

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.								
Signed:	Officer:	EP	Date:	23/10/2025	Manager:	SK	Date:	24.10.25

Application Ref:	2025/0616			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	Various.	Site Notice:	30/09/2025	
Officer:	EP			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Regularisation of landscaping and engineering works to create extended parking area to front and terracing at the rear.
Site Address/Location:	36 Painter Wood, Whalley Old Road, Billington BB7 9JD.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No comments received.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objection subject to condition.
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.

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 Policy DMG1: General Considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations Policy DMH5: Residential and Curtilage Extensions National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Relevant Planning History: 2025/0305: Regularisation of landscaping and engineering works to create extended parking area to front and terracing at the rear and new summer house to rear. (refused). 2024/0694: Proposed single-storey extension to the rear, single storey infill extension between dwelling and garage, alterations to fenestration, replacement flat roofs and addition of cladding. (approved with conditions). 2024/0506: Prior notification for enlargement of dwelling by construction of additional storey. (prior approval not required).

2022/0467: Demolition of existing house and erection of a replacement dwelling with associated external works. Resubmission of 3/2021/1122. (approved with conditions).

2021/1122: Demolition of existing house and erection of a replacement dwelling with associated external works. (refused).

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

36 Painter Wood is a prominent hillside location within the Green Belt and to the south of the Billington settlement boundary (formed by the Whalley Old Road). The existing dwelling is modernist in design (sited for commanding views over the Calder valley). It forms part of a row of similar residential properties, some now replaced but all adhering to similar design principles.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Part retrospective consent is sought for substantial landscaping and engineering operations conducted at the rear of the site. The works will create tiered levels within the garden retained by stone walling and accompanied by landscaping. In addition, a new parking area with accompanied landscaping is to be constructed to the front of the site.

Green Belt:

The application site itself is in a sensitive, elevated hillside location which falls within the designated Greenbelt and as such consideration must be given in regard to the increase in built form and the impact on the openness of the landscape. Therefore, Key Statement EN1 of the Core Strategy and national Green Belt Policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is engaged.

Key Statement EN1 relates solely to development within the defined Green Belt. It states '*The overall extent of the green belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of the designation*'.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 13 sets out the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy including the five purposes it serves and how Green Belt should be protected against inappropriate development. This includes assessing proposals which affect the Green Belt and its openness. NPPG identifies that "openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume".

Development which is harmful to the Green Belt should only be permitted in 'very special circumstance' 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.

Excavation works at the site have already commenced and the introduction of retaining walls has begun, however, it is important to recognise the site prior to this was largely undeveloped and the rear curtilage reflected the openness of the surrounding landscape. Since the refusal of application 3/2025/0305 which relates to the same development, the retaining walls that had already been constructed have been reduced in height to reduce their visual prominence.

These operations are now considered proportionate to the proposed extensive areas of soft-landscaped garden. As such, openness would be preserved both visually and spatially. Furthermore, there is no proposed

extension of the existing residential garden beyond its current defined boundaries, and so the surrounding countryside would be safeguarded from encroachment.

As a result, the proposed engineering operations would not cause significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt, and the development remains appropriate to the residential use of the site. The proposal would not therefore be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. In this regard it would accord with Key Statement EN 1 of the Core Strategy, and the associated provisions of the Framework.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

The application site has two neighbouring dwellings known as No.34 and No.38 Painter Wood.

In respect to the proposed landscaping and engineering works, the overall land levels will remain largely consistent with the existing arrangement and as such it not considered that any elevated overlooking is created, that differs significantly from the original arrangement, that would be of harm to neighbouring receptors. As such, there is no adverse impact to neighbouring amenity to warrant refusal.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance/Green Belt:

Policy DMG1 of the RVCS states that development must

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English heritage building in context toolkit).*
- 2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
- 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*

In respect to the new parking area proposed to the front of the application property, it is understood that the land levels will remain largely consistent with the existing arrangement. There will be an increase in off-road parking provided but the development will be softened with accompanying soft landscaping. It is therefore not considered this part of the proposal would cause undue harm to character or visual amenities of the area and is acceptable. There is similar development found on neighbouring property.

The remainder of the development is sited to the rear of the dwelling but given the nature of topography with the site being on an elevated position, some views of the rear of the site can be afforded from within the public realm.

The proposed terracing in the rear of the site would result in the introduction of a number of stone retaining walls and associated new soft and hard landscaping. Whilst the proposed engineering operations are extensive, the resultant development would generally comprise low-level walling, relative to the slope of the original garden. The retaining walls would result in the introduction of new solid build form within the site but given these are to be accompanied by a range of soft landscaping, they will not result in harm to the openness of the site to a degree that would warrant refusal. As such, taking consideration to the reduction in the height of said retaining walls since the previous refusal, spatial openness would be sufficiently maintained, and the scheme is considered acceptable.

Highways and Parking:

LCC Highways were consulted in relation to the proposal and raised no objection of highway safety grounds subject to the imposition of conditions relating to the construction and use of the driveway and the collection of surface water.

Landscape/Ecology:	
<u>Biodiversity Net Gain.</u>	
The development is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it is a householder application.	
Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:	
As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for approval.	
RECOMMENDATION:	