

Ribble Valley Borough Council -
Development Control
Church Walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

Our Reference: PA-0000955/01
Customer reference: 3/2026/0214
Date: 14 April 2026

Proposed erection of 26 affordable dwellings with associated access, gardens, parking and landscaping.

Land at Albany Drive Copster Green BB1 9EH

Dear Planning Officer,

Thank you for consulting us on the above application, on 25 March 2026.

We have reviewed the submitted information that is relevant to our remit and set out our position and comments below.

Environment Agency position

We object to the proposed development as submitted because it involves the use of a non-mains foul drainage system in circumstances where it may be feasible for the development to be connected to a public sewer but no justification has been provided for the use of a non-mains system. We recommend that the application should be refused on this basis.

Reason(s)

Private sewage treatment facilities should only be used where it is not feasible for a development to be connected to a public sewer, because of the greater risk of failures leading to pollution of the water environment posed by private sewerage systems compared to public sewerage systems.

This objection is supported by the PPG for Water Supply, Wastewater and Water Quality (ref ID: 34-020-20140306) which advises that the first presumption must be to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into a public sewer. Only where, having taken into account the cost and/or practicability, it can be shown to the satisfaction of the LPA that connection to a public sewer is not feasible, should non-mains foul sewage disposal solutions be considered.

Overcoming our objection

To overcome our objection the applicant should thoroughly investigate the possibility of connecting to the public foul sewer, and either revise their application to propose a mains connection or submit evidence that demonstrates that this is not feasible.

Lack of capacity or plans to improve capacity in the sewer is not a valid reason for a development to install a private sewerage system. In such cases the developer should explore how a lack of capacity may be overcome so that their development can be connected to a public foul sewer. In these cases, if an applicant decides to apply for a water discharge permit for private treatment facilities, on the basis of the information currently available within the planning application it appears unlikely that we would be able to grant a permit.

Installations and Amenity – advice to LPA

The proposed development is within 500m of one or more industrial or waste management site that is regulated by the Environment Agency through the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016. The location of this site(s) can be found on Defra's Data Services Platform, available at - [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/access-the-public-register-for-environmental-information#environmental ...](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/access-the-public-register-for-environmental-information#environmental...)

The Environment Agency issues Environmental Permits for installations or waste management operations. A permit will require that operators demonstrate they have taken all reasonable measures to prevent pollution of the environment and harm to human health. Pollution can include air quality impacts, odours, noise, pests water quality and ground water impacts. If prevention is not possible, the operator must take steps to minimise the impact from pollution instead. In some cases, this is unlikely to eliminate all emissions and there could be impacts to the environment which may cause local residents some concern. When a new development is built near to an existing permitted facility this does not automatically trigger a review of the Environmental Permit and we will regulate this in line with our [Environment Agency enforcement and sanctions policy - GOV.UK](#).

Planning authorities must satisfy themselves that in land use terms the proposed development is suitable for this location given the proximity to a regulated site/s as described above and the scope of the permit as granted.

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Planning policy requirements (paragraph 200 of the NPPF) state that new development should integrate effectively with existing businesses and not place unreasonable restrictions upon them.

Please note that in accordance with national planning policy (paragraph 201 of the NPPF), planning decisions should assume that permitting regimes will operate effectively. Applicants should be advised to consider our 'Environmental Permitting Guidance' which can be found at: [Check if you need an environmental permit - GOV.UK](#).

If you have any questions regarding our response, please contact clplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Dana Binns – Sustainable Places Planning Advisor,
National Contact Centre: 03708 506 506
Email: clplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk
Lutra House, Dodd Way, off Seedlee Road, Preston, PR5 8BX