

20th January 2026

The Planning Department
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe



Our ref: LJG407
Your ref: -

By email only

Dear Sir/Madam,

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE LAND AT PRESTON ROAD, RIBCHESTER

I am pleased to enclose this application for Permission in Principle on behalf of my client, Mr T Burns, for the erection of two dwellings on land fronting Preston Road, Ribchester.

Site description

The site comprises an undeveloped parcel of land, broadly rectangular in shape and extending to 0.19 hectares in size, located between existing dwellings which front Preston Road. The topography of the area is such that the land gradually slopes downwards towards the village

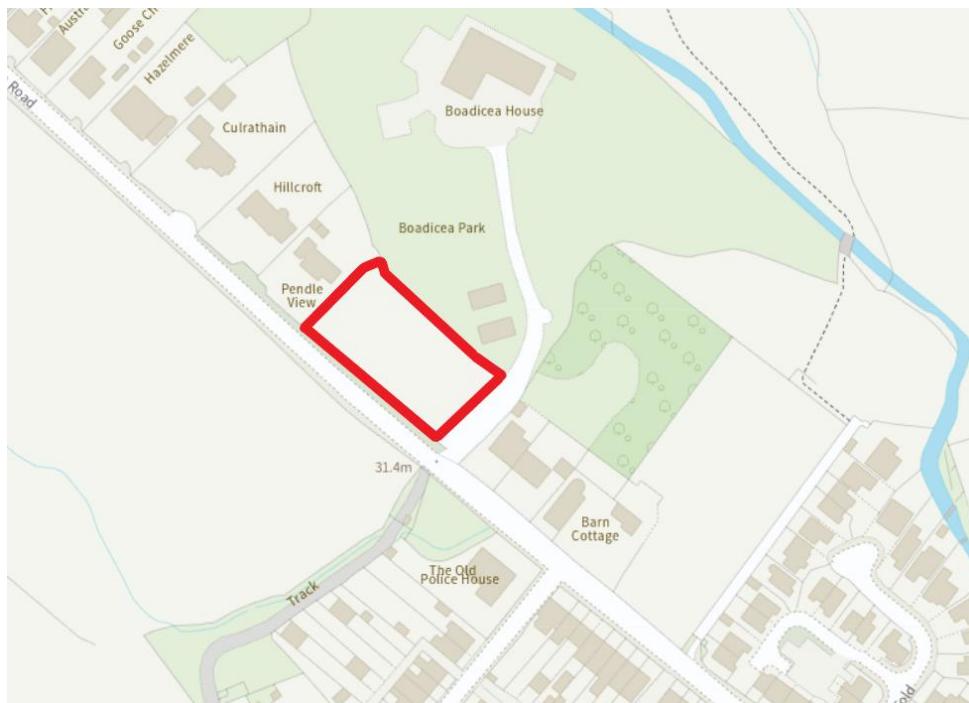


Figure 1 – site location

The land is currently bound by relatively dense foliage to the frontage and northwestern boundary. The rear and southeastern boundaries are more open, with access currently taken from the latter by way of an existing field gate.

With regard to known constraints, the site is not within or adjacent to a conservation area, nor are there any other heritage assets in the vicinity. There are no public rights of way within the site which would be affected by the proposals.

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and therefore at limited risk in this regard.

Proposals

The proposals seek to erect two properties on the land, with access taken from the adjacent road, at the junction with Preston Road.

Whilst not required at this stage, an indicative layout has been provided to show that the site can comfortably accommodate the quantum of development proposed.

Permission in Principle – procedural requirements

Permission in Principle ('PiP') is sought for future residential development at this site. The ability to make an application for PiP is available under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 via the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017.

The PiP route is a two stage process. The first is to establish whether a site is suitable in principle to accommodate the type and quantum of development proposed. The second, referred to as 'Technical Details Consent' considers detailed matters associated with the proposals.

A decision whether to grant PiP in the first instance must be made in accordance with the relevant policies within the development plan, unless there are material considerations, such as those in the National Planning Policy Framework, which would indicate otherwise.

In accordance with Part 2A of the Order, the PiP process does not extend to 'major' development. Therefore it is limited to:

- The provision of less than 10 dwellings; and
- Development carried out on a site of 1 hectare or less

Applications must be determined within 5 weeks, beginning on the day immediately following that on which a valid application is received by the Local Planning Authority. As per the Order, this application is supported by the requisite level of information for the Council to consider the PiP:

- The relevant application form;
- A location plan identifying the land; and
- The required fee

The development as proposed falls squarely within the aforementioned thresholds and the relevant level of information is provided as required by the Order.

Policy context

The site is located within the open countryside, but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary for Ribchester as shown in the policy map excerpt below.

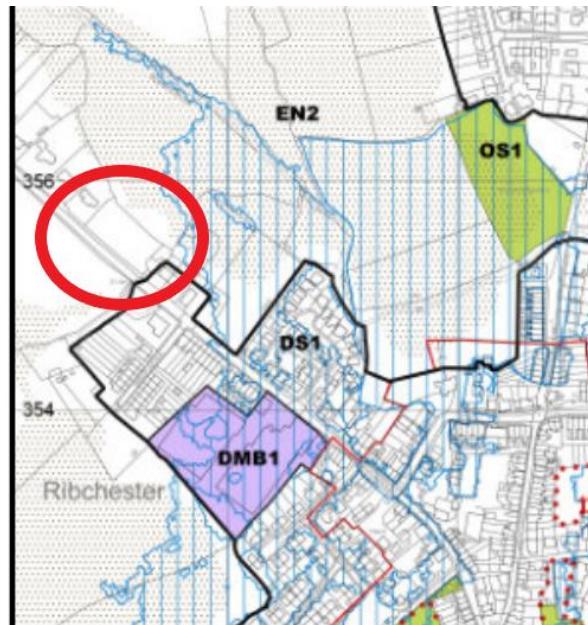


Figure 2 – policies map excerpt

Accounting for this designation, the following policies of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014) would normally be engaged when considering the proposals:

- **Key Statement DS1** outlines the Council's development strategy with regard to housing, employment, retail and leisure;
- **Key Statement DS2** confirms that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Wherever possible, it will aim to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area;
- **Policy DMG1** sets out various criteria to be considered in assessing planning applications, requiring new development to be sympathetic to existing land uses, highway safety and not adversely affect the amenities of the area;
- **Policy DMG2** states that development within Tier 2 settlements and outside of settlements will be required to meet one of five listed criteria (which will be considered in the Appraisal section below);
- **Policy DMG3** supports the provision of sustainable and accessible development;
- **Policy DME3** advises that development which has an unacceptable impact on priority habitats or protected species will not be supported, unless suitable mitigation can be achieved; and
- **Policy DMH3** limits new residential development within the open countryside to a number of listed criteria.

However, it is relevant to note that on the 7th January 2026, an appeal decision was issued, following a hearing in December 2025, with regard to Land to the south of Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn, in which the Council's 5 year housing land supply was considered in detail by the Inspector.

The appeal was allowed and it was found that the Council's 5YHLS was some 3.45 years. This is a significant material consideration in the determination of this application and will be considered in greater detail below.

In addition to the Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and details how they should be applied. It requires local planning authorities to adopt a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 11 confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development lies at the heart of the Framework. For decision making this means approving development where it accords with an up-to-date development plan, or where the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or policies within the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Paragraph 39 states that LPA's should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Paragraph 61 confirms the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of new homes and paragraph 73 advises that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing needs of an area.

Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and 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. Paragraph 125 d) also confirms that planning decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land.

Appraisal

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Act and the requirements of the Framework, this application must be considered in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The primary considerations relating to this proposal, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017, are limited to:

- Location
- Land use
- Amount of development

Location - Principle of development

The primary consideration in establishing the principle of development is to what degree the various policies of the Core Strategy are engaged or considered to be out of date.

The Chatburn appeal considered the Council's stated 5YHLS and when assessing the specific matter of past oversupply influencing current housing requirements, advised that it would (emphasis added):

...impede the achievement of the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. I therefore find that the forward-facing approach adopted in the appeal decisions and local plan examination letters that have been referred to by the appellant to be the most appropriate"

Turning to the issue of the actual supply position, when considering the status of various sites which make up the stated supply, it was found that:

"...at this point in time, the deliverable supply of housing amounts to 1,130 dwellings, which, in combination with the consequences of not deducting past over-supply from the local housing need requirements, **reduces the housing land supply position to 3.45 years**"

Subsequently, with regard to the status of the Core Strategy, insofar as it relates to housing related applications it was stated that:

"the Council cannot demonstrate a 5YHLS. Accordingly, as set out in footnote 8 of the Framework, **the most important policies of the development plan are considered to be out-of-date. Consequently, paragraph 11 d) of the Framework applies**"

The Inspector concluded that any impacts arising from conflict with the spatial strategy would not significantly outweigh the benefits of sustainable housing delivery.

In light of this decision, and in the context of the significant shortfall facing the Council, applications should be determined in line with the tilted balance set out in paragraph 11d), 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.

With regard to the first matter above, none of the areas or assets of particular importance, as set out in Footnote 7, are present at this site. As such there are no strong reasons for refusing development.

With regard to the second limb, there are no adverse impacts arising from the principle of residential development at this site. It is a natural infill plot, respects the linear development present in the vicinity and subject to any final design proposals, would not cause notable landscape or visual impacts.

In terms of sustainability and accessibility, the site lies immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary for Ribchester and benefits from direct access to the local services available.

Future occupants would be able to reach the centre of the village along dedicated pedestrian footways on Preston Road.

Facilities within and surrounding the settlement include the following:

- public houses serving food;
- a restaurant;
- a retail shop;
- post office;
- cafes;
- places of worship;
- a village hall;
- a school;
- an outdoor playground, tennis courts and football pitches; and
- local businesses such as repair garages amongst others

All of which would allow residents to meet their daily needs in a sustainable manner. As the Inspector in the Chatburn appeal also noted, it is reasonable to find that a considerable proportion of future expenditure would be spent in local shops, services and amenities given that they would be accessible and convenient. The development here accrues the same economic benefits in this regard.

Furthermore public transport is also readily available with bus stops located along Preston Road circa 230m from the proposed site entrance (see Figure 3 below). Regular services operate from these stops and offer daily travel to Preston, Clitheroe and Blackburn, allowing residents to sustainably access those larger settlements which contain a wider range of services.

Services 5, 5A, 45, 522 and 995 operate from the stops, starting from 6am and running until 8.30pm. This affords future occupants travel by means other than car for employment, retail or leisure opportunities.

The frequency of these services is reflective of those available to future residents of the Chatburn appeal site. The Inspector determined that occupants would not be wholly reliant on private car use as a result.

This is clearly also the case at Ribchester and the dwellings as proposed would not only have direct access to the aforementioned services but also help to sustain these largely independent businesses through patronage and use.



Figure 3 – bus stops in the vicinity of the site

Whilst the site lies within the open countryside it has a clear and direct relationship with the settlement and existing built form. The parcel is effectively an infill plot, fronting the highway and bound on three sides by existing development.

The location is therefore wholly acceptable for a proportionate amount of residential development.

Land use

Permission in Principle is sought solely for residential development. Whilst the PiP legislation allows for “housing led development”, no alternative land uses are sought on this occasion.

Amount of development

Permission is sought for two detached dwellings, within the range of the relevant PiP legislation. Whilst the final layout will be subject to detailed design proposals at the second stage of the process, the indicative drawings provided demonstrate that development could be comfortably accommodated without causing any undue impacts.

Summary

It has been established that the Council’s 5YHLS current sits at 3.45 years, which is a significant shortfall and a notable material consideration in determining this submission. Furthermore, the Inspector, in allowing the Chatburn appeal, found that it was necessary for the Council to positively address this position, with it being “part of the solution to the acute housing crisis that exists nationally”.

In light of the factors above, residential development at this site is acceptable, sustainable, accessible and as such Permission in Principle should be granted in accordance with paragraph 11d) of the Framework.

The proposals can make a modest but meaningful contribution to the Council's housing land supply and deliver new homes in an accessible and sustainable location, promoting sustainable, proportionate growth in areas such as Ribchester, leading to economic benefits arising from expenditure during the construction and occupation phases of the development.

The tilted balance in favour of sustainable development therefore weights heavily in supporting the scheme and any conflict with the spatial requirements set out within the Core Strategy is outweighed by the matters described in this statement.

All other associated considerations beyond the matter of principle are reserved for the Technical Details Consent stage of this process.

If you require any further information to assist with your deliberations please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Lee Greenwood MA MRTPI
LJG Planning Consultancy