountered.

In this case we do not even have the proximity to the Roman road as a support, and any request for field investigation would be on a purely precautionary basis. Whilst we would encourage the prospective developers to "de-risk" the site by commissioning a field evaluation, it would be difficult to justify a formal requirement for such work by the imposition of a planning condition.

#### **NATURAL ENGLAND:**

Standing Advice offered.

#### **ELECTRICITY NORTH WEST:**

No response received.

### **UNITED UTILITIES:**

Drainage details not accepted as would expect to see details of finished floor levels as well as cover and invert levels of all manholes. Request a condition requiring details of surface water and foul water drainage to be submitted.

### **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY:**

No constraints identified and therefore screened as low risk. Do not intend to make comments on the proposed scheme.

### **NETWORK RAIL:**

The developer would be required to enter into a basic asset protection agreement with Network Rail to ensure that works do not impact the safe operation, stability, integrity of the railway and its boundary. In addition the developer will be required to submit a risk assessment and method statement to Network Rail and this is a suggested condition. The applicant will be required to provide a suitable trespass fence within the application site which is also a suggested condition. Additional comments provided, and conditions suggested, about construction, drainage, lighting, noise and vibration and trees.

### **ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONS:**

Approximately 200 letters of representation have been received. These include three letters of support and 167 objections received from separate properties on the following grounds:

- Development is far in excess of what can be absorbed by the village;
- No provision for school place and medical facilities. Schools already oversubscribed;
- We do not need parking for 43 cars this will impact on residents with lighting, noise, etc.;
- If the development goes ahead smaller dwellings i.e. bungalows should be placed near the railway to reduce impact on the overlooking properties and future occupiers more privacy;
- Infrastructure is not suitable for this amount of properties;
- The traffic would be horrendous. Whitehalgh Lane and Whalley Road are not designed for such high volume of traffic;
- Development would ruin the green space and wildlife habitats including barn owls, herons, kestrels, deer, stoats, voles, ancient trees and brooks;
- The closest town is Clitheroe which has several supermarkets but none designed for the high numbers of customers;
- Whilst the land has been assessed as not of good agricultural grade seems irrelevant as the farmland in this area is predominately used for livestock and therefore has agricultural value;
- Langho has no village centre and very few businesses, the development of 300 houses offers no benefits economic or otherwise and would have a negative impact on the village and its residents;
- The two fields bordering Whitehalgh Lane should be retained as agricultural stock and permanently designated as such, allowing a more balanced proposal of approx. 220 houses alongside 17 acres of agricultural stock;

- The brook sunning through the site provides a more natural boundary to the proposed development and preserves some of the characteristics, heritage and attraction of the area;
- The Northcote Park development stated that this would not set a precedent for further development with no direct contact by Hallam Land Management to agree mitigation or compensation for impacts and little feedback from the public consultation regarding compromise on the outsized scale of the development;
- I think this council has already met its quota for new homes;
- The land in question is in a flood risk area leading to increased flood risk nearby, potential waterlogging and ruining more of the reduced greenspace in the area;
- This development next to the railway will not encourage new residents to use public transport;
- I believe there will be an increased risk of antisocial behaviours there are not facilities for entertaining people without getting in their cars;
- Where will the access and exit be places? If on Longsight Road then that will involve a major alteration to that highway which is a very busy thoroughfare. A single access off Longsight Road creates a bottleneck;
- I have reviewed the documents and attended the public consultation, which was inadequate, this proposal represents a concerning overdevelopment driven by profit rather than community need and poses a severe threat to the village, it's environment and the broader Ribble Valley;
- The applications contravene the fundamental principles of RVCS, notably Policy DMG2 as the scheme achieves none of the objectives and undermines them, delivering substantial harm with no discernible benefit;
- Langho is a small community of approx. 2,000 residents. The proposal is for 300 dwellings equating to an estimated 690/750 residents based on 2.3/2.5 persons per household (ONS figures) This represents a 35/40% increase with no corresponding provision to accommodate it. This is not sustainable growth and goes beyond the village's capacity;
- The Junction Capacity Analysis relies on outdated 2021 traffic data, predating the speed limit change and fails to account for existing congestion points such as Whalley Road junction. This analysis is fundamentally flawed and unreliable;
- The exit point onto the A69 is bounded on either side by road crests which restrict safe exit views particularly when turning right resulting in compromised vision of approaching vehicles;
- The Transport Assessment presents a dangerously inadequate evaluation of the severe impact this development will have on the already overburdened A59;
- The proposal designates Whitehalgh Lane as a shared surface for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. This is impractical and unsafe. Whitehalgh Lane is a narrow, unlit, winding path, less than 3m wide with blind corners and no passing areas. It struggles with minimal current use, adding hundreds of vehicles alongside vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists is a recipe for accidents and litigation;
- The Design and Access Statement allocated 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling totalling a minimum of 450 vehicles which overlooks the overflow when households exceed this average or visitors arrive, leading to local roads being overrun with parked cars;
- There is no provision for road widening, traffic signals or a bypass;
- Primary schools are at capacity with no available places. Secondary schools are oversubscribed. LCC Education provided a response based on outdated 2022 data stating no developer contribution required at this stage. Should this application be approved without securing a contribution it places the onus on the local authority to address any shortfall;
- Whalley Medical Centre serves 8,000 patients across multiple villages an influx of 700 new residents would overwhelm this facility. The Section 106 contributions in the Planning Statement are unspecified and offer no assurances of new facilities;

- The proposal has no plans for additional shops, community facilities or basic amenities like a post-box. The existing pharmacy and sandwich shop cannot support additional 700 residents. Increasing the village's population without corresponding enhancement to services is not responsible planning;
- The car park proposal far from a benefit would introduce additional burdens to the community with most residents able to reach the station on foot within 5/10 minutes, encourages car use and commuters from areas like Billington and Whalley to these spaces The number of spaces varies throughout the application;
- Langho station already compromised by flooding, additional 50 spaces will exacerbate this;
- The proposed biodiversity mitigation of bird boxes and native planting is wholly inadequate to offset the destruction of a thriving ecosystem. The loss of arable land jeopardizes local food production;
- Langho's open fields and vistas define its identity and appeal, the construction of 300 homes would dominate the landscape and overshadow existing properties with the tranquillity and aesthetic value of the area would be irreparably compromised;
- The proposed attenuation basins are insufficient and the FRA neglects associated health risks such as insect pollination and bacterial growth;
- The Air Quality Assessment concludes that levels remain below limits but this offers little reassurance to residents directly exposed. Increased congestion on the A59 will amplify emissions from idling vehicles impacting areas where children walk and residents live;
- The Environmental Noise and Vibration Report figures are manageable with proposed mitigation such as acoustic fencing and enhanced glazing; however, this fails to address the lived experience which disrupts sleep, constant vehicle noise and years of construction activity rendering outside spaces unusable and indoor peace unattainable. The report's technical compliance does not mitigate the profound disturbance to residents' quality of life;
- This development does not enhance the environment. It systematically degrades it;
- The footpath to the railway station involves stairs or a steep, unpaved incline rendering it inaccessible to wheelchairs, prams or elderly residents. The claim all abilities access is inaccurate;
- With bus services limited to one per hour and no enhancements proposed the development will generate 450-500 daily car trips;
- The Planning Statement suggests the development will enhance local tourism. Langho offers a sandwich shop and a pharmacy. No cafes, heritage sites or significant attractions;
- Policy DMG2 requires out of boundary developments be small scale, essential or beneficial. The proposal lacks evidence of necessity and does not substantiate local need. It delivers no economic or social advantages, only developer gain, in clear violation of planning principles;
- Many chose to live in Langho for its peace, views and community. This development jeopardizes these qualities. Construction noise, dust and traffic spanning 5 – 10 years diminishing property values. The screening offered consisting of shrubs is inadequate against a substantial housing development;
- Langho is a village defined by its small scale, green spaces and close-knit community. Doubling its geographical size with uniform housing erodes this character. Quiet lanes will become congested, fields will give way to concrete and community cohesion will dissipate;
- The Ribble Valley offers brown field sites, urban-adjacent locations and areas with established infrastructure better suited to development;
- Are the overhead power lines crossing the fields proposed to be sunken as they are not shown on the drawings and there is no information concerning this;
- The approach to the Ribble Valley from the west will be changed forever and will start to look like an urban area with so many houses built on the greenfield approach;

- If the proposal goes ahead bungalows should be built near the railway line and a smaller car park;
- Please do not remove the large oak tree behind the houses;
- The proposal is contrary to several core principles of the NPPF;
- This application is premature in the context of the current and emerging Local Plan, which should guide the location and scale of future growth in a plan led manner. Approving speculative applications of this magnitude outside the designated settlement boundary would undermine the plan making process and set a dangerous precedent for future development on greenfield land;
- Loss of Green Belt land contravenes national and RVBC planning strategy;
- The over development of Green Belt agricultural land increases the risk of flooding. RVBC Policy DME6 states development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere;
- We have a private water pipe running through the field that supplies water to our house. Can you assure us that construction work will not affect our water supply;
- The Ribble Valley is known for its scenic beauty, countryside and peaceful environment which attracts both residents and visitors, such a large-scale development would undermine the rural charm leading to loss of green spaces that are vital for country living, biodiversity and wildlife;
- Whilst I recognise the need for more housing, it is crucial that the development meets the actual need of the community. There are concerns that the proposed houses may not be affordable or in line with housing needs of local residents;
- Spoiling people's views of the Ribble Valley with ugly cheap new build houses that do not fit in with the area;
- The development would introduce a generic suburban style that would be out of place and visually jarring in a historic and rural setting;
- This development will not only reduce house prices but could drive existing residents to leave;
- Residents feel that their concerns have been dismissed or ignored and that proper community engagement has not taken place;
- The proposal to build access routes through an existing public footpath is completely unacceptable. This footpath is used daily by residents as a vital community asset. Its loss would negatively impact walkability, public health and local tradition;
- The scale of this development will put significant pressure on council services, including road maintenance, refuse collection and street lighting. There are concerns that local taxes will increase to cover the cost;
- There is widespread and passionate opposition to this proposal and it is vital that local people are heard, it is RVBC's responsibility to act in the best interest of its residents and preserve the unique rural identity of its villages;
- Our biggest concern is the volume of sewage and surface water. The pipework runs through our land and runs down Bushburn Brook and every time it rains heavily it lifts cast iron manhole lids and leaves a trail of human waste in its wake. Adding 300 houses on a combined sewer system will increase pollution. A larger pipe would not help as the sewage plant at Elker Lane has not got capacity to cope. The increased sewage will make Bushburn Brook a dead zone for wildlife and have a major impact on the River Calder that it flows to;
- The train service to Manchester takes longer and costs more than if done by car;
- Conflicts with EN2 Open Countryside which should be protected, enhanced and restored;
- RVCS 2028 identifies a need for 21 new homes in Langho. This target has been exceeded and the SHLAA does not identify further requirements in this area. This proposal significantly exceeds planned growth and contradicts the area's strategic planning framework;

- A study by 24housing.co.uk examined building competitions in local authorities across the UK between 2020 and 2023. RVBC was ranked sixth in the country with 232.6 new buildings completed per 10,000 people;
- Recent developments in RV included affordable homes at 30% of the total units which refutes claims that there is a housing shortfall and a lack of affordable homes;
- The housing target for RV under the NPPF is 310 houses per year, when the 5% buffer is applied this results in 325 p.a. if this development went ahead then Langho would meet almost all of the RV target for one year;
- This development does not meet any of the criteria by DMG2 and does not provide any clear evidence of the economic or social benefits it would bring;
- Residents are unlikely to cycle over difficult terrain or along the congested A59;
- Paragraph 117 (b) of the NPPF states that development must address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport – the lack of continuous pavements on either side of the A59 creates a dangerous, inaccessible environment for wheelchair users and those with restricted mobility potentially preventing them from accessing public transport (train or bus) independently or safely;
- Whitehalgh Lane (pedestrian/cycle access) has no pavements so people with disabilities and reduced mobility are unable to access Langho easily, independently and safely;
- Paragraph 110 of the NPPF requires significant development to 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. The applicant states the area has excellent transport links which makes sustainable travel possible. In reality there is no viable public transport infrastructure to meet the needs of existing and future residents:
  - The hourly direct train service to Manchester can be unreliable with trains constantly running late or not turning up;
  - There is no direct train service between Langho and Preston to ease congestion on the roads. Changing at Blackburn increases journey times;
  - The hourly bus service from Clitheroe to Preston may not be sufficient or convenient to some residents;

This is likely to mean residents will rely on travelling by car which would not achieve the objectives of promoting sustainable travel;

- Policy DMI2 states new development should be located to minimise the need for travel and prioritise access by foot and cycle. This location with limited amenities will inevitably increase reliance of private vehicles for accessing everyday necessities, healthcare, education and employment in neighbouring towns;
- There is a significant difference in scale, mass and potential impact between the existing 42 home Northcote Park and the 300 dwellings proposed;
- The application stated they want to maintain the outlook and reduce the impact on existing properties but plan to build 2.5 storey houses and remove a huge outdoor area used by dog walkers and residents;
- How will financial contributions for improving local amenities and infrastructure be enforced when the land is sold to a developer if permission is granted?
- 8 more new detached 4 bedroomed houses are currently being built in Langho, with a recent extension to Petre Wood estate for starter homes, growing families, downsizing, affordable homes, shared ownership home and apartments – therefore the need for these types of homes has already been met in Langho. A new housing state has just been built on Northcote Park comprising of approximately 40 new houses consisting of large, detached houses, affordable homes and bungalows also addressing this type of housing need;

- In reality there needs to be a new primary school, secondary school, doctors practice and dentist practise, another supermarket to be built for there to be anything like the infrastructure required to support 300 new homes in Langho;
- The railway line means that there is an unavoidable barrier to accessing Langho's amenities and therefore negates the ability to integrate any new development with the existing settlement. The proposed development will neither feel a part of, or be integrated into the village owing to its geography and single limited point of access between the existing village and the new development;
- The A666 is main commuter route between Blackburn and the Ribble Valley and on commuters' people will pop into the local shops. Not having access to the proposed development off the A666, any increased population will not benefit the local Spar/pharmacy/Post Office by passing by. If occupants do not facilitate the pedestrian access to the village the residents will use their cars to use shops more accessible from the A59 rather than shops in the village;
- Even with the inclusion of improved lighting many people would be uncomfortable having to walk through an underpass to access the village;
- Proximity to the railway line seems to be a core supporting factor for this proposal when this station only serves one train line with trains running once per hour between Clitheroe and Rochdale. There is little clarity as how the proposed car park would benefit Langho or reduce car journeys by private car. 100% of the car parks users would access via vehicle from the A59 with people living in Langho are likely to walk or park were they currently park rather than driving all the way to the car park and people using the car park are more likely to not live in Langho and therefore more likely to continue their onward journey along the A59 and not travel through the village and support the local economy through use of the local amenities;
- Areas of concern is the protection of trees and existing and future habitats as well as the erosion and removal of existing trees at a later planning stage, the reduction of the natural railway/buffer zones providing natural corridors and visual and acoustic screening and the potential reduction of planned community green spaces and the potential replacement with further housing and/or hard landscaping;
- The proposal would result in the net loss of important open space as the site is the only natural open space locally within Langho that does not require a walk up a hill to access, whilst the site itself is not accessible it provides important health and wellbeing benefits through visual connection to green space;
- Our property has stunning views of Hurst Green and Longridge Fell for which we paid a premium to enjoy, if this proposal goes ahead we believe our property's value will be affected;
- We disagree with the proposal for more trees when there is already plenty of mature established trees in situ. The woodlands to the development at Northcote Manor have been protected but the small woodland near to me has not;
- There is not a need for affordable housing as the village has a high stock of terraced housing and semi detached properties. There is also additional affordable housing on the Petre estate which has fully alleviated any gap in need. A housing estate should be much smaller in size and proportionate to the village in order for new residents to have an opportunity to amalgamate into existing village life;
- The only shop within walking distance is the small Spar/PO without parking, the chemist and several hairdressers have limited parking. A nursery and primary school are also without parking. A community hall with parking, meeting rooms and facilities might be an asset but there is no provision for this. The community orchard and play area is a nice open space but has no toilet provisions;
- Feel there has not been fair opportunity for residents to voice their concerns over this proposal with only 150 Langho homes being addressed as part of the neighbour notification plan;

- The proposed Toucan crossing on the A59 would be significantly underused and would become an unnecessary cost to RVBC to maintain in future years;
- Consistency of planning applications across the Tier 1 villages with the reasons for refusal for a housing development in Read in 2016 equally relevant to this application which is also outside the settlement boundary and in open countryside;
- Although not “Green Belt” the proposed area is a natural green break between the centre of Langho, the railway and the busy A59. The proposed development does not take into account the impact of housing height on the current houses, given the sloping nature of the site the area adjacent to the railway should have no housing over single storey or be a green area;
- There is no public parking on Olive Bank this is a single entrance small area with residents parking only;
- The nursery is closed, the Indian restaurant has been closed for years and we have no café or petrol station;
- The developers have retained the footpath across the site, but a footpath running through a residential estate can't compete with a rural footpath through local open countryside;
- It seems ridiculous that the proposed car park covers provision for disabled spaces when there is no disabled access to the platforms;
- The car parking issues can be addressed by other means such as an arrangement with the restaurant owner to provide sufficient spaces or compulsory purchase to provide a café/community facility. We do not need 300 houses in order to get a car park;
- RVBC rejected an application for 132 houses 11 years ago and I would ask what, if anything, has changed, other than the proposal being for 300 houses and additional houses recently/currently built in Langho;
- The development fails to create a walkable neighbourhood and will increase reliance on cars;
- Para 117(b) of the NPPF requires that development addresses the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport. Pedestrian infrastructure along the A59 is adequate with pavements not continuous and requiring multiple crossings of the A59 creating a dangerous and inaccessible environment and those with mobility impairments, effectively preventing them from accessing public transport (train or bus) independently and safely;
- The proposed pedestrian/cycle access at Whitehalgh Lane has no pavements meaning people with disabilities and reduced mobility have no way to access Langho or indeed leave the site at all. Therefore, the proposed developed fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF in terms of accessibility for all; and
- The report states that it would be easy to access services such as Doctors and Dentists by cycling to Rishton and Great Harwood. This would not happen due to the steep terrain both ascending and descending into these two settlements is steep with no footpaths and narrow unrestricted roads.

## 1. **Site Description and Surrounding Area**

- 1.1 The application relates to an area of land measuring 20.01 hectares outside the defined settlement boundary of Langho.
- 1.2 The site is bounded to the north by Longsight Road (A59), to the east by Northcote Park (residential development), to the south by the railway line and to the west by Whitehalgh Lane.

- 1.3 The site is greenfield agricultural land and sloped from the south to the north. An existing Public Right of Way footpath (PROW) 3-6-FP6 runs across the site and connects with Langho Railway Station and on to Langho via the railway tunnel.
- 1.4 The land includes a protected woodland, Green Nook Wood which lies to the northeast of the site, and there are other mature trees on the site. There is also an existing watercourse which runs north to south through the centre of the site.

## 2. **Proposed Development for which consent is sought**

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for up to 300 dwellings which comprises the following:
- 300 dwellings including 30% affordable homes
  - New railway station car park
  - Biodiversity net gain strategy to deliver a minimum 10% improvement
  - Sustainable drainage systems including attenuation basins
- 2.2 Access is applied for in this application, with the scheme proposing a direct vehicular access onto the A59 and a new pedestrian / cycle access point from Whitehalgh Lane. The existing pedestrian access points from the A59 and the railway station underpass in the south-east corner of the site would be retained. Details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are all reserved for a later stage, however the proposal includes indicative plans which illustrate how the site could accommodate the level of development being applied for which do carry some weight.

## 3. **Relevant Planning History**

None.

## 4. **Relevant Policies**

### **Ribble Valley Core Strategy**

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy  
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development  
Key Statement EN3: Sustainable development  
Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
Key Statement H1: Housing Provision  
Key Statement H2: Housing Balance  
Key Statement H3: Affordable Housing  
Key Statement DMI1: Planning Obligations  
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations  
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations  
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility  
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands  
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation  
Policy DME6: Water Management

Policy DMH1: Affordable Housing Criteria  
Policy DMB4: Open Space Provision  
Policy DMB5: Footpaths and Bridleways

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Technical Guidance to National Planning Policy Framework

## 5. **Assessment of Proposed Development**

### 5.1 **Principle of Development:**

5.1.1 The application site lies outside of the defined settlement of Langho (Tier 1 Settlement). Key Statement DS1 seeks to concentrate the majority of new housing development within the identified strategic site (Standen) and in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. In addition development is focused towards the more sustainable Tier 1 Villages which includes Langho. Importantly this site is outside of the settlement boundary for Langho, within the open countryside, as such Policy DMG2 is primarily engaged which requires development to meet one of the following criteria:

- Essential to the local economy or social well-being;
- Development needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture;
- Development for local needs housing which meets an identified need;
- Development for small scale tourism or recreation appropriate to a rural area;
- Small scale use appropriate to a rural area where a local need for benefit can be demonstrated;
- Development compatible with the enterprise zone.

5.1.2 The development of the site for open market and affordable dwellings fails to satisfy any of the above exception criteria to allowing development in the designated countryside. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not be acceptable in principle as it fails to accord with Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy in terms of the location of housing development within the Borough.

5.1.3 Policy DMG2 goes onto state within the open countryside development 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, landscape and siting. This will be considered in further detail below.

5.1.4 The most recently published five-year housing land supply figure (base date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) indicates that Ribble Valley Borough Council has a housing land supply of 6.2 years. It is noted that this represents a point in time and that the Council's housing supply will change as permissions are implemented and new permissions are granted and/or amended. However, for the purposes of determining this application, the Council's position is that it can demonstrate a five year supply, that the relevant strategic policies are considered to be up-to-date and in terms of the planning balance paragraph 11 (d) is not engaged.

- 5.1.5 The recently published Affordable Housing Needs Survey (May 2025) includes a separate calculation of the need for affordable housing in the borough. This confirms a need of 230 affordable dwelling per annum and a net need of 16 households over five years in the area of Langho, Billington and Dinkley. It is acknowledged that the development would help to contribute towards this local need, with 30% of the scheme equating to 90 units.
- 5.1.6 In terms of sustainability, the site is located adjacent to Longsight Road (A59) and the Langho Railway Station, however, the site itself will be segregated from the village of Langho by the railway line. As such there would be little scope for integration with the village, which itself provides limited facilities, with only a small convenience store/post office, pharmacy as well as hair and beauty facilities. The nearest supermarket is in Great Harwood approximately 3km to the south with other supermarkets in Clitheroe 7.15 km to the northeast. The only vehicular access to the site would be via Longsight Road (A59) and although cycle and pedestrian links are proposed to Whitehalgh Lane to the west and the PROW would remain (albeit part diverted) to the east, both of these routes are constrained and provide limited access for anyone with mobility issues due to the topography and distances involved.
- 5.1.7 Para 117(b) of the NPPF requires that development addresses the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport. Pedestrian infrastructure along the A59 is poor in terms of continuous pavements resulting in multiple crossings of the A59 for those with reduced mobility, effectively preventing them from accessing public transport (train or bus) in a safe manner.
- 5.1.8 There is a proposed pedestrian/cycle access onto Whitehalgh Lane, which is a narrow lane with limited potential to improve the width and provide adequate pavements which will result in people with reduced mobility having limited options to access Langho. Therefore, the proposed developed fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF in terms of addressing the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility.
- 5.1.9 The bus service (22) along Whalley Road serves local connections to Clitheroe to Shadsworth via a 30-minute service Monday to Friday 06.32am until 19.43 then hourly until 23.43, Saturday 30 mins from 07.13 until 18.38 then hourly until 23.43, Sunday an hourly service from 09.38 until 18.43. There are regular school children only services to Clitheroe Grammar School, Ribblesdale HS, Bowland HS and Billington St. Augustine's RCHS during term time. There is also a service to Nelson & Colne Collage via Whalley, Read and Higham which runs at 16.52 daily.
- 5.1.10 The train station at Langho provides an hourly service between Clitheroe and Rochdale from 06.31 until 21.33 direct (20.33 on a Saturday) and takes around 1hr 30mins; 1h 06mins to Manchester Victoria. The service to Clitheroe takes approximately 12mins and runs until 22.49 Monday to Friday. At present the Sunday service is partly replaced by bus between Clitheroe and Blackburn resulting in a longer journey of around 2-3hrs.
- 5.1.11 Contributions towards improved bus services for five years and upgraded bus stops have been requested by LCC Highways. The bus service would not be routed through the site, as such the closest bus stops would be located on

Longsight Road (A59) which for future residents located furthest south on the site would raise issues in terms of distances and accessibility. The nearest existing bus stop are located some 450m from the site access and over 1.3km from the southern part of the site. LCC Highways have requested new bus stops in both east and west directions on the A59. Whilst the precise siting of these is unknown at this stage, this is not considered to address the concerns.

- 5.1.12 The bus stops to the south on Whalley Road are proposed to be upgraded but again these are sited over 350m - 400m from the furthest properties at site and would only be accessible via public footpath 3-6-FP 6a through the site and then via steps and the narrow railway underpass. Again this lacks accessibility for mobility users and pedestrian with prams/wheelchairs.
- 5.1.13 It is noted that the indicative layout includes a new car park to accommodate circa 40 vehicles to park and ride from Langho Railway Station. This is stated to be supported by Northern Trains Ltd and Community Rail Lancashire Ltd, however no details about how the car park would be delivered and importantly who would have ownership and management responsibility have been provided with the application, as such this element of the scheme is only considered to carry limited weight. It is also stated that there is potential for the landowner to provide land for the future provision of a ramped access to the platforms so access for all users can be provided as set out in the Department for Transport 'Option selection report DfT 'Access for all' Programme Langho Station'. However, this cannot be given any weight as this land use has not been included in this application and it is understood the funding from Central Government has not been secured.
- 5.1.14 It is considered that on balance the site is not a sustainable location to support 300 houses by virtue of the ineffective connections to Langho village and difficulty in accessing pedestrian and cyclist links, bus stops and the railway station, particularly by future residents with disabilities and reduced mobility or with prams/pushchairs/young children. The proposed improvements do not address these concerns. The proposal would fail to encourage future residents to utilise the limited local services and facilities provided within Langho. Instead, residents on the site would be heavily reliant on car borne travel to access their day-to-day needs such as work, education, medical, shopping and leisure facilities. As such the proposed development fails to the accord with Key Statement DM12 and Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy and Para 117(b) of the NPPF and would not result in sustainable development.

## 5.2 Impact upon Residential Amenity:

- 5.2.1 Whilst the details of the layout of the proposed dwellings are reserved for a later date, the relationship with a number of nearby residential dwellings must be considered in respect of the potential for the proposal to result in undue impacts upon existing or future residential amenities.
- 5.2.2 In this respect, the nearest residential properties are Wildmans Farm, Wildmans Barn, 1 and 2 Wildmans Barn located approximately 23- 36m from the closest part of the site, Wade Platt Farm is located 140m, Foxghyl, Redwoods and Redwoods Barn are located between 300 - 380m all to the west of the site. Properties on Bushburn Drive and Moorland Road are located on the southern boundary of the

site with the railway line adjacent to the boundary providing a separation distance of around 20m. Northcote Park development is located immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. To the north of the site is Longsight Road (A59) with properties on this side located some distance away.

- 5.2.3 In respect of the existing properties to the south of the site, taking into account that the land levels slope downwards from south to north, these properties would have uninterrupted views of the proposed site from their rear (south) aspects. The majority of these properties are two storey or have rear dormers which overlook the site and therefore careful consideration of the proposed house types and proximity of these to the railway line boundary would need to be considered at the Reserved Matters stage to avoid the existing residential units experiencing significant direct overlooking from elevated positions that would significantly compromise and undermine the sense of privacy afforded to the private garden areas.
- 5.2.4 The existing properties to the east of the site on Northcote Park would be separated to some degree by the brook and existing woodland trees. With the proposed site plan indicating no built form within close proximity to the eastern boundary. As such those properties are not considered to be unduly affected.
- 5.2.5 The existing properties to the west consist of detached farm properties the nearest of which is Wildman's Farm and Barn which is located within its own grounds which abut the site to the east and south and therefore offer some protection in terms of impacts. Foxghyl and Redwoods are separated from the site by Whitehalgh Lane and therefore would not be unduly impacted by the development in term of amenity.
- 5.2.6 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development can be accommodated on the site without undue impacts on the existing neighbours' properties subject to appropriate housetypes, appropriate land levels and scale, appropriate design and distances to the eastern and southern boundaries and to the individual residential units to the west.

### 5.3 Impact on Visual Amenity

- 5.3.1 The proposal would be readily visible from Longsight Road, Whitehalgh Lane, Langho Railway Platform, public footpath 3-6-FP 6a which crosses the site from North to South along the eastern side and those residential properties next to the site. Longer term views would also be afforded from the surrounding highways on higher ground to the north as well as public footpaths and highways further to the south.
- 5.3.2 The site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 35 Lancashire Valleys. The NCA covers key characteristics of this area, however the scale of assessment is limited in considering landscape impacts due to its broad coverage.
- 5.3.3 A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment (LCC, 2000) identified the site as Character Area 5C: Lower Ribble which is of the Undulating Farmland Landscape Type 5C: Lower Ribble which is described as an area of lowland gritstone farmland between Longridge Fell to the north and Mellor

Ridge to the south. It has a distinctive broad valley landform; the north and south valley sides are separated by a flood plain which contain the meandering course of the River Ribble. There is a particularly distinctive pattern of wooded cloughs which descend the valley sides, their streams entering into the Ribble. A complex pattern of hedges and woodland form links to these wooded cloughs, giving an overall impression of well wooded landscape. Although a rural valley, the area is well settled; a dense network of winding country lanes and tracks link the large number of stone farm buildings. Other features of this area are the country houses and designed landscapes, for example Stoneyhurst College, Huntingdon and Showley Hall. The Roman settlement of Ribchester is sited at an historic crossing point of the Ribble, a tranquil village in the centre of the valley.

- 5.3.4 The Character Area has been assessed as Medium with medium value and medium susceptibility resulting in a sensitivity of Medium.
- 5.3.5 A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted with the application which identifies the key visual receptors with regards to this site and considers the predicted effects on the landscape. It states that the proposed development would result in inevitable change to the character of the site with the magnitude of change assessed as High which when considered with a Medium sensitivity results in Major to Moderate level of effect on the character of the site itself during all phases of the development. These phases would be adverse, long term and permanent. The LVIA considers that overtime these effects would reduce to Minor as new planting matures and that overall any effect on landscape character would be limited and localised and the proposed development would read as a well contained extension of Langho.
- 5.3.6 In terms of visual effects the development has been assessed as having a:-
- major-moderate level of visual effect for those properties on Moorland Road and Bushburn Drive to the south that are afforded views over the site and road users of Longsight Road (A59) adjacent to the site;
  - moderate adverse effect for those properties at the western edge of Northcote Park, the group of 'Wildmans' farmhouse properties on Longsight Road adjacent to the site's NW corner and road users of Whitehalgh Lane, at least until mitigation planting is established.
  - major level of visual effect on the public right of way which crosses the site, at least until mitigation planting is established.
  - minor adverse effect on public footpath 11 Wilpshire which is part of the Ribble Valley Jubilee Trail to the SW of the site and public footpath 1 Dinkley looking SE towards the site (more longer distance views) as well as from York Road / Whalley Old Road above Langho and routes to the north of the A59 including Chapel Lane and Northcote Road. These will be afforded glimpsed views of the site
- 5.3.7 Clearly the proposal would result in significant urbanisation of a large expanse of undeveloped greenfield land which currently provides a green buffer between the

A59 and the railway line and village of Langho beyond. The proposal would result in the loss of the site's open and rural character which currently positively contributes to the surrounding open countryside and it is clear from the LVIA that the scale and intensity of development would change and adversely effect the site's countryside character currently experienced by residents, road users and public footpath users. Spatially the quantum of development appears to almost double the size of Langho village.

- 5.3.8 In this respect, the quantum of development proposed fails to accord with Policy DMG1 in that the proposal fails to meet criterion (2) of the Policy which requires that development proposals be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale and massing. It fails to accord with Policy DMG2 in that it fails to be in keeping with the character of the landscape or respect the special qualities of the area by virtue of its scale. It also fails to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework in particular paragraph 135 insofar that the proposed development would not be sympathetic or respond positively to the inherent character of the area.

#### 5.4 Impact on Footpaths

- 5.4.1 The proposal would be readily visible within this open countryside location with public footpath 3-6-FP 6a running directly through the site from the A59 to the northwest and Langho Railway Station to the southeast.
- 5.4.2 The indicative layout plan shows that it is proposed to retain this footpath across the site albeit with a diversion towards the northern section. This diversion would require a legal order and a suitable diversion route to be provided. As Layout is a reserved matter the indicative layout may change.
- 5.4.3 LCC Highways have advised that the minimum width of the footpath will be 2m with a preferred route through Public Open Space rather than the estate road footway. The new signalised crossing that is required will allow users to cross the A59 between 3-6-FP 6 and 6a. They advise that the stile and all other obstructions will need to be removed at the railway line, as there will no longer be needed.
- 5.4.4 In respect of the above matters, by virtue of the harm identified in the visual amenity section of the report, it is considered that the proposal would result in an adverse impact on the users of this Public Right of Way crossing the site.
- 5.4.5 As such, the proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Policy DMB5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy insofar that the proposed development would result in significant harm to users of the public right of way by virtue of the quantum of development and its failure to respond positively to the inherent character of the area.

#### 5.5 Trees/Ecology and BNG:

- 5.5.1 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Strategy.

- 5.5.2 A detailed landscaping scheme would be submitted as part of the Reserved Matters but the indicative plan suggests areas where existing landscaping would be retained and areas of new landscaping.
- 5.5.3 The site is surrounded by infrastructure, primarily A & B roads and a railway line which in conjunction with Green Nook Wood means the site is likely to be utilised as a wildlife corridor which will be adversely affected during the development of the site.
- 5.5.4 The submitted arboricultural and ecology reports state that the proposed development will not have a detrimental effect on the flora and fauna of the site due to mitigation, on/off site BNG and tree retention will be very high. However, given the topology of the site there will need to be a substantial change in levels within the site which can, and will, affect the retention of some of the mature trees and hedgerows.
- 5.5.5 Greater Manchester Ecology Unit have been consulted and advise that currently there is insufficient Ecology information available to decide the above application. In particular, the following information is lacking –
- Updated habitat survey undertaken at an appropriate time of year. The current habitat assessments provided were carried out in late October, outside of the optimal time of year for undertaking grassland surveys. According to comments made in the Ecological Impact Assessment and the Biodiversity Net Gain Report provided with the application, further botanical surveys are planned in June.
  - Breeding Bird Surveys; again, these are planned for June 2025
  - Great Crested Newt Surveys; these surveys are planned in 2025
- 5.5.6 The proposal fails to demonstrate that the proposed development would not result in harm to established wildlife habits and therefore fails accord with Key Statement EN4 and Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.
- 5.5.7 In addition, GMEU raise some queries regarding the BNG requirement. Currently the applicant proposes that retained grassland and woodland habitats on the site will be enhanced as a contribution towards the requirement for the development to achieve at least a 10% gain in biodiversity, but it is questionable whether these enhancements could be achieved in practice, given that the habitats will be fragmented and subject to significant public pressure from the development. GMEU advise that the applicants should re-visit these proposals to assess whether the claimed enhancements could realistically be achieved.
- 5.5.8 Even if the enhancements claimed could be delivered, the development will still result in a significant loss in local biodiversity. It is stated that Biodiversity Units could be sourced off-site, but no details of this off-site provision have been provided. Further information regarding off-site habitat creation and enhancement is required to provide an acceptable level of reassurance that the Biodiversity Gain Condition, which will apply to the application, will be able to be met.
- 5.5.9 In this respect the authority cannot be certain that the proposal would align with the requirements of Key Statement EN4 which requires a net enhancement in

biodiversity of a least 10% and whether this could be accommodated on the site and the mandatory BNG requirement.

## 5.6 Highway Safety and Access

- 5.6.1 LCC Highways have raised no highway concerns in respect of the proposal, with their detailed comments about the acceptability of the site access arrangement previously set out in this report. In terms of creating a safe and suitable access and effectively mitigating the potential impact on the transport network, the proposal would accord with Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 and NPPF para 115 subject to transport contributions and appropriate conditions.
- 5.6.2 To support sustainable travel at the site for all users, two new quality bus stop standard bus stops in both east and west bound directions on the A59 are proposed and the nearest two bus stops will be upgraded to quality bus stop standard bus stops in both east and west bound directions on Whalley Road. The bus services are both LCC subsidised services and LCC request a contribution to support the running of these services to support sustainable travel at the site in the future, as well as a contribution towards Travel Plan support. The applicant is agreeable to paying both contributions.
- 5.6.3 The indicative layout includes a new car park to accommodate circa 40 vehicles to park and ride from Langho Railway Station. It is noted that this is supported by Northern Trains Ltd and Community Rail Lancashire Ltd and that there is potential for the landowner to provide land for the future provision of a ramped access to the platforms. The provision of high quality secure and covered cycle parking at the station would support further sustainable travel.
- 5.6.4 LCC will not formally adopt the car park, therefore future maintenance and management will need to be secured by another authority or third party. As previously referred to in this report this is unknown at this stage, leading to uncertainty over delivery.
- 5.6.5 There is a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Policy (LCWIP) for Ribble Valley published March 2024. Whalley Road is identified as a strategic route between Whalley and Langho with measures identified for improvement.
- 5.6.6 As layout is a reserved matter it is not possible to fully assess the proposal in respect of the level of car parking to be provided, however, it is anticipated that the proposal would provide sufficient off street parking for the site in order to accord with Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which requires that all development proposals provide adequate car parking and servicing.
- 5.6.7 Para 117 (b) of the NPPF requires development to address the needs to people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport. LCC have requested improvements to the pedestrian access along the A59 with improved footways, crossing and public access to bus routes including bus stops improvements. A development of this scale should ensure that the needs of all future residents are met, however as previously referred to in this report, there are concerns over the accessibility and connectivity of the site to nearby services and facilities, which is fundamental to the success of the scheme and how well it can

physically integrate with the surrounding area. The failure of the proposal to satisfactorily address these material considerations carries significant weight against the scheme.

- 5.6.8 At the present time there is not an accessible route to Langho Train Station and the provision of the car park including disabled spaces would not, on its own, meet the requirements for accessibility. Therefore, the matter of the sustainability of the site has not been addressed as detailed above and in this respect the proposal would fail to accord with Key Statement DS1 and DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF para 117(b).

## 5.7 Drainage and Flood Risk

- 5.7.1 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 although the latest national flood risk mapping shows that part of the site on the eastern side where Bushburn Brook runs through the site and the central spinal corridor would be at risk of surface water flooding.
- 5.7.2 With regard to Flood Risk the applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which identifies four low to high risk surface water flow routes which cross the site. The proposed surface water drainage system will be designed to accommodate surface water flooding generated from greenfield runoff within the site boundary. Ground levels will be altered to raise the topographical depressions to match the remaining areas of the site and remove any surface water ponding to lower the modelled flood depth.
- 5.7.3 In terms of a drainage strategy infiltration such as soakaways will not be viable due to impermeable ground conditions such as clay and silt on the site. Therefore, surface water is likely to be disposed of via gravity to attenuation ponds on the northern part of the site (adjacent to Longsight Road (A59)) before discharging via gravity to the central watercourse subject to approval from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). Foul effluent will likely discharge via gravity to the site low point before being pumped to the 300mm public foul sewer within the south eastern boundary of the site subject to approval by United Utilities.
- 5.7.4 LLFA have reviewed the submitted drainage strategy and raise no objections subject to a number of conditions.
- 5.7.5 The Environment Agency have been consulted but are of the view that as no constraints have been identified the development has been screened as low risk and so they do not intend to make comments on the proposed scheme. Officers have identified a concern about the potential for the car park to flood and this matter has been referred back to the LLFA for further comment.
- 5.7.6 As part of the site is prone to surface water flooding, and the indicative plan shows that this would accommodate key infrastructure serving the development mainly internal access roads, the application is required to satisfy the flood risk sequential test and demonstrate that there are no other suitable or available sites to accommodate the development at a lower risk of flooding. A sequential test has been submitted which reviews other sites as being potentially suitable or available for the development within the Ribble Valley and concludes that there are no sequentially preferable sites. Thirty-two sites were assessed with the majority

rejected due to site area/capacity. One site did meet the site area/capacity but had significant flood risk from surface water and was also in a less sustainable location. Officers agree with the findings and therefore the sequential test is satisfied.

5.7.7 For the reasons outlined above the proposed development is considered to accord with Policy DME6 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy subject to appropriate conditions and subject to the LLFA being satisfied about flood risk on the proposed railway car park.

## 5.8 Potential Impacts on the Railway

5.8.1 Network Rail have submitted general comments regarding development adjacent to a railway and raise no specific concerns in respect of this proposal subject to conditions.

5.8.2 Northern Railway are reviewing the proposal with regards to specific impacts on the adjacent railway service and the proposed car park. These comments are expected prior to the meeting and will be provided in the update report.

5.8.3 In this respect the railway does not pose a constraint to allowing the development.

## 5.9 Air Quality, Noise and Lighting

5.9.1 An Air Quality report has been submitted in support of the application which has been reviewed by Environmental Health and they raise no issues.

5.9.2 Lighting would be considered at reserved matters stage. Any lighting scheme would need to comply with the Institution of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note for the reduction of obtrusive light 2021 (or later versions). It should be designed so that it is the minimum needed for security and operational processes and be installed to minimise potential pollution caused by glare and spillage in accordance with Zone E2 Rural low district brightness as appropriate in villages or relatively dark outer suburban locations.

5.9.3 In terms of noise, a noise and vibration report has been submitted in support of the proposal. The prevalent noise sources are from the road traffic on Longsight Road and the adjacent railway line. There is typically one passenger train per hour in each direction between 06.00 and 00.00. The line is used by freight trains which tend to occur during daytime hours only.

5.9.4 As the site layout has not been developed specific measures for each dwelling are unknown at this stage, therefore a façade assessment has been carried out assuming the nearest residential façades are set back 10m from both the railway line and Longsight Road. This is considered to be the most onerous acoustic conditions for this site.

5.9.5 There are scheduled trains at the start of the day between 06:00 and 07:00 and at the end of the day 23:00 and 00:00 which could potentially result in sleep disturbance. It is proposed that the typical maximum level from passing trains be

designed not to exceed the 45 dB LAF max criteria and this is considered in the façade assessment.

- 5.9.6 The noise report concludes that the LAeq levels during the day and at night were high. The WHO guidelines on community noise states that to prevent serious annoyance during the daytime, outdoor areas should be less than 55dB, but there is no mention of how this is to be achieved. The report also references BS8233 that bedrooms shall be 30dB at night. The WHO guidelines also state that an LAmax of 45dB shall be achieved. However, these measurements are at the top end of the scale of what would be accepted and as the typical assessment for an open window is 12-15 dB a distance of 10m would not be sufficient to allow for open windows to provide ventilation and that attenuated passive ventilators or mechanical ventilation would be required.
- 5.9.7 Whilst the report discusses acoustic specifications of walls, glazing ventilation and plant noise, an assessment of the indoor sound levels given the specification proposed needs to be included in any future report. It is not clear that the guidelines can be achieved here with the mitigation proposed, however at this stage issues around noise are not a constraint to allowing the development in outline, with further consideration required to be given at the reserved matters stage which would need to be secured by condition would.

## 5.10 Geoenvironmental Constraints

5.10.1 A Preliminary Geoenvironmental Investigation report has been submitted in support of the application which identifies the following issues:

- The existing topography of the site will require earthworks to regrade requiring under build and retaining walls;
- The overhead electrical wires present a potential constraint unless they can be relocated. Details of the feasibility to divert and the requirements for easement required are unknown at the time of the report;
- The sewer and water pipes present a potential constraint unless they can be relocated. Details of the feasibility to divert and the requirements for easement required are unknown at the time of the report. UU may seek to restrict changes in site level if the depth cover above the sewer was adversely affected;
- The presence of watercourses on the site would make it prudent to prepare a silt and surface water management plan (SWMP) and a Construction Environmental Management Strategy (CEMS) prior to any commencement of construction.

5.10.2 The report concludes that whilst the site is suitable for the proposed use the use for residential purposes would require further intrusive investigation in order to ensure that any remediation work is identified and appropriate mitigation proposed.

5.10.3 In this respect the proposal accords with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which requires that all development proposals achieve efficient land use and remediation subject to an appropriate condition.

## 5.11 Archaeology

5.11.1 LCC Archaeology has raised no concerns in respect of the proposal.

5.11.2 In this respect the proposal accords with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

#### 5.12 Contributions

5.12.1 Contributions have been requested from LCC Highways towards Travel Plan of £18,000 and public transport of £175,000 per annum for a period of five years, and the applicant is agreeable to this.

5.12.2 NHS Lancashire & Cumbria Integrated Care Board have asked how health requirements can be factored in for this development. They have been asked to provide a copy of their policy. Based on the information available to officers there is no justification to request a contribution at this stage.

5.12.3 LCC Education do not require any contributions towards school places at this time given the projected spaces available in schools to accommodate this development. They have been asked to confirm that these spaces are within Ribble Valley schools.

#### 5.13 Other Matters Raised

5.13.1 Concerns have been raised regarding the neighbour notification process. Nearest neighbours abutting the red edge of the application site have been notified by letter, a number of site notices were posted around the site and a press notice was published in the Clitheroe Advertiser. This is in addition to any publicity carried out by the Parish Council and the developer. The number of responses received suggests that members of the public are aware of this application.

### **6. Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion**

6.1 The delivery of housing and affordable housing to help meet the Borough's housing needs is a benefit that carries moderate weight. The proposed train station car park is a benefit that carries very limited weight given the uncertainty over delivery and future custodianship. The site is not a suitable location for residential development having regard to the strategic policies and the concerns about sustainability. Furthermore the development of 300 houses is considered to result in adverse spatial, visual and landscape harm, and impacts on ecology have not been properly considered. Overall on balance, it is considered that the harm resultant from the proposed development would outweigh the economic and social benefits.

6.2 For the reasons outlined above the proposed development is considered to be in significant direct conflict with Key Statement DS1 and H2 and Policy DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy insofar that approval would result in a form of development that would result in the creation of new dwellings outside of any settlement boundary.

6.3 It is further considered that the proposed development would result in the introduction of an incongruous and discordant form of development within the open countryside that fails

to respond positively to the inherent character of the area contrary to Policies DMG1, DMG2, DME1 and DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

- 6.4 The proposal fails to demonstrate that the proposed development would not result in harm to established wildlife habits contrary to Key Statement EN4 and Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and fails to provide an adequate strategy to demonstrate how the development will meet the statutory BNG provision.

RECOMMENDATION: That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would result in a large-scale residential development, outside of a defined settlement, which fails to meet any of the exception criteria for allowing development in such location contrary to Key Statements DS1 and H2 and Policies DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.
2. The proposed development, by virtue of the quantum of development, would result in a large-scale development in a rural location resulting in future users being reliant on a private motor vehicle contrary to Key Statement DM12 and Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework which supports sustainable patterns of development.
3. The proposed development, by virtue of its overall scale and footprint, would result in the introduction of an incongruous, unsympathetic, and discordant form of development, particularly when viewed from public vantage points along Longsight Road (A59) approaching the site from both the western and eastern directions, Public Footpath FP0606a which crosses the site and residential properties to the north of Langho village afforded direct views of the site. This would result in adverse, long term and permanent visual and landscape harm. The resultant impact fails to respond positively to the inherent visual and landscape character of the area contrary to Policies DMG1, DMG2, DME1 and DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework including paragraph 135.
4. The application fails to carry out appropriate assessments to fully assess the impacts of the development upon habitats within and adjacent to the site including whether appropriate protection and enhancement can be provided for protected species and their habitat. This is contrary to Key Statement EN4 and policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
5. The proposed development would result in the loss of existing habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units, with insufficient details being submitted to demonstrate an appropriate strategy for achieving the statutory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain contrary to Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

[https://webportal.ribblevalley.gov.uk/site/scripts/planx\\_details.php?appNumber=3%2F2025%2F0196](https://webportal.ribblevalley.gov.uk/site/scripts/planx_details.php?appNumber=3%2F2025%2F0196)