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From: Salesbury Parish Council <salesburypc@gmail.com>
Sent: 16 April 2026 11:17
To: Planning; Salesbury Parish Council; Margaret Howells
Subject: Comments re Planning Consultation 3/2026/0214

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3/2026/0214 proposed erection of 26 affordable dwellings with associated access, gardens, parking and landscaping at land at Albany Drive Copster Green

Salesbury Parish Council writes to formally object to the above application. This representation is made having regard to the statutory Development Plan, relevant material considerations, and established appeal decisions. At residents' request, a public meeting was held on Monday 13th April 2026, where 50 residents attended. This is a considerable proportion of local residents. All were against the proposal, and many have written to you outlining their personal objections.

1. Development Plan Conflict and Statutory Duty

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The application site lies adjacent to, but outside the defined Tier 2 settlement boundary of Copster Green and is therefore located within the open countryside on greenfield land. As such, the proposal must be assessed against the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, notably:

- Key Statement DS1 (Development Strategy)
- Key Statement DS2 (Sustainable Development)
- Policy DMG2 (Strategic Considerations)
- Policy DMH3 (Dwellings in the Open Countryside)

These policies collectively establish a restrictive policy framework for residential development in the countryside. The proposal constitutes a significant residential scheme that is in clear and fundamental conflict with the spatial strategy of the Development Plan.

Given the lack of evidence with the defined exceptions (notably demonstrable local housing need), the proposal must be considered as non-compliant with RVBC policy.

2. Weight of Previous Appeal Decision (Fall-back Position and Consistency)

The site has been the subject of a dismissed appeal (APP/T2350/W/15/3134524), which is a highly material consideration.

The Inspector's findings were unequivocal:

- The site is unsustainably located
- The development failed to meet the local needs exception test
- The proposal conflicted with Core Strategy policies

- Increased traffic volume posing a hazard to pedestrians due to lack of pavements on exiting Albany Drive.

Critically, the Inspector concluded that the development would undermine the Council’s spatial strategy and did not represent sustainable development.

A recent application 3/2021/1155 to change a property within the Copster Green Tier 2 settlement from commercial to residential was also refused at appeal and refer you to the reasons stated within Appeal Decision APP/T2350/W/22/3297902.

There has been no material change in circumstances since these decisions in terms of:

- Accessibility
- Settlement hierarchy
- Availability of services and amenities (including education & healthcare services)
- Provision of pavements or safe walking routes
- Provision of safe cycling routes

As such, the previous appeal decisions should be afforded significant weight, and a departure from its conclusions would require robust justification, which is absent in this case.

3. Failure to Satisfy Local Needs Exception Policy (DMH3)

Policy DMH3 permits housing in the open countryside only where it meets an identified, evidenced local need.

The Core Strategy defines local needs housing with reference to:

- Parish-level housing needs surveys
- Waiting list data
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment evidence

The proposal relies on generalised affordable housing need at the borough level. However, the appeal decision confirmed that borough-wide need does not satisfy the policy requirement for locally evidenced need.

In the absence of:

- Robust, up-to-date parish-level evidence
- A clear functional link between the development and local need

the proposal fails to meet the exception test and is therefore contrary to policy.

4. Unsustainable Location and Failure Against the Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development

The proposal fails when assessed against the three dimensions of sustainable development:

Social Role:

While the provision of affordable housing is acknowledged, this benefit is significantly tempered by the unsustainable location and lack of integration with services. Public transport is poor and unreliable, with few services before 09:00 and none after 19:00. Services are further restricted at weekends. This means that employed people, especially those working shifts, would rely heavily on cars to commute. All residents of the village rely on cars to socialise in evenings and at weekends due to poor or non-existent public transport. There are no meeting places or socialisation centres within the village. This places people reliant on public transport at risk of social isolation and difficulty obtaining day-to-day essentials.

There are no shops within easy or safe walking range. The nearest shop for everyday essentials such as milk and bread is the Co-op, almost 2 miles away at Brownhill. There are no continuous footpaths to reach this, or other similar shops. In reality, this is a journey that most people, especially older people or those with young children would make by car.

Economic Role:

The economic benefits are limited to short-term construction impacts and do not outweigh the spatial policy conflict.

There are no employment opportunities within walking distance of the site, and residents of working age would be highly dependent on use of private vehicles to reach their workplaces. Anyone working shifts would almost certainly be reliant on private vehicles.

Environmental Role:

The development would result in:

- Loss of greenfield land and wildlife habitat for the flora and fauna of the area
- Encroachment into open countryside which would cause irreparable damage
- Increased reliance on private vehicle use

The appeal decision previously identified that the site would result in car-dependent patterns of development, contrary to sustainable transport objectives.

The proposal therefore conflicts with:

- Key Statement DS2
- Policy DMG3 (Transport and Mobility)

5. Settlement Hierarchy and Disproportionate Growth

Copster Green is identified as a Tier 2 settlement, with extremely limited services, amenities and infrastructure. This proposed development is outside of the Tier 2 settlement and could not be seen as 'infilling' a built-up area.

The scale of development (26 dwellings) represents a disproportionate level of growth relative to the size and function of the settlement (>100% on Albany Drive itself and almost 20% of the total properties forming Copster Green to the north of the A59).

This conflicts with the Core Strategy objective of directing growth to the most sustainable locations. The proposal would therefore undermine the plan-led distribution of development.

6. Landscape Harm and Erosion of Settlement Character

The site forms part of the rural setting and transitional edge of Copster Green.

Although the applicant has submitted an ecology report this appears to contain out of date and, in part, false or misleading information. Residents report regularly observing a variety of both protected and non-protected species of mammals in the immediate vicinity of the site including badger, fox, deer, bats, brown hare and hazel dormouse, together with a wide range of birds including various species of owl. We understand a local badger conservation group has contacted you with regard to locations of nearby setts. Disruption to this habitat could cause irreparable damage to a variety of protected species.

Development would:

- Result in urban encroachment into the countryside

- Erode the distinct settlement edge
- Harm the intrinsic character and beauty of the rural landscape
- Result in loss of habitat to many species of flora and fauna
- Not be in keeping with other properties in the area

This is directly contrary to:

- Key Statement EN2 (Landscape)
- Policy DME2 (Landscape and Townscape Protection)

The harm caused is not outweighed by public benefits, particularly given the policy conflict.

7. Highways and Accessibility Constraints

The proposal raises significant concerns in respect of:

- Substandard pedestrian infrastructure. There are no pavements leading from Albany Drive to the main A59 and no pedestrian crossings allowing safe access to the bus stop. Pedestrian refuges were installed many years ago following the tragic death of a local resident after being struck by a vehicle on the A59 when attempting to cross the road close to Lovely Hall Lane.
- Contrary to statements in the applicant's submissions, there have been a number of road traffic collisions within a 5km range, primarily on the A59, some causing major injury to persons.
- The A59 pavement towards B6245 (Ribchester Road) is narrow and unsuitable for wheelchairs and prams/buggies.
- There is no pavement on Lovely Hall Lane until Salesbury CP School, and the lane is only partially lit. This means that parents accessing the school are more likely to drive there in private vehicles.
- People using wheelchair or pushing prams are unable to access the bus-stop located by Oaks Bar traffic lights on B6245 Ribchester Road, as the pavement is restricted in parts and too narrow.
- There is no continuous pavement along the B6245 from the junction with A59 to Salesbury. The lack of pavements along steep, narrow sections of this road makes walking hazardous and places pedestrians and cyclists at risk.
- There are no cycling lanes on nearby roads making travel by this method hazardous.
- Lack of safe and convenient access to services such as secondary schools, doctors, dentists and pharmacies. Local NHS GPs, including Whalley and Brownhill are already full and no local dentists are taking new NHS clients.
- Increased vehicular movements on rural roads. Lovely Hall Lane is already congested at peak times and subject to vehicles travelling in excess of the 30mph speed limit. Due to residents' concerns over speed on both A59 and Lovely hall lane, Salesbury Parish Council has undertaken regular SPID monitoring over the last 2 years, with traffic frequently recorded in excess of the advertised limits. Between 13/06/25 – 03/06/25 traffic was recorded travelling at 65mph (time= 12:21) on both Lovely Hall Lane (30mph limit) and A59 (time=09:00) near Yu Restaurant (40mph limit). This showed a worrying increase from the period 11/09/24 – 24/09/24 which recorded 55mph (time=20:37) and 60mph (time=13:30) respectively. Full SPID data is available from Salesbury Parish Council, please contact our clerk Lesley Lund at clerk@salesburypc.org.uk should you require this.

- At school drop off and collection times, the Headteacher encourages all traffic to follow a one-way system, resulting in a heavy volume of traffic exiting Lovely Hall Lane onto the A59. This is hazardous to pedestrians due to lack of pavements on this narrow lane.
- The lack of public transport services operating during the evening and at weekends increases the risk of social isolation for people without private transport or unable to walk/cycle due to mobility, age or safety concerns.
- Lovely Hall Lane is subject to a weight limit of 7.5tonne. This means Albany Drive would be unable to be accessed by heavy wagons and plant.
- The applicant draws attention to a number of PROWs within the area. These are across agricultural land, frequently contain livestock and are often muddy. This means they are not a suitable or sustainable means of access to local villages, especially for those going to work or shopping or walking at night.

The likely outcome is a highly car-dependent development, contrary to:

- Policy DMG3
- National sustainability objectives

This further reinforces the conclusion that the site is not a suitable location for residential development.

8. Prematurity, Precedent and Cumulative Harm

Granting permission would:

- Undermine confidence in the Development Plan
- Set a harmful precedent for further speculative applications in the countryside
- Lead to incremental erosion of the spatial strategy

The cumulative effect would be to significantly weaken the Council's ability to resist inappropriate development in unsustainable locations.

9. Planning Balance

While the provision of affordable housing is acknowledged as a benefit, this must be weighed against:

- Clear conflict with the Development Plan
- Failure to meet policy exception tests
- Unsustainable location
- Increased reliance of private vehicles
- Landscape harm
- Harm to wildlife
- Previous appeals dismissal

When assessed in the round, the adverse impacts of the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

10. Drainage

Current residents of both Albany Drive and Brown Leaves Grove have informed us of problems with drainage for both rainfall runoff and sewerage. This development would potentially worsen the situation for these homes. We note that that the Lead Local Flood Authority have stated that they consider the applicant's proposed drainage strategy to be inadequate as it fails to satisfy the

requirements of the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems. Currently run off drains into a culvert which frequently blocks and overflows. Residents have already complained about this to LCC and fear further development utilising the same culvert would exacerbate current problems, especially during heavy rainfall.

11. Other Local Concerns

Albany Drive is currently a small, quiet cul-de-sac of 23 homes. This proposal would more than double the size of this pleasant road, resulting in a huge increase in traffic from both new residents and deliveries. Current residents are rightfully concerned that this peaceful road will disappear, potentially with a reduction in property values such a quiet residential road affords.

Construction and its associated traffic, including contractors' vehicles, would have a major impact on the current residents of Albany Drive. Air quality could be worsened by dust and residents negatively impacted by noise and disruption.

Residents living along the bridleways BW0338011, BW0338012 and BW0338084 are already aware of the detrimental impact of these routes being used as a 'rat-run' for vehicles trying to avoid congestion at the junction of Lovely Hall Lane with the A59, particularly at school times. There is a very real fear that further increases in traffic due to this development would result in even more traffic along these bridleways, placing pedestrians, children at play and residents' pets at risk and causing increased damage to the bridleway itself.

12. Conclusion

This site is not in a suitable location for housing with regard to accessibility, in conflict with Key Statements DS1, DS2 and DM12 and Policies DMG2 and Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy which seeks to locate development where the need to travel is minimised. The proposal represents:

- A departure from the Development Plan
- Unsustainable development in policy terms
- A scheme that has already been found unacceptable in principle

In the absence of material considerations sufficient to outweigh this harm, the application should be refused.

Salesbury Parish Council respectfully requests that planning permission is refused.

kind regards

Lesley Lund

Clerk to Salesbury Parish Council