



Persimmon Homes Lancashire Ltd

PLANNING STATEMENT

LAND AT SALESBURY VIEW, WILPSHIRE





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APPENDIX A

INSPECTORS DECISION

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. On behalf of Persimmon Homes this Planning Statement supports a full planning application for the erection of 80no. Dwellings with new vehicular access, landscaping and other associated works on an allocated housing site off Salisbury View, Wiltshire.
- 1.1.2. Persimmon Homes are proud to be one of the UK's most successful housebuilders, building over 13,500 new homes a year in more than 350 locations nationwide, and are committed to the highest standards of design, construction and service. Founded in 1972 by Life President Duncan Davidson, the Group is made up of a network of 31 regional operating businesses.
- 1.1.3. A previous application on the site was refused by the council LPA ref 3/2023/0614, the applicant subsequently appealed the refusal ref APP/T2350/W/24/3352614. The appeal was dismissed, and this application has amended the scheme based on the Inspectors comments. The applicant has also taken on board previous comments from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) regarding the northern end of the site and have amended the layout to address the LPA's comments.
- 1.1.4. The layout and design of the proposal have evolved through a detailed design process, pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and review of the Inspectors comments. IDP architects were brought on board in November 2022 to offer a fresh perspective on the scheme and to offer high quality design for the development. IDP have undertaken a thorough review of previous applications on the site, including those submitted as pre-application enquiries and reviewed feedback from the council and Inspector. Design development for the scheme has been informed by an assessment of the heritage and character of the sites surroundings and the sites constraints and opportunities, as well as feedback from the council. Background research into the site and the design evolution are set out in sections 2 and 3 of the Submitted Design and Access Statement.
- 1.1.5. The revised design of this scheme aims to provide a sustainable community with a mix of housing types and tenures within a high-quality landscape setting. IDP have undertaken a master planning approach to the design. The masterplan proposal is underpinned by the following principles:
- Offering a mix of different types and tenures of homes which can attract a range of households;
 - Provide a sustainable community set against a high-quality landscape framework;
 - Ensuring the scheme integrates into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, whilst respecting existing landscape features and land uses around the development;
 - Deliver an economic impact in the area and across the neighbourhood;
 - Achieve a strong sense of place and character which is distinct yet locally referenced; and
 - Maximise pedestrian and cyclist permeability across the site to encourage alternative modes of transport over car.
- 1.1.6. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken to assess the impact of the scheme on this hillside location and to look at mitigation measures to ensure that the proposed development does not cause significant harm to the visual amenity of the street scene and wider public viewpoints. The proposed layout in conjunction with the landscape proposals including extended landscape buffers has retained and accentuated key views over the valley and sought to retain and enhance existing landscape features where at all possible including existing mature tree belts and woodland. The proposal has also sought to utilise areas of open space to provide high

quality recreational use for all, encouraging residents to take advantage of outdoor space. Thus, the revised design is now considered to be entirely acceptable and is not likely to result in material harm to the local landscape character or visual amenity.

1.1.7. The proposed development presents a revised scheme which has responded positively to the challenges of the site and adheres to council feedback in relation to previous schemes and comments raised in the Inspectors decision. The scheme has reduced the quantum of dwellings in line with council advice. The revised layout also places lower density to the outside of the site. Dwellings on the site accord with the Nationally Described Space Standards to ensure a high standard of living for future occupiers. The revised layout and increased planting ensure that key views are preserved, and that the development reflects and respects its surroundings.

1.1.8. This statement is set out as follows:

- Section 2 provides the factual background to the proposal;
- Section 3 summarises the relevant planning policies;
- Section 4 details the proposed development;
- Section 5 analyses the planning considerations relevant to the proposal; and
- Section 6 sets out our conclusion.

2 THE SITE

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1.1. The application site is a greenfield area of land approximately 4.98 Hectares in size which is currently open field and grazing land of an irregular shape. The site is located to the East of Salesbury View and is bounded by residential properties to the western and northern sides which are a mix of modern and older properties and is accessed from Salesbury View via Whalley Road.
- 2.1.2. To the eastern side is open fields with mature woodland to the south and southeast. The southern boundary lies in close proximity to the borough boundary with Blackburn with Darwen. A Public Right of Way (3-46-FP 25) is located to the east of the site, with open fields located beyond this footpath.
- 2.1.3. There are electricity pylons and overhead lines that cross east-west to the southern part of the site. In addition, there is a high-pressure pipeline that runs along the southern boundary of the site that is protected by an easement. An existing tree line crosses the centre of the site running east to west.
- 2.1.4. The site experiences a steep gradient fall from the northeast corner to the southern boundary along Knotts Brook woodland. The elevation difference between the highest and lowest point is approximately 38m. The gradient across this elevational difference is varied, with the steepest area of climb to the northeast of the site. This forms a steep slope rising from the existing hedgerow and properties along Whalley New Road towards Hollowhead Avenue.

Figure 2-1 - Location Plan



- 2.1.5. The site is located in close proximity to sustainable forms of transport, approximately 350m away is the Ramsgrave and Wilpshire train station providing access to Rochdale and Clitheroe. Bus stops are located on Whalley Road with regular services to Preston City Centre, Clitheroe Town Centre and Blackburn. Amenities are located on Whalley New Road approximately 350m from site including a supermarket, public house, bakery, hairdressers, opticians and various other shops.

- 2.1.6. The site is not with a conservation area, nor in close proximity to any listed buildings or other heritage assets.
- 2.1.7. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's flood map for planning and is therefore at a low risk of flooding. The site is also at very low risk of flooding from surface water.

2.2 SITE AND PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.2.1. A planning application was submitted for the proposed erection of new residential development comprising 99 new homes, including 30% affordable housing, open space and associated infrastructure (LPA ref: 3/2022/0115), this application was withdrawn on 28 November 2022.
- 2.2.2. An amended application was submitted on 31 July 2023 for the proposed erection of new residential development comprising 85 dwellings at Land off Salesbury View (LPA Ref: 3/2023/0614). The proposal was amended post submission changing a semi-detached property to a detached property, which reduced the number of dwellings to 84. This was a design led decision by the Appellant to allow the necessary additional room for levels changes within the proposed street scene.
- 2.2.3. The application was refused on 13 September 2024. The reason for refusal as cited within the decision notice is replicated below:

“The proposed development would be on a prominent hillside location at the edge of a settlement and adjacent to Green Belt. The proposed development fails to be visually attractive and sympathetic to the area's character by virtue of the layout, density, house types and scales, inadequate green buffers and significant level changes to the landform, appearing overly dominant and incongruous in the street scene and from wider public viewpoints to the detriment of visual amenity. This would be contrary to policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 - 2028 and Paragraphs 128 and 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.”
- 2.2.4. The applicant subsequently appealed the refusal of the planning application in September 2024 (Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/W/24/3352614). The inspector dismissed the appeal on 05 February 2025. This application responds to the points raised by the inspector; these are outlined in more detail in section four of this statement. The Inspectors decision is available in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2.5. Other applications on the site relate to the diversion of the overhead lines.
- 2.2.6. There have previously been pre-application discussions for the site in 2014, 2019 and 2025 these discussions are summarised in the submitted Design and Access Statement. In the most recent pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority, no concerns were raised about the design or layout of the proposal, and it was agreed that the scheme should focus on points raised in the Inspectors decision, which this application does.

3 PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.1.1. The Development Plan for the Ribble Valley currently comprises the following documents:

- Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014); and
- The Housing and Economic Development Plan Document (HED DPD - adopted 15th October 2019).

3.1.2. The site does not fall within a Neighbourhood Development Plan area.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014)

3.1.3. The Ribble Valley Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 to guide development from 2008 until 2028.

3.1.4. The site is located within the Settlement Boundary of Wilpshire.

3.1.5. Key Statement DS1 (Development Strategy) sets out the settlement hierarchy strategy and identifies the housing distribution for settlements in Ribble Valley. It outlines that the majority of new housing should be concentrated within the three principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley (and the strategic site at Standen). Development is then focussed within nine 'Tier 1' villages, considered the most sustainable of the remaining 32 defined settlements. Wilpshire is identified as one of these sustainable Tier 1 villages.

3.1.6. Key Statement DS2 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) states that when the Council is considering development proposals it will take a positive approach that reflects the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.1.7. Other policies of relevance to the proposed development include the following:

- Key Statement EN1: Green Belt
- Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Key Statement H1: Housing Provision
- Key Statement H2: Housing Balance
- Key Statement H3: Affordable Housing
- Policy DMI1: Planning Obligations
- Policy DMI2: Transport Considerations
- Policy DMG1: General Considerations
- Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
- Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility
- Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands
- Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection
- Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation
- Policy DME6: Water Management
- Policy DMH1: Affordable Housing Criteria
- Policy DMB4: Open Space Provision

Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development - Development Plan Document (October 2019)

- 3.1.8. Ribble Valley's Housing and Economic Development Plan Document (the HED DPD) was adopted on 15 October 2019 and allocated housing and employment sites to meet the residual requirements from the Core Strategy.
- 3.1.9. The settlement boundary for Wilpshire has been extended to include the site.
- 3.1.10. Policy HAL2: Land at Wilpshire, allocates the site for housing. The HED DPD states that this site has been added to address housing requirements in Wilpshire.

Local Plan Review

- 3.1.11. The new Local Plan will update the Local Development Framework (LDF) to establish a new vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the Ribble Valley to 2038. This will encompass the policies within the existing Core Strategy and the provisions of the Housing and Economic Development DPD to create a single document which will direct new development within the borough.
- 3.1.12. In May 2022, the Council reached the first regulation stage of the plan-making process and consulted with residents and other stakeholders on the strategic issues to consider as part of the new local plan.
- 3.1.13. There are no further updates available for the Local Plan Review and at this time due to the very early stage of preparation is afforded no weight.

5 Year Housing Land Supply Report

- 3.1.14. In the 2025 Report the proposal site at Salesbury View (site ref: HAL 2) the site is identified for a minimum of 75 dwellings, which contribute to the council's 5 year supply. The report notes 'Following a recent appeal decision on this site (3/2023/0614) 75 units is considered to be a reasonable estimate'.

3.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2024)

- 3.2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.2.2. Policies of particular relevance to this proposal are listed below:
 - Section 4 states local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area;
 - Paragraph 61 states it is important that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed;
 - Section 6 states the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity;
 - Section 8 states planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places;

- Section 12 seeks to achieve well-designed places and beautiful buildings, noting that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Furthermore, paragraph 135 states planning decisions should ensure that developments, “*create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users*”;
- Paragraph 124 requires planning decisions to promote an effective use of land, while safeguarding and improving the environment, ensuring safe and healthy living conditions;
- Section 9 seeks to promote sustainable transport, and states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe; and
- Section 11 states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

- 3.2.3. The NPPF was updated in December 2024, Prior to this on 30 July 2024 the Secretary of State (SoS) released a written ministerial statement (WMS) entitled ‘Building the homes we need’. As the WMS is an expression of government policy, it is a material consideration which we consider can be afforded moderate weight. The statement outlined the government’s plan to build the homes this country needs and states a commitment to building 1.5 million homes over the next five years. The revised NPPF reflects the Government’s stated aim that it wants the economy to build, and that building more homes is a key part of that.
- 3.2.4. Key changes to the NPPF included amendments to paragraph 61, which reversed the changes made in December 2023. This paragraph no longer undermines housing delivery and is clear that local authorities will need to meet the new housing targets, using the new standard method. This places weight on the standard method, minimising the opportunities for councils to not meet their needs. The new method provides a stable and balanced approach, which will reflect the way towns and cities work, and support authorities with speeding up plan making. It also reinforces the need for comprehensive and inclusive housing strategies that address current and future demographic needs, while promoting sustainable development.
- 3.2.5. Planning Practice Guidance¹ notes that under the revised NPPF, housing requirements may be higher than the identified need and authorities should consider the merits of planning for higher growth and should not normally have to be thoroughly justified at examination. This encouragement to plan for higher growth without the need for justification through a formal examination clearly demonstrates that housing need is critical, and that the government are extremely supportive of house building to meet increasing needs for housing.
- 3.2.6. It is clear in the revised NPPF, ministerial statement and Planning Practice Guidance that building more homes is a critical issue for the government, and the revised NPPF and revised standard method support the building of more homes to address the housing crisis.

¹ Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 2a-040-20241212 (Revision date 12.12.2024)

4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of new residential development comprising 80 new homes, including 30% affordable housing, open space, and associated infrastructure.
- 4.1.2. The proposed development is the result of design evolution, which has taken on board feedback from both the Local Planning Authority and Planning Inspectorate. Following the withdrawal of the application in 2022 IDP architects undertook an assessment of the heritage and character of the sites surroundings and the sites constraints and opportunities. They also took on board feedback from the LPA. The scheme evolved to reduce the number of dwellings, ensure the proposal was NDSS compliant and placed higher density towards the centre of the site. The amended scheme was submitted in 2023 but was unfortunately refused and dismissed at appeal. The current proposal builds on the 2023 scheme, refining the scheme to adhere to the Inspectors comments as well as feedback from the LPA. Section 3 of the submitted Design and Access Statement sets out further information about the evolution of the design.
- 4.1.3. Key points raised by the Inspector on which the dismissal was based are set out below (the full inspector's decision is available in Appendix A):
- The impact of overbearing retaining structures;
 - Concerns about landscape buffer not being effective in mitigating landscape and visual impact;
 - The impact of extensive earthworks required to re-profile the land; and
 - Concerns regarding layout of western part of the site.
- 4.1.4. The Inspector did note the following points in their decision:
- The principle of residential development is acceptable on the site;
 - That the scale and density of the proposed development is acceptable;
 - That split level dwellings are acceptable at this location and reflect many dwellings in close proximity to the site; and
 - That there would be no harm to the adjacent green belt.
- 4.1.5. Amendments to the design directly respond to concerns raised by the Inspector, this approach was agreed in a pre-application meeting with the case officer on 02 July 2025. Key changes to the scheme are as follows:
- The eastern landscape buffer has been increased to allow greater visual impact mitigation and subsequent amendments to the site layout to allow for this;
 - The plot arrangement on the western edge to allow for a greater landscape buffer; and
 - Revision of plot and typology to allow for semi-detached 2.5 storey dwellings.
- 4.1.6. The proposal also amends the northern end of the site, to provide a more organic layout. This amendment was not raised by the inspector but has previously been raised by the Local Planning Authority and directly responds to their previous comments. It should be noted that the housing mix, density, materials and elevations are similar to the refused application as inspector did not comment on these matters in their reason for dismissal.
- 4.1.7. Please refer to the supporting Design and Access Statement prepared by IDP Architects for further details of the proposal.

5 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1.1. The following section considers the proposed amendments against the relevant planning considerations.

5.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.2.1. The site is located within the settlement boundary of the village of Wilpshire which is identified as a Tier 1 village within Key Statement DS1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. Key Statement DS1 states that in addition to the strategic site at Standen and the borough's principal settlements, development will be focused on the Tier 1 Villages. It also requires the scale of housing growth to be managed to reflect existing population size, the availability of, or opportunity to provide facilities to serve the development and the extent to which development can be accommodated within the local area.
- 5.2.2. Policy HAL2 of the HED DPD allocates the site for housing but does not allocate a specific number of units to be delivered. The residual housing requirement for Wilpshire for the period 2008-2028, as identified in table 4.12 of the Core Strategy, is 45 dwellings. However, this figure is not a cap on the amount of development that could be provided on the site. The HED DPD states that careful regard will be given to any proposals on the site that seek to bring forward more than the planned requirement having regard to the overall development strategy of the Core Strategy and the relevant Development Management considerations. Furthermore, the council's 5 year housing land supply report identifies the site for a minimum of 75 dwellings following the Inspectors decision, which is noted in the report.
- 5.2.3. Land adjacent to the site to the southeast is located within the Green Belt, this is under the ownership of the applicant but not included within the red line boundary. Development has been steered away from this part of the site and the proposed dwellings are located wholly within the extent of the boundaries of the housing allocation. The Green Belt land would remain undeveloped; this would therefore not conflict with Green Belt policy. The Inspector's decision also states that *'I agree with both main parties that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt under the terms of the Framework. It would not be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt or to the purposes of including land within it.'*
- 5.2.4. It should also be noted that the principle of development was previously stated as being acceptable in the Planning Committee Report for the previous application (LPA ref: 3/2022/0115). The Inspectors decision also notes that the proposal is acceptable in principle and that the council do not dispute this fact. Thus, the proposal is acceptable in principle, subject to high quality design which this report goes on to demonstrate and should be supported in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within National and Local Planning Policy.

5.3 LAYOUT AND DESIGN

- 5.3.1. The layout of the site has been amended to take account of comments raised in the Inspector's decision and comments made by the LPA specifically in relation to the layout of the northern end of the site. The current scheme builds on the previously submitted scheme (ref:3/2023/0614) which sought to address comments raised during the initial application (LPA ref: 3/2022/0115). IDP architects were brought on board following the withdrawal of the initial application in November 2022, they evaluated the initial layout and design of the site and considered feedback from the LPA

on previous applications and pre-application enquiries. This process is set out in Section 3 of the Submitted Design and Access Statement.

5.3.2. The revised design concept is underpinned by the following design principles:

- A landscape-led masterplan which is shaped by the site's existing landscape framework;
- Utilisation of the site's constraints, including its sloping topography, to create a distinctive and attractive development;
- Retention of existing hedgerows, woodland and mature trees where possible to establish a distinctive landscape character;
- A clear distinction between the public and private realm;
- Active frontage onto all streets, pedestrian routes and open spaces;
- Integrated movement for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;
- A network of 'dynamic' linear streets connecting to 'static' open spaces of varying sizes, to create interesting places for social interaction;
- An environment which is not dominated by vehicles;
- A public realm which is well-overlooked and supervise;
- Recognisable built forms and features to enhance legibility throughout the scheme;
- A diverse range of parking options;
- Inclusive access to the development for all members of society;
- Utilise existing access points to maximise the site's context and opportunities;
- Creation of new focal points within the scheme to help establish it as a place in its own right; and
- Promote connectivity to the site context through pedestrian links.

5.3.3. The Inspectors comments are set out below, with commentary as to how the points have been responded to underneath:

5.3.4. ***"I find the limited separation to the boundary in combination with the proposed tall retaining feature and level difference to the dwelling on Plot 7 would result in a cramped and incongruous layout in this part of the site, out of character with the prevailing building pattern."***

This area of the site has been re-designed, with plots 7 and 8 being rotated 90 degrees to be east-west facing, to sit in line with plots 3-6. This amendment has allowed for plots 3-8 to be pulled away from the boundary increasing the separation distance from the rear of these plots' gardens to the boundary of the site from approximately 4.3m to 10m. Plot 9 has been relocated to the east near plots 10-13 to allow for this change. The rotation of plots 7&8 assimilates with the character of the building pattern and better integrates with the proposed site layout. It also results in a more spacious feeling layout in this part of the site. It is considered that the amended layout now provides a layout which reflects the prevailing building pattern and is more spacious and thus addresses the Inspectors comments.

5.3.5. ***"Turning to Plot 28, the proposed plans indicate a 2m and 3m high retaining structure surrounding the curved rear/side garden of Plot 28 with the driveway for Plot 11 adjacent at lower level, together with an additional screen fence/wall above. On the basis of this information, this could result in an overbearingly high boundary feature which would be highly visible forward of the building line of Plots 7 to 11 and would face towards a pedestrian route and open space."***

Plots formerly numbered 10-29 now 9-26 have been reconfigured to take on board the Inspectors comments, a side by side comparison of the former layout shown on the left and the proposed layout on the right hand side is shown in **figure 5-1** below. It should be noted that plot 9 has been re-located from the western boundary to this cluster of dwellings. Plots 13-17 remain the same layout, likewise, plots 21-26 (formerly 18-23) remain the same. Three plots have been removed (formerly 27-29) and minor tweaks to the layout of plots 18-20 (formerly 24-26) to allow for amendments to this area. The plots here have been amended to be arranged in a roughly rectangular formation; this layout has avoided the awkward interface between plots located on the corners of this cluster of dwellings.

As noted above plots formerly number 7-9 have been reconfigured to avoid the awkward interface between plots rear/side garden of Plot 28 with the driveway for Plot 11. Properties on the northern edge of this parcel of the site are now north-south oriented, and the levels have been amended to have a gentler gradient stepping up more gently to avoid the need for overbearingly high boundary fences or retaining features. The re-design of this part of the site has resulted in a better layout which assimilates into the site and does not present overbearing boundary treatments or structures.

Figure 5-1 - Comparison of former (left) and proposed (right) layout of the western part of site



5.3.6. “The central eastern boundary of the site and the land re-profiled with tall retaining features to accommodate the plots. However, the layout would fail to provide a sufficient landscape belt to define the settlement edge and provide an appropriate transition between built development and the open countryside in this area. [...]. Due to the small gap, extensive earthworks and the abrupt change in levels, there would be limited opportunity to provide meaningful landscaping in this area, a highly sensitive part of the site.”

5.3.7. As noted above the levels across the site has been amended to provide a softer approach to levels across the site. The site now steps up gently from west to east. The proposed mitigatory planting buffers on site have been widened to provide better separation distances. This has also allowed for retaining structures to be replaced with sloping banks to avoid the need for retaining

structures/walls/boundary treatments. Figure 5.2 below shows a comparison between former site levels and proposed site levels.

Figure 5-2 - Comparison of former (top image) and proposed (bottom) illustrative site levels



- 5.3.8. The landscape buffer on the eastern edge of the site has been increased to circa 14 metres this allows for a landscape slope rather than a retaining structure. Likewise on the western boundary the landscape buffer has been increased to circa 10 metres to allow for a gentle slope rather than a retaining structure. This allows for additional mitigatory planting which will screen and assimilate the development into its surroundings.
- 5.3.9. The internal layout at the western and eastern edge have been amended to allow for the larger landscape buffers. The layout in the northern end of the site has also been amended to allow for a more organic road and block structure in line with comments from the LPA, however it should be noted that the inspector did not comment on this end of the site. To the south plots have been amended to be 2.5 storey semi-detached properties, in response to the Inspectors comments.
- 5.3.10. The proposed masterplan is generally made up of 2-storey dwellings within the southern half of the site, with the exception of some 1 and 2.5 storey homes. The northern section of the site comprises 2.5-storey split level houses which maximise and utilise the site topography in this area. The Inspector stated in their decision that *“the proposed use of split level dwellings would be an acceptable way to adapt to the site’s topography and is evident in the local area.”*

- 5.3.11. The placement of dwellings and their density has been carefully considered in relation to the existing urban grain with lower density on the outside of the site in the south and north and mid-density being placed to the west of the site. This is in line with feedback from the council which stated that higher density housing should be kept to the internal part of the site. However, it should be noted that the Inspector deemed the scale and density across the site to be acceptable.
- 5.3.12. The design of the proposed dwellings has taken a traditional vernacular approach to the architectural style of the scheme. The proposed palette of materials utilises a palette of materials, tones and architectural detailing which is sympathetic to the local vernacular. Local character is reinforced by the use of semi-detached and detached units, which offer a modern, yet sympathetic interpretation of 18th and 19th century villas found across Wilshire. A number of the proposed dwellings throughout the development incorporate chimneys, reflecting surrounding dwellings and to enhance areas of significant within the development.

Landscape and Visual Effects

- 5.3.13. The site falls within National Character Area 35, Lancashire Valleys. There are key characteristics relevant to the site and vicinity which provide an overview of the wider landscape character. The site falls within Lancashire Character Type 7 in the Landscape Strategy for Lancashire (2000), Farmed Ridges and falls within Landscape Character Area 7a, Mellor Ridge. The assessment identifies local forces for changes and their landscape implications.
- 5.3.14. Policy DME2 states that applications should not harm the landscape or characteristic of the local area. The policy goes on to say that the council will seek to enhance the local landscape wherever possible and will consider the potential cumulative impact of development where development has already taken place.
- 5.3.15. A Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted with this application which considers the site and its surrounding context in both landscape and visual terms, to assess the potential effects of the development proposals upon landscape features, landscape character and visual amenity. The report considers the potential effects of the proposed development on landscape features, landscape character and visual amenity.
- 5.3.16. The LVIA also responds to the Inspectors comments which are set out below in bold and then how they have been responded to below:
- 5.3.17. **It has not been demonstrated that the buffer along the central-eastern boundary and PRow 25 would be effective in mitigating the landscape and visual impact of the development in the long term. The LS seeks that the character of ridge settlements is conserved through the softening of abrupt urban edges. The proximity of the proposed dwellings within this part of the site to open countryside and PRow 25 would not be perceptibly softened but would result in a highly conspicuous urban edge, the immediate visual effect of which would be harmful. Whilst the land would be used efficiently, it would compromise the quality of the environment in this regard.**
- 5.3.18. The LVIA has been updated to reflect the improved landscape buffers to the east and west and now includes winter photomontages and views, thus providing a full assessment of landscape impact at all times of the year including proposed planting.
- 5.3.19. The LVIA considers mitigation for the site and sets out landscape mitigation principles in relation to the proposed development, which are shown on the Landscape Framework Plan and on the

subsequent landscape Masterplan within the LVIA. The aim of the landscape principles is to underpin the proposals with a robust landscape framework that will mitigate potential landscape and visual issues associated with the development of this site for housing, particularly in relation to forming a robust Green Belt boundary.

- 5.3.20. The LVIA concludes that there are a limited number of locations where views of the site are available. Any effects on landscape character will generally be perceived at a site level and within very close proximity to the east, north and west. These effects will be mitigated over time as proposed planting particularly to the eastern boundary, but also other boundaries, matures. Improved landscape buffers will ensure that views will be successfully assimilated. that In terms of the wider landscape character area, (7a, Mellor Ridge), any change to its character brought about by the proposed development, is judged to form a very small part of the wider character area and would be negligible in Year 15.
- 5.3.21. It considers that this is a good site for residential development. There is visual and physical containment on many of its boundaries, and likely landscape and visual effects will be both localised and limited in extent and nature. Any identified likely effects are also capable of being successfully mitigated. The proposals relate well to the surrounding landscape and will form a seamless extension to the existing settlement of Wilpshire. In landscape and visual terms, the proposed residential development is considered to be entirely acceptable and is not likely to result in material harm to the local landscape character of visual amenity.
- 5.3.22. It should be noted that the Inspector did state *‘that change arising from development is not synonymous with that equating to harm and change of this nature would be an inevitable consequence of developing the site in accordance with the allocation.’*
- 5.3.23. The submitted Design and Access Statement and Landscape Masterplan also considers landscape and the layout of the landscaping in the development. The layout of the development has been developed to retain and accentuate key views over the valley. It also seeks to mitigate the visual effects of the built development upon existing users of the adjacent road and footpath infrastructure. These buffers have been extended to soften change between the urban development and adjacent countryside. Where practicable the proposal has retained and enhanced existing landscape features including existing mature tree belts and woodland. The proposal has also sought to utilise areas of open space to provide high quality recreational use for all, encouraging residents to take advantage of outdoor space.

Designing out Crime

- 5.3.24. The layout of the development has been designed so that buildings overlook the public open spaces and streets, providing natural surveillance. This helps to discourage areas of anti-social behaviour by promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility for residents.
- 5.3.25. Car parking is included within the curtilage of the proposed dwellings to provide optimum surveillance.
- 5.3.26. A crime Impact Statement is submitted with the planning application which sets out the measures that have been included to mitigate against crime on the site, including physical security measures, and design development which considers how the layout and design can seek to minimise crime on the site.

Summary

- 5.3.27. The proposal has carefully considered feedback from the LPA on the previous applications and the Inspectors comments. IDP Architects have assessed the site with particular regard to constraints, opportunities and the existing character of the sites surroundings. A revised design concept has been achieved which represents a development which reflects and respects the character of the surrounding area whilst responding to the challenges of the site and whilst addressing the Inspectors comments. The LVIA considers that subject to appropriate mitigation as set out in the DAS and Landscape Masterplan the development will not cause significantly harm to the local landscape or the character of visual amenity. The proposed scheme addresses the Inspectors comments and now provides a scheme which is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- 5.3.28. Further information on the design and layout is provided in the accompanying Design and Access Statement prepared by IDP architects which demonstrates that the proposal accords with policies EN3, EN4, DME2 and DMG1.

5.4 HOUSING PROVISION

- 5.4.1. This new scheme has reduced number of properties proposed from the previous application to 80, following design development. The development comprises a mix of dwellings as set out in the table below, 24 of these dwellings on the site will be affordable homes which make up 30% of the overall development.

Table 5-1 – Total Housing Mix

Bedrooms	Number Proposed	%
2	6	8
3	45	56
4	29	36
Total	80	100

- 5.4.2. The above table sets out the housing mix on the site. Policy H2 states that planning permission will only be granted for residential development providing it can be demonstrated that it delivers a suitable mix of housing that accords with the projected future household requirements and local need across the Ribble Valley as a whole as evidenced by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2008. The SHMA was adopted in 2008, the document is therefore considered to be out of date by virtue of it being prepared over 15 years ago and thus carries very little weight if any weight. Nonetheless it is still the case that there is still a net need for new housing of all sizes across the borough and which in any event was a primary finding of the 2008 SHMA.
- 5.4.3. The Councils own recently produced Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (SHENA) (2022) which was commissioned to inform the future review of the Local Plan states that analysis suggests that there would be a greater proportionate need for larger homes (i.e. 3 and 4+ beds) due to the greater forecast growth in the number of families. The site reflects this need with the majority of dwellings being larger homes. The SHENA also goes on to state that the individual mix of housing

provided on a site-by-site basis will need to respond to the changing demands and needs of the market and take account of local market evidence and viability considerations, which will have an important influence on the appropriate mix.

- 5.4.4. The density of the scheme is similar to the previously refused scheme, which the Inspector deemed to be acceptable, stating that *'the low overall density of development proposed on the site would be acceptable'*.
- 5.4.5. The proposal therefore responds appropriately to the most up to date housing needs evidence and responds to the constraints of the site and previous advice from the council.

Table 5-2 - Affordable Housing Types

Bedroom No.	Number of Dwellings
2 Bed House	6
3 bed house	18
Total	24

- 5.4.6. Key Statement H3 of the Core Strategy outlines the requirement for affordable housing, requiring 30% provision on sites of 10 or more dwellings within the settlement boundaries of Clitheroe and Longridge. 24 dwellings on the site will be affordable homes which making up 30% of the overall development. This figure is made up of a mix of 2 & 3-bedroom dwellings as outlined in the table above. Affordable homes are spread evenly throughout the southern half of the development in small clusters and are tenure blind to ensure they are integrated seamlessly within the wider development.
- 5.4.7. In response to the requirements for housing for older persons in Key Statement H3 of the Core Strategy, nine of the dwellings are proposed to be over-55 accommodation, 4 of which are within the affordable housing allocation.
- 5.4.8. All dwellings accord with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) to ensure a good standard of living for future occupiers.
- 5.4.9. The housing mix is broadly similar to the previously refused application, where the LPA did not raise concerns nor refuse the application based on housing mix. Likewise, the Inspector did not raise any concerns or dismiss the appeal on the basis of housing mix. The proposal therefore accords with policies DMG1, DMH1 and Key Statement H3 of the Core Strategy.

5.5 HIGHWAYS

- 5.5.1. Access for vehicles and pedestrians will be from a new access from off Salesbury View which is an unclassified road subject to a 30mph speed limit. This remains the same as the previously submitted application.
- 5.5.2. All houses within the development are allocated approximately 2 car parking spaces apart from 4-bedroom houses where 2 spaces and a garage space is provided, these car parking spaces include on plot parking, and integral, detached or attached garages. Totalling 201 spaces across the site. All

dwelling are served by EV charging points and have cycle storage. These are shown in the submitted Proposed EV Charging Plan, Bin & Cycle Storage Plan.

- 5.5.3. The site is in close proximity to by public transport, with bus stops located along Whalley Road to the west with the nearest approximately 130m from the site. With regular routes to and from Clitheroe to Blackburn via Wilpshire whilst Bus Route 45 is an hourly service which runs from Preston to Blackburn via Wilpshire. Ramsgrave and Wilpshire Railway Station is approximately 320m to the West of the site with hourly services to Clitheroe and Manchester via Blackburn and Bolton.
- 5.5.4. A Transport Assessment (TA) prepared by SCP is submitted with the planning application, which concludes that the proposed development is located in the is in a highly sustainable location with no local highway safety issues. The TA also notes that the level of parking is in line with the council's parking standards and demonstrates that there will be no material traffic impact on the local highway network associated with the proposed development.
- 5.5.5. A Travel Plan prepared by SCP is also submitted with the planning application which reviews the existing transport facilities at the development site and identifies a range of measures for implementation by the travel plan coordinator to reduce overall car usage and promote the use of sustainable transport modes.
- 5.5.6. A Swept Path Analysis plan for refuse vehicles, has also been provided to demonstrate that refuse vehicles can move safely throughout the site and waste can be collected.
- 5.5.7. It is noted that LCC Highways had no objections to the previously refused scheme with the officer's report stating that *'the professional advice of LCC Highways is that the proposal is acceptable in principle subject to appropriate contributions and conditions'*. The current scheme does not propose significant changes in terms of highways layout or access and thus we consider remains acceptable. It should also be noted that Inspector did not dismiss the scheme on highway safety grounds.
- 5.5.8. Therefore, the proposal accords with Policies DMG 1 and DMG 3 of the Core Strategy.

5.6 ECOLOGY AND TREES

- 5.6.1. The site is an existing agricultural field which is unlikely to provide high value habitat. The submitted landscape masterplan shows that there will be additional hedgerow planted throughout the site to mitigate the loss of the existing hedgerow on the site, as well as landscaped areas and tree planting. This will provide a buffer to surrounding development and also enhancements to biodiversity through the provision of additional wildlife corridors. Landscaping on the site has been designed to Mitigate the visual effects of the built development upon existing users of the adjacent road and footpath infrastructure, whilst retaining and accentuating key views over the valley. It also seeks to maximise the ecological value of the site. Landscape buffers to the east and west of the site have been improved in response to the Inspectors comments. The buffers have been widened to allow slopes rather than retaining structures that can support mitigatory planting.
- 5.6.2. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Method Statement prepared by Ascerta has been undertaken to determine impacts within the site. The majority of vegetation within the site will remain unaffected. Some impacts will occur as a consequence of external works requirements, given the sloped and variable topography within the site, however it has been sought to minimise impacts where possible. 15 individual, seven groups of trees, two hedges and one woodland were recorded during the survey. One Tree Preservation Order is present on the site which covers the

protection of T3-T11 and W1 as shown on Tree Surveys Sheets 1&2 presented in the appendices of the AIA. The development of the site as proposed will directly require the removal of low value trees which are in fair, poor or dead condition (G1, G7, T12, T13 and T14) and the removal of a low value hedgerow which is also in fair, poor or dead condition (H2). The report notes that mitigatory planting should be undertaken to compensate for the loss of trees and hedgerow on the site.

- 5.6.3. The AIA also specifies measures to be undertaken to ensure the ongoing health and viability of trees to be retained within the proposed development including the erection of fencing, no dig zones and the production of an Arboricultural Method Statement. An accompanying Tree Protection Plan is also submitted which shows the position of protective fencing and any additional special measures that are required to protect trees during the build process. The protection measures for these trees can be secured via planning condition.
- 5.6.4. The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Prepared by ERAP presents the results of a desktop study, data search and extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey carried out in 2021 and water vole and other surveys undertaken in 2019 and 2021. It also includes an updated site walkover undertaken in May 2023 and August 2025. It concludes that the site will provide an opportunity to secure ecological enhancement for fauna typically associated with residential areas such as breeding birds and roosting bats. Measures to conserve the habitat connectivity through the site are entirely feasible. It goes on to state that the ecological assessment has demonstrated that a residential development at the site is feasible and acceptable in accordance with ecological considerations and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.6.5. Since the submission of the previous application, Biodiversity Net Gain was made mandatory for all planning applications in February 2024. Applications are now required to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity, therefore a BNG Report and Metric Prepared by ERAP are submitted with this application. The Metric and Report show that there would be a 289.91% increase in hedgerow units on the site. However, the total overall net change in habitat units would be -32.10% and 0% for watercourse units. The applicant is committed to providing a 10% net gain in biodiversity and is exploring options for the enhancement of off-site habitats to compensate for the loss of units associated with the proposed development, where this is not feasible or practicable the application would seek to agree a biodiversity payment for the loss of habitat units associated with the site with a habitat bank or other similar provider
- 5.6.6. Therefore, the proposal accords with policies DME1 and DME3 of the Core Strategy.

5.7 FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE STRATEGY

- 5.7.1. The whole site is located within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's flood maps for planning. This means the site has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. The site is also at very low risk from surface water according to the Environment Agency's flood maps for planning, which means that the site has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1% each year. As the proposal is located within Flood Zone1 it does not require a sequential or exceptions test.
- 5.7.2. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) Report prepared by EDGE Consulting Engineering notes that the construction of the proposed development will result in an increase of impermeable areas and therefore a corresponding increase in surface water run-off. To ensure that the site poses no flood risk to proposed or existing properties a restriction of surface water run-off is required. The Report concludes it concludes that development of the site will not increase the flood risk to any

other property. Likewise, Construction of the proposed development will not increase flood risk on or off the site. Drainage design is also submitted in support of the application.

- 5.7.3. Previously the Lead Local Flood Authority had no objections to the scheme subject to appropriate conditions being attached to any grant of approval. Likewise, the Inspector's decision did not raise any concerns or dismiss the appeal on flood risk or drainage concerns.
- 5.7.4. For further details about flood risk and drainage, which demonstrates compliance with policy DME6 and Key Statement EN3 please refer to the submitted FRA Report.

5.8 GROUND CONDITIONS

- 5.8.1. Phase I Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment (PCRA) Report and a Phase II Ground Investigation Works reports prepared by GEOL consultants Ltd are submitted in support of the application.
- 5.8.2. The PCRA sets out that the site has remained undeveloped in accordance with OS maps dating back to c. 1893 to 2019. During this time, trees and bushes bound the field margins of the site. By c.1956 the only development on the site is the erection of two electricity pylons. Woodland is recorded to the south east & south. The reconnaissance (walkover) survey confirmed no obvious evidence of any recent, unrecorded development on the site or change in activity from this time where the site was still being used mainly for agricultural / grazing purposes. Therefore, with respect to soil contamination, there appears to be no plausible significant sources of ground contamination noted on this site based on the data sources reviewed. The report concludes by recommending that appropriate site specific investigation works forming a detailed Phase II Ground Investigation be completed for this site, prior to commencing with the proposed residential development to determine the actual ground conditions present below the site.
- 5.8.3. A Phase II was undertaken to accord with the recommendations of the PCRA. The submitted report makes general observations and recommendations for further works and reports including
- 5.8.4. Further survey and treatment by a qualified ecologist or remediation contractor before development to treat Himalayan Balsam found on the northern site area. Recommended temporary groundwater control measures during construction and the use of lateral trench support for excavations deeper than 1.20m, to prevent unstable deep excavations. Drainage recommendations included drainage and service runs near foundations being completed beforehand to prevent material movement and foundation settlement and the installation of adequate drainage to prevent water ponding during and after construction, especially if existing systems are disrupted.
- 5.8.5. The case officer's report for the previous application noted that the submitted documents were acceptable and can be controlled by appropriate conditions being attached to any grant of approval. Likewise, the Inspector's decision did not raise any concerns or dismiss the appeal on the basis of ground conditions.
- 5.8.6. For further details on the ground conditions for this site please refer to these reports which demonstrate compliance with Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.

5.9 SUSTAINABILITY

- 5.9.1. Key Statement EN3 states that the Council will seek to ensure that all development meets an appropriate recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so, in order to address both the causes and consequences of climate change. All development should optimise

energy efficiency by using new technologies and minimising the use of energy through appropriate design, layout, materials, and landscaping and address any potential issues relating to flood risk

- 5.9.2. Persimmon Homes is committed to sustainability and took a net zero carbon pledge in 2021 and are aiming to achieve net zero carbon homes in use by 2030 for standard house types. The diagram below demonstrates key milestones in Persimmon's sustainability aspirations.

Figure 5-3 - Persimmon Homes Key Milestones for Sustainability



- 5.9.3. Current initiatives being undertaken by Persimmon achieve these goals include adhering with Part L of Building Regulations by providing energy efficient boilers, more thermally energy efficient walls and floors and provision of Solar PV. The proposed development includes PV provision for all dwellings on the site and all of the dwellings will accord with Part L of Building Regulations. The proposal also provides cycle storage to dwellings without garages and EV charging on all plots to promote the use of sustainable travel modes.
- 5.9.4. Future aspirations for net zero carbon homes include:

Future Home Standard (by 2025) to include:

- Additional loft insulation
- Solar PV (if required)
- Air Source Heat Pump
- Triple Glazing
- EV Charging
- More Thermally Efficient Walls

These low carbon technologies will result in an 80% reduction in carbon.

Net Zero Carbon Homes for Standard House Types (by 2030) include a combination of:

- Additional loft insulation
- Solar PV (if required)
- Air Source Heat Pump
- Triple Glazing
- EV Charging
- More Thermally Efficient Walls
- Battery Storage (storing excess energy from Solar PV)
- Potential Move to Panelised Offsite Manufacturing
- Green Energy Electric Traffic
- Product development of:

- Infra-Red Panel Heater
- Air Source Heat Cylinders
- Hydrogen
- Smart Homes
- MVHR

5.9.5. A supporting Water Efficiency Statement has also been submitted. Which sets out that all new Persimmon Homes will meet and exceed the required building regulation standard of Part G. Through the use of dual flush toilets, flow regulated showers and taps and the latest A+ / A rated water efficient appliances all the new homes proposed on the site will enable residents to reduce their water consumption even further.

5.9.6. Therefore, the proposed development will comply with Policy EN3.

5.10 BENEFITS AND THE PLANNING BALANCE

5.10.1. We consider that the principle and proposed quantum of development is acceptable in highways and design terms and would be compliant with the development plan. In addition, the proposal would have significant economic benefits. The submitted Economic Benefits Report sets out in detail the economic benefits of the scheme.

5.10.2. It is a key priority of the government to significantly boost the supply of homes, this has been made clear in the written ministerial statement (WMS) entitled 'Building the homes we need' (July 2024) which made a commitment to build 1.5 million homes over the next five years due to the 'most acute housing crisis in memory'. The statement also set out amendments to the NPPF which would support the delivery of the much needed 1.5 million homes, including restoring and raising housing targets. Revised paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. It is clear from the WMS and revisions to the NPPF that the government is no longer willing to accept authorities not meeting housing needs and affirms the government's commitment to build more homes and shows their support for authorities who want to plan for growth. The proposed development would provide 80 much needed homes in the Ribble Valley in line with the government's priorities, including affordable housing. In the appeal decision the Inspector noted that the NPPF 'seeks to boost the supply of housing and has a strong pro-growth agenda'. The Inspector gave considerable weight in favour of the proposal with regards to the provision of housing in an allocated housing site in an accessible location.

5.10.3. The proposed development would generate new jobs, in addition to the employment opportunities during the construction phases of the development. The economic benefits associated with the proposed development go beyond just the jobs created by the construction of the proposed dwellings. They also include temporary socio-economic benefits generated during the construction phase of the development and permanent socio-economic benefits which will be generated once the scheme is complete, and dwellings are occupied. As such, the proposal will make a positive contribution to the local economy. The economic benefits of the scheme are summarised below:

- The proposal would create 139 direct construction roles and indirect/induced job supported per annum during the build phase;

- The Proposed Development could generate around £6.9million of Gross Value Added (GVA) per annum or £20.7million of GVA over the three-year build timeframe (based on current prices);
- Future occupiers of the development are estimated to have a total householder expenditure of £2.1million, with an estimated £911,500 being spent on convenience goods retail, leisure etc.;
- Increased expenditure from future occupiers is estimated to support 5 jobs in the economy;
- An estimated increase in council tax revenue of £183,966 from future occupiers;
- First occupation expenditure is estimated to be £480,000 in the first 18 months of the development and;
- The proposal will result in an increased supply of labour in the locality, 625 retail, accommodation & food services businesses in the Ribble Valley could benefit from this spend;
- 183 tonnes less carbon will be emitted per annum by the dwellings at the proposed development compared with older homes; and
- Compared with older homes there will be an estimated energy cost saving of £78,338 per annum when compared with older homes.

5.10.4. For further details of the economic benefits to the scheme please refer to the submitted Economic Benefits Report. The Inspector considered that *'there would be an economic and social benefits through the creation of construction jobs and training as well as post construction through future occupiers spending and potentially working in the local area.'*

5.10.5. In addition to economic benefits the scheme also has substantial benefits, which are as follows:

- Contribute to housing need identified for Wiltshire and Ribble Valley;
- Provision of much needed affordable housing;
- Provision of housing for older people;
- Investment in local infrastructure from agreed planning contributions;
- Opportunities to create ecological habitats on a low value site; and
- Provision of open space for use by future occupiers and neighbouring properties.

5.10.6. It should be noted that the Inspector deemed that *'the provision of affordable homes would be a benefit of significant weight in favour of the development'*, which would partly address an unmet need in Wiltshire and the Ribble Valley.

5.10.7. The principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable (by the applicant, Inspector and LPA), which demonstrates compliance with Local and National Planning Policy. The proposal also constitutes sustainable development.

5.10.8. The proposed development is consistent with the development plan. There is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Here there are no countervailing considerations and other material considerations reinforce the presumption. The NPPF and government commitments to provide much needed housing by seeking to provide good quality housing to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements, including provision of affordable and housing for older persons; and achieving a sense of place through layout and design.

6 CONCLUSION

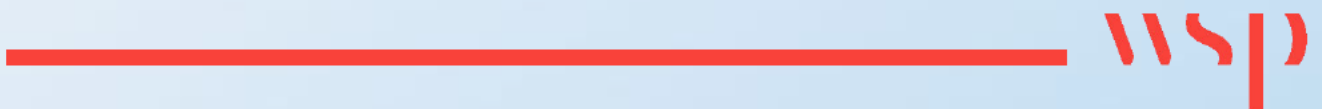
- 6.1.1. This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 80no. dwellings with new vehicular access, landscaping and other associated works. The statement has demonstrated that the principle of housing development at this site is acceptable, it is also noted as being acceptable in the Planning Committee Report for the previous application (LPA ref: 3/2022/0115). Likewise, the Inspectors decision noted that the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable (ref: APP/T2350/W/24/3352614). The site has also been identified for 75 dwellings in the council's 2025 5 year housing land supply report further supporting residential development on the site.
- 6.1.2. It has been demonstrated that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact in respect of highways or amenity or biodiversity. It would result in a positive development of an allocated housing site contributing to housing provision in the area including affordable and housing for older people.
- 6.1.3. The layout and design of the proposal have evolved through a detailed design review by IDP architects following the initial planning application in 2022. Further design development has been undertaken following the Inspectors dismissal of the resubmission of the application in 2023. This application has responded to points raised by the Inspector and has also respond to previous comments made by the LPA in relation to the layout of the northern end of the site. The revised scheme has evolved to ensure that the new proposal responds positively to feedback from the council on previous proposals, the Inspector's comments, site constraints and opportunities and the heritage and character of the sites surroundings. The scheme provides a sustainable community with a mix of housing types and tenures within a high-quality landscape setting.
- 6.1.4. The Inspectors comments (noted in bold below) have been addressed by the current scheme as follows:
- 6.1.5. **The impact of overbearing retaining structures**, levels across the site have been amended to ensure that west to east the site gradually steps up to avoid the need for major or overbearing retaining structures and features.
- 6.1.6. **Concerns about landscape buffer not being effective in mitigating landscape and visual impact**; the landscape buffers have been increased on both sides of the development to ensure adequate screening of the site to mitigate the landscape and visual impact.
- 6.1.7. **The impact of extensive earthworks required to re-profile the land**; as noted above the levels have been reworked to provide a gentler stepped approach across the site which has negated the need for extensive earthworks; and
- 6.1.8. **Concerns regarding layout of western part of the site**; this part of the site has been reworked and in conjunction with the amended levels now provides a well designed layout.
- 6.1.9. The proposal is compliant with the NDSS, resulting in a more spacious layout of dwellings and substantial areas of open space. The design of the dwellings represents a modern interpretation of surrounding dwellings with a palette of materials, tones and architectural detailing which is sympathetic to the local vernacular, which was not a reason for refusal by the Inspector. The proposal has also positively responded to the challenging topography of the site proving split level dwellings to utilise land and ensure views and preserved.
- 6.1.10. The revised layout and design has been considered in conjunction with the submitted LVIA. The proposed layout in conjunction with the enhanced landscape proposals has retained and

accentuated key views over the valley and sought to retain and enhance existing landscape features where practicable and possible. The LVIA concludes that there are a limited number of locations where views of the site are available. Any effects on landscape character will generally be perceived at a site level and within very close proximity to the east, north and west. These effects will be mitigated over time as proposed planting particularly to the eastern boundary, but also other boundaries, matures. Mitigation is set out in the submitted landscape Masterplan, which seeks to mitigate the visual effects of the built development upon existing users of the adjacent road and footpath infrastructure.

- 6.1.11. All technical considerations have been addressed in the accompanying reports submitted with the applications.
- 6.1.12. The revised layout allows for larger landscape buffers to the east and west of the site, which ensure gentle slopes rather than large retaining structures. This also allows additional planting to screen and provide visual mitigation as well as providing an acceptable degree of separation to the site's boundaries. Therefore, in summary the proposed development presents a revised scheme which has responded positively to the challenges of the site and adheres to council feedback in relation to previous schemes and points raised by the Inspector.
- 6.1.13. The NPPF highlights a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It has been demonstrated that the development proposal complies with local and national planning policy and that the significant benefits of the scheme clearly outweigh the limited impact of the development when all material considerations are weighed in the planning balance. The application should therefore be approved without delay.

Appendix A

INSPECTOR'S DECISION





Appeal Decision

Site visits made on 7 and 14 January 2025

by A Veevers BA(Hons) PGDip(BCon) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/W/24/3352614

Land to the east of Salesbury View, Wilpshire Lancashire

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Persimmon Homes Lancashire against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 3/2023/0614.
 - The development proposed is erection of new residential development comprising 84 new homes, including 30% affordable housing, open space and associated infrastructure.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development given on the decision notice differs from that stated on the application form. This reflects the fact that amended plans were submitted during the processing of the planning application, which included a reduction in the number of proposed dwellings from 85 to 84. As Section E of the appeal form confirms that a change was made to the description in this manner, I have used the amended description in the banner header above.
3. I visited the appeal site, accompanied, on 7 January 2025. The residents of 3 Wilpshire Banks, 4 Whalley Road and 6 Whalley Road also requested that I view the appeal site from their property, and I was able to do so on my site visit. However, due to inclement weather on that day, I carried out a further unaccompanied visit to the wider environs on 14 January in order to obtain optimal views of the site from public viewpoints, including public rights of way.
4. A new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) came into effect in December 2024. Accordingly for the purposes of this decision I have referred to the latest version of the Framework. The main parties have been given the opportunity to comment on the revised Framework. Therefore, I am satisfied that no one would be prejudiced by this change to the national policy context.
5. During the appeal a planning obligation pursuant to s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act) has been submitted. It includes obligations to come into effect if planning permission is granted. I return to this matter later in my decision.

Preliminary Matter

6. Almost all the appeal site is allocated for housing in the Local Plan for Ribble Valley 2008-2028, Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan

Document, adopted 15 October 2019 (DPD). However, the red edge site boundary also encompasses unallocated land within the settlement boundary in the southern part of the site and part of land within the Green Belt in the south-eastern part of the site. These areas comprise very steeply sloping wooded land within which no development is proposed. The effect of the proposal on the Green Belt is not a reason for refusal in the decision notice. From the information available to me, I agree with both main parties that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt under the terms of the Framework. It would not be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt or to the purposes of including land within it. As such, I make no further reference to the site's partial location in the Green Belt in this decision.

Main Issue

7. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

Site Context

8. The appeal site comprises parcels of steeply sloping open fields and grazing land on the edge of the settlement Wilpshire. The southern part of the site has particularly steep and heavily wooded gradients and includes Knotts Brook, part of which forms the administrative boundary with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, beyond which is residential development. To the north and west is residential development. The eastern boundary predominantly comprises of a low drystone wall and timber post and wire fence, beyond which the land continues to rise and comprises open agricultural fields within the Green Belt.
9. The site falls significantly in level from the highest point in the north-east corner down towards the rear of properties along Salesbury View to the west and to the wooded Knotts Brook to the south. Two distinct interspersed rows of trees separate parcels of land within the site. In addition, high voltage power lines traverse the southern part of the site in an east west direction with two pylons located on the site. A Public Right of Way¹ (PRoW 25) runs through the wooded section of Green Belt land to the south and proceeds close to the eastern boundary of the site. The site would be accessed off Salesbury View, a relatively steep road that provides access to four properties along Salesbury View and to the rear of several properties along Whalley Road.
10. Being located towards the edge of the settlement, the site is part of a transition zone between the rural edge and the more built-up part of the settlement. Due to the change in land levels, the site occupies a prominent position and is visible from numerous public viewpoints, including a network of roads and public rights of way in the surrounding countryside.

¹ Public Right of Way 0346025

Layout

11. The layout has been largely dictated due to the constraint of the overhead power line, the site's topography and a large diameter water main and a row of trees that cross the site. The single access into the site runs westwards towards the centre of the site and sweeps almost 90 degrees to continue northwards, largely following the contour of the hillside to end in a cul-de-sac. Either side of the north section of the estate road would be split level semi-detached and detached dwellings surrounded by landscaping to the boundaries of the site.
12. At the southern end of the site, a semi-circular crescent of detached dwellings would front an area of open space that follows the route of the overhead power line and includes an attenuation pond and play area. Two cul-de-sacs of dwellings sit centrally within the site and extend towards the east and west boundaries.
13. Two pedestrian routes to PRow 25 would be incorporated within the proposed layout as well as a pedestrian route linking the east and west parts of the site alongside an existing row of trees, which forms a further band of open space across the site. These linkages would allow permeability through the site and into the surrounding countryside.
14. The layout allows for a mix of frontage and side parking, attached, detached and integral garages separated by frontage tree or hedge planting within front gardens. While Plots 12 to 17 rely on frontage parking, this would be a relatively short stretch of cul-de-sac located integrally within the overall site. It would not be readily apparent when viewed from outside the site or from the main internal access road and would not dominate the overall layout. Furthermore, following amendments and details of clarification during processing of the planning application, the Highway Authority have not raised an objection to the highway layout of the scheme.
15. Although separation distances between dwellings in the northern part of the site would be less generous than properties off Whalley Road to the west, they would be comparable to those between dwellings on Hollowhead Avenue and Beaver Close to the north. The linear form of development in this area also respects the contours of the site as is similarly the case along Hollowhead Avenue and Beaver Close, as well as the linear alignment of Whalley Road and the railway to the west of the site which run in a north/south direction. I saw other linear residential development at my site visit on the facing valley hillside at Paris, Waverley Road and Isle of Man. The proposed arrangement is therefore not uncommon in the area.
16. The Council's concerns relating to the northern part of the site centre around the significant changes to landform. It is inevitable, due to the topography and geology of the site, that in order to achieve the proposed layout, significant earthworks and extensive retaining structures would be required.
17. Consequently, the approach across the scheme would be to address levels within individual parcels in different ways, and in the northern area, split-level dwellings and gardens, along with landscaping where level changes would otherwise be particularly apparent. The appellant's evidence² indicates that dwellings to the east of the northern access road would generally include a retaining structure along the

² Schematic External Works Layout sheet 1 and 2 (Drawing Nos 210687-EDGE-XX-XX-DR-C-1098 and 1099 Revision PO5)

rear garden boundary. Gardens to the west of the access road would be tiered and would incorporate, for the most-part, a retaining feature between the upper and lower gardens and between the lower garden and adjacent land.

18. The retaining structures and dwellings would be clearly visible, particularly in close views from properties to the west of the site on Wilshire Banks where the dwellings would be at much higher land levels. It would take time for the proposed landscape buffers between these properties and the new dwellings to mature. Nonetheless, provided reasonable sized specimens were used within the landscaping scheme at the outset of planting, due to the distance, the visual appearance of the structures and dwellings would be lessened, as is the case with existing surrounding development. Should I be minded to allow the development this could be dealt with by the imposition of a suitably worded condition.
19. Notwithstanding the above, higher retaining structures would be constructed within other areas of the site close to the boundaries where it has not been clearly demonstrated there would be sufficient space to accommodate landscaping to screen the structure and/or the proposed dwellings. This would particularly be evident to the rear of several plots.
20. From the evidence available, in order to ensure an acceptable road gradient, the proposed two storey dwelling at Plot 7 would be approximately 5m above the land level at the boundary of the site with the rear garden of 22 Whalley Road (No 22), and would include a 3m high retaining structure with a close boarded fence above. I observed the tall evergreen trees along this boundary are located within the garden of No 22 and their retention cannot therefore be guaranteed to screen the proposed development. Although two silver birch trees are located within the appeal site close to this boundary, the appellant's arboriculture information³ identifies these would be removed to facilitate the retaining structure requirements. As such, I find the limited separation to the boundary in combination with the proposed tall retaining feature and level difference to the dwelling on Plot 7 would result in a cramped and incongruous layout in this part of the site, out of character with the prevailing building pattern.
21. Turning to Plot 28, the proposed plans⁴ indicate a 2m and 3m high retaining structure surrounding the curved rear/side garden of Plot 28 with the driveway for Plot 11 adjacent at lower level, together with an additional screen fence/wall above. On the basis of this information, this could result in an overbearingly high boundary feature which would be highly visible forward of the building line of Plots 7 to 11 and would face towards a pedestrian route and open space.
22. Plots 54, 64 and 65 would be sited close to the central eastern boundary of the site and the land re-profiled with tall retaining features to accommodate the plots. However, the layout would fail to provide a sufficient landscape belt to define the settlement edge and provide an appropriate transition between built development and the open countryside in this area. PRoW 25 runs along the boundary of the site directly parallel with these plot boundaries on the opposite side of the drystone boundary wall. Due to the small gap, extensive earthworks and the abrupt change

³ Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement, Revision D Ref MG/6631/AIA&AMS/RevD/Jan24, tba landscape architects, January 2024.

⁴ Schematic External Works Layout sheet (Drawing No 210687-EDGE-XX-XX-DR-C-1099 Revision PO5) and Proposed Boundary Treatment Plan Drawing No 103 Revision P4

in levels, there would be limited opportunity to provide meaningful landscaping in this area, a highly sensitive part of the site.

23. Whilst gardens and driveways that incorporate retaining features are evident along Wilpshire Banks and Whalley Road, I observed these assimilated within the landscape due to set backs from the road and/or stepped retaining features. That would not be the case relating to the above plots, which would be more prominent. I also observed the harmful effect that significant sized retaining walls have at the interface between urban and rural area where there is an absence of a landscape buffer, as I saw at 22 and 24 Hollowhead Avenue.
24. The Council claim the landscape buffer to the rear of Plots 3 to 6 is insufficient and I recognise that the rear gardens on these proposed plots would require a retaining feature between 2.5m and 3m high. However, due to the generous size of the garden of No 22 and the single storey scale of the dwellings on these plots, I consider the separation distance between the retaining structures and the boundary in this location, which is less steep than other parts of the site, would be acceptable.
25. For the above reasons, the proposal results in a contrived layout with very tall retaining features close to the boundaries which are themselves visually intrusive and a symptom of overdevelopment. The proposal fails to demonstrate that the layout can be accommodated within the appeal site while maintaining an acceptable degree of separation to the site's boundaries. The scheme therefore fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions.

Landscape and Visual effects

26. Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy 2008-2028, A Local Plan for Ribble Valley, adopted December 2024 (CS) states that in determining planning applications particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character.
27. There is a distinction to be made between impact on landscape, which should be treated as a resource, and impact on visual amenity, which is the effect on people observing the development in places where the development can be viewed, such as villages, roads, public rights of way and individual dwellings.

Landscape Character

28. The site lies within the Lancashire Character Type 7: Farmed ridges and 7a: Mellor Ridge as defined by 'A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire', dated 2000 (LS). Because the site comprises the rounded ridge profiles and valley slopes of mixed farmland and woodland, it exhibits key features characteristic of this semi-rural landscape type and contributes positively to the wider appearance of the area.
29. However, the site is close to the edge of Wilpshire near to houses and businesses, and consequently its overall landscape character includes the nearby urban landscape.
30. The appellant's Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment⁵ (LCVIA) focusses upon the visual effect from key receptors in the surrounding area and

⁵ Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Pegasus Group, Ref P21-0362.ROO1v4, dated January 2024

concludes that views of the site are contained and limited to locations within close proximity with wider views generally restricted by vegetation and existing development.

31. The proposal would represent a significant change in character from a largely open, grassed site intersected by two distinct rows of trees with woodland along the southern edge to an estate-type housing development that would occupy a large part of the site. The dwellings would be plainly visible from the surrounding area and would represent a substantial incursion of development into the countryside. It is clear the development of houses on the site would inevitably change the otherwise open pastoral character of this greenfield site. Change arising from development is not synonymous with that equating to harm and change of this nature would be an inevitable consequence of developing the site in accordance with the allocation.
32. The plans show a built housing envelope of development stepped back from the boundaries of the site, with landscaping, including retention and enhancement of an existing row of trees crossing east to west on the site, along with increased landscaping to form buffers to the boundaries on the northern part of the site. A large area of public open space including trees and an attenuation pond would break up the mass of development. While the development's size and scale would still result in an urban incursion into the countryside and would expand the settlement, I saw that creeping development on valley slopes is a common feature of the area.
33. The site benefits from being immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary but the steep slope of the site means that rows of dwellings would step up the hillside and reveal the full depth of development. Nevertheless, it is contained, to a large extent to the west and north by existing residential development, and to the south, by a belt of woodland. The development would be seen in its wider context with the surrounding built development, the overhead power line and intervening vegetation. Views of the upper shoulder and ridge of the hill as it rises to the east would still be obtainable when viewed from high land along surrounding public rights of way and houses on the opposite valley slope.
34. The woodland to the south and development to the north and west would remain as a key visual characteristic of the area, though there would be visual and spatial loss of the rural context that lies beyond the site to the east. This would be from the introduction of large amounts of built form, albeit the extent of the development would not protrude eastwards beyond the existing built limits of Hollowhead Avenue and Warrenside Close.
35. In this respect, the visual envelope of the proposed development would be contained, and the loss of the fields would be localised to the site and its immediate context. Over time landscaping proposed on the northern edge of the housing parcel and within the site would filter obtainable views of buildings. The land would be perceived to be part of the settlement and not countryside on the edge of the settlement as it currently is.
36. Based on the evidence before me and my own observations of the site and the surrounding landscape, I agree in part with the appellant's conclusion that, even though the magnitude of change upon the site itself would be high, the residual

effects on the immediate landscape character would be moderate and on the wider landscape character would be minor.

Visual Effects

37. Turning to visual effects, visual amenity relates to the direct visual impacts on receptors (people) rather than on the landscape. The LCVIA has assessed the visual effects of the proposal from several key viewpoints. During my site visits I was able to observe the site, and its context, from several important local viewpoints, including those identified in the LCVIA.
38. The LCVIA identifies users of PRoW 25 are considered to be of high sensitivity (viewpoints 1 and 2). I found the walk along the path to be a pleasant environment which is clearly well used given the number of passers-by I encountered even at the mid-afternoon hour. From my observations and the visualisations provided from this location, PRoW 25 allows views through the site from the public realm. It is clear that the view here from the open grassland would change considerably. Over time, landscaping may soften the appearance of the estate along the boundaries. However, as set out above, even though I accept steep sites are capable of accommodating planting, there would be a sharp contrast in the immediate landscape within the central-eastern section of the site where PRoW 25 runs alongside the site boundary. This would be due to the extensive earthworks required to re-profile the land combined with limited scope for a meaningful landscaped buffer at a point that would be extremely open and visible.
39. Pedestrians would have their enjoyment of the footpath significantly harmed. Indeed, it is recognised in the LCVIA that landscaping mitigation to the eastern boundary is key in reducing visual impact and mimicking the character of other built form on surrounding valley sides. The LCVIA methodology defines the 'high' magnitude of change as a major change in the view that is highly prominent and has a strong influence on the overall view but indicates the magnitude of harm from PRoW 25 in Year 15 would be moderate. Given my assessment above in relation to the limited space available for a greater density of planting alongside the central-eastern boundary, even during the months when leaves would be on trees, the LCVIA's significance of effects downplays the magnitude of change and overplays the beneficial effects of landscaping mitigation in this area. As such, effects upon completion and Year 15 for the site would be greater than the LCVIA indicates. Even in the long-term there would be a permanent high, major adverse, magnitude of harm.
40. The LCVIA indicates that due to the maturation of mitigation planting to the eastern boundary in viewpoints 4, 6, 7 and 9 the magnitude of change to views would change from low/medium/high in Year 1 to very low/low in Year 15, which would result in a minor/moderate adverse effect in Year 15. However, for the same reasons given above in relation to the limited space to provide meaningful landscaping mitigation within the central-eastern part of the site, I am not convinced the resultant effect in the long term would be as predicted but would be higher. I do, however, recognise that views would lessen with distance and that the experience and views of the viewer would vary depending upon relative elevation, angle and screening. Views would also be intermittent, transitioning and changing as the viewer moves towards and away from the viewpoints identified.

41. Viewpoint 8 relates to people using or living on Salesbury View who, as acknowledged in the LCVIA would experience a high magnitude of change in Years 1 and 15 resulting from a major adverse effect even with landscape mitigation. The quantum of development and its urban form would be in stark contrast to the current undeveloped fields. This would also be the case when viewed from surrounding properties on Whalley Road, Wilpshire Banks and Hollowhead Avenue.
42. However, this would be likely to be the case for any greenfield site allocated for development. While views would change, there would be a considerable depth of landscape buffer to surrounding properties, particularly within the northern part of the site. Due to its depth, it would ensure proposed dwellings would not appear overbearing when viewed from surrounding dwellings despite the incline of the land. I recognise the strength of representation from some members of the public and accept that the effects of the proposal would be significantly appreciated from surrounding properties. However, in planning terms, there is no right to a view. The relatively linear, stepped form of the development interspersed with landscaping would not be noticeably dissimilar to other housing developments located on rising land in the local area.
43. With the exception of the western boundary to Plot 7 for reasons set out above, because of the proposed landscape buffer, the existing garages along Salesbury View and the depth of existing and proposed gardens the visual effect of the development from viewpoint 8 and surrounding dwellings would be diminished. In my view the proposed development could be successfully assimilated in proximity to neighbouring properties.
44. From my observations on site, I am largely in agreement that the development would result in negligible adverse impacts over the much longer distant views of the appeal site. Due to the distance from viewpoints 3 and 5, the site would be seen nestled close to existing woodland and surrounding residential development next to the eastern fringe of Wilpshire. From here the level of harm would be minimal.
45. Notwithstanding, it has not been demonstrated that the buffer along the central-eastern boundary and PRoW 25 would be effective in mitigating the landscape and visual impact of the development in the long term. The LS seeks that the character of ridge settlements is conserved through the softening of abrupt urban edges. The proximity of the proposed dwellings within this part of the site to open countryside and PRoW 25 would not be perceptibly softened but would result in a highly conspicuous urban edge, the immediate visual effect of which would be harmful. Whilst the land would be used efficiently, it would compromise the quality of the environment in this regard.

Scale

46. Scale relates to the height, width and length of each building in relation to its surroundings⁶. The provision of roof-level accommodation would result in some proposed dwellings to be more prominent than others, with significant ridge heights. Notably, almost all of these dwellings would be split level and positioned on the northern part of the site where they would be seen against the incline of the hillside in front of a belt of proposed trees and behind street trees. Plots 18 to

⁶ MHCLG National Design Guide, January 2021

21 would comprise two pairs of semi-detached 3-bedroom properties located close to the initial part of the internal access road. The ridge height of these dwellings would be high and would include a photovoltaic roof panels, a small dormer in the front roof slope and a rooflight on the rear slope to accommodate a third floor of accommodation. The four dwellings would not dominate the approach into the wider site because they would be flanked by large two-storey corner detached dwellings and face towards an area of open space, thereby adding variety within this part of the site.

47. At my site visit, I saw other split level dwellings of similar height along Wilpshire Banks where, facing the road, three floors of accommodation include integral garages. In addition, imposing traditional properties at 22 and 24 Whalley Road, which are set back from and higher than the road, also include three floors of accommodation within gabled projecting features. The proposed use of split level dwellings would be an acceptable way to adapt to the site's topography and is evident in the local area.
48. In general design terms, there would be a variety of house types. The surrounding area largely includes a mix of traditional and contemporary architecture accompanied by a mix of materials and detailing. The elevations of the proposed dwellings would be incorporate features found in the area including, amongst other things, exposed rafters, chimneys, gables, bays and dormers and would suitably reflect the scale and appearance of house types that exist in the surrounding area albeit with a more modern emphasis. In these respects, I am satisfied that the dwellings would appropriately reflect the context of the locality.
49. Within their evidence, the Council confirmed that external materials could be appropriately and necessarily managed through a planning condition.
50. Given the quantity and distribution of open space across the site, the perception of built form would be diminished. The resulting varied scale and appearance of dwellings would offer variety and interest to the proposed street scene and would assist in its legibility and sense of place. I am therefore satisfied the scale of the development would be acceptable.

Density

51. The Council do not dispute the principle of residential development on the site and given the allocation in the development plan I have no reason to form a different view. No specific quantum of development is set out in Policy HAL or Policy HAL2:Land at Wilpshire of the DPD. However, the supporting text advises that, in addition to the electricity line crossing the site, its topography presents issues in terms of visual impact and restrictions on capacity. Policy DS1 of the CS sets out the development strategy for the Borough including the distribution of housing. Table 4.12 of Policy DS1 states that 66 houses are required within the settlement of Wilpshire to meet housing needs within the plan period up to 2028. While I have no information before me about the delivery of housing in the area, the Council's evidence confirms that the figure of 66 is not a cap on the amount of development that could be provided on the appeal site and on the basis of the appeal documentation I have no reason to disagree.
52. Policy DMG1 of the CS sets out general considerations for development in relation to design, access, amenity, the environment and infrastructure. In terms of design, it requires, amongst other things, that all development must consider the density,

layout and relationship between buildings. Paragraph 129 of the Framework supports development that makes efficient use of land while safeguarding the environment. Planning Practice Guidance also provides advice with respect to density⁷, requiring consideration of such matters as plot ratio, bedspace per hectare and dwellings per hectare.

53. I acknowledge that the density of the development would be low in terms of the number of dwellings per hectare. However, an assessment of density alone does not take account of the site's context and constraints. This is recognised in Policy HAL2 where topography and an overhead power line are significant constraints to development. Given this, the proximity to the wooded area of Green Belt to the south, and the retention of a tree belt crossing the site, the higher density of development would be concentrated centrally within the site with areas of lower density concentrated to the north and south. In this case, the Council alleges the amount and density of development would harm the character of the area, particularly within the northern and eastern parts of the site.
54. The appellant calculates the density of the proposed development would be approximately 17 dwellings per hectare as measured by the number of dwellings within the appeal site⁸ and density of development within the northern and southern parts of the site would be slightly lower. Even taken as a ballpark this would be very low and would be commensurate with the surroundings. I recognise the overall density figure would include the open space identified around the attenuation pond, trees and buffer areas.
55. In terms of the surrounding housing development, there is a variation to the size and style of properties. Housing to the north of the appeal site towards the end of Hollowhead Avenue and to the west off Whalley Road, including Wilshire Banks and Salesbury View, reflects a more spacious form of development with predominantly detached properties in generous plots. Beyond the wooded valley of Knotts Brook to the south of the appeal site, Warrenside Close and Walden Road are more tightly arranged housing estates with a varying degree of separation between properties, although most properties have landscaped front gardens, which positively contributes to the character of the area. Elsewhere in Wilshire there is also terraces of properties.
56. Whilst the plot ratios for proposed properties within the central and northern part of the site may not be as spacious as those off Whalley Road and Hollowhead Avenue, having regard to the nature of the village as a whole, the low overall density of development proposed on the site would be acceptable.

Conclusion on Character and Appearance

57. Given the above, I find the overall density and scale of proposed development would be acceptable. I also find the identified moderate adverse landscape harm would be localised only and not therefore cause a significant adverse effect on the wider landscape character of the area. However, although I find these aspects of the development would be acceptable in terms of the impact on the character and appearance of the area, as set out above, I find the layout and resultant visual effects on the landscape would not be acceptable. The proposal would fail to deliver a high-quality, visually attractive development.

⁷ Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 66-005-20190722

⁸ IDPartnership Northern, Statement of Case N81:3203, dated 20 September 2024

58. It would therefore cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and be contrary to Policy DMG1 of the CS. This policy requires, amongst other things, that developments are of a high standard of building design, sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses and consider the density, layout and relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character. This policy also requires that regard is had to the landscape or townscape of an area and the importance the open space has on this.
59. The proposal would also be contrary to paragraphs 129 and 135 of the Framework which outlines, amongst other things, the importance of securing well-designed, attractive places. It is also outlined that decisions should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

Planning Obligation

60. The completed s106 Agreement is signed in counterpart, each with an identical clause to confirm that each counterpart is a duplicate original and that, together, they constitute one agreement.
61. Framework paragraph 58 and Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (CIL Regs) confirm that planning obligations must only be sought where they meet each of the following three tests: necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
62. The s106 Agreement would secure financial contributions towards 22 primary education places, enhancements to PRoW 25 to provide a footbridge over Knotts Brook and re-surfacing, off-site public open space improvements to facilities at Durham Road play area and recreation ground and the monitoring of a travel plan. The s106 Agreement also includes mechanisms to secure the phased delivery of affordable housing, including First Homes, over 55's housing, and the provision of on-site landscape and public open space, along with its subsequent management and maintenance.
63. Policy DMI 1 of the CS sets out the infrastructure that new developments are required to provide or contribute to and includes the provision of education, open space, affordable housing and improvements to highway safety that cannot be covered by planning condition or s278 Highway Agreement.
64. This policy is supported, in some cases, by formulas used to calculate the amount of the contribution. I am satisfied that the pressure on these services and facilities will potentially increase as a result of the appeal proposal and consider that the scale of contributions towards the provision of education places, off-site open space, PRoW improvements and the monitoring of a travel plan would comply with the tests set out above. The provision and maintenance of on-site public open space is necessary in order to ensure that the proposal functions as planned and the proposal would secure affordable housing as required by Policy H3 of the CS.
65. In summary, I find the planning obligations relating to affordable housing, education, PRoW 25, on and off-site open space and travel plan are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the

development and are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the appeal development. They meet the statutory and policy tests of the CIL Regs and the Framework and the requirements of the CS. I am therefore able to take them into account in my decision.

Other Matters

66. Interested parties have raised several other concerns including, but not limited to, highway safety, flood risk and drainage, wildlife and biodiversity interests, local infrastructure, facilities and services, parking, privacy, pollution, air quality, climate change and loss of agricultural land. However, the Council did not refuse the application for these reasons and as I am dismissing the appeal on other grounds, such matters do not alter my overall conclusion and have therefore not had a significant bearing on my decision.

Planning Balance

67. The Framework seeks to boost the supply of housing and has a strong pro-growth agenda. The proposal would provide for the delivery of 84 new dwellings and would develop an allocated housing site in an accessible location. Therefore, I give this matter considerable weight in favour of the proposed development.
68. Nonetheless, the proposal is in conflict with the development plan in respect of the effects on character and appearance.
69. The infrastructure improvements delivered through the signed s106 are required to meet policy objectives to address the impact of the development and therefore cannot be deemed as a benefit. They are of neutral weight in the planning balance. Nonetheless, the delivery of 30% affordable housing, amounting to 25 new homes, would be deemed to be a direct benefit of the scheme. It has been identified by the appellant that there is an unmet need for affordable homes in Wiltshire and the Ribble Valley and this would be partly addressed by the proposal. As such, the provision of affordable homes would be a benefit of significant weight in favour of the development.
70. The proposal would also deliver economic and social benefits through the creation of construction jobs and training as well as post construction through future occupiers spending and potentially working in the local area. However, this gain would be delivered on any housing site and therefore this provides only moderate weight in support of the proposed development. The proposal would provide biodiversity benefit through enhancement and maintenance of landscaping including replacement and new tree planting and wildflower planting. I afford this moderate weight.
71. The development would incorporate open space for use by occupants of the proposed dwellings and others but this is an expectation of well-designed schemes. Measures such as solar panels and electric vehicle charging points would contribute to climate change adaptation, but there is little to suggest the development would be particularly innovative or that it would go beyond the requirements of the development plan in this regard.
72. Taking all of these considerations together in the overall planning balance, the harm that I have found to the character and appearance of the area would not be outweighed by the benefits when taken individually or cumulatively.

Conclusion

73. The proposal is in conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole. Material considerations have not been shown to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with it.
74. Therefore, for the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

A Veevers

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