

**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>	MC	<b>Date:</b>	24/02/2026	<b>Manager:</b>	LH	<b>Date:</b>	27/2/26
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<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2026/0050			 <b>Ribble Valley Borough Council</b> <a href="http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk">www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</a>				
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	06/02/2026	<b>Site Notice:</b>	06/02/2026					
<b>Officer:</b>	MC							
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>					<b>REFUSAL</b>			

<b>Development Description:</b>	Permission in principle for erection of up to two dwellings.
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	Land adj Preston Road, Ribchester, PR3 3XL

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
Ribchester Parish Council raise concerns regarding flood risk which could worsen existing issues if not mitigated. The comments from LCC highways regarding pedestrian access to and from the site and village are noted.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
<b>LCC Highways:</b>	No objection.
<b>United Utilities:</b>	General comments made in relation to drainage. United Utilities (UU) note that their response to a subsequent technical matters application will be based upon the information that is available at the time of response. They note it is the applicants responsibility to investigate the existing of any infrastructure that might impact their details design. A public sewer crosses the site and UU would not permit building over it. An access strip for maintenance or replacement is required and access must not be compromised.

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
<p>One objection has been received in response to the application raising the following issues/comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Only one dwelling should be permitted on the site on the grounds of highway safety</li><li>• Concerns that the bungalows could become four bedrooms and there would be insufficient parking</li><li>• Any additional parked cars along Preston Road would add to existing congestion</li></ul> <p>One representation of support has been received.</p> <p>In addition a comment has been made by a ward councillor in relation to the ownership of the site and the proposed route of access to the dwellings. Access is served by an existing barrier which would need to be addressed at the technical matters stage. There is no in principle objection to two bungalows provided the final design is similar to the indicative drawings.</p>	

**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  
Key Statement H1- Housing Provision  
Key Statement H2 – Housing Balance

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations  
Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations  
Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility  
Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands  
Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection  
Policy DME3 - Site and Species Protection and Conservation  
Policy DMH1 – Affordable Housing Criteria  
Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**Relevant Planning History:**

4/6/5820 – Outline application for residential and business development  
Refused

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

The application site comprises a piece of grassland located adjacent to the Tier 2 Village settlement of Ribchester. The site is located just outside of the settlement boundary and within land designated as Open Countryside. The surrounding area is a mix of agricultural fields to the south of the B6245 and a linear pattern of residential development to the north-west and south-east of the application site. The site has an existing access to the south-east and is bounded by hedgerow, which descends in gradient from north-west to south-east. Boadicea Park is sited to the rear on the site which comprises a commercial building for Snail Farming and holiday lodges.

## **Principle of Development:**

Permission in Principle applications may only deal with the principle of development and are not applications for planning permission. Any other details relating to any other material planning consideration are to be dealt with within any future Technical Details application. Planning practice guidance confirms the scope of permission in principle as being limited to matters of location, land use and amount of development. As such these matters have been assessed as follows:-

### Location

The application seeks permission in principle for the erection of two residential dwellings. 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 a new residential dwelling, Key Statement DS1 states that:

*The majority of new housing development will be:*

- *concentrated within an identified strategic site located to the south of Clitheroe towards the A59; and the principal settlements of:*
- *Clitheroe;*
- *Longridge; and*
- *Whalley.*

*In addition to the strategic site at Standen and the Borough's principal settlements, development will be focused towards the Tier 1 Villages, which are the more sustainable of the 32 defined settlements:*

- *Barrow*
- *Billington*
- *Chatburn*
- *Gisburn*
- *Langho*
- *Mellor*
- *Mellor Brook*
- *Read & Simonstone*
- *Wilpshire*

The first part of Policy DMG2 states that:

*'Development should be in accordance with the core strategy development strategy and should support the spatial vision.*

*1. development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement'.*

The second part of this policy requires development within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six considerations which are listed as follows:

- 1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being 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.*
6. *The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation’.*

Policy DMH3 seeks to limit residential development in the open countryside and AONB to development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need.

The site is located outside of a settlement boundary and as such, the proposal fails to accord with the spatial strategy for the Borough.

The most recently published five-year housing land supply figure for the Ribble Valley (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 (appeal ref: APP/T2350/W/25/3372635) has found that the Council no longer have a Five-Year Housing Land Supply and the housing supply is calculated to be 3.45 years.

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

Specifically for decision taking 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 this 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 this 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 habitats 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 sub section ii) of Para 11d) requires the LPA to consider whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

In terms of whether the site is in a sustainable location, as referred to at ii.) above and as required by policies DMI2 and DMG3 of the RVCS, the site is located within the Open Countryside, outside of the settlement of Ribchester which is a Tier 2 settlement. Whilst Ribchester does offer some facilities such as a primary school, pub, convenience store and a café, and these services are within walking distance of the site, these services alone do not automatically equate to sustainability, as the wider connectivity of an area should also be considered. In this case the bus service to nearby settlements is limited, providing only an hourly service Monday – Saturday and a two hourly service on Sundays. The bus provisions into nearby settlements are not of a duration or frequency that would make travelling by public transport an attractive method of transport for future occupiers. Ribchester offers a bus service to the nearby main settlements of Clitheroe, Whalley, Preston, Blackburn and Longridge but the shortest bus journey is over approximately 12 minutes to Longridge and an hourly service throughout the majority of its operating time.

As such, future occupiers of the dwellings are likely to rely on private motor vehicle to access key services and facilities, for example to access medical services, secondary schools and employment.

This will be discussed in more detail in the planning balance section of this report.

#### Land use

Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy stipulates that all development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature. In this instance, the proposal seeks to introduce new housing to the application site which is located within a predominantly residential setting and which also adjoins existing residential development. Whilst it is acknowledged there is a commercial use to the rear of the site, these uses (snail farm and holiday accommodation) already co-exist alongside residential development. As such, the proposed use of the land within the application site for residential development would be sympathetic to the prevailing residential character of the area. Accordingly, the proposed development would be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG1 and is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to land use.

#### Amount of development

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 permission in principle is sought for the development of up to two dwellings within the application site. An indicative site layout plan has been provided in support of the application which shows that the application site comprises sufficient space to comfortably accommodate the scale of development proposed with associated gardens and parking areas. As such, the proposed development would be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG1 and is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to the amount of development being proposed.

It is also relevant to consider at this stage whether or not the amount of residential development could be successfully integrated within the landscape. The immediate streetscene comprises of frontage development of a similar density to the proposed development and the proposed dwellings would be read in this context. The indicate drawing suggests the two dwellings would be bungalows, although this detail is not a matter for consideration at this stage. There are no concerns raised at this permission in principle stage with regards to the visual impact of the amount of development proposed.

#### **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**

This application relates solely to principle of development and whether the proposal would align with the spatial and locational strategy of the borough.

As such, the impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of surrounding residential properties does not fall to be assessed within the scope of this application and would be reserved for consideration/assessment following the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

#### **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**

This application relates solely to principle of development and whether the proposal would align with the spatial and locational strategy of the borough.

As such, matters relating to the potential for adverse impact(s) upon the character or visual amenities of the area resultant from the development do not fall to be assessed within the scope of this application and would be reserved for consideration/assessment following the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

### **Highways and Parking:**

Lancashire Country Council Highways have been consulted on the application and comments have been provided.

They note that the site is proposed to be accessed from the adjacent access to Boadicea Park where the access is not in the red edge. The site access to Boadicea Park is conditioned to be surfaced in a bound and porous material the first 10m under condition 5 of 3/2022/0530 and be 7m wide under condition 7 of the same permission. They note that the visibility splays are X2.4m by Y25m to both sides along the nearside edge of Preston Road and they consider that this application would be required to provide access improvements, including measures for pedestrians to safely access the highway on a separate footway and suggest that whilst the provision of direct accesses from each dwelling onto Preston Road is not proposed, it would likely reduce vehicle speeds on Preston Road by the urbanisation of the street scene and the provision of a footway, in the highway verge and visibility splays to match those agreed at the Boadicea Park access.

The Local Highway Authority consider that direct accesses and the provision of a footway would aid the collection of refuse from the kerbside of Preston Road. Lancashire County Council acting as the Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the principle of the proposed development and they consider that the matters highlighted can be mitigated at stage 2 technical details stage.

It is acknowledged that the proposed access on the illustrative site plan includes land outside of the red edge. However, in light of the comments above from the highways authority suggesting they would support direct access off the highway into the site, which would be entirely within the red edge, then the applicant has not been asked to amend the application. If however, the applicant wishes to provide the access off the entrance to Boadicea Park, then this would fall outside the scope of a technical details consent application and a new application would be required.

Lancashire Country Council Highways have been consulted on the application and have raised no concerns on highway safety matters pertaining to access and in any case such matters would be subsequently addressed as part of the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

### **Landscape/Ecology:**

Appropriate surveys would be required to be undertaken (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal) given the close proximity of the site to woodland and Boyce's Brook and submitted in support of any subsequent 'Technical Matters' submission to determine whether the proposal is likely to result in adverse impacts upon protected species or species of conservation concern.

In addition, at the 'Technical Matters' stage, the applicant would be required to demonstrate how the proposal would achieve the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net-Gain or provide an appropriate exemption in accordance with Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

### **Other matters**

#### Other applications

The applicants supporting statement makes reference to appeal decision APP/T2350/W/25/3372635 whereby the Inspector concluded that whilst the site was located within the open countryside, the site had good pedestrian and cyclist access to the facilities and services in Chatburn (Tier 1 village) and considered the village

to have a frequent bus service to the principle settlement of Clitheroe as well as Skipton and Preston. Therefore, it was concluded that there would not be a whole reliance on the use of private motor vehicle. The applicant considers that in terms of facilities and access to public transport, the site, just outside of the settlement boundary of Ribchester would be similar in terms of accessibility and sustainability to those of the appeal site in Chatburn.

Whilst there are some similarities between the villages, it is important to note that Chatburn is a Tier 1 village and has a greater provision of services than Ribchester, for example a library, butchers, florist, takeaway and a beauty salon. In addition, Chatburn is physically closer to a main settlement than Ribchester and the bus service provides a slightly more frequent service into Clitheroe, with journey times at 7 minutes to the bus interchange and a 3-minute bus journey from Chatburn to Clitheroe Community Hospital (non-emergency).

As such, it is considered that the two sites are not directly comparable.

#### Flood Risk

Concerns about flood risk have been raised by the Parish Council. The Council is aware of recent planning appeal decisions (APP/H1840/W/23/3329778, APP/H1705/W/21/3281406 & APP/F0114/W/22/3313796) which confirm the issue of flood risk (including the application of the Sequential Test and any necessary mitigation) as a matter to be dealt with at the Technical details stage.

As such, any site at risk of flooding will require a Flood Risk Assessment (inclusive of the sequential test) to be submitted in support of any subsequent 'Technical Matters' submission in order to fully assess the proposed development against implications of flood risk. For the avoidance of doubt, this is not a matter that can be taken into account at this stage and does not justify refusal of this PIP application.

The Council's records indicate that United Utilities have apparatus which runs directly through the application site. An application for technical details consent would be expected to demonstrate how the development could come forward without compromising these assets. In any event, this would be a separate matter for the landowner to resolve with United Utilities.

#### **Conclusion and Planning Balance:**

As identified earlier in this report, the Council are unable to demonstrate a Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) and so paragraph 11d) of the NPPF is engaged and in this case the tilted balance applies and the proposal must be assessed against paragraph 11d) ii and a balancing exercise must be undertaken.

The benefits of the development have been considered, namely the delivery of housing especially in the context of a lack of 5YHLS, albeit the development would only contribute up to 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. Given the development is only for up to two dwellings these benefits are considered to carry limited weight.

However, 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 this report, it is considered that the granting of this permission in principle, would result in the creation of residential development in an unsustainable location.

The granting of residential development in this location is considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits as there would be a reliance on private motor vehicle for future occupiers to access key services and facilities which is considered to be significant and even on the application of the tilted balance, there would not be justification to grant planning permission.

As such, this application is recommended for refusal.	
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	That Permission in Principle be refused.
<b>01:</b>	<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 up to two new residential dwellings in an unsustainable location whereby there would be a reliance on private motor vehicle by occupiers of the dwellings to access key services and facilities.</p> <p>When applying Paragraph 11d)ii of the NPPF, the resultant harm from allowing residential development in this unsustainable location is considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.</p>