

Statement of Community Involvement

Full Planning Application for the Erection of 77.no Affordable Dwellings with Associated Access, Gardens, Parking and Landscaping Areas.

Land east of Clitheroe Road, Whalley.

For Pringle Homes.

May 2025

Job Number: 18-086

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1.0 Introduction and Consultation Objectives

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Pringle Homes ('Pringle'/'the Applicant') to support a full planning application for residential development on land to the east of Clitheroe Road, north of Whalley as being submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council ('RVBC').
- 1.2 The description of the development is:

'Full Planning Application for the Erection of 77.no Affordable Dwellings with Associated Access, Gardens, Parking and Landscaping Areas.'
- 1.3 The Statement is prepared pursuant to Government advice which encourages applicants to consult the local community in preparing new development proposals to provide local people with the opportunity to shape new development in their area. Applicants are also encouraged to consult with other stakeholders in pre-application discussions.
- 1.4 The Statement therefore provides a full explanation of the pre-application consultation process and is accompanied by appendices which contain evidence of the consultation undertaken by the applicant. The outcome of the feedback received is also documented and this Statement will set out how the applicant intends to address the responses.
- 1.5 The report has the following structure:
 - Review of the planning legislation, planning policy and guidance in relation to community engagement at national and local level;
 - Outline of the consultation process undertaken by the applicant;
 - Summary of the consultation responses received and how they have been considered by the applicant and their development team; and
 - Concluding comments.

Pringle Homes

- 1.6 Pringle Homes was founded in 1981 and is a family run, Lancashire based housebuilder. Their website expresses that *'we are committed to providing our customers with exemplary service. Our new homes are designed and built to the very highest standard, with the demands of the modern home-owner very much in mind,'* and describes them as *'one of the North West's most exclusive house-building companies.'*
- 1.7 Pringle's developments are often located in semi-rural areas with a focus on locations with good accessibility and transport links. Their work includes a number of 3-6 bedroom luxury residential developments across Lancashire and more recently a development of 37 affordable homes at Crow Trees Farm in Chatburn, now known as Ravenwood, including 1-4 bedroom units across apartments, bungalows and house formats.

2.0 Planning Policy Context

2.1 Community engagement in the planning process has been given greater basis via the Localism Act 2011 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). Local authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to 'front load' the planning system and set guidance for developers in undertaking consultation on proposals in order to give local communities more involvement in the planning process.

2.2 The NPPF¹ promotes pre-application engagement and 'front-loading', stating that:

'Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.' (Para. 40.)

2.3 The NPPF goes on to state that:

'[Local Planning Authorities] should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.' (Para. 41.)

2.4 The NPPF also confirms at Section 12 ('Achieving well-designed places') that:

'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.' (Para. 131).

2.5 The Ribble Valley Statement for Community Involvement was adopted by the Council in October 2021 and includes principles for dealing with planning applications including pre-application consultation with developers and the council's approach for community involvement on planning applications including:

'In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paras. 39-46) Ribble Valley Borough Council encourages pre-application engagement to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.' (Para 17.1)

'The Council also encourages applicants to engage with both the Council and the community/third parties before an application is submitted. This will give an opportunity to address issues before the planning application is submitted, thus potentially avoiding an application being in-validated and reducing the time to determine an application. [...]

¹ National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Developers are encouraged to submit a consultation statement with their planning application outlining who was consulted, the means by which they were consulted, the results of any consultation and how these have influenced the planning application proposals.’ (Para 17.3)

- 2.6 A revised SCI was released by the RVBC in May for consultation until June 6th 2025. The statement remains unadopted as this time. The new statement aims to:

‘to ensure that all sections of the public and community, including local groups and organizations, are actively involved in the planning process and are notified of plans that may affect them.’

- 2.7 This statement demonstrates that the application submitted by Pringle for land at Clitheroe Road, is fully compliant with current policy and guidance in respect of engagement.

3.0 Community Consultation Process

Consultation with RVBC

- 3.1 In considering this site, a pre-application advice request was submitted to RVBC on behalf of Pringle in 2023 to allow the opportunity to *'approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way'* (Para. 39 of the NPPF).
- 3.2 This request was to facilitate an opportunity to formally present and engage with the Council in regard to a development opportunity on the site, with an attached sketch for a proposed residential development of 18 no. self-build housing plots. Whilst this pre-application request was in relation to a proposed scheme that did not go ahead to application submission (due to a number of factors), it was located on the same site area as the proposed development option now discussed in this Statement.
- 3.3 The pre-application discussions were intended to act as a precursor to submission of a planning application. It was considered that formal pre-application engagement with the Council would facilitate an effective platform to discuss the principles of developing the site to accommodate residential development.
- 3.4 In 2023, a pre-application meeting was held online, with representatives of RVBC, Maybern and Pringle in attendance. On 13th June, a written enquiry response was subsequently received.
- 3.5 The pre-application response informed that the Council considered the proposed development to be in conflict with Key Statement DS1 (Development Strategy) and Policies DMG2 (Strategic Considerations) and DMH3 (Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB) of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, as approval would lead to new dwellings outside of the settlement boundary without sufficient justification. Feedback to the pre-application advice request was largely policy-based due to the site's location. The response related primarily to its position in the countryside and being outside of the settlement boundary.
- 3.6 Considerations of the pre-application response for the 18 no. self-build units were made and it was decided that a revised plan for 100% affordable homes would be considered. The Council highlights that self-build units, as previously proposed, are not deemed to meet 'local-housing need', and supplied self-build waitlist figures that described minimal demand in the area.
- 3.7 Following appointment of a revised architect, a revised scheme of 77 no. affordable dwellings is intended to better address the housing needs of Borough as defined in the Core Strategy.
- 3.8 The revised proposal for 100% affordable housing also intends to meet justification for exception criteria of Policy DMG2, which states development outside the settlement boundary must meet at least one of a list of criterion; one of which being *'the development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.'*
- 3.9 Given that the proposed scheme for the site has been revised since the previous pre-application advice request, the RVBC planning team has been provided with updated plans on house types and the scheme.
- 3.10 Due to there having been a previous pre-application advice request for another residential development on the site in recent years, it was not deemed necessary to make another formal request for the 77 no. proposed affordable unit scheme. The Council's response to the previous pre-application request for this site will be closely considered prior to application submission of the proposed development as to the highlighted core strategy policies and principles of development which remain largely relevant.

Consultation with Councillors – Ward and Parish

- 3.11 In March 2025, Whalley Parish Council was informed on the new development proposal through an email from Maybern on the 24th March 2025. This email included notification of the development and contained an attachment of a consultation leaflet to be sent to local residents, as attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.12 Maybern received a response from the Parish Council Clerk stating information on the development would be shared at their meeting in April.
- 3.13 Following the Whalley Parish Planning Committee meeting held on the 17th April 2025, it was summarised that the Parish Council had insufficient information to make a decision on whether to respond to Pringle Homes within the public consultation period. As such, it was agreed that the Parish Council would wait to respond to the planning application following submission as part of the statutory neighbour consultation period.
- 3.14 Ward Councillors for the Whalley and Painter Wood ward, Cllr Mark Hindle and Cllr John Atheron, were also contacted by Maybern via email to advise of the site proposals and a copy of the consultation leaflet provided.
- 3.15 A response was received from Cllr Mark Hindle outlining his concern for the proposed development via significantly impacting on road infrastructure, increasing traffic congestion and local services (schools and GPs) being at capacity. The concerns outlined by the Councillor have been addressed in section 4.0.

Consultation with Lancashire County Council Highways

- 3.16 A pre-application consultation has been undertaken by Mode Transport Consultants on behalf of the applicant with LCC Highways. This submitted the scheme proposal and summary of the local highway network that would be assessed as part of the Transport Statement to the planning application.
- 3.17 A meeting with LCC Highways was held with representatives from Mode in attendance on the 23rd January 2025.
- 3.18 A response from LCC was received on 27th January 2025 that addresses their comments in response to the application and concludes that the impact of the development should be considered thoroughly when submitting the application. The full response has been reviewed and incorporated into the Transport Statement.

Public Consultation

- 3.19 To assist the applicant in considering the need for the proposal and its relationship to the surrounding area, the applicant has sought to engage with residents and businesses of Whalley.
- 3.20 The information leaflet was circulated on the 19th and 20th March 2025 to around 2,000 properties in Whalley advising on the proposal and that it is to be progressed to a planning application and inviting any feedback and views on the proposal. A period of 15 days for the submission of comments via email or post was provided.
- 3.21 The leaflet distribution catchment area included all homes and businesses within the area north of the River Calder, east of the A59 and west of the A671. A map of the catchment area of distribution is presented at Appendix 2.
- 3.22 Following the distribution, 22 consultation responses were received from residents via email, all but one were expressing objection to the development of up to 77 no. affordable dwellings. A more detailed outline of the consultation responses received is presented at Appendix 3.

3.23 The feedback from residents can be summarised into the following points:

- Increased strain on local infrastructure and services,
- Lack of demand for the proposed affordable housing,
- Environmental degradation and green space loss,
- Impacts on traffic congestion and highway safety,
- Impacts to character of local area.

3.24 One respondent expressed interest in the proposed development, specifically when the development would commence construction and more information on the housing types.

4.0 Consultation Assessment and Responses

Principles of Development

- 4.1 Whalley is one of 3 principal settlements located within Ribble Valley, as identified within Key Statement DS1 and to be a key focus for new development in the Borough. The settlement has a number of facilities and services that are within an accessible distance to the proposed site.
- 4.2 The proposed development site immediately abuts the northern settlement boundary of Whalley and is well contained by both the A59 (to the immediate north) and Clitheroe Road (running along the western boundary). From these distinct barriers, especially the A59, it is apparent that the site is well related to the Whalley settlement in terms of location and access.
- 4.3 Although the site is designated as open countryside, the proposed development would meet criteria for exception in Policy DMG2(2) and Policy DMH3² for development outside of the settlement boundary as the development will help to achieve an identified local need for affordable housing.
- 4.4 The site is not located within a flood risk zone and is not designated Green Belt such that there are no other policy or technical restrictions to its potential for development.
- 4.5 The Planning Statement to the proposal will provide further information on the accordance with national aims for the delivery of housing and wider tenures to meet housing needs and local policy accordance.

Local Infrastructure and Services

- 4.6 The most significant factor of concern to residents is the perceived capacity of local infrastructure and services, particularly schools, GPs and dentists, to service additional residents to the local area caused by a major residential development.
- 4.7 There are a number of primary schools within a 2 mile radius of the proposed development that are determined at this time to be oversubscribed. However, it is reasonable to expect that residents can travel outside of the immediate local area to nearby areas and towns (such as Clitheroe) for facilities. Furthermore, the position of school places will change on a yearly basis, particularly local to the site, due to the recent opening of Ribblesdale Primary School that could accommodate some demand.
- 4.8 It is also relevant to reference that a consultation response to a planning application for a previous development in Whalley (REF: 3/2021/1277), LCC Education highlighted that, when predicting future capacity and project pupils of Barrow URC Primary and Langho and Billington St Leonards Primary, both schools will be undersubscribed by January 2027.
- 4.9 When considering this together with the possible redistribution of demand as a result of the new build school, there should be available primary school provisions in the area for this development by the date of completion of units on the proposal site.
- 4.10 Other service concerns included GP availability. Whalley Medical Centre is the closest GP surgery to the site (0.6 miles) and we understand is open to accepting new patients.
- 4.11 It is also important to consider that the nature of the proposed scheme, being for affordable homes, it will be highly limited to individuals with a connection to the local area and prioritises local people. Therefore, individuals and families to the new dwellings may well already be living within Whalley and

² Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014)

neighbouring areas prior to the development, so it is considered that there is likely to be a relatively low increase in local services demand.

- 4.12 Having regard to the above, the impact of the proposed development on infrastructure provision will be fully considered through the application, and any consultee comments regarding relevant contributions for additional provision will be fully reviewed and provided for where necessary (and could be secured either via a planning condition or Section 106 provision as may be necessary).

Affordable Housing Need

- 4.13 Another significant area of concern for residents was a lack of need for affordable housing in Whalley. More affordable homes were also considered to likely have a negative impact on the character of Whalley. One resident expressed that a nearby affordable housing scheme has sold less than 70% so suggests there is a lack of demand (no further details of this site were provided e.g. of the delivery timeframe or unit types).
- 4.14 In preparing the development proposal, the applicant has had full regard to the national and local housing position and aims to provide for a range of tenure and unit sizes to address housing needs.
- 4.15 In this respect, the Council's Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment outlines a net annual affordable housing need for an average of 88 affordable homes per year. It also references that there is a significant housing need for 1 bedroom properties which is not being achieved. Recent nearby developments in the area include a majority of 2 bedroom properties and above which is maintaining the perceived lack of affordable housing need. The proposal for 77. no affordable homes, including 1 and 2 bed units will assist in meeting the need for such affordable housing units that is not currently being met in the area.
- 4.16 In addition, the RVBC Housing Land Supply Assessment of 2022 has indicated that over the last 12 years affordable housing delivery numbers are averaging only 66 per year. This suggests that more affordable housing is still required which this proposal will make a significant contribution to.
- 4.17 Further consideration to the provision and need for affordable housing in the Borough and Whalley is explained in the Planning Statement, including having regard to the Government's aim to deliver 1.5m new homes.

Environmental Impacts

- 4.18 A number of responses have raised concerns to the loss of greenspace and open land in the Whalley area.
- 4.19 The site is not a public open space and does not have public access. It is privately owned, used for grazing purposes, and access by the public is not permitted or promoted.
- 4.20 The proposals will result in a significant amount of amenity space and landscaping and woodland being provided on the land that would be accessible by both future residents and existing residents in the local area and provide a high quality visual and landscape setting to the proposed development.
- 4.21 The site and proposals have been fully assessed by ERAP Consulting Ecologists to consider the baseline and current wildlife and habitat provisions of the site and the sites relationship to nearby designated areas. A full tree and hedgerow survey has also been undertaken, including of the health and age of trees by Iain Tavendale Tree Consultant.
- 4.22 Main areas of quality trees and hedgerows have been retained on and around the site in the proposals. A clear strategy for replacement tree planting and the provision of higher quality habitats on the land area has been considered, including the requirement to provide for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain associated with development proposals, within the remit of on and off-site BNG provision (or a

combination of both). The site layout and landscaping plans will demonstrate on-site landscaping provision and the relevant Ecology and BNG Reports will provide relevant information.

- 4.23 As a residential development scheme, the proposal is fully in line with the surroundings and is not an unusual use or of a scale that will result in significant environmental impacts such as air pollution to affect local air quality. The land is not in proximity to an air quality management area and as it is accessible by a choice of means, the level of traffic movements would not be significant to consider air quality mitigation measures.
- 4.24 Concerns to noise and disturbance associated with the construction of the units can be appropriately mitigated by a Construction Environment Management Plan that will be agreed between the applicant and the Council via the planning application. This will likely control how many construction vehicles can arrive and depart on any day and their delivery routes and times as well as the provision of wheel washing facilities, noise and dust measures to keep noise and dust to a minimum, and due regard to lighting, for examples measures to ensure construction lighting will cease at the end of the operational day.
- 4.25 It is considered the proposal and supporting information submitted with the application and the appropriate use of planning conditions can ensure that the development proceeds in a responsible manner, protecting the environment and amenity of local residents during the construction phase and beyond.

Highway and Parking Concerns

- 4.26 Concerns have been raised in numerous consultation responses outlining possible increases in traffic generation and impacts on the operation and safety of roads local to the development. A handful also suggested there is not adequate parking provision available in the centre of Whalley.
- 4.27 Mode Transport Consultants has advised on the development of the site proposals and prepared a Transport Assessment ('TA') to inform the development proposals. The TA fully assesses the proposed traffic levels that would be associated with the development and has undertaken up-to-date traffic surveys to confirm existing traffic flows in the area and at surrounding junctions, also having regard to feedback to a pre-application advice request with LCC Highways. In the TA, Mode have concluded that:

'the proposed development is expected to generate 44 two-way trips during the AM peak period and 41 two-way trips during the PM peak period. This equates to approximately 2 trips every 3 minutes on average during the AM and PM peak period; therefore, the development proposals will not have a severe impact on the road network, which is the threshold set out in paragraph 116 of the NPPF under which development should not be refused on highways grounds.'
- 4.28 The TA also considers the site is accessible by a choice of means.
- 4.29 The site location is approximately a 15 minute walk from the town centre of Whalley and 20 minutes from Barrow. Residents of the site will have access to a wide range of amenities within walking distance. Footpaths are present along Clitheroe Road for pedestrians use.
- 4.30 There is a bus stop a short walk from the site, with routes to Preston, Burnley, Blackburn and Shadworth as well as neighbouring towns such as Clitheroe. The stop is conveniently located on Clitheroe Road abutting the site to enable the development to achieve sustainable transport links to the local area.
- 4.31 Traffic congestion increases which respondents claim, will not be significant due to the limited traffic flows associated with the proposal and the site's accessible location on foot, cycle and by public transport.
- 4.32 The existing access to the site will be utilised by the development and has been assessed in the TA to be suitable. In pre-application engagement, LCC Highways have agreed a temporary access route would

be acceptable to allow temporary construction access to the site minimising amenity impact on immediate local residents.

- 4.33 Some responses outlined concerns for the access being unsafe. This was in reference to the speed limit of 40mph on Clitheroe Road. The access is assessed within the TA and has been deemed acceptable.
- 4.34 Each dwelling will have an adequate amount of parking relating to the number of bedrooms, whether this be in a garage or separate space. Therefore, the impact of parking on local residents will be minimal and increase in parking demand has been accounted for. As mentioned previously, residents of the proposed development will also be able to use sustainable modes of transport to access the town centre therefore also reducing parking demand and local impact on Whalley.
- 4.35 It is considered that the applicant has acknowledged and addressed all highways concerns in preparing the development proposals. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable from a highway's perspective.

Impacts to Local Character

- 4.36 A handful of responses outlined their belief that the increase of affordable housing developments in Whalley over recent years is negatively impacting local character of the area. Some respondents were concerned that it would devalue house prices in Whalley; this is not a planning matter.
- 4.37 With regard to local character, this is only a planning matter if the development character proposed unduly impacts or harms local aesthetic.
- 4.38 One respondent suggested they would be less opposed to the development if it was a luxury development similar to that of Northcote Park in Langho, another development by Pringle Homes, rather than affordable housing. We wish to emphasise that within the Northcote Park development there are a number of 'tenure blind' affordable homes that are well received by the community and RVBC Planning. It is possible local residents are unaware of such dwellings within Northcote which reiterates how 'tenure blind' and of high quality in terms of construction and materials the affordable homes will be.
- 4.39 The proposed homes have been intentionally designed to fit local (RV) character and will be of a high quality construction and materials consistent with homes previously built by Pringle. Figure 1 and 2 (below) show previous affordable homes by Pringle at Northcote Park which are similar in style and design to those that are proposed for Clitheroe Road; the proposal scheme will also include a range of 1-4 bed units to enable occupation by a range of family sizes. Pringle are also building out an affordable scheme in Chatburn, again where the unit design and quality has been accepted by RVBC and local residents.
- 4.40 Objections received are attempting to highlight a belief that affordable housing is not necessary in Whalley due to this being a more affluent area. This is not a planning matter and conflicts with local policy and recognised affordable housing need that the proposed development will support and meet.



Fig 1. Affordable homes at Northcote Park, Langho



Fig 2. Affordable homes at Northcote Park, Langho

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive process of pre-application engagement with key stakeholders and with the local community.
- 5.2 From the engagement process, the Applicant has gained a better understanding of the local context and afforded the opportunity for residents to feedback on key local issues and the proposal.
- 5.3 The comments and feedback received during the pre-application consultation with the local community have been reviewed and the applicant has responded to comments and questions raised and points will be fully addressed via the planning application submission information.
- 5.4 The Applicant considers that the pre-application consultation undertaken with residents and businesses within Whalley to be efficient, meaningful and effective.
- 5.5 The next stage of the consultation process will comprise the statutory consultation exercise undertaken by the Council upon validation of the planning application. The Applicant remains committed to working with the local community and the Council throughout the planning and development process.

Appendix 1 - Leaflet for public consultation



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PRINGLE
HOMES

Public Consultation – New Homes at Clitheroe Road, Whalley
Have Your Say on a New Housing Development

Dear Resident,

Pringle Homes is bringing forward proposals for a high-quality, sustainable residential development on land to the East of Clitheroe Road, North of Whalley and South of Barrow. As a local, family-run developer, we are committed to delivering thoughtfully designed homes that meet local housing needs while enhancing the surrounding area.



About Pringle Homes

We have a strong track record of delivering quality homes across the North West, including our recent Ribble Valley developments, Northcote Park near Langho and our latest development in Chatburn, Ravenswood which have been very well received.

Our Proposal

We are proposing a development of up to 80 high-quality affordable homes to help address the pressing need for local housing. This scheme will include a mix of houses and bungalows, designed to cater to a range of residents, from young families to older people looking to downsize.

- A mix of ownership and rental opportunities to support different housing needs.
- A mix of 1 to 4-bedroom homes to cater for a wide variety of people
- Enhancements to the existing access off Clitheroe Road for safe and convenient entry.
- Significant public open space, new landscaping, and habitat creation to protect and enhance the local environment.

Your Feedback Matters

As part of our commitment to working with the community, we welcome your thoughts and feedback on the proposals before we submit a planning application.

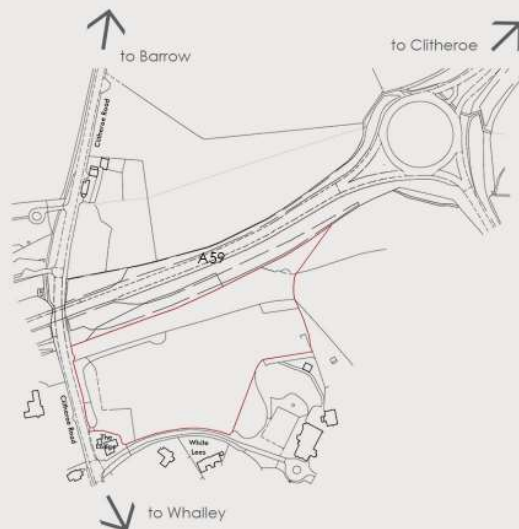
Email us at:

whalley@pringlehomes.co.uk

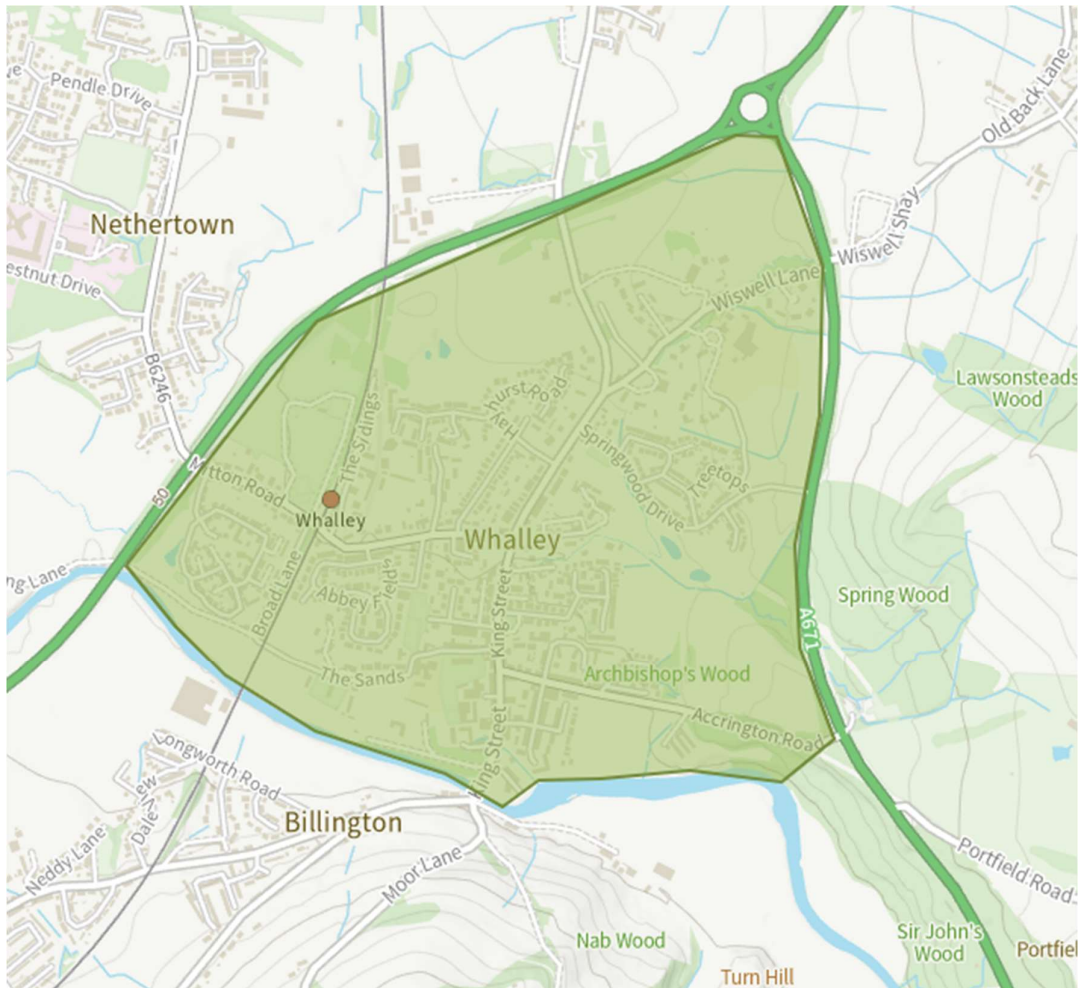
Please share your views by

10th April 2025

We appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you.



Appendix 2 - Catchment Area for leaflet distribution



Appendix 3- Summary Table of Consultation Responses

Whalley Consultation Areas of Concern					
Principles of Development	Local Infrastructure and Services	Affordable Housing Need	Environmental Impacts	Highway and Parking Concerns	Impacts to Local Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggests the proposal does not adhere to Ribble Valley's Core Strategy, stating any new development must not adversely impact the local infrastructure and community. References Whalley Valley Cumulative Impact Assessment 2022-2025 that suggests negative effects of concentrated development on the local infrastructure and community. Appeal decision for a neighbouring site that was upheld for refusal and believes this site has the same characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant strain is being placed on local amenities in the village. Suggests nobody can get doctors' appointments. Schools are overcrowded. Multiple responses outline their belief the proposal will have a negative impact on the well-being of locals and the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggests there has already been double the target number of homes built in the Ribble Valley since 2021. Too many houses have been built in Whalley and it is becoming overcrowded. Takes Whalley Meadows as an example of lack of demand for affordable homes, stating the new development is less than 70% occupied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development would negatively impact local wildlife and habitats. Loss of green space. Would prefer to leave the space for rewilding. States site is a wildlife corridor for commuting species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access from Clitheroe Road is too dangerous, as it has a 40mph speed limit. Roads already have significant queues. A59 concerns for access and safety and exceedance issues. Suggests that the development will not support parking for enough cars in 4 bedroom homes which will be unsightly and endanger children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed development is inappropriate in terms of scale and form, and is incongruent with existing houses. Nature of the village is changing and becoming overcrowded. Would prefer luxury homes like Northcote Park instead of affordable homes. Concerned the development will devalue nearby homes.