


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	LW	Date:	02/06/25	Manager:	KH	Date:	02/06/25
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0239			 <div>Ribble Valley Borough Council</div> <hr/> www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	01/05/25	Site Notice:	01/05/25	
Officer:	LW			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				REFUSAL

Development Description:	Proposed replacement dwelling following demolition of existing house and garage plus extension of the residential curtilage.
Site Address/Location:	Glendene, Barker Lane, Mellor, BB2 7EE.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No comments received with respect to the proposed development.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objection.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
Two letters of representation have been received raising no objection to the proposal, along with one letter of representation raising concerns with respect to the loss of the existing property.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN1: Green Belt
Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2013/0721: Proposed detached dwellinghouse with integral garage following demolition of existing including external works and access (Approved).

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to a detached two-storey residential property known as Glendene, situated to the western side of Barker Lane, Mellor. The property is bordered to the north by the residential property known as Hillside and to the west and south by open fields.

The site to which the proposal relates is located outside of any defined settlement area and on land which benefits from a Green Belt designation. That aside, the property benefits from no other designations or constraints.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Consent is sought for the construction of a replacement two-storey dwellinghouse, following the demolition of the existing property and detached garage, and extension of the residential curtilage.

The two-storey dwellinghouse would measure 11.5m by 12.6 and would incorporate a single storey integral garage, utility and sitting area to the northern side elevation, measuring 4.7m by 14.5m. To the rear a flat roof canopy would also be featured, along with an entrance porch to the front. The property would have a maximum eaves and ridge height of 4.8m and 7.9m respectively and would be constructed from facing brickwork with stone features, slate roof tiles and uPVC windows and doors.

Principle of Development:

The application site lies within the designated Green Belt and therefore Key Statement EN1 of the Core Strategy and national Green Belt policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is engaged.

The NPPF states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt and advises that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt.

As set out in the NPPF and Key Statement EN1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, the essential characteristic of the Green Belt is its openness. NPPF paragraph 154 states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in Green Belt. However, the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces, is considered an exception where it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. Development which is harmful to the Green Belt should only be permitted in 'very special circumstances' and these will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

There are no specific definitions within the NPPF or Ribble Valley Core Strategy in relation to what constitutes 'materially larger', however the generally accepted approach is for an assessment of the increased volume that the development would create above that of the existing building.

It is noted that pre-application advice on the construction of a replacement dwelling was sought prior to the submission of this formal planning application. The pre-application scheme included a two-storey dwelling with a hipped roof appearance measuring 12m by 11m which also incorporated a single storey, flat roof porch (2.4m x 3.7m) and sunroom (3.3m x 5.7m) and a pitched roof integral garage (5.2m x 5.7m).

Whilst detailed volume calculations were not provided at pre-application stage, the submitted Design Statement stated that the volume increase of the proposed dwellinghouse when compared to the existing dwellinghouse equated to approximately 50%. The pre-application enquiry response subsequently advised that the *'proposed development is generally acceptable subject to clarification in terms of volume increase, however it is considered that a reduction to, or removal of the garage, would help to achieve an acceptable volume increase'*. It was therefore concluded that *'in its current form the development proposed is likely to result in Green Belt harm in terms of Key Statement EN1 and NPPF Section 13*

‘Protecting Green Belt Land’ and affect the openness of this area, however suggestions are outlined as to how this could be overcome’.

The proposed scheme has been amended since pre-application, with the development now including a two-storey dwelling with a gable roof form, measuring a maximum of 11.5m by 12.6, along with a single storey integral garage, utility and sitting area measuring 4.7m by 14.5m. The Agent has provided a comparison of volumes taking account of the existing dwellinghouse (385 cu.m), inclusive of the detached garage building, and the proposed replacement dwelling (740 cu.m). These calculations indicate that the proposal would result in a total amount of new built form of 355 cu.m, equating to an increase of approximately 92% above that of the existing buildings. The proposed development would therefore clearly result in a materially larger building at the proposal site than that of the existing. Furthermore, the prominent views into the site, particularly upon approach from the south along Barker Lane, would mean that the resultant increase in volume would be apparent from the surrounding landscape.

With the above in mind, it is considered that the proposed replacement dwelling would result in a materially larger building than that of the existing in as much that the cumulative cubic volume increase of the proposal would be significant in relation to the existing property which in turn would result in Green Belt harm contrary to the guidance set out in Paragraph 154 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. Furthermore, there are no very special circumstances demonstrated which would outweigh this harm.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

It is not anticipated that the proposed development would result in any significant detrimental harm upon the existing amenities of any nearby residential receptors by way of overshadowing, loss of outlook or daylight. The nearest residential dwelling is Hillside, a bungalow property sited to the north of the proposal site. The site slopes down to the south, with the proposal site being located on lower land levels than that of Hillside. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling would remain approximately 5.5m from the main dwellinghouse at Hillside, with the two-storey element set in excess of 10m from this neighbouring property. As such, it is not anticipated that any significant undue harm upon the neighbouring residents would be resultant.

The window openings to the front and rear of the dwelling would provide similar views to those afforded by the window configuration featured to the existing property, whilst the openings to the southern side elevation would not have a direct interface with any nearby residential receptors and would provide views largely towards the open fields which border the site to the south. As such, no new opportunities for direct overlooking or loss of privacy are anticipated in this respect. The window proposed to the northern side elevation would face towards Hillside, however this window would serve a utility room and therefore could be obscurely glazed in order to protect the amenity of the adjacent residential property and reduce any perceived sense of overlooking.

Taking account of the above, the proposed development is considered acceptable with respect to impact upon residential amenity.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

The proposed replacement dwelling would appear relatively traditional in design, utilising facing brickwork with stone features, slate roof tiles and uPVC windows and doors. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would appear at odds with its surroundings, with the external facing materials of the dwelling appearing similar to the existing properties in the locality.

The proposal would also follow the established building line of the properties located to the north of the proposal site and would not be sited forward of the existing dwellinghouse. Although large, the form and siting of the dwelling would, on balance, remain sympathetic to the surrounding properties, which

themselves are diverse in terms of their overall size, scale and architectural design. As such, it is not considered that the external appearance of the development would have a significantly harmful effect on the existing visual amenities of the area.

It is noted that concerns have been raised with respect to the demolition of the existing dwellinghouse. However, the existing property is not considered to be of any significant historical or architectural merit and therefore its proposed demolition and replacement with a new two-storey dwellinghouse does not raise any concerns in this respect.

Highways and Parking:

Lancashire County Council Highways have been consulted on the proposed development and raised no objection. The parking standards required for the size of the dwellinghouse would be met, including three on-site parking spaces as well as an integral garage.

It is noted that the Local Highway Authority have requested the provision of a covered cycle store for four bicycles; however, the proposed garage is considered suitable to provide cycle storage and therefore the provision of an additional store is not considered necessary in this particular instance.

Landscape/Ecology:

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report has been submitted with the application, dated 18th March 2025. The report concludes that multiple gaps behind the soffits were observed, and the building was assessed as offering low bat roosting potential.

However, as further survey work is recommended, it cannot be determined whether the development would result in no adverse impact upon protected species until an emergence survey has been undertaken in the optimum survey season (May to September inclusive) confirming the presence/ absence of roosting bats. As such, the proposal fails to satisfy the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations and is contrary to Policy DME3 and Key Statement EN4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seek to restrict development proposals likely to have an adverse effect on protected species unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits outweigh the local and wider impacts.

It is also noted that the submitted Bat Report states that the proposed development would be located on the footprint of the existing property and areas of hardstanding surrounding the property – therefore resulting in the loss of less than 25 sq.m of natural habitat and satisfying the de minimis Biodiversity Net Gain exemption.

However, the submitted site plans show the proposed replacement dwelling to encroach onto the grassed area to the rear of the existing property, with the proposed parking area also resulting in the partial loss of the grassed area situated to the front of the existing dwellinghouse. Based on this, the cumulative loss of natural habitat appears to exceed the 25 sq.m de minimis threshold.

The applicant has therefore failed to adequately demonstrate that the proposal would be exempt from the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements, and no completed biodiversity metric calculation tool has been submitted demonstrating that the proposal is capable of achieving the required 10% enhancement on the baseline value of the site. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended by The Biodiversity Gain Town and Country Planning (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024).

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:	That planning consent be refused for the following reasons:
01:	The proposed development would result in a replacement dwelling which would be materially larger than that of the existing in as much that the cubic volume increase of the proposal would be significant in relation to the existing property. The proposal is therefore considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt contrary to the provisions of Key Statement EN1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) and Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework which attaches substantial weight to Green Belt harm.
02:	The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not unduly impact upon protected species as insufficient evidence has been submitted to assess the potential impact of the development on protected species in particular, bats. In the absence of such information the LPA cannot be satisfied that the proposed works would not cause disturbance to bats, result in the loss of a bat roost or cause injury or death to bats and other wildlife within or adjacent to the site contrary to Key Statement EN4 and Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028 as well as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in determining development proposals.
03:	The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposal would be exempt from the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements or that the proposal is capable of achieving a 10% enhancement on the baseline value of the site as required by The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 7A.