


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	LW	Date:	09/04/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	10/4/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0042			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	03/03/26	Site Notice:	03/03/26	
Officer:	LW			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				REFUSAL

Development Description:	Outline application for the proposed erection of two dwellinghouses with access applied for.
Site Address/Location:	Land adjacent to Fernhill, Ribchester Road, Clayton le Dale,

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

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	The Local Highway Authority raises an objection to the proposed development as adequate visibility splays from the accesses have not been demonstrated.
United Utilities:	Comments have been provided to direct the applicant to further sources of support and guidance on matters that might affect their proposal.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
<p>Five letters of representation have been received. The concerns raised can be summarised as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impact on the semi-rural character of the area; • Creates an urbanising effect inconsistent with the existing environment; • Encroachment into the countryside; • Substantial loss of outlook and open views; • Diminished residential amenity including loss of privacy; • Contrary to Policies DMG2, DMH3 EN4, DMI2 and DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy; • Limited pedestrian infrastructure; • Increased vehicular traffic; • The entrance to Oaks Quarry Garage is less than 50m away – visibility for lorries existing Oaks Quarry is poor and visibility of cars leaving the proposed development is limited leading to increased chance of road traffic accidents; • Contribution to localised flooding; • Environment impacts due to the loss of habitat; • Disruption during construction works; • Sets an undesirable precedent for further development along Ribchester Road; • Within 100m of an intensive Broiler unit; • Proposed development would have the same address as existing properties. 	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees & Woodland
Policy DME2: Landscape & Townscape Protection
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation
Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

No relevant planning history.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application relates to an area of land located to the south-western side of Ribchester Road, adjacent to the residential properties known as Fernhill and Rose Garth, Clayton le Dale. The proposal site is greenfield in nature and is situated outside of any defined settlement limits, being on land which benefits from an Open Countryside designation.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks outline consent for the construction of two dwellings, with access applied for and all other matters reserved. As this is in outline only, no details of the scale, layout, appearance and landscaping have been submitted; however, an indicative site plan has been provided.

Principle of Development:Compliance with Development Plan (Ribble Valley Core Strategy)

The development applied for is the construction of two new dwellings within the defined Open Countryside. As such, it is necessary to consider whether the location of the proposed new dwellings would be compatible with the overall spatial strategy for housing growth within the borough as identified within the currently adopted development strategy.

When considering the principle of new residential development, Key Statement DS1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy outlines a spatial strategy for new housing development which are to be directed to the strategic sites and Principal and Tier 1 settlements. Policy DMG2 and DMH3 of the Core Strategy seeks to restrict residential development within the Open Countryside and AONB to that which meets a number of explicit criteria.

Policy DMG2 is two-fold in its approach to guiding development. The primary part of the Policy DMG2(1) is engaged where development proposals are located 'in' Principal and Tier 1 settlements with the second part of the Policy DMG2(2) being engaged in circumstances where proposed development is located 'outside' defined settlement area or within Tier 2 villages, with each part of the Policy therefore being engaged in isolation and independent of the other, dependent on the locational aspects of the proposal.

The mechanics and engagement of the Policy are clear in this respect, insofar that it contains explicit triggers as to when the former or latter criterion are applied and the triggers are purely locational and based on a proposals relationship to defined settlement boundaries and whether, in this case, such a proposal is 'in' or 'outside' a defined settlement.

The proposal is located outside of any defined settlement boundary, in this respect, when assessing the locational aspects of the development, it is the secondary element of Policy DMG2 that is engaged (Policy DMG2(2)) which states that:

Within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas development must meet at least one of the following considerations:

- 1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area.*
- 2. The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.*
- 3. The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
- 4. The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
- 5. The development is for small scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*

Given the site is located outside of any defined settlement limits, DMH3 if also applicable, with the Policy being engaged in parallel with Policy DMG2. In this respect, Policy DMH3 states that:

Within areas defied as open countryside or AONB on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to:

- 1. Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied.*
- 2. The appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings provided they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must be structurally capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.*
- 3. The rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings (subject to a number of criteria).*

In respect of the above first criterion, it is clear from the submitted details that the proposal could not be argued as being 'essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area' nor could it be considered that the proposal 'is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture'.

In respect of the matter of 'local need', no robust evidence has been provided to suggest that the proposal would align with the definition of 'local needs housing'. The Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that local needs housing is 'the housing developed to meet the needs of existing and concealed households living within the Parish and surrounding Parishes which is evidenced by the Housing Needs Survey for the Parish, the Housing Waiting List and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment' and that 'the most recent SHMA and Housing Needs Survey and Waiting List evidence would always be used in determining if the proposed development meets the identified need'.

As such, the proposed development would conflict with the spatial strategy set out in the development plan as the site lies outside the settlement boundary. Furthermore, it would not meet any of the identified

considerations or exceptions which are required for residential development to be acceptable in the Open Countryside.

Policies DMI2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy require new development to be located to minimise the need to travel, with good access by foot and cycle and convenient links to public transport. Considerable weight is to be attached to the availability and adequacy of public transport to serve those moving to and from a proposed development. This aligns with the sustainability objectives of the NPPF.

The site is located within the Open Countryside, outside of the settlements of Wilpshire and Copster Green which are Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements respectively.

Copster Green is predominantly residential in nature and offers little to no services or facilities required to meet the daily needs of future occupants. Whilst Wilpshire does benefit from some facilities such as a primary school, pub, post office and village hall which are within a reasonable walking distance from the proposal site (20-minutes), these services alone do not automatically equate to sustainability. The nearest convenience shop is a 40-minute walk away and pedestrian access from Wilpshire to the proposal site is via Ribchester Road which carries a high volume of traffic with limited footways, forcing pedestrians to walk in the carriageway.

There are bus stops on Ribchester Road that are serviced by routes that provide connections to key service centres which have a broader range of services, or onward connection points for other public transport services. The nearest bus stop is 250m to the north-west of the site, which Lancashire County Council Highways have confirmed in their consultation response is serviced by a single commercial service – 45 (Preston to Blackburn) - operating hourly Monday – Saturday and two-hourly on Sundays and Bank.

As noted by the Local Highway Authority, whilst this bus stop is within acceptable walking distance to the site, there is no connecting full width footway. With the above in mind, it is not considered that the existing connectivity of the area would make travelling by foot or public transport an attractive method of transport, with future occupants instead being overly reliant upon private motor vehicles to access services and facilities necessary to meet their day-to-day needs.

As such the proposed development would conflict with Policies DMI2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Other Material Considerations

The most recently published five-year housing land supply figure (base date of 31st March 2025) indicated that Ribble Valley Borough Council has a housing land supply of 6.2 years. However, a recent appeal decision (dated 7th January 2026) at Land to the South of Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn (APP/T2350/W/25/3372635) determined that the Council has a housing land supply of 3.45 years.

The consequences of not having a 5YHLS is that in the case of this application, paragraph 11d) of the NPPF if engaged in the decision-making process. On this basis, the restrictive approach towards new housing development outside of settlements must be considered to be out-of-date.

Specifically for decision making, this means if the most relevant Local Plan policies for determining a planning application are out-of-date (such as when a 5YHLS cannot be demonstrated), granting permission unless:

- i. The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

In terms of areas or assets of particular importance referred to at subsection i) above, these are identified as habitat sites and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, or a National Landscape, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest...); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change. The application site is not affected by any such areas or assets as such this subsection does not apply.

In which case, the tilted balance should be applied and subsection ii) of paragraph 11d) requires the LPA to consider whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. This will be considered in the concluding section of the report.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF states:

'Planning policies and 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.'

Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.

The proposal site is bordered to the east by the residential property known as Rose Garth, to the west by Fernhill and to the north by Ekuuse and Rockhaven. However, it is not considered that the proposed residential use of the site would be of significant detriment to nearby properties. Any issues relating to overshadowing, loss of outlook, daylight or privacy could be addressed through the consideration of the reserved matters application which would deal with the detailed design and of the development.

It is noted that concerns have been raised by third-party representations regarding the loss of views. However, the loss of a private view is not a material planning consideration and is therefore afforded no weight in the determination of this application.

Concerns have also been raised with regards to disruption during construction works. However, the proposal comprises a relatively small-scale housing development and should the application be approved, it would be likely considered appropriate to impose a condition requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement prior to works commencing which would include details such as the delivery, demolition and construction working hours. This would help mitigate any resultant impact during the construction phase.

It has also been highlighted that the development would be located within 100m of Low Farm, which is an intensive Broiler unit, with concerns raised over the potential impact of this upon the amenity of future occupiers. However, the agricultural operations at Low Farm already co-exist alongside nearby residential development and therefore no significant concerns are raised in this respect.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

Policy DMG1 states:

'All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style... particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings...'

In this instance, outline consent is sought for the development of two new dwellings within the application site. An indicative site layout plan has been submitted which shows that the site would comprise sufficient

space to accommodate the scale of development proposed with associated gardens and parking areas. As such, no concerns are raised with respect to the amount of development being proposed.

Although the proposal site is currently an open field, it is located between two residential properties that form part of a ribbon of development along Ribchester Road. The development of this site would therefore be read as a natural extension of the row of houses on this side of the road. Whilst it would change the character of the field, visually it would not be seen as an overtly incongruous incursion into the countryside.

As such, whilst the scale, layout, appearance and landscaping are reserved for future consideration, there is not considered to be any reason why the development of the site for two dwellings could not be achieved in a way that would respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Highways and Parking:

Lancashire County Council Highways have been consulted on the application and concerns / comments have been set out regarding sustainability (dealt with above), access and visibility splays as follows: -

Access

Two new vehicle access points are proposed from the site onto Ribchester Road. The Local Highway Authority (LHA) note that revised site plans are required based on measurements taken on site and not on the OS layer. The Proposed Site Plans submitted show a footway/ verge of up to 2m wide across the site frontage. The revised plans should show the correct width of the service verge, which is narrower, and locations of highway gullies and street lighting columns across the site frontage and immediately adjacent.

Furthermore, no site section plans have been submitted to demonstrate how appropriate access will be constructed given the level differences between the carriageway on Ribchester Road and the site, which slopes up from the road. The access should be constructed so that there is not a steep gradient to the driveways.

The accesses would also need to be surfaced in bound material for at least 5m into the site from the back edge of the service verge and surface water collected across the front of the accesses and drained to suitable internal outfalls to prevent surface water from discharging into the public highway network. This could be secured via an appropriately worded planning condition.

The construction of the access would need to be carried out under a legal agreement (Section 278) with the LHA. Works should include, but not be exclusive to, the construction of the accesses to an appropriate standard, the relocation of any highway gullies out of the access points onto Ribchester Road and a street lighting assessment.

Visibility Splays

The development would be accessed from Ribchester Road, which is a two-way classified road subject to a maximum speed limit of 30mph. For a road with a speed limit of 30mph visibility splays of 43m in both directions from each access will be required. Visibility splays should be measured to the nearside carriageway edge on Ribchester Road and nothing over 0.9m in height above the carriageway level should be within the visibility splays. The visibility splays should be over land within the applicant's ownership and/or the publicly maintained highway network with no part of any splay over third party land.

No visibility splay drawings have been submitted with the application. However, based on the above criteria, the LHA does not consider that adequate visibility splays could be achieved, with splays from both access points being over third-party land. Unless and until adequate visibility splays have been

demonstrated from the site, which may require the access points being re-located, the LHA objects to the application.

Traffic may be travelling below the maximum speed limit, and shorter visibility splays may be accepted. However, these would need to be supported through data obtained by an automated seven-day survey carried out in a neutral month, avoiding school holidays, national holidays and events, or local events which could impact on traffic movements and with prevailing weather conditions noted.

The LHA have also provided additional guidance with respect to matters which would need to be addressed as part of any subsequent reserved matters submission, relating to on-site parking provision, cycle storage, electric vehicle charging points, refuse storage and collection and the construction phase of the development.

Taking account of the above, insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would result in no adverse impact upon highway safety in the immediate vicinity of the proposal site. The proposal as submitted therefore fails to satisfy the aims and objectives of Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seeks to restrict development proposals likely to have an adverse effect on highway safety and parking.

Landscape/Ecology:

A Biodiversity Net Gain Report has been submitted in support of the application which indicates that the proposed development is capable of a post-development net gain of 14.48% in habitat units and 11.43% in hedgerow units. As such, the proposal is considered to satisfy the statutory requirements with respect to Biodiversity Net Gain subject to the statutory condition being satisfied.

Other Matters:

Flood Risk

It is noted that concerns have been raised with respect to the potential increase in localised flooding as a result of the development. However, the proposal site is located with Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of surface water flooding. Notwithstanding this, were the application to be approved, a condition would be imposed requiring the submission of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and foul water drainage scheme in order to promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution.

Address

Concerns have also been raised about the potential for the new dwellings to have the same property number/ address as existing properties along Ribchester Road. However, this is not a planning matter.

Conclusion and Planning Balance:

As identified earlier in this report, the Council are unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and so Paragraph 11d) of the NPPF is engaged. In this case, the tilted balance applies, and the proposal must be assessed against 11d) ii and a balancing exercise undertaken.

The benefits of the development have been considered, namely the delivery of housing especially in the context of a lack of a lack of 5YHLS, albeit the development would contribute only two dwellings to the Council's housing supply. As such, this is considered to carry moderate weight. There would also be the benefit of consumer expenditure in the area, construction jobs and supporting the building industry supply chain. However, these short-term temporary benefits are considered to carry limited weight.

Paragraph 11d) section ii) also requires the LPA to have particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, and for the reasons outlined within the report, it is considered that the granting of this outline consent, would result in the creation of residential development in an unsustainable location.

The Applicant has also failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not result in any adverse impact upon highway safety within the immediate vicinity of the site, with the proposal failing to adequately consider the potential highway implications of the development, contrary to Policy DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

The adverse impact of granting the proposed development is therefore considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits as there would be a reliance on private motor vehicles for future occupiers to access key services and facilities and potential adverse impacts upon highway safety. This is considered to be significant and even on the application of the tilted balance, there would not be sufficient justification to grant planning permission.

As such, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:	That outline planning consent be refused for the following reasons:
01:	<p>The proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the overarching objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) insofar that approval would lead to the creation of two new dwellings in an unsustainable location whereby there would be a reliance on private motor vehicles by occupiers of the dwellings to access key services and facilities.</p> <p>The proposal also fails to adequately demonstrate that safe access points can be created to serve the development without resulting in an adverse impact upon highway safety, contrary to Policy DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF.</p> <p>When applying Paragraph 11d) ii. of the NPPF, the resultant harm from granting outline planning permission for the development proposed is considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.</p>