

Land South of Causeway Farm, Balderstone, BB2 7HZ

Outline planning application for up to 85 no. residential units with access applied for off A59 Longsight Road (all other matters reserved).

PLANNING AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT (INCLUDING STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT)
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/1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Purpose of the Application

- 1.1.1. PWA Planning is retained by Specialist Diesels Ltd ('the Applicant') to progress an outline planning application for the erection of up to Outline planning application for up to 85 no. residential units with access applied for off A59 Longsight Road ('the Proposed Development') at land south of Causeway Farm Balderstone BB2 7HZ ('the Site').
- 1.1.2. This planning application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council ('the Local Planning Authority') as an outline planning application and relates to the redline boundary defined on the Location Plan submitted in support of this application.
- 1.1.3. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.1.4. This Planning Statement will look to demonstrate that the proposals accord with the provisions of the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and moreover that there are other significant material considerations which indicate that planning permission ought to be granted

1.2. Scope of Planning Application

- 1.2.1. The following documents are submitted in support of this Planning Application:

- Planning Application forms and plans
- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement (DAS)
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA)
- Transport Assessment (including Travel Framework Plan)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)
- Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy (FRA)
- Lancashire County Council SuDS Proforma
- Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (HEDBA)
- Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA)
- Noise Impact Assessment (NIA)

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (including Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment)
- Great Crested Newt Survey
- Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Impact Assessment & Conservation Payment Certificate
- Bat Activity Surveys
- Plans and Drawings:
 - Site Location Plan (ref. 1588-LP-01 Location Plan 2025-10-28)
 - Landscape Illustrative Plan (ref. 10032_P01_Causeway Farm Landscape Masterplan 05122025)
 - Parameters Plan (ref. 1588-PP-01 Parameters 2025-10-28)
 - Site Access Plan (contained in Transport Assessment)

1.2.2. The information provided within the above reports and plans/drawings provides a comprehensive assessment of the Proposed Development and confirms that the development can be delivered without giving rise to any unacceptable impacts.

1.3. Structure of Document

1.3.1. The remainder of the Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the site and its surroundings
- Section 3 outlines the planning history of the site and relevant nearby applications
- Section 4 provides details on the proposed development including details on affordable housing provision
- Section 5 details the relevant policies in the Development Plan
- Section 6 details other material consideration including consideration on the LPA's five-year housing land supply position.
- Section 7 confirms the principle of development, summarises the technical considerations, and sets out the planning balance.
- Section 9 sets out the summary

/2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1. Site Location

- 2.1.1. The application site, which extends approximately 4.1ha in size, is located at Causeway Farm, off Longsight Road in the area of Balderstone. The site currently comprises open agricultural land. A Site Location Plan is submitted with this application and a red edge aerial image is included in figure 1 below which illustrates the site within its wider setting.



Figure 1: An aerial image of the Site in its wider setting

- 2.1.2. The site is bound to the north by Longsight Road (A59) which is a key road providing access through major towns in the Ribble Valley through to Preston. The site lies approximately 4.5km north west of Blackburn which provides access to a wide range of public amenities and services.
- 2.1.3. The position of the A59 forms a detracting and urbanising element within the immediate context of the site, while the existing employment and residential development along the A59 reduces the sense of an open countryside character in this part of the landscape. As

such, the overriding character is that of a transitional, semi-urban, road corridor, as confirmed in the submitted LVA.

- 2.1.4. Existing access is taken from the north west of the site off Longsight Road. Beyond this, to the north of the site are open agricultural fields, along with an MOT and service centre and car dealership. Within the general vicinity of the site is the Grade II Listed property Causeway Farmhouse and also a number of public amenities including a small convenience store, a tyre shop and a petrol station.
- 2.1.5. There are no listed buildings within the site itself, however the nearby Grade II listed Causeway Farmhouse, the School Southwest of Church of St Mary and the Church of St Mary with Presbytery have all been considered in terms of potential impacts from the proposed development, which are assessed further within this statement and the supporting heritage statement.
- 2.1.6. By reference to the Environment Agency's flood risk map, it does not fall within an area subject to flooding, lying wholly within Flood Risk Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding.
- 2.1.7. The site is subject to several TPOs, situated in the south-eastern portion of the site. The site is not subject to any local or national ecological designations. The site is located within the Open Countryside Area, as defined Ribble Valley Borough Council's Proposals Map.

2.2. Site Suitability

- 2.2.1. In terms of sustainability, the nearest village to the Site is Mellor Brook, located just to the south west of the Site. Other villages are also in the vicinity of the Site, including Mellor to the south east and Osbaldeston to the north east. As such, the Site is in close proximity to a number of local amenities, including a bus stop, a post box, a health surgery, and a local convenience store.
- 2.2.2. The following list shows the walking distances from the centre point of the Site to several of the local key amenities in the immediate vicinity of the Site:
 - Spar Convenience store – 150m
 - Bay Horse Bus Stop – 240m

- Fielden's Arms Public House – 650m
- Mellor Saint Mary CE Primary School – 1,000m
- Mellor Village Hall – 1,270m
- Oakhurst Surgery – 1,100m
- Mellor Post Office – 1,360m
- One Stop Convenience Store – 1,360m
- Mellor Pharmacy – 1,430m

2.2.3. Taking the above into account, and noting that a 20-minute walk typically equates to around 1,600 metres, many day-to-day facilities fall within a reasonable walking distance of the Site and can therefore be accessed in a sustainable manner.

2.2.4. The nearest bus stop to the site provides various services throughout the day to destinations such as Blackburn, Clitheroe, Skipton and Preston. As confirmed by the submitted Framework Travel Plan, the journey times to these destinations by bus are as follows:

- Preston – 20 minutes
- Blackburn – 24 minutes
- Clitheroe – 29 minutes
- Skipton – 95 minutes

2.2.5. As such, the proposed development benefits from good bus accessibility, which encourages sustainable travel and reduces reliance on the private car.

/3 Planning History

3.1. Site Planning History

3.1.1. A search of Ribble Valley Council's planning register has been carried out to understand the planning history relevant to the site and the proposed development. Planning applications relating to the site itself include:

- **3/2024/0771:** Outline planning application for up to 9,290sqm of employment development. (Use Class B2 - General Industrial and/or Use Class B8 - Storage and Distribution with access applied for off A59 Longsight Road (all other matters reserved). Refused 8th April 2025.
- **3/2023/0148:** Outline planning application for up to 9,290sqm of employment development. (Use Class B2 - General Industrial and/or Use Class B8 - Storage and Distribution with access applied for off A59 Longsight Road (all other matters reserved). Refused 22nd September 2023.
- **3/2022/0484:** Removal of existing machinery building and construction of a steel frame machinery building and concrete pad. Approved 11th July 2022.
- **3/2017/0825:** Conversion of existing agricultural building into cattery. Approved 25th October 2017.
- **3/2012/1072:** Proposed conversion of barns at Causeway Farm to form dwelling and associated detached garage. Approved 24th October 2013.

3.1.2. This application is a resubmission of the previously refused application (ref: 3/2024/0771). The following reasons for refusal were attached to the decision and are therefore of relevance to this application:

- 1) *The proposed development would result in large scale commercial development outside of a defined settlement which fails to meet any of the exception criteria for allowing development in such locations. Furthermore the rural location of the application site means that future users would be reliant on a private motor. The harm that would arise would be contrary to Policy DMG1, DMG2, DMG3 and EC1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 - 2028 as well as the National Planning Policy Framework which supports sustainable patterns of development and seeks to promote sustainable transport. There are no material considerations which justify deviating from the Development Plan in this case.*

- 2) *The proposed development, by virtue of its overall scale and footprint, would result in the introduction of an incongruous, unsympathetic, and discordant form of development, of an overtly suburban appearance, particularly when viewed from the A59 approaching the site and Public Footpaths FP0304060, FP0304061, FP0304062, FP0304063 and FP0304064. The loss of over 100m of hedgerow (classed as Habitat of Principle Importance) adjacent to the prominent road frontage together with a further 40m of hedgerow being reduced to 1.5m in order to accommodate the site access and sightlines would result in further environmental harm. The resultant impact fails to protect key landscape features or respond positively to the inherent visual and landscape character of the area contrary to Policies DMG1, DMG2, DME1, DME2 and DMB5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028.*
- 3) *The proposed development would result in the loss of existing habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units, with insufficient details being submitted to demonstrate an appropriate strategy for achieving the statutory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain contrary to Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).*

3.2. Relevant Local Planning History

- 3.2.1. Application ref. 3/2025/0196, an outline proposal for up to 300 dwellings with associated access, a rail station car park, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems, was refused on 27 June 2025. The refused scheme relates to land off Longsight Road, located approximately 6.2 kilometres north east of the Application Site.
- 3.2.2. The application was refused for five reasons, largely relating to the scale and location of the scheme outside a defined settlement. The published committee report refers to the most recently published five-year housing land supply figure, which indicates that the borough has a housing land supply of 6.2 years.
- 3.2.3. This application has subsequently been appealed and allocated the reference 6002485. Within the appeal documentation, a fundamental part of the Appellant's case is the contention that the Council does not have a five year housing supply, with the following excerpts from Appendix 1 of the Statement of Case, summarising their position:

"This Statement concludes that the five-year housing land supply should be measured against the LHN figure, and a 5% buffer on the basis that Key Statement H1 is evidently out of date. The Council's proposition to 'bank' an oversupply of housing against what is a minimum strategic housing requirement, up to and even beyond the Plan period, is flawed and contrary to national policy and the imperative of significantly boosting the supply of housing.

This conclusion is consistent with that of several appeal decisions and the most recent determination from the Secretary of State.

....

It is only in a single, limited scenario where oversupply is allowed to be deducted from the forward LHN housing requirement, and an acceptance of the Council's deliverable supply, where RVBC can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Even then it is an incredibly marginal position at just 5.1 years (an exceedance of only 29 dwellings).

*Based on a planning judgement on both issues, this Statement has assessed the supply and concluded that against the local housing need figure and a 5% buffer, the five-year housing land supply position equates to **3.1 years.**"*

- 3.2.4. Whilst the appeal process is in the early stages, with the Inquiry not scheduled until the 28th of April, 2026, the outcome will not be known for some time. However, the evidence presented is robust and detailed, and is something the LPA will be already be analysing. It is therefore directly relevant to the application at hand.
- 3.2.5. Further to this, an appeal was determined on the 7th of January 2026, which concludes that the LPA is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply. This decision is fundamental to the consideration of the application at hand and given that it is the most recent assessment of the LPA housing land supply position, should be treated as the accepted and current position for housing supply within the Borough. The appeal (appeal ref: APP/T2350/W/25/3372635) related to a PIP application for up to nine units in Chatburn. As part of the appeal the Appellant contended that local housing need should not be reduced by previous oversupply. The implications of this would be a reduction in housing land supply from 6.19 years (the LPA's position), to 4.05 years.

3.2.6. In reaching a determination on this matter the Inspector also reviewed the particulars of other development sites and the principle of including oversupply in the calculation. The outcome was as follows:

*"22. I therefore find 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**.*

23. The Council has consistently delivered more completions than required since 2014/15, and there is no compelling evidence before me to suggest that this will not continue. This is a material consideration that tempers the weight to be given to housing delivery as a benefit of the proposed development. Nonetheless, given the significant shortfall in the 5YHLS at this time, I afford substantial weight to the proposed provision of housing, given that it is in an accessible location."

3.2.7. Clearly, it is therefore the position of the applicant, on this submission, that the LPA are currently unable to demonstrate a sound 5-year supply of housing. This matter is discussed in further detail in Section 6.3.

/4 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1. Development Overview

4.1.1. The Planning Application is submitted in Outline, with access applied for off A59 Longsight Road, and all other matters reserved.

4.1.2. As the application is submitted in outline, with scale, layout and landscaping to be dealt with as reserved matters, a detailed set of plans have not been submitted with this application. However, an Illustrative Masterplan and Parameters Plan has been submitted to demonstrate how proposed development may come forward at a later date, whilst respecting the existing important features of the site where appropriate.

4.1.3. The proposed development includes the following elements:

- Delivery of up to 85 dwellings, including 30% affordable housing;
- Provision of green infrastructure including informal recreation areas and natural play;
- Creation of new native planting along boundaries and retention of existing landscape features;
- Incorporation of attenuation basins as landscape features and sustainable drainage systems;
- Delivery of at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain;

4.1.4. Access into the site will be provided to the north east of the site via Longsight Road. The Planning Application is accompanied by a comprehensive Transport Assessment that confirms the required visibility splays can be achieved and that the site access junction will operate within capacity with the proposed development traffic.

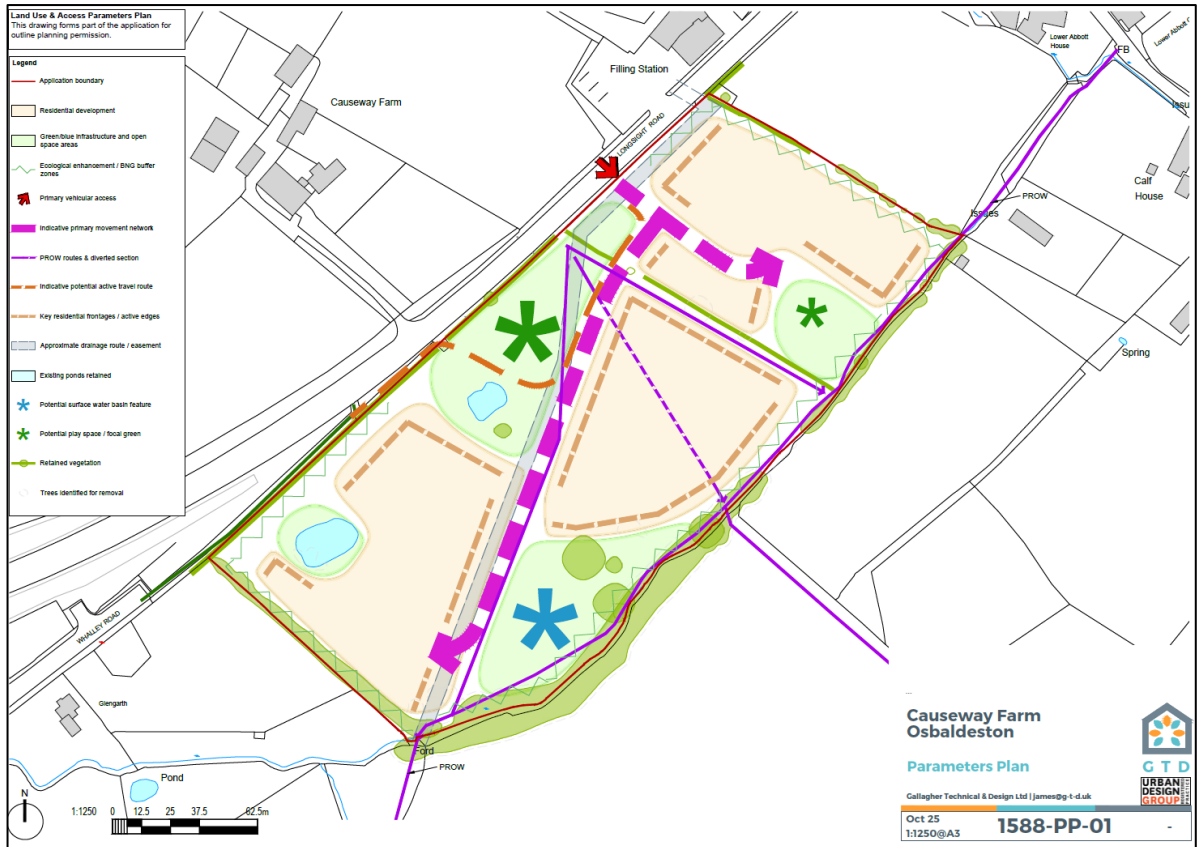


Figure 2: Parameters Plan

4.1.5. The proposed layout is a landscape-led scheme which will retain and strengthen the existing vegetation along boundaries, with a particular focus on the protection of the southern woodland through a managed buffer and supplemented by additional planting to enhance screening and habitat value, as shown in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Landscape Masterplan

4.2. Affordable Housing

- 4.2.1. Policy H3: Affordable Housing, states that for housing developments outside the settlements of Clitheroe and Longridge requires that for developments of 5 or more dwellings must deliver 30% affordable housing on-site. The proposed development will provide 30% affordable housing and is therefore in accordance with Policy H3.
- 4.2.2. The affordable housing will be distributed throughout the development. As this is an outline application, the exact tenure and unit mix will be agreed at a later stage. The mix will be informed through discussions with the LPA housing team to ensure it reflects up to date local needs.

4.3. Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.3.1. No public consultation was undertaken prior to submission of the application. Given the outline nature and limited scale of the proposals, it was considered that meaningful engagement would be better informed once detailed design matters are available at a later stage.

- 4.3.2. This Planning Statement therefore includes this brief Statement of Community Involvement to explain the approach taken. The application has been prepared with regard to national and local policy expectations around early engagement, and the Applicant remains committed to engaging with interested parties as the scheme progresses.

/5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1. Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a statutory duty on local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

5.1.2. In this instance, the Development Plan for the application site comprises of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 (2014) and the Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (2019).

5.2. Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy (2008 – 2028)

5.2.1. Extract from the adopted Proposal Map are provided in Figures 2 and 3, which illustrates the site is located within the open countryside, outside of, however within close proximity to, the defined settlement boundary of Osbaldeston and to the northeast of Mellor.

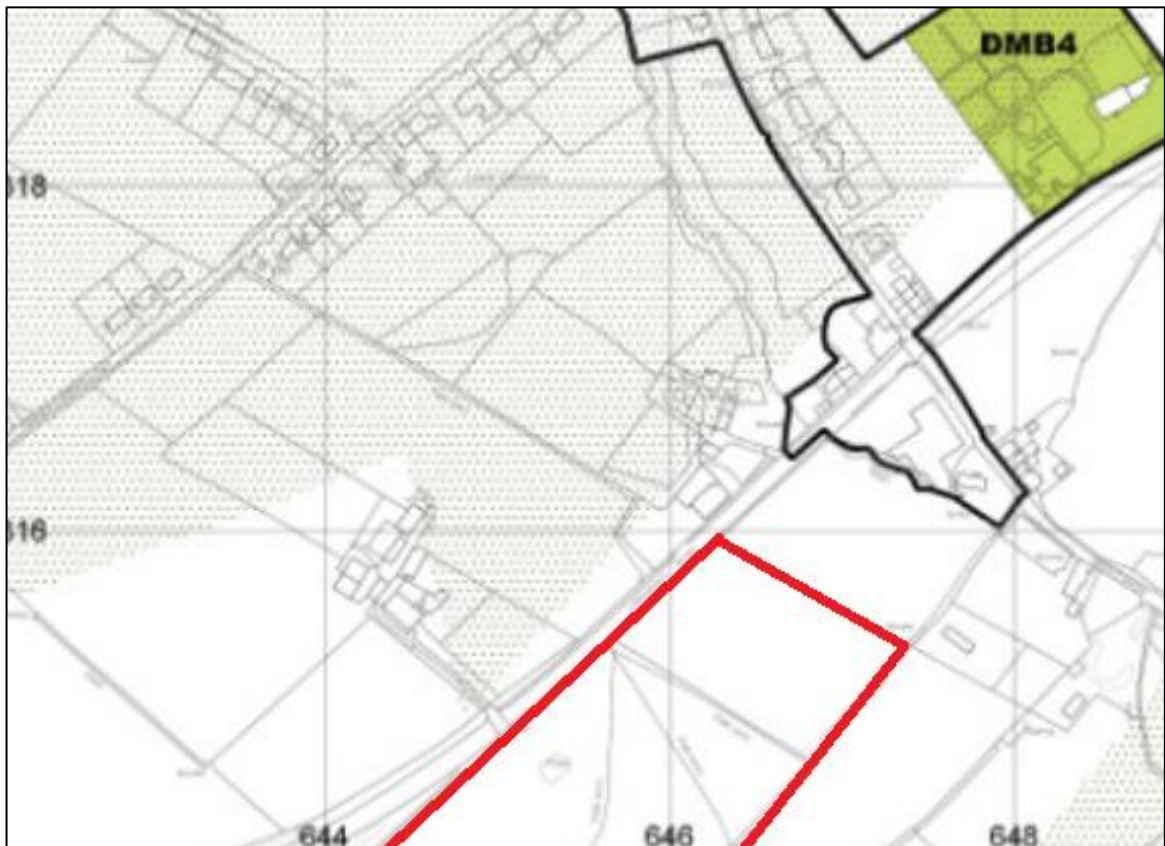


Figure 4: Extract from the Proposals Map

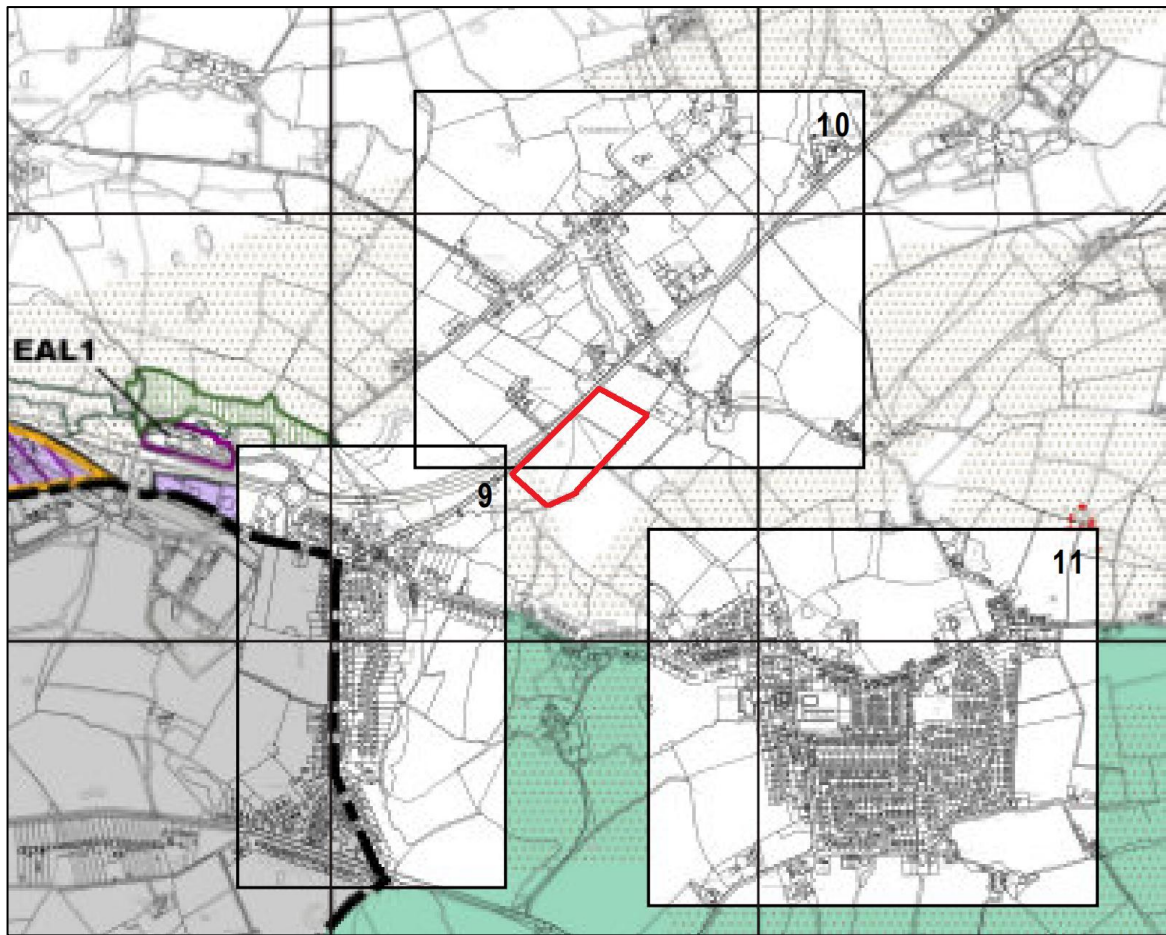


Figure 5: Extract from Proposals Map Showing Wider Area

- 5.2.2. The following Core Strategy policies are considered most relevant to the Proposed Development.
- 5.2.3. **Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy** states that the majority of new housing should be concentrated within the settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. The policy states that the Council will “always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area”.
- 5.2.4. Additionally, as with the NPPF, the policy details that where the relevant policies are out of date permission will be granted unless any impacts would “significantly and demonstrably” outweigh the benefits of doing so. This provision is of added pertinence given the Council has conceded they cannot demonstrate a sound supply of housing. Consequently, there is a tilted balance in favour of development, meaning the Council will have to identify where the significant harm would be caused, should they not be minded to support the application.

- 5.2.5. **Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** echoes the NPPF, showing how the Council will favour proposals which reflect sustainable development.
- 5.2.6. **Key Statement H1: Housing Provision** sets out a minimum requirement for the Borough and details the requirement to deliver 280 dwellings per year.
- 5.2.7. **Key Statement H2: Housing Balance** states that new developments must be consistent with local needs for housing across the Borough.
- 5.2.8. **Key Statement H3: Affordable Housing** sets out the Council's approach to securing affordable housing. Affordable housing is defined as accommodation accessible to people whose incomes prevent them from accessing suitable housing on the open market. Within the settlement boundaries of Clitheroe and Longridge, all housing developments of 10 or more dwellings (or sites of 0.5 hectares or more) must deliver 30% affordable housing on-site. Outside these settlements, this threshold applies to developments of 5 or more dwellings (or 0.2 hectares or more). A reduction to a minimum of 20% may only be accepted where robust, independently verified viability evidence is submitted. The Council prioritises housing for older people and seeks that 15% of dwellings on sites of 10 or more be designed for this group, with half of those units also qualifying as affordable housing. Affordable homes must remain affordable in perpetuity and should normally be provided on-site unless a suitable alternative approach is agreed with the Council. Older persons' accommodation should, as a minimum, meet Lifetime Homes standards.
- 5.2.9. **Key Statement DMG1: General Considerations** requires all development to achieve high quality design, protect amenity, and ensure safe and sustainable access. Proposals must respect local character in terms of scale, massing, layout, materials and landscape impact, and incorporate sustainable construction and energy efficiency measures. Development should provide safe and suitable access, consider traffic and parking implications, and protect and enhance Public Rights of Way. Proposals must safeguard the amenity of neighbouring uses, ensuring adequate privacy, daylight, and public safety. The policy also requires careful consideration of environmental assets, following the mitigation hierarchy, protecting biodiversity and heritage, and prioritising the reuse of previously developed land. Finally, development must not result in the loss of important open space

without robust justification and must be supported by appropriate infrastructure capacity or phasing where necessary.

- 5.2.10. **Key Statement EN2: Landscape** mainly focuses on protection of the Forest of Bowland AONB through ensuring development contributes to the conservation of the area by enhancing and protecting the landscape and character. The statement does offer more general coverage by linking the policy to the protection of all landscapes outlining that the Council expects all development to be in-keeping with the character of the local landscape.
- 5.2.11. **Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change** shows that the Council will seek to ensure all development is sustainable in its design and building standards, in order to address climate change.
- 5.2.12. **Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity** illustrates that the Council will seek to conserve and where possible, enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity to preserve habits and species.
- 5.2.13. **Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets** states that there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.
- 5.2.14. **Key Statement DMI1: Planning Obligations** states that planning obligations will be used as a mechanism to deliver development that contributes to the needs of local communities and sustainable development. Obligations will be negotiated on a site-by-site basis.
- 5.2.15. **Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations** illustrates that new development should be located to minimise the need to travel, especially by personal vehicle. All new developments should have convenient access to public transport, as well as pedestrian and cycle routes.

/6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1. Introduction

6.1.1. Key policy documents that comprise 'material considerations' include the NPPF, National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), and other local supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the Proposed Development, which are considered below.

6.2. National Planning Policy Framework

6.2.1. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied and is a material consideration in planning decisions as per NPPF Paragraph 2 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

6.2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF 2024") was published on Thursday 12 December 2024, alongside a Written Ministerial Statement from the Minister of State ("Building the Homes We Need") and a Consultation Response explaining a number of the Government's decisions in respect of the policy changes.

6.2.3. The Minister described the NPPF's publication as "the next step in delivering on our promise to radically reform the planning system" and the changes as "reflect[ing] our commitment not to duck the hard choices that must be confronted in order to tackle the housing crisis – because the alternative is a future in which a decent, safe, secure and affordable home is a privilege enjoyed only by some rather than being the right of all working people."

6.2.4. The NPPF sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. For decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, grant planning permission unless:
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, grant planning permission unless

- Specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted.

6.2.5. Sustainable development is broadly defined in Paragraph 8 of the Framework as having three overarching objectives:

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Activation of NPPF 11d):

6.2.6. NPPF paragraph 11 maintains the presumption in favour of sustainable development, serving as a guiding principle for decision taking in the planning system. NPPF 2024 introduced several key revisions.

6.2.7. Whilst NPPF 11c is unchanged, identifying that development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development should be approved without delay, NPPF 11d sets out the alternative course where a development plan is not up-to-date.

6.2.8. NPPF 11d, Footnote 8 and NPPF 78 together specify that where the policies that are most important for determining the application are out of date, permission should also be granted, subject to (i) and (ii).

6.2.9. Footnote 8 confirms that:

- 6.2.10. "This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years..."
- 6.2.11. Both NPPF 11(i) and (ii) have been amended to reflect the government's commitment to increasing the supply of homes.
- 6.2.12. NPPF 11(d)(i) is amended by the exchange of the word 'clear' to 'strong' reason for refusing development. According to the government's explanation of this change it is stated in response to the original Q6 (wording of the new presumption) that:
- 6.2.13. *"A change has also been made to be clear that when assessing whether areas or assets of particular importance provide a reason for refusal, there should be a 'strong' basis for doing so when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (replacing the existing 'clear' reason). This reflects views that we heard about opportunities to strengthen the presumption's wording, in the context of the government's commitment to increasing the supply of homes, but still enables these key protections to be fully considered and enforced where it is appropriate to do so."*
- 6.2.14. This means that the significance of any conflict with the policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance would need to be greater than was the case in the previous NPPF. Use of the word "strong" implies the need for any such reason to be both evident and powerful.
- 6.2.15. In the instant case, there are no footnote 7 policies engaged.
- NPPF 11d(ii):
- 6.2.16. NPPF 11d(ii) still requires an assessment of whether the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The NPPF directs particular attention to certain 'key policies' in four categories (1) directing development to sustainable locations, (2) making effective use of land, (3) securing well-designed places and (4) providing affordable homes, individually or in combination. These key policies should represent the focus of planning assessment.

- 6.2.17. Section 5, 'Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes', demonstrates that one of the Government's central objectives is to increase the delivery of high-quality housing, which support the needs of local areas and relate to their surrounding context, with the Council providing sufficient provision of land for housing developments.
- 6.2.18. Paragraph 61 of the Framework confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. It goes on to acknowledge the importance 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.
- 6.2.19. Paragraph 66 states that states that major housing developments should ensure the affordable housing mix addresses identified local needs, encompassing Social Rent, affordable rental options, and affordable home ownership.
- 6.2.20. Section 8 relates to the promotion of healthy and safe communities and part of achieving this is the provision of, but not limited to; meeting social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs; mixed use developments where there are opportunities for meetings between people; and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- 6.2.21. Paragraph 115 outlines the crucial requirements for evaluating development sites, emphasising the need to prioritise sustainable transport, ensure safe access for all users, adhere to national design guidance for transport infrastructure, and cost-effectively mitigate any significant impacts on the transport network or highway safety through a vision-led approach.
- 6.2.22. Paragraph 116 clarifies 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.
- 6.2.23. Section 11 of the NPPF requires decisions to promote an effective use of land and requires decision makers to give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land for homes and other identified needs (Paragraph 124).
- 6.2.24. Section 12 relates to achieving well-designed places and has had its scope expanded upon, in comparison to the previous 2019 version of the NPPF. Paragraph 131 asserts that the

creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

6.2.25. Paragraph 135 asserts that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- will function well and 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;
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- 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; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

6.3. Ribble Valley's Housing Land Supply Position

6.3.1. NPPF 78 refers to the Local Housing Need (LHN) figures, set out in the separate, stand alone, Excel document .

6.3.2. RVBC's adopted Local Plan is more than five years old and so the indicative LHN requirement must be used with immediate effect. The figure has increased from 113 dwellings per annum to 310 per annum. This is a very significant increase.

Ribble Valley Housing Land Availability Survey (HLAS) May 2025 and 5 year Supply Statement 2025

6.3.3. This document sets out the details of the Council's regular monitoring of housing completions and permissions. The Council aims to publish this data on an annual basis and can also publish updates to respond to circumstances such as planning appeals. The information in this report sets out data relating to all housing sites with planning. The survey should be read in conjunction with the accompanying '5 Year Supply Statement as at 31st March 2025 which confirms the authority's 5-Year Land Supply Position and '5 Year Supply. In line with the NPPF, because Ribble Valley's strategic policies are more than five years old, the local housing need (LHN) figures should be used as the housing requirement in the calculation of the five-year supply until such time as an updated Local Plan is in place. The LHN has been calculated as 311 new homes per annum. The five-year supply as of 31st March 2025 is 6.2 Year Supply.

Ribble Valley Housing Land Availability April 2025

- 6.3.4. In April 2025, RVBC published a housing land supply position, which states it can demonstrate a 5.03 year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 6.3.5. RVBC issued an updated statement at the end of May, which significantly revises their position and now claims a 6.2 year supply. This increase is primarily due to the introduction of a 536-dwelling oversupply deduction from the five-year requirement, based on cumulative completions since 2008 exceeding the Core Strategy (CS) target of 280 dpa. RVBC has reduced the requirement to take account of past oversupply, which mixes requirements and periods. The CS is no longer relevant and therefore any claimed oversupply should be excluded at the point the CS is deemed out of date (5 years).
- 6.3.6. While the December 2024 NPPF removed the explicit reference to oversupply, RVBC relies on the Government's clarification that such deductions remain permissible and cites PPG ID: 68-032 in support. The PPG reference to which they refer helps them. This reference in the PPG relates to how past over supply of housing completions against planned requirements can be addressed and states "*where areas deliver more completions than required, the additional supply can be used to offset any shortfalls against requirements from previous years.*" This paragraph relates to the allowance to offset past undersupply with past oversupply. This is a backwards looking balancing arrangement, not one which allows the baseline requirement to be reduced, as RVBC is proposing.

- 6.3.7. Whether it is possible to also seek to reduce future requirements was the subject of a Court of Appeal case; Land off Ashmead Drive, Gotherington Appeal in Tewkesbury Borough (Appeal ref. 3256319 – 12/01/21). The most important conclusions of the judge (The Honourable Mr Justice Dove) are found in Paragraph 47 of the Judgement:

... The claimant contends that this primary submission proceeds on the basis that it is not the claimant's case as to the interpretation of the Framework that paragraph 73 of the Framework prescribes how an oversupply should be taken into account, but rather that whether to take it into account at all cannot be simply a matter of planning judgment but is required by the Framework. Again, similar points arise in relation to the absence from the Framework of any policy text which would justify such an approach. The Framework does not say, nor does the PPG, that oversupply must be taken into account in all circumstances. For the reasons already given it is not for the court to supplement or add to the existing text of the policy. The question of whether or not to take into account past oversupply in the circumstances of the present case is, like the question of how it is to be taken into account, a question of planning judgment which is not addressed by the Framework or the PPG and for which therefore there is no policy. No doubt in at least most cases the question of oversupply will need to be considered in assessing housing needs and requirements. The fact this may be the case does not require the court to provide policy in relation to this issue which the policy maker has chosen not to include." (PWA emphasis)

- 6.3.8. Recent appeal decisions further undermine the argument for reducing future housing requirements on the basis of past oversupply, particularly in the context of Local Housing Need (LHN) and where any historic surplus relates to an out of date plan such as a Core Strategy. In APP/J3720/W/25/3358848 (Stratford on Avon, 2025), the Inspector rejected the Council's attempt to deduct past oversupply from the five year requirement because the surplus had accrued against an earlier Core Strategy requirement that no longer reflected up to date housing need. The decision makes clear that the purpose of the LHN method is not to penalise authorities that have previously over delivered; over delivery improves affordability and should not be treated as a "debt" to be offset against future need.

- 6.3.9. A further relevant decision is APP/H1840/W/21/3266573 (Wychavon, 2022), which provides a clear precedent on the treatment of oversupply when calculating the five year requirement. Although the Council initially claimed a five year supply based on the Standard Method, this position relied on deducting several years of historic oversupply. Subsequent

appeal decisions in the South Worcestershire area (refs. APP/H1840/W/21/3289569 and APP/J1860/W/21/3289643) confirmed that oversupply should not be included within Standard Method calculations. Following those decisions, the Council accepted that, when assessed correctly and without applying oversupply as a discount, the joint South Worcestershire authorities could demonstrate only 4.4 years of deliverable supply. These decisions collectively reinforce that past oversupply cannot be used to reduce a forward looking Local Housing Need requirement.

6.3.10. As noted in section 3.2 of this statement, in the context of Ribble Valley, the approach taken in APP/T2350/W/25/3372635 further supports the position that the Council's published five-year housing land supply figure is overstated. In that case, the appellant's five-year housing land supply assessment concluded that Ribble Valley could demonstrate only 4.05 years of supply, compared with the Council's stated 6.19 years. This difference arose from a recalculation of the annual housing requirement. Both parties agreed on the starting point for the calculation of the supply, resulting in an annualised requirement of 311 dwellings + 5% buffer. However the LPA sought to reduce that figure to 204 dwellings (214 with the buffer), on the basis of over-supply in previous years which amounted to 536 dwellings.

6.3.11. As noted the Inspector, concluded that this was not a reasonable approach from the LPA, stating as follows within the decision:

"13. I acknowledge that the Framework and PPG do not rule out the use of past over-supply to reduce future housing requirements. Nevertheless, to adopt the approach of the Council, and that of the Inspectors in the decisions it has highlighted, would 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.

14. Thus, it is my judgement that past over-supply should not be used to reduce local housing need requirements in this case. This should not be seen as penalising the Council, as has been suggested, rather, it is part of the solution to the acute housing crisis that exists nationally."

6.3.12. The appeal therefore demonstrates that, when assessed correctly and without reducing the requirement through the application of past oversupply, the Council is unable to

demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. The concluded 5-year housing land supply figure of 3.45 years should therefore be considered the current and appropriate figure used when determining this application.

6.3.13. The above process is consistent with that being progressed by other Appellants within the Ribble Valley. Again, as noted in previous sections, appeal ref: 6002485 relates to a housing proposal for up to 300 homes, which was refused under application 3/2025/0196. This appeal will be heard at an inquiry which is set for the 28th of April 2026 and due to last 7 days. In this instance the Appellant has taken the same position that previous oversupply should not be considered and in doing so, their assessment results in an evidence-based supply of an even lower total of 3.1 years. Of equal interest and pertinence is the conclusion that even when allowing for oversupply to be considered the supply would still only be incredibly marginal position, equal to 5.1 years, which is only 29 dwellings above the 5-year threshold.

6.4. Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2008 and updated 2013

6.4.1. Both documents identify the borough's older population profile compared to the national average and that long-term projections indicate likely notable growth in the proportion of older people in the district. The 2008 SHMA also refers to a lack of bungalows in the borough at that time.

6.5. Affordable Housing Need Survey May 2025

6.5.1. The Council's Housing Need Survey identify the affordable housing requirements in the Borough. Analysis has been undertaken to estimate the annual need for affordable housing. This includes taking account of local housing costs (to both buy and rent) along with estimates of household income. The evidence indicates that there is an acute need for affordable housing in the study area and a need in all sub-areas. The majority of need is from households who are unable to buy OR rent and therefore points particularly towards a need for rented affordable housing rather than affordable home ownership. The Survey states "the level of affordable need does suggest the Council should maximise the delivery of such housing at every opportunity."

6.5.2. The analysis suggests there will be a need for both social and affordable rented housing – the latter will be suitable particularly for households who are close to being able to afford to rent privately and possibly also for some households who claim full Housing Benefit. It is

however clear that social rents are more affordable and could benefit a wider range of households – social rents could therefore be prioritised where delivery does not prejudice the overall delivery of affordable homes. The study also considers different types of AHO (notably First Homes and shared ownership) as each may have a role to play. In both sectors the analysis points to a particular need for smaller accommodation. For general need rented affordable housing there is a clear need for a range of different sizes of homes, including 45% to have at least 3-bedrooms of which 10% should have at least 4-bedrooms.

- 6.5.3. A range of data sources and statistics have been accessed to consider the characteristics and housing needs of the older person population and the population with some form of disability. The older person population is projected to increase notably moving forward. An ageing population means that the number of people with disabilities is likely to increase substantially.

/7 Principle of Development

7.1. Introduction

7.1.1. Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a statutory duty on local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, the principle of development must be assessed against national and local planning policy.

7.2. Principle of Development

7.2.1. The application site lies within the designated Open Countryside as defined on the Ribble Valley Proposals Map. While not within a defined settlement boundary, the site lies immediately adjacent to the developed area of Mellor Brook and benefits from excellent strategic connectivity via the A59. Although the Development Plan (notably Core Strategy Policies DMG2 and DMH3) seeks to limit new housing in countryside locations to cases of identified local need, this presumption must be considered in light of the Borough's housing land supply situation, housing need evidence, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development within the NPPF.

7.2.2. The proposal includes 30% on-site affordable housing and the illustrative concept plan demonstrates that the site can accommodate up to 85 dwellings in a high-quality, landscape-led layout that integrates with the character of the area. The principle of development must therefore be assessed in the context of the tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, given the state of housing land supply and the outdated status of key policies in the Core Strategy.

7.3. Housing Land Supply and the Tilted Balance

7.3.1. The Council's May 2025 Housing Land Supply Statement claims a 6.2-year supply based on Local Housing Need (LHN) figures. However, this figure is dependent on a 536-unit oversupply deduction from an out-of-date Core Strategy requirement of 280 dpa. Given that the Core Strategy is now more than five years old, the LHN of 311 dpa must be used without deduction. National guidance (PPG ID: 68-032) only allows oversupply to offset past under-delivery, not to reduce future requirements.

- 7.3.2. As confirmed in Land off Ashmead Drive, Gotherington [2021], whether to account for oversupply is a matter of judgment. The artificial reduction claimed by the Council skews the five-year calculation and raises doubt over whether the supply can truly be sustained. Therefore the current 5-year supply position is considered to be that detailed in appeal decision APP/T2350/W/25/3372635, whereby the Inspector concluded the supply to be 3.45 years.
- 7.3.3. The tilted balance in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged.

Assessment Against Footnote 9 Policies

Sustainable Location – Paragraphs 84, 110 and 115

- 7.3.4. The site lies immediately adjacent to existing employment areas, residential development and services, and benefits from strategic access via the A59. Previous employment-led applications on the site raised sustainability objections due to trip generation, but residential use, especially with affordable housing, generates lower and more localised demand.
- 7.3.5. The scheme promotes community cohesion through its proximity to services and employment at Samlesbury and Mellor Brook. As such, it meets the tests of paragraphs 84 and 115 by enhancing rural settlement sustainability and making use of underutilised land. Paragraph 110 is met by the provision of a safe new access, with detailed design secured at the reserved matters stage.

Effective Use of Land – Paragraph 129

- 7.3.6. The proposed scheme optimises the use of a well-located site without overdevelopment. At up to 85 dwellings on 4.17 hectares, the density allows for ample landscaping and ecological buffers, with space to accommodate SuDS and biodiversity enhancements. The development makes efficient use of a site with limited constraints while being sensitive to its landscape context.

Well-Designed Places – Paragraphs 135 and 139

- 7.3.7. Although the application is outline with design reserved, the illustrative layout demonstrates that the proposal can meet high-quality place-making standards. The dwellings will be low-rise and set within a generous green framework, with enhanced planting and buffer zones to protect the visual setting of the adjacent listed buildings and nearby public rights of way.

The proposal will meet the NPPF's requirements for safe, attractive, inclusive, and accessible communities.

7.4. Identified Local Need for Affordable Housing

- 7.4.1. Core Strategy Policy H3 requires that 30% of units on qualifying sites are provided as affordable housing, with an emphasis on meeting local needs and providing housing for older people. This application commits to meeting the full 30% requirement on-site. Given the acute need for affordable rented accommodation, as identified in the Council's May 2025 Housing Need Survey, the proposed development will deliver tangible benefits in this regard.
- 7.4.2. The Housing Need Survey identifies a pressing demand for smaller, affordable, family and elderly housing across all sub-areas. The proposal's affordable housing offer will help address this gap and aligns with Policy DMH1, ensuring priority is given to those with strong local connections.

7.5. Sustainable Location

- 7.5.1. Despite the site being outside a formal settlement boundary, it lies in a location well-related to services, employment and public transport along the A59 corridor. It is within walking distance of local employment and retail provision and is within 4.5km of Blackburn and 7km of Clitheroe. The site is accessible and well-connected, and the use of the land for housing will support the local economy and public services.

/8 Technical Considerations

8.1. Layout and Design

8.1.1. A Design and Access Statement (DAS) supports this planning application. The DAS explains the design rationale for the scheme, with the design framework being shaped by detailed analysis of site features and environmental constraints.

8.1.2. The overarching concept is to create a landscape-led, low-impact residential neighbourhood that fits naturally within its rural setting. The development will be contained within a defined envelope surrounded by multifunctional green infrastructure. The key features include:

- The delivery of up to 85 dwellings at an indicative net density of approximately 32 dwellings per hectare (dph) across the developable area of about 2.5 hectares.
- A single vehicular access from Longsight Road forming a central spine street.
- Integration with existing PRowS and potential new links along green corridors.
- A large green space at the northern entrance providing a sense of arrival and community focus, supplemented by smaller pocket spaces and play opportunities.
- Indicative SuDS features following natural flow paths towards the southern basin, managing surface water runoff at source.
- Retention and strengthened existing vegetation, alongside the creation of new native planting along boundaries.
- Delivery of at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

8.1.3. The DAS concludes that the proposal responds positively to its setting, retains key landscape features, and establishes parameters that will ensure high-quality design at the reserved matters stage. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with the relevant provisions of Core Strategy Policy DMG1 and the relevant policies of the NPPF.

8.2. Landscape

8.2.1. A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared to assess the landscape and visual matter associated with the proposed development.

8.2.2. The site is identified within Lower Ribble Landscape Character Area (LCA) within the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment. The only landscape features present within the site that are characteristic of the Lower Ribble LCA are the field boundary hedgerows,

which would benefit from management and enhancement to improve their condition and contribution they make to the wider landscape character of the LCA. The site is influenced by the adjoining A59 road corridor which runs along the north-western edge of the site, the existing built form along the A59 near to the site, and by the visual containment provided by the site boundary vegetation, the roadside trees along the A59, and the ridgeline within the agricultural land to the east.

- 8.2.3. The perception or distinctiveness of the wider LCA and Landscape Character Type (LCT) would not be compromised as a result of the residential development proposed. The development would result in localised permanent loss to two commonplace landscape features, and would introduce housing development that would be noticeable but would not visually dominate the landscape and that would not be substantially uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The report finds that the impacts on the landscape character of the site within the context of the Lower Ribble LCA are considered to result in minor adverse effects as only a very small proportion of the LCA will be changed, no fundamentally defining features will be lost, and those features that will change will be compensated for.
- 8.2.4. In relation to visual effects, the development will be visible within a limited visual envelope geographically and for a relatively small number of potential visual receptors. Importantly, when the site is visible, it is viewed through the filtering effect of the site boundary vegetation. The site is well contained by its own boundary vegetation but parts of the boundaries are less intact which affords greater intervisibility with the surrounding landscape to the north and north west. There are no views within which the site is seen as an important component of the landscape in its current usage, and even for the more sensitive of visual receptors, the development of the site would still not result in the loss of any important scenic qualities or valued visual features.
- 8.2.5. The most significant visual effects will be experienced by the recreational users of the PRoW which cross the site where there will be moderate adverse effects experienced, as a result of the direct, close proximity views of the new dwellings once the development is completed. These effects will reduce to moderate to minor adverse after 15 years once the proposed soft landscaping has matured, as there will be intervening vegetation to filter and screen views of the built development, and new areas of public open space will form the focus of foreground views.

8.2.6. Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Policy DMG1 and Policy EN2.

8.3. Highways and Transport

8.3.1. A Transport Assessment supports this planning application which assesses whether the Proposed Development can be accommodated by the local transport network. The report considers the accessibility of the site by non-car modes, the trip generation and potential traffic impact, a review of road safety, and sets out the Travel Plan to be implemented.

8.3.2. Following the assessments undertaken, the report made the following conclusions with regard to the proposed development:

- The existing and proposed pedestrian infrastructure located in the vicinity of the site will enable safe pedestrian movements between the development site and the local area.
- The site benefits from being located in close proximity to bus stops which provide services that are ideally placed to cater for the needs of the residents at the development.
- The proposed access arrangements are considered to be appropriate to serve this scale of development and will provide a safe means of access into the site.
- The impact of the proposals has been assessed using the TRICS database and are deemed to be appropriate.
- The capacity assessments undertaken have shown that the proposals will not have a material impact or give rise to any highways related issues.

8.3.3. As such the report concludes that the proposed development would have a minimal impact and be able to be accommodated onto the local highway network. There is also no evidence to suggest that the proposals would have an adverse effect on road safety or the number of accidents in the vicinity. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Policy DMG1 and Policy DMI2, along with NPPF Paragraphs 115 and 116.

8.3.4. A Framework Travel Plan accompanies the Transport Assessment in the appendices which sets out the principal strategies that will be put in place once residents are occupying the dwellings to encourage sustainable travel. The aim of the Travel Plan is to encourage residents and visitors to use alternatives to the private car, to increase the awareness of

the advantages and potential for travel by more environmentally friendly modes, and to introduce a package of management measures that will facilitate travel by other modes of transport.

- 8.3.5. A wide range of measures and actions will be used to encourage car sharing, public transport use, cycling and walking. The Travel Plan Coordinator will ensure the Travel Plan is implemented and is operating effectively.
- 8.3.6. A detailed resident Travel Survey will be undertaken to establish travel modes of residents and following this, specific targets will be set and agreed with the Travel Plan team at the Council. The site has been demonstrated to benefit from non-car accessibility and it should, therefore, be expected that the adoption of a Travel Plan would be particularly effective.
- 8.3.7. The report concludes that the proposed development will provide a highly sustainable development and should be considered acceptable to the local highway authority. As such, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy DMI2, alongside the sustainable development principles set out in the NPPF.

8.4. Ecology

- 8.4.1. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken which identifies important ecological features and any potential effects that may arise as a result of the development. The assessment comprised an extended UKHab Survey, a desk study, a BNG assessment, and consideration of likely impacts.
- 8.4.2. The desk study confirmed that there are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation sites within 1km of the application site. There is one area of deciduous woodland 265m north west of the site.
- 8.4.3. The survey found that the site is of moderate ecological value, potentially supporting legally protected and notable species including amphibians (including Great Crested Newts (GCN)), foraging/roosting bats, foraging/nesting birds, reptiles and notable species such as Brown Hare.
- 8.4.4. In light of these findings, the report sets out recommendations including a further bat survey, comprising a climb/inspection, if any trees are proposed for removal. Additionally,

site clearance should be timed to avoid both the hibernation period and the nesting bird season, with above-ground vegetation cut before nesting commences and ground vegetation cleared during the 'active' season. Furthermore, impacts on GCN should be mitigated by entering a District Level Licensing Scheme. Other recommendations include a sensitive lighting scheme, along with bat and bird box schemes, and a Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) management plan to remove Himalayan Balsam from the site.

- 8.4.5. Overall, the report concludes that if all recommendations detailed in the report are implemented in full, the proposed development is not expected to have significant adverse residual impacts on biodiversity.
- 8.4.6. As part of the previous application that was refused earlier this year on the site (ref. 3/2024/0771), GCN eDNA surveys were undertaken, which tested positive for the presence of GCN. As such, the Applicant has been working towards obtaining a District Level Licence (DLL) from Natural England to ensure that impacts of the development are appropriately mitigated. A certificate from Natural England supports this planning application to demonstrate that the Applicant has made the relevant initial payment, with an intention to pay the remainder of the conservation payment once a permission is granted. On the basis of the information submitted as part of the DLL process, Natural England are content that the ponds within the vicinity of the site have been accounted for and the total payment of £86,075 plus VAT would be sufficient to allow for the relocation of habitats. The Applicant has made a financial commitment at this initial stage to ensure that the scheme is acceptable from an ecological perspective.
- 8.4.7. Additionally, bat activity surveys undertaken as part of the previous application identified that the site supports low levels of bat activity and does not provide high value habitat for commuting or foraging bats, largely due to high lighting levels from the A59. The surveys recorded limited commuting and foraging activity along the linear features and the watercourse to the south east. While the surveys were completed in 2022, they continue to provide a robust baseline given the absence of any changes to site conditions or surrounding habitats that would increase bat activity or risk. In this context, and given the outline nature of the application, it is considered proportionate for updated bat activity surveys to be secured by condition. A pre commencement condition would ensure that the surveys are completed at the appropriate time and that any necessary mitigation can be incorporated into the detailed layout at the reserved matters stage.

8.5. Biodiversity Net Gain

- 8.5.1. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been included in the submitted PEA, which is supported by the BNG metric.
- 8.5.2. The assessment found that the BNG baseline score for the site is 9.51 Habitat Units, 12.04 Hedgerow Units, and 0.30 Watercourse Units. The proposed scheme will result in a loss of modified grassland bramble scrub, tall ruderals and small sections of hedgerows during site clearance and construction, which will be replaced predominantly by developed land and vegetated gardens.
- 8.5.3. The assessment identified that the post-intervention scores will be 14.88 Habitat Units (+56.42%), 13.25 Hedgerow Units (+10.05%), and 0.65 Watercourse Units (116.59%). As such, the proposed development and habitat enhancements will generate enough units to meet the mandatory 10% BNG target. The report recommends that all retained habitats should be covered by a long-term Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) to secure the anticipated BNG units post-intervention. As such, the proposed development is in accordance with Policy EN4 and NPPF paragraph 193.

8.6. Flood Risk and Drainage

- 8.6.1. A Flood Risk Assessment & Outline Drainage Strategy has been undertaken to identify potential flooding issues and any consequential implications on the proposed site development.
- 8.6.2. The Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1, where residential development is appropriate. Environment Agency mapping shows no fluvial, tidal, groundwater or reservoir flood risk, with only minor areas of high-risk surface water flooding in the northern and southern boundary areas, which will be addressed through the site layout and drainage strategy.
- 8.6.3. The proposed development incorporates a comprehensive surface water drainage scheme designed in line with the NPPF, national SuDS standards and LLFA requirements. Due to low permeability clay soils, infiltration is not viable. Surface water will therefore be discharged at greenfield run off rates to the tributary of the River Ribble that adjoins the site, controlled to 30 litres per second. A SuDS attenuation pond is proposed to provide approximately 1,700m³ of on-site storage for the 1 in 100 year event plus 50 percent climate

change. Exceedance flows will be safely routed through the site towards the existing watercourse.

- 8.6.4. The FRA confirms that all surface water generated by the development can be fully managed on site with no off-site flood risk. Safe access and egress will be maintained at all times from Longsight Road. Residual flood risk is considered low.
- 8.6.5. Foul drainage will be discharged to the existing 150mm public sewer on Abbot Brow, in accordance with United Utilities requirements.
- 8.6.6. Overall, the assessment demonstrates that the development is safe from flooding, does not increase flood risk elsewhere, and provides a compliant and sustainable drainage strategy consistent with national and local policy. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with Policy DME6 and NPPF Paragraph 170.

8.7. Heritage

- 8.7.1. A Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (HEDBA) supports this planning application to assess the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the study site.
- 8.7.2. The assessment found that there are no designated or non-designated heritage assets within the study site. Causeway Farmhouse (Grade II) lies approximately 80m north-west of the study site. The proposed development would result in only a minor change to the character of its wider setting. Given the limited contribution that the wider setting makes to the building's significance, and the proposed layout which minimises visual intrusion, this change would not result in harm to its significance.
- 8.7.3. The available archaeological records suggest that there is the low potential for the survival of prehistoric and Roman period remains within the study site. The study site is likely to have remained in agricultural use through the medieval and post-medieval periods. It is possible that buried remains relating to medieval or early post-medieval agriculture, such as ploughing or drainage features, could survive, but these would be considered to be of negligible significance. Consequently, the proposed development accords with Policy EN5.

8.8. Arboriculture

- 8.8.1. An Outline Arboricultural Impact Assessment supports this planning application which sets out the results of the Tree Survey undertaken and the subsequent effects on arboriculture that would arise in connection with the proposed development.
- 8.8.2. 18 individual trees, 7 groups of trees, and 3 hedges were recorded within influencing distance of the site. These are largely confined to existing field boundaries and are predominantly middle aged. Species composition is entirely broadleaved with common ash being the dominant species, many of which are affected by disease.
- 8.8.3. The desktop review and site survey identified one Tree Preservation Order covering 7 trees and 2 tree groups, and 841m of Hedgerow Habitats of Principal Importance.
- 8.8.4. The proposed development would necessitate the removal of 2 individual trees (common ash in poor condition), and approximately 228m of hedgerow. All the hedgerow that would be removed is Hedgerow Habitats of Principal Importance.
- 8.8.5. The report concludes that the development would give rise to no unavoidable adverse effects that cannot be mitigated. The final detailed layout could be developed which would retain most existing trees, with the removal of some low-quality trees. The developments provides an opportunity for new trees to be established as replacements in similar locations. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Policy DME1.

8.9. Geoenvironmental

- 8.9.1. A Phase I Desk Study has been undertaken to assess potential land contamination risks associated with the proposed residential development at Longsight Road. The assessment involved a review of historical mapping, environmental datasets and a site walkover. While the site is currently in agricultural use, the study identifies several potential contamination sources associated with historic features, including infilled pits and former ponds, and possible made ground deposits across the site.
- 8.9.2. Using DEFRA/EA CLR11 methodology, a Preliminary Conceptual Model has been prepared. Several pollutant linkages have been classified as moderate to high risk, including heavy metals, hydrocarbons and asbestos in made ground, with asbestos linkages assessed as high risk due to the severity of potential consequences. The report concludes that these levels of potential risk require intrusive investigation to clarify the presence, extent and

significance of contamination before suitability for residential development can be determined.

8.10. Noise

- 8.10.1. A Noise Impact Assessment has been undertaken to evaluate the suitability of the site for residential development. Baseline noise monitoring was carried out adjacent to Longsight Road (A59), confirming that road traffic is the dominant noise source. Ribble Valley Borough Council accepted the use of the 2022 survey data following a review of updated traffic flows, which demonstrated only a negligible increase in noise levels since the original measurements.
- 8.10.2. Using a calibrated 3D acoustic model, external and internal noise levels were assessed across the proposed masterplan. Predicted daytime noise levels across all garden areas fall within the BS 8233 upper guideline value of 55 dB LAeq,16h. For properties closest to Longsight Road, the assessment identifies that enhanced glazing (minimum Rw + Ctr 32 dB) and acoustic ventilators (minimum Dn,e,w + Ctr 40 dB) will be required to achieve the BS 8233 internal noise criteria, along with careful orientation of gardens to screened areas or the use of localised acoustic fencing.
- 8.10.3. The assessment also considers Approved Document O requirements relating to noise and overheating. Night-time noise levels at the plots nearest to Longsight Road exceed the simplified external thresholds for natural ventilation under ADO, meaning dynamic thermal modelling will be required at detailed design stage to demonstrate compliance.
- 8.10.4. Subject to the incorporation of the recommended mitigation measures, the report concludes that acceptable internal and external noise environments can be achieved and that the site is suitable for residential development.

8.11. Planning Balance

- 8.11.1. The proposed development represents a carefully considered and policy-responsive scheme which brings forward a meaningful and much-needed contribution to local housing supply in Ribble Valley. It proposes up to 85 dwellings on a site that, although located outside the defined settlement boundary, is functionally and physically related to the nearby settlement of Mellor Brook. The site is located in a sustainable location, well-connected to local services,

employment and public transport, and its development would reinforce the role of the area as a sustainable, accessible place to live.

- 8.11.2. The proposal will provide 30% affordable housing on site, in accordance with the Council's policy, and will address the pressing and identified housing needs across the borough, particularly in terms of smaller family homes and homes for those with local connections. The scheme is designed to be landscape-led, low-density and well-integrated into the surrounding rural edge, avoiding the scale, form and suburbanising effect of previous proposals on the site.
- 8.11.3. In planning policy terms, while the development lies in the Open Countryside and is technically contrary to certain Core Strategy policies, these must be considered in the context of the Council's housing supply position and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. The tilted balance, as set out in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, is engaged, and the key test is whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 8.11.4. In this case, the harm arising from development beyond the settlement boundary is limited and localised, and can be appropriately mitigated through the layout, design, and landscaping of the site. In contrast, the benefits of the scheme—including the delivery of affordable housing, the contribution to the borough's housing needs, and the use of a sustainable and well-connected site—are significant and carry substantial weight.
- 8.11.5. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development constitutes sustainable development when assessed against the Framework as a whole. The presumption in favour of such development should therefore apply, and the application should be supported accordingly.

/9 Conclusion

9.1. Summary

- 9.1.1. PWA Planning is retained by Specialist Diesels Ltd to progress an outline planning application for the erection of up to Outline planning application for up to 85no. residential units with access applied for off A59 Longsight Road at land south of Causeway Farm Balderstone BB2 7HZ.
- 9.1.2. This statement has demonstrated that the proposed residential development at Causeway Farm represents a sustainable, policy-aligned, and well-considered scheme that responds directly to both local and national planning objectives.
- 9.1.3. Although the site lies outside the defined settlement boundary, it is located in a sustainable, accessible, and visually contained location that relates well to existing built form. The application addresses all previous reasons for refusal, most notably by significantly reducing the scale of development, ensuring a landscape-led approach, and committing to deliver affordable housing in line with policy requirements.
- 9.1.4. The tilted balance under Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged due to the absence of an up-to-date plan and questions around the robustness of the Council's five-year housing land supply position. In this context, the proposal should be assessed on whether any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In this case, they would not.
- 9.1.5. The proposal offers a range of important planning benefits:
- Delivery of up to 85 high-quality new homes, helping address the Council's identified housing shortfall.
 - Provision of 30% affordable housing in full compliance with Policy H3, meeting an identified local need.
 - Development of a sustainable site adjacent to the existing settlement, with good access to services, public transport and employment opportunities.
 - A landscape-led, low-density layout that responds positively to its rural edge context and previous Inspector comments.

- No unacceptable impact on highways, landscape character, heritage, ecology or residential amenity.
- A scheme that reflects the principles of good design, with flexibility to secure high-quality outcomes at reserved matters stage.

9.1.6. On balance, the development constitutes sustainable development in the terms set out by the NPPF and the local policy framework. The Local Planning Authority is therefore respectfully invited to support the application and confirm that the proposal can be viewed positively in principle.



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