

Planning Statement

Including Affordable Housing Statement

Full Planning Application for the Erection of 26 no. Affordable Dwellings with Associated Access, Gardens, Parking and Landscaping

Land at Albany Drive, Copster Green

For Pringle Homes

March 2026

Job Number: 18-122

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1.0 Introduction and Approach

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Maybern Planning and Development ('Maybern') on behalf of Pringle Homes ('Pringle' or 'The Applicant') seeking full planning permission via Ribble Valley Borough Council ('RVBC' or 'The Council') for the erection of 26 no. affordable dwellings with associated works at Land at Albany Drive, Copster Green.

1.2 The description of the application proposal is:

Full Planning Application for the Erection of 26 no. Affordable Dwellings with Associated Access, Gardens, Parking and Landscaping

1.3 This Planning Statement sets out:

- A description of the site and surroundings;
- The scope of the development proposal;
- The statutory and planning policy context of the site and application proposals; and
- Assessment of the proposals against the statutory and planning policy context and other material considerations and technical matters relevant to the site proposal.

1.4 The application is submitted following a pre-application enquiry submission and meeting with RVBC in January 2025 and the consideration of feedback received (LPA ref: RV/2024/ENQ/00109).

1.5 Submitted in conjunction with this Planning Statement are the following:

- Planning Application Forms and Certificate - via the Planning Portal ref PP- 14555588

PLANS (Provided by MCK unless stated):

- Location Plan – Ref – 24-133 - LP01
- Proposed Site Layout – Ref – 24-133 - PL01
- Coloured Site Layout – Ref – 24-133 - PL01
- Boundary Treatments Plan – Ref – 24-133 - BT01
- Indicative Street Scenes – Ref – 24-133 – SS01
- Refuse Collection Plan – Ref – 24-133 - RP01
- Hard Landscaping and Materials Plan – Ref – 24-133 - HL01
- Land Use Plan – Ref - 24-133 – LU01
- Landscaping Scheme (ref:7767.01 rev A) prepared by Trevor Bridge Associates
- Topographical Survey (ref: S25-0840) prepared by JLP
- Tree Constraints Plan (ref: WC-474(1)) prepared by Woodsage Consulting

- Shade Analysis Plan (ref: WC-474(2)) prepared by Woodsage Consulting
- Drainage Layout Plan (ref: 25358-001) prepared by Flood Flows

BOUNDARY DETAILS (Provided by MCK unless stated):

- 1.8m Brick Wall – Ref – 12.1.01
- 1.8m Timber Fence – Ref – 12.2-02
- 1.8m Timber Gate – Ref – 12.02-08

HOUSE TYPE PACK (Provided by MCK unless stated):

- Burton Proposed Elevations (and floor plans) – Ref – BU01
- Hastings Proposed Elevations (and floor plans) – Ref – HA01
- Marsden Planning Drawing (with floor plans and elevations) – Ref – MA01
- Raleigh Proposed Planning Drawing (with floor plans and elevations) – Ref – RA01
- Bransfield Proposed Planning Drawing (with floor plans and elevations) – Ref – BR01
- Buxton Proposed Planning Drawing (with floor plans and elevations) – Ref – BUX01
- Materials Specification (March 2026) – prepared by Pringle Homes

REPORTS

- Tree Survey Schedule (ref: WC-474.1a) (December 2025) prepared Woodsage Consulting
- Design and Access Statement – (February 2026) prepared by MCK
- Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Maybern Planning and Development
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (December 2025) prepared by Flood Flows
- NW SuDS pro-forma (February 2026) prepared by Flood Flows
- Attenuation Calculations (February 2026) prepared by Flood Flows
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (February 2026) prepared by Envirotech
- Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain (February 2026) prepared by Envirotech
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric (February 2026) prepared by Envirotech
- Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report - 25151/GEDS (December 2025) prepared by REFA
- Transport Statement - 251150-TS (February 2025) prepared by SCP Transport Planning
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (February 2025) prepared by Woodsage Consulting

Pre-Application Enquiry Advice

- 1.6 A formal pre-application meeting was held with RVBC in January 2025, with representatives of RVBC, Pringle and Maybern attending. This request was used to facilitate an opportunity to formally present and engage with the Council with regards to a development opportunity on the site. The development proposal submitted via this enquiry related similarly to the current proposal with 26 no. affordable units. The pre-application response from RVBC provides relevant context for the site and a residential proposal.
- 1.7 The response on the matter of (residential) principle was primarily related to the site's location within the open countryside and outside of the settlement boundary such that the Council considered the proposal to be in conflict with Key Statement DS1 (Development Strategy) and Policies DMG2 (Strategic Considerations) of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. It was referenced that justification to the criteria of these policies would be required given the location outside of a defined settlement boundary. It was also noted that there were concerns that the level of affordable housing proposed in would not likely be supported in the settlement, and that provision of such units in such a location would increase the cost of living to potential residents due to lack of key services/facilities within walking distance of the site.
- 1.8 With further regard to the site's location and its sustainability, officers referred to a previous appeal dismissal¹ on the site which concluded the site was contrary to Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3. However, it was clear to the agent and applicant that more recent appeal decisions and application cases for marginal sustainability considerations to location were not mentioned/considered by Officers in the pre-application response.
- 1.9 It is also important to note that at the time of the pre-application response, RVBC were able to evidence a 5-year housing land supply resulting in the referenced policies being considered up to date. This is not now the case.
- 1.10 The response also provides comments relating to design, layout and visual impact; residential amenity; highways and parking; landscaping and ecology, as well as flood risk and drainage. Due regard has been had to these elements in the preparation of the planning application and relevant provisions have been incorporated into the scheme as submitted where possible.

The Applicant:

- 1.11 Pringle Homes is a family-run housebuilding company based in Preston which specialises in the delivery of high-quality development sites in the North West, including the delivery of both market and affordable homes with involvement from Registered Providers.
- 1.12 They have delivered development sites in Ribble Valley, Preston and South Ribble, including Northcote Park, Langho (including affordable units); Pennington Gardens, Higher Bartle; and Collinwood Gardens, Hutton. Most recently they have completed a development of 17 dwellings, both open market and affordable housing, in Woodplumpton, Preston. These approved schemes benefit from a range of attractive house types with a variety of bedroom numbers and homes to be available on a mixture of tenures (market and affordable housing).
- 1.13 Pringle Homes has also liaised closely with the Council's housing and planning team more recently in securing planning permission for the 37 affordable dwellings at Crow Trees Farm, Chatburn. This is now in the final stages of construction and being delivered in partnership with MSV, the Council's recognised Registered Provider (RP) partner.

¹ APP/T2350/A/14/2222255

2.0 The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site extends to approximately 1.16ha and comprises two fields in grazing use lying to the immediate south of Albany Drive, Copster Green. The site is located at the immediate southern edge of the defined settlement boundary of Copster Green.
- 2.2 The land is generally flat and rises gently from east to west across the site, as well as rising gradually from north to south.
- 2.3 The site is bound to the north by existing bungalows along Albany Drive and the more recently completed housing scheme of Brown Leaves Grove (approved under LPA Refs: 3/2011/0482 and 3/2012/0745). Whilst fields lie to the east and west, these are relatively narrow areas beyond which are residential properties to Lovely Hall Lane (to the east) and Ribchester Road (to the west). An equestrian facility with stables and storage areas is to the immediate south, accessed via a track through the site with open fields beyond.
- 2.4 Dense boundary trees and hedges are present to the east and west boundaries and to the southern boundary of the northern most field. A ditch also runs along the eastern boundary. Whilst the southern boundary is defined by a fenceline separating it from the equestrian facility area, a ridge line in this field beyond the site area provides a natural enclosure of the land area and site immediately south of the settlement.
- 2.5 The site is currently accessed via a field gate located at the end of Albany Drive and its turning head area. This access point currently provides access to the equestrian facility referenced above with a track that runs across the northern boundary of the site from east to west before running southwards along the western boundary.
- 2.6 Figure 1 below shows an aerial view of the site within its wider built and natural environment contexts (the approximate site area indicated in red).



Figure 1: Aerial view of the approximate application site (edged red) and its wider setting.

Accessibility and Services:

- 2.7 The site is located south of Longsight Road (A59), which is a main arterial route that provides access to surrounding settlements such as Salesbury (<1km), Langho (3.8km), Whalley (7km), Clitheroe (13.5km) and Preston (16.5km). This road provides the site with a strong access potential with regards to wider key services and facilities. Furthermore, Copster Green is linked to Salesbury and Clayton Le Dale via Lovely Hall Lane and Ribchester Road providing immediate service provision to the village. From here Whalley Road (A666) also provides further linkages to Blackburn (8.3km).
- 2.8 Whilst Copster Green has limited services and amenities, facilities can be easily accessed in the surrounding settlements and areas as mentioned above. Salesbury contains a primary school, village hall (which accommodates a post office two hours a week), a church and sports facilities. Wider provision of facilities (including education) is located within Clayton Le Dale and Langho as well as the larger surrounding settlements.
- 2.9 Sports facility provision is plentiful throughout the surroundings, with Salesbury Bowling Club and Wilpshire Wanderers Football Club approximately 1.4km away from the site (3 min. drive), Langho Football Sports & Social Club located approximately 2.5km away from the site (5 min. drive) and Wilpshire Golf Club approximately 2.5km away from the site (5 min. drive).
- 2.10 Frequent bus services run along the A59 with two bus stops located within 550m of the site. The Clayton-le-Dale/ Lovely Hall Lane bus stop provides access to the surrounding larger settlements including Clitheroe, Whalley, Mellor and Blackburn via bus service 25 and Skipton, Barnoldswick, Clitheroe and Preston via bus service 280. Furthermore, the site is also served the Ribchester, Oaks Brow/Oaks Bar bus stop which is located 650m from the site. Access to Preston, Broughton, Longridge, Ribchester and Blackburn is provided from this stop via bus service 45. These bus stops/services allow linkages to larger settlements where facilities and services can be accessed. The mentioned services run at an hourly rate and are further reviewed in the Transport Statement.
- 2.11 Ramsgreave and Wilpshire Railway Station is approximately 3km away which offers services to Rochdale and Clitheroe with trains generally operating every hour (with slightly reduced services on Sundays). From these locations, wider connections to Manchester and Blackburn can be made.
- 2.12 In relation to walkability, there are numerous Public Rights of Way and Bridle Ways located within close proximity to the site. FP0338009, FP0338010, FP0338013, FP0338031, BW0338012, BW0338084 and BW0338011 run throughout the settlement and are all within accessible proximity to the site. These provide the site with ample access to walkable spaces and wider greenfield areas which currently provide informal recreational areas for the existing community of the settlement. Areas of public open space are also located off Lovely Hall Lane to the north east of the site.

Planning History

- 2.13 A review of RVBC on-line planning search facility reveals that there has been a previous application made for the site. The details of this are as follows:
- Outline planning application ref: 3/2014/0307 - Westbridge Developments Ltd (submitted April 2014); Albany Drive, Salesbury/ Copster Green, BB1 9EH. The erection of up to 32 no. dwellings and associated works. Refused at Planning Committee June 2014.

Following the refusal and the submission of an appeal (APP/T2350/A/14/222255), the site was dismissed on the 21st October 2014 following a hearing on the 16th September 2014. The Inspector dismissed the appeal on grounds of lack of accessibility by a range of means and a perceived unsustainable pattern of development. It was also considered it would result in precedent for other unsustainable developments. The Inspector also highlighted the lack of services for basic needs in

the village (e.g. no shop, post office, school), limited bus access, and that resultant car trips would be unsustainable journeys.

It is important to note however, at that time, the current Core Strategy was not in place and there was an absence of a definitive position on the Borough's 5-year housing land supply (HLS). Due to this the Inspector noted that *"I am mindful that in the absence of a definitive position, the matter of housing supply potentially carries significant weight. The proposal would provide up to 30 dwellings which I am advised are deliverable within 5 years. In this regard, the proposal would contribute to significantly boosting the supply of housing in the Borough"*.

Having regard to technical matters, it was determined that the scale of the development proposal would not lead to an increase in traffic that would be detrimental to character, nor would the proposal detract from highway safety. The Inspector also detailed that subject to an appropriate layout at the reserved matters stage for the site, the development site could *"accommodate up to 32 dwellings without any detrimental impact upon the living conditions of adjoining occupiers or existing landscape or ecology"*. The Inspector also stated that there was *"no reason to conclude that an effective means of draining the site could not be found, or that it would preclude the development of the site in principle"*.

Wider Planning History

2.14 There are a number of more recent proposals for residential development within close proximity to the development site and in the wider RVBC area that are of relevance to the proposal including the following:

- Outline planning application ref: 3/2015/0200 - Calderwood (Developments) Ltd (submitted February 2015); Land rear of Beech Cottage, Lovely Hall Lane, Copster Green, BB1 9EH. The erection of up to 9 units with access off Albany Drive (via demolition of an existing dwelling) and all other matters reserved. Refused April 2015.

Following the refusal and the submission of an appeal (APP/T2350/W/15/3134524), the site was dismissed on the 11th February 2016 following a hearing on the 15th December 2015. The Inspector dismissed the appeal on grounds similar grounds to the above referenced appeal. It was also noted that the applicant did not quantify specific, more local need for such development in this location with specific regard to housing for over 55's. As such, it was determined that the proposal was contrary to the spatial strategy of the Core Strategy established by policies DS1, DMG2 and DMH3, and as such, was in conflict with the development plan as a whole.

Unlike the application referenced at paragraph 2.13 above, at this time RVBC had an up-to-date development plan and could show an adequate 5-year HLS. It is also important to note that throughout the Inspector's report, the provision of affordable dwellings in this location was provided weight in the assessment of housing in principle.

- Permission in Principle application ref: 3/2025/0414 - Mr R Jackson (submitted May 2025); Land to South of Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn, BB7 4QG. Recommended for refusal at planning committee June 2025. Appeal allowed.

Following the refusal and the submission of an appeal (APP/T2350/W/25/3372635), the appeal was allowed on the 7th January 2026 following a hearing on the 9th December 2025. The Inspector approved the appeal on reasons of the Council being unable to show an adequate 5-year HLS. In more detail it was confirmed that the deliverable supply of housing throughout the Borough amounted to 1,130 dwellings, which when combined with not deducting past oversupply from the local housing need requirements, reduced the housing land supply position to 3.45 years. This is the currently the most up to date figure regarding RVBC HLS.

- Full planning application ref: 3/2022/0966 - Pringle Homes (submitted Oct 2022); Crow Trees Farm, Crow Trees Brow, Chatburn. Erection of 37 affordable residential units with access, parking and landscaping at (and conversion of former dairy outbuilding to open-market residential unit and refurbishment/modernisation of Crow Trees Farmhouse). Approved September 2024.

Application site lies adjacent to and outside of the settlement boundary and comprises open countryside land. Whilst the Housing Officer made a specific review of affordable housing need to the settlement, it was also noted that there were currently no affordable housing ownership options available in the parish and there had been no additional affordable housing delivered for well over 15 years. It was also considered that there was a mix of house types and tenures proposed that would encourage a sustainable community to be formed on site.

- Outline application ref: 3/2025/0196 - Hallam Land (submitted March 2025) - for up to 300 residential dwellings, and associated works - Land off Longsight Road, Langho. The application was refused in June 2025 and an appeal is ongoing with an Inquiry to be held in April 2026. It is now accepted by the Council in its Statement of Case to the appeal that *'the Council's position is that as it cannot demonstrate a five-year supply, that the relevant strategic policies are not considered to be up-to-date and therefore the Council's position is that paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged'*.

Surrounding Uses:

- 2.15 Immediate usage to the north of the site is residential in nature along with the A59. This includes a range of house types including bungalows and two storey houses in detached and semi-detached forms.
- 2.16 To the south and west of the site, open fields lead onto dispersed linear residential dwellings along Lovely Hall Lane and Ribchester Road and a number of farm related properties.

General Technical Considerations

- 2.17 The site lies within Flood Zone 1, the lowest classification for flood risk as defined by the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning. The western boundary of the site contains a narrow strip of land which is subject to risk of surface water flooding, however this falls under a 1 in 1,000 annual likelihood of flooding. The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy considers this further and provides the proposed drainage strategy for the site.
- 2.18 With regards to the topography of the site, the current levels of the site rise from the northern boundary south easterly. It can also be noted that land across the site rises from west to east. The topography of the site has been considered in the finalised layout submitted.
- 2.19 In relation to exiting drainage features on-site a ditch runs beneath the hedgerow in this western location.
- 2.20 The site contains limited tree cover however is bound by tree/hedge coverage to its eastern and western boundaries, whilst also containing a central field boundary consisting of a tree/hedgerow belt which runs across the centre of the site (from east to west). It is understood there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the land.
- 2.21 The site does not lie within a conservation area, nor does it lie within the immediate setting of any listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets. The closest listed building to the site is located 270m away from the site boundary (Oaks Bar – Grade II Listed), between which there is built form in the respect of multiple dwellings, roads and open fields.

Development Plan Allocations

- 2.22 As per the Ribble Valley Local Plan proposal's map, the site falls outside of the defined settlement boundary for Copster Green and is therefore designated as open countryside; although, it immediately abuts the settlement boundary.
- 2.23 The site does not comprise Green Belt or Nationally protected landscape
- 2.24 Copster Green is identified as a Tier 2 village settlement in the Borough as per Key Statement DS1.
- 2.25 Please see below an extract from the Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development, Development Plan Document Proposals Map – Sheet 3 - Inset 13 - Copster Green for reference.

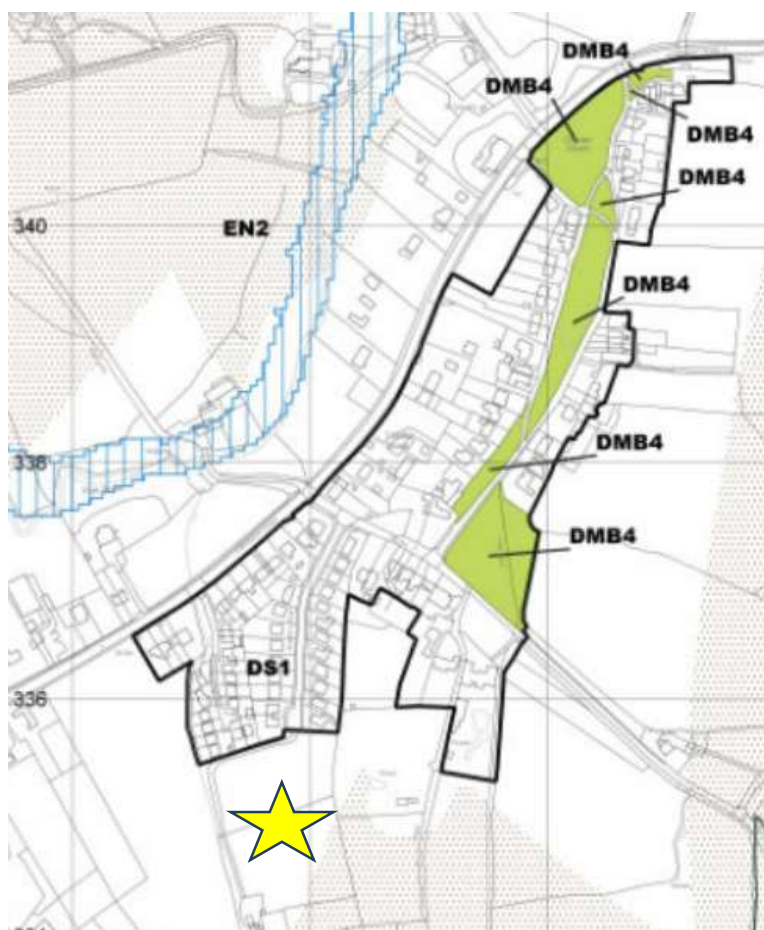


Figure 2: Insert from Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development DPD Proposals Map – Application site referenced by the yellow star.

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 This full planning application seeks permission for the:

'The Erection of 26 no. Affordable Dwellings with Associated Access, Gardens, Parking and Landscaping.'

3.2 This section summarises the proposal and should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and technical reports.

Affordable Housing Development:

3.3 The land is proposed to be developed for 26 no. affordable dwellings, with a mix of 2 and 3 bed units comprising bungalows, semi-detached and mews house types as follows:

Unit Type/Name	Number of units	Number of Bedrooms	Size (sq ft)
Burton	5	2	775
Buxton	1	2	775
Hastings	6	2	807
Marsden	6	2	868
Bransfield	7	3	1022
Raleigh	1	3	1029

3.4 The tenure mix is proposed to include affordable rent, rent to buy and shared ownership units. Discussions would however be undertaken with the Housing Officer at RVBC during the course of the planning application to confirm the final housing tenure split.

3.5 A local Registered Provider (RP) with established housing stock in Ribble Valley is in discussions with the applicant to take forward the delivery and allocation of units on the site following a grant of planning permission and construction. Progressing to a swift delivery of the site would therefore allow the RP to ensure local housing needs are met quickly.

3.6 The RP would also maintain open space and communal areas on the site via a management agreement.

Layout, Scale and Appearance:

3.7 The proposed bungalows and houses would be one and two storeys in height in a mix of detached, and semi-detached houses. Four units in a mews format are also proposed.



Bungalow Units – Burton (top image), Buxton (middle image) and Hastings (bottom image)



Mews/ Semi Detached Units – Marsden (left image), Raleigh (centre image) and Bransfield (right image)

- 3.8 The materials pallet for the units would be brick with some of the bungalow units featuring a rendered front and / or side aspect. All units will feature grey slate-alike roof tile, with fascias and soffits Black Woodgrain uPVC with black rainwater goods. Double glazed windows will be provided in grey uPVC frames with stone heads and cills whilst doors will be in grey uPVC. All units have simple elevational form featuring porches and chimneys and some units include gables to porches or front elevations to provide detail and diversity to the street scene. Dwellings on corner locations and at the end of runs would also include outward facing facades to provide active frontages and surveillance to the street-scene.

- 3.9 Hard landscaping provided throughout the site will feature private pathways consisting of paving slabs, as well as parking areas laid with black bitmac.
- 3.10 A range of boundary treatments are proposed to be included throughout the site with the provision of 1.8m high close boarded fencing along most garden boundaries and some areas of brick wall with fence treatments along areas to the access road and open space areas. Details of these are also submitted alongside the application via the detail and landscaping plans.
- 3.11 All units would have rear gardens with access to these provided via driveways or side pathways, also providing access to bins and for bin movements.
- 3.12 Given the site size and arrangement, appropriate separation distances between main facing elevations (with windows) and garden sizes are achieved.

Access, Connectivity and Parking

- 3.13 The units would be accessed via improvement of the existing field and equestrian related vehicular access point from Albany Drive on the northern boundary. The main access road and internal roads will be provided at adoptable standard with a width of 5.5m. These will also feature 2m footways on both sides of the road.
- 3.14 The main access road is to run southward through the site providing direct access to some units and to the internal turning heads that provide access to two private driveway areas serving other units. The continuation of the access road toward the southern boundary is to allow for ongoing access provision to the equestrian facilities to the south.
- 3.15 Two parking spaces will be provided to each unit in line with parking standards. The 52 parking spaces will be provided either via side driveways or to the front of units, with landscaping areas interspersed and providing visual relief to the street scene.
- 3.16 Refuse bin collection points are provided adjacent to turning heads throughout the site for ease of access/egress for refuse vehicles. The location of these collection points falls within the 30m distance to all units for ease of residents, whilst also falling within a 25 m proximity for refuse collectors.
- 3.17 Three turning heads are proposed throughout the development for the safe manoeuvring of vehicles.
- 3.18 The site will link to existing footpaths along Albany Drive that will be maintained.
- 3.19 Secure cycle storage will be provided to units via storage within rear gardens.
- 3.20 Further details of site provision for access and parking are provided within the Transport Statement.

Landscaping and Open Space

- 3.21 The site layout includes a range of landscaping and public open space (POS) provision to deliver a high-quality environment. All units also have on-plot gardens via rear garden space and frontage landscaping elements.
- 3.22 The main POS and landscaping at the south of the site encompasses an area of 0.074ha. This allows for a large amount of tree planting. A smaller POS area within the north-western element of the site by the private driveway area is also proposed. The tree/hedge belt that runs throughout the centre of the site is also largely to be retained (other than for the road provision).

- 3.23 The proposed development has purposefully been sited around pre-existing mature trees located along the site's boundaries (where they have been deemed suitable for retention) and to avoid any potential negative impact upon these. The retention of these trees (mainly along the eastern and western boundaries of the site) has been of the most importance in the evolution of the proposed design following discussions with ecologists and arboriculturist.
- 3.24 Three individual trees and a small section of a tree group will be removed to allow for the development and associated infrastructure. Tree T19 is categorised as U quality (those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years) and is deemed as unsuitable for retention. Trees of low quality T1 and G3 (Category C2) and trees of moderate quality T12 (Category B2) are also to be removed, as the arboriculturist considers that some tree losses are required to enable the development whilst seeking minimal impact upon visual amenity value. Mitigation measures such as tree protection fencing to retained trees and hedges will be provided during construction as identified within the Tree Protection Plan.
- 3.25 It is proposed that a significant number of new trees are to be planted on-site. In part this will ensure replacement for the small number of trees which must be removed as a result of the development, but which will also afford high quality on-site landscaping and biodiversity enhancement.
- 3.26 The proposal includes hedge planting including along the initial section of the road to create an appropriate boundary to the access road and entrance into the site area and to the (majority of) the southern site boundary. Other hedge provision will be provided between the front gardens and parking areas of dwellings for amenity purposes.
- 3.27 Other areas of planting as shown on the accompanying landscaping plans include a wildflower meadow area within the southern POS section of the site. The planting is to be made up of Emorsgate EM2 wildflower meadow.
- 3.28 Lastly, a proposed swale SUDs feature is to be located within the north-western section of the site. This is to facilitate drainage potential, whilst also featuring SUDs wildflower turf. This area of the site will not only provide aesthetic benefits but will also provide a drainage and ecological/biodiversity improvements for the site.

4.0 Planning Policy Context and Other Material Considerations

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

“In making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.

4.2 Therefore, the starting point for the consideration of any planning application is the Development Plan.

4.3 It is also relevant that material considerations will include national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), in respect of the approach to decision making and to support and aims for development relevant to specific policy topics and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). A draft update to NPPF has been released (December 2025) but is not in place for decision making purposes.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

4.4 The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

4.5 It establishes ‘three overarching objectives’ for sustainable development comprising economic, social and environmental (para. 8). It confirms these objectives ‘are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways’. In respect of the social role, there aim is to support and enhance communities through the provision of a sufficient number and range of homes for the future, whilst creating well designed/attractive places, which have strong amenity provision to benefit community wellbeing.

4.6 At the heart of the Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development (Para. 10). For decision-taking this means approving development where it accords with an up-to-date development plan, or where the plan is out-of-date, which by reference to footnote 7 includes for applications for housing where the LPA cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, for granting permission unless:

- the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance (e.g. green belt or other environmental designations) provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- adverse impacts would **significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits**, or policies in the Framework indicate development should be refused (Para. 11d).

4.7 NPPF paragraph 39 provides that:

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

4.8 Regarding the delivery of a sufficient supply of housing, the NPPF places great importance on the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes (Para. 61). It requires reference to the standard method of assessing housing needs (para 62) and housing planning policy (and in turn

decision-making) to facilitate ‘the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community’ (Para 63).

- 4.9 The NPPF promotes affordable housing provision and that a mix of affordable tenures should be progressed in line with local need (Paras 66 and 71), and that small and medium sites and windfall sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and can be built out quickly with benefits to suitable sites within existing settlements (Para. 73).
- 4.10 Para 78 requires LPAs to identify and update housing supply to provide a minimum of 5 years of housing against the local housing need where strategic policies are more than 5 years old².
- 4.11 Housing in rural areas is also accepted to enhance and maintain the vitality of communities and to support local services, including where settlements are close/ grouped, development may support services in a village nearby (Para 83).
- 4.12 Paragraph 110 specifies the following:

‘the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making’.

- 4.13 Other key matters within the NPPF relevant to the proposals include:
- promoting walking, cycling and public transport (Para. 109) and only preventing or refusing development on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network following mitigation would be severe (Para. 116)
 - for development to add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development, and to be ‘sympathetic to the local character... including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting’ and also establish ‘a strong sense of place’ (Para. 135)
 - to assist with protection and enhancing landscapes and biodiversity including via opportunities for net gain (Para 187); and
 - to accord with aims for climate change in terms of energy efficiency/ good design (Paras 162/164), and minimising flood risk locations from any form of flooding; with due regard to the sequential testing of sites unless proposals come forward on allocated sites where the applicants need not apply the test again (Para 180).

The Development Plan

- 4.14 In accordance with Section 70(2) of the 1990 Act and Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, the statutory development plan for the site comprises the RVBC Core Strategy (adopted 2014) (CS) and the RVBC Housing and Economic Development DPD (adopted 2019) (HED) which predate the issue of current NPPF.

² Footnote 39 referencing use of the standard method as per NPPG.

- 4.15 RVBC are in early stages of a Local Plan Review with Call for Sites exercises in 2021 and 2025 and an Issues and Options release in 2022. Further progress on the Review has however been delayed. This site has been submitted within the CFS.
- 4.16 As a result of the recent appeal decision referenced above it is now acknowledged that the Council does not have a 5-year housing land supply.
- 4.17 As such the weight to be applied to the development plan and those policies relevant to housing location and supply is reduced /policies out of date and the ‘tilted balance’ of national policy is in place.
- 4.18 In respect of the development plan, the application site lies outside but on the immediate edge of the settlement boundary and as open countryside as per the proposals map.
- 4.19 The pertinent policies from the CS and HED relevant to the proposals at the site are summarised below:
- DS1 – Spatial Strategy - Within Tier 2 Villages, development will be required to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits.
 - DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.
 - EN2 – Landscape – requires development schemes to be in keeping with landscape character. Development is also to reflect local distinctiveness, style and scale through development features and materials used.
 - EN3 - Sustainable Development and Climate Change – for development to consider sustainable design and construction standard.
 - EN4 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity – to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and minimise negative impacts. Proposals which harm ecological and biodiversity credibility must demonstrate mitigation and compensation in line with national guidance. As a principle, all development should lead to an increase in biodiversity net gain.
 - H1 - Housing Provision – Land is to be made available for the provision of 5,600 dwellings throughout the plan period delivering ‘at least 280 dwellings per year over the period 2008 to 2028’.
 - H2 – Housing Balance – for a suitable mix of houses having regard to housing needs.
 - H3 – Affordable Housing – for delivery of units on sites and with specific provisions for older persons accommodation.
 - DMI1 – Planning Obligations – will be used to draw funding from development proposals for infrastructure/highways improvements, open space provision and education on a case-by-case basis.
 - DMI2 - Transport Considerations – all new development should be located sustainably to minimise the need to travel with strong active travel links alongside public transport provision to reduce the need to travel via motor vehicle.
 - DMG1 - General Considerations –development proposals are to adhere to principles including (inter alia):

- Design – to afford high quality design, to be sympathetic to surroundings, to be of correct density and layout, to use sustainable construction techniques and to follow the code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes.
 - Access – to consider all vehicular implications, to provide safe access and egress, to protect and enhance PROW's.
 - Amenity – to not affect the current/pre-existing amenity of the development sites surroundings, to provide adequate distancing and lighting, have regard to public safety (through use of design principles), consider air quality and mitigate against any adverse impacts.
 - Environment – consider environmental impacts (specifically with regards to ecology and biodiversity).
 - Infrastructure – to not result in a net loss of any important open space, consider potential impacts upon local infrastructure provision.
- DMG2 - Strategic Considerations – a two-part policy relevant to location, with part 2 outlining:
 - (2) - Outside defined settlement areas or within tier 2 villages - development to meet at least one of five criteria including:
 - (1) be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area;
 - (3) is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such
 - DMG3 - Transport and Mobility – considerable weight is attached to the location and quality of *'public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development'*. Developments are to offer opportune use of public transport, whilst providing adequate car parking spaces in line with current standards.
 - DME1 - Protecting Trees & Woodland – requires the conservation of trees and woodland and the enhancement of biodiversity.
 - DME2 - Landscape & Townscape Protection –developments will be refused if they significantly harm significant landscape or landscape features.
 - DME3 - Site and Species Protection and Conservation – Developments which adversely affect a sites ecological features should be refused. This also encourages the enhancement of biodiversity alongside development. This now supplemented by the national requirements of 10% net gain.
 - DME6 - Water Management – development is to be strongly resisted where an unacceptable risk from flooding is present.
 - DMH1 – Affordable Housing Criteria - including considerations to eligibility and provisions for occupancy.
 - DMH3 - Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB – a criteria policy for development to be limited to (1) residential development which meets an identified local need that is evidenced by Housing Needs Survey for a parish, the Housing Waiting List or the Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - DMB4 – Open Space Provision – all residential development over 1ha is *'expected to provide adequate and usable public open space'*.

Housing Information in Ribble Valley

- 4.20 The most recently issued 5-year housing land supply position for the Borough (May 2025) incorporated the new local housing need figure as per the revised standard (stock- based) methodology released alongside the revised NPPF (2024). It outlined the delivery of 330 units per year (compared to the past method which required the delivery of 113 units per year) and claimed the council could show a 6.2 year supply.
- 4.21 However, as referenced above, the recent appeal decision has found that RVBC can currently only provide a 3.45 year housing land supply such that the housing statement and policies of the development plan are out of date and the tilted balance is engaged.
- 4.22 It is also to be noted that the Council raised issues to the future supply of housing in the Borough in response to the 2024 draft NPPF release (Report to Planning and Development Committee, August 2024). This outlined there is “concern for an area such as the Ribble Valley, where deliverable, sustainable land is limited, the increased housing requirement figures has the potential for the Authority to no longer be able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply’.
- 4.23 Affordable housing need has until recently been considered in a 2020 Strategic Housing and Employment Needs Assessment (SHENA) Report (Turley) setting out a housing need of 88 units per annum. This did not provide smaller area or settlement need figures.
- 4.24 In May 2025, the released a new Affordable Housing Needs Assessment (AHNA) (2025)³. This references that the Borough requires a total gross need of 323 affordable unit completions per annum /total net need of 230 units per annum. As such the Borough need is now significantly higher than the previous 88 units. The committee report to the AHNA references that ‘there is an acute need for affordable housing within the study area’ and that ‘the relative lack of social rented housing [in the Borough] means it will be difficult for the Council to meet affordable housing needs when they arise’.
- 4.25 Within the 2025 study, settlement and smaller area affordable needs have now been included, and in respect of Tier 2 Villages or the rest of the district, it sets out a net need of 33 affordable completions per annum / 83 units as a net need.
- 4.26 The AHNA also provides a suggested unit size mix for affordable housing by tenures to be followed in affordable schemes as below:

Figure 5: Suggested size mix of housing by tenure – Ribble Valley			
	Affordable home ownership	Affordable housing (rented)	
		Under 65	65 and over
1-bedroom	20%	20%	50%
2-bedrooms	45%	35%	50%
3-bedrooms	30%	35%	
4+-bedrooms	5%	10%	

Figure 1: Suggested size mix of housing by tenure (Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, Ribble Valley Borough Council, May 2025).

- 4.27 This AHNA has not been subject to public consultation or examination. Therefore, the current weight to be applied to the size mix element in particular should, in our view, be more limited until subject

³ Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, Ribble Valley Borough Council (May 2025)

to public consultation. As the overall affordable housing need figures are based on collected waiting list data, this is considered more robust in respect of weight to be applied to it.

- 4.28 Alongside the evidenced affordable need throughout the borough, the current Housing Land Availability Survey shows that between 2024-2025 housing completion levels significantly dropped from previous levels, with only 332 new build completions during this period, down from a previous level of 508. Of completions, only 72 affordable dwellings were completed⁴.
- 4.29 The RV Corporate Strategy 2019-2023 includes an Ambition (5) to match the supply of houses to identified needs and includes an objective for providing adequate mix of additional affordable housing throughout RV and meeting the housing needs for all sections of the community. A medium priority for mechanisms for delivering affordable housing in villages is also outlined.
- 4.30 Similarly, the Pennine Lancashire Housing Strategy 2009-2029 seeks a renaissance and steady growth in the housing market and outlines that issues of affordability are present in the Borough. Policy aims to deliver affordable housing and rural affordable housing are included.

⁴ Housing Land Availability Survey (HLAS) 2024, Ribble Valley Borough Council (April 2025)

5.0 Affordable Housing Statement

The number, size, type, tenure and location of the affordable housing provision to be made (including reference to the definition of affordable housing in the NPPF).

- 5.1 As already set out in this statement, the planning application proposes 26 no. new dwellings, all of which would be affordable homes, split between affordable rent, rent to buy and shared ownership units. The split between tenures will be discussed and agreed with the Councils planning and housing officers during the course of the planning application.
- 5.2 The proposed homes include house types featuring 2 and 3-bedroom dwellings across bungalow, mews and semi-detached properties.
- 5.3 It is anticipated that the affordable housing provision could be secured by way of a condition or Section 106 in agreement, the precise terms of which will be agreed with officers during the planning application

The timing of the construction of the affordable housing and its phasing (e.g. by tenure)

- 5.4 Subject to the grant of planning permission, the site will be developed out in partnership with a Registered Provider (RP). Subject to a grant of planning permission in late 2026/early 2027, construction could commence mid 2027 with final handover of all units in 2028.

The arrangements for the transfer of the affordable housing to an affordable housing provider or the management of the affordable housing (if no Registered Provider is involved);

- 5.5 Subject to the grant of planning permission, all proposed dwellings would be transferred to a RP – discussions are ongoing between the applicant and a local RP in readiness for any future planning permission that may be granted.

The arrangements to ensure that such provision is affordable for both the first and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing

- 5.6 It is anticipated that either a suitably worded condition or Section 106 agreement could secure the affordable housing in perpetuity (in line with Homes England Capital Funding Guide). An agreement could be reviewed and agreed during the course of the application.

The occupancy criteria to be used for determining the identity of occupiers of the affordable housing and the means by which such occupancy shall be enforced

- 5.7 The scope of eligibility criteria for the proposed affordable housing could be agreed by the RP and RVBC housing team during the course of the planning application. This could then be incorporated in the S106 drafting, or for pre-commencement submission (if this is to be dealt with via a condition).

6.0 Assessment Against the Development Plan and Other Material Considerations

6.1 This section assesses the proposal and its compliance with the development plan and other relevant material considerations.

Principle of Residential Development

Marginal Sustainability

6.2 Whilst a previous appeal decision⁵ has found the site and its surroundings to be unsustainable, more recent national planning policy and appeal decision findings provide alternate considerations for assessing housing in rural locations and accessibility to sustainable transport modes and the weight to be assigned to subsequent marginal sustainability.

6.3 It is also now relevant that there are alternative opportunities for sustainable transport choices via electric car vehicles and e-bikes; delivery of goods and food shopping via home delivery and companies using electric vehicles; and home working and use of IT links for meetings and activities. All of these elements have been recognised in appeal decisions in recent years as contributing to opportunities to minimise private journeys.

6.4 As detailed above, it is apparent that the site has (generally) level (flat) pedestrian linkages to surrounding settlements, including Salesbury that has some facilities, and clear/lit walking linkage to bus stops with frequent bus services. The bus services from these stops run hourly (on most days) and will allow residents to reach essential services and facilities in a short period of time. Whilst a short section of Lovely Lane is not a formal footpath, there is a grass verge along this lightly trafficked length to allow access to the footpath along A59 and to the bus stops. At distance of less than 800m to bus stops this is significantly less than the 2km upper walking distance accepted in guidance and appeal decisions⁶. A 5km cycle access potential to a number of other larger settlements is also present and the provision of cycle parking facilities to units will assist this opportunity for movement.

6.5 The proposal also relates directly to NPPF para 110 which notes that *“opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”*. As such, the development site can be considered to have a strong relationship with sustainable transport solutions for a rural area and as a result, prospective residents of the site will not solely be reliant on the private car.

6.6 More recent appeal decisions have considered a number of accessibility points in respect of rural housing schemes:

- Land at Cardwell Farm, Garstang Road, Barton, Preston⁷- the inspector found that although the application site had a lowly position in the settlement hierarchy, as well as limited facilities, a regular bus service and further service/facilities provision within 2km was adequate to serve the site. It was also determined that although the private car would be used for the majority of journeys to services, sustainable alternatives existed and that the commute time would not be lengthy. As such, it was determined that accessibility policies set out within the framework were a neutral consideration in the case.

⁵ APP/T2350/W/15/3134524 and APP/T2350/W/25/3372635

⁶ Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation Guidance and recognised in Appeal Decision APP/C3105/W/25/3363572 – allowed 2025

⁷ APP/N2345/W/20/3258889 – allowed 2021

- Sandy Furlong Farm, Compton Road, Hilmarton, Nr Calne, Wiltshire⁸- it was considered by the inspector that the site was served by frequent bus services close to the site and allowed for short journey times that would “provide future occupiers with a viable alternative transport option to access employment, leisure and other day to day services and facilities in the wider area”. Due to the villages rural location, it was accepted by the inspector that there would be some use of the private vehicle, but with the prevalence of alternative transport methods it was determined that access to surrounding services and facilities could be provided.
- Land north of Cote Road, Aston, Oxfordshire⁹ - it was considered that two hourly bus services on Monday-Saturday would facilitate sustainable travel to larger settlements with their greater variety of shops, services and facilities, including employment opportunities, and opportunities for maximising the use of sustainable transport modes had been taken up through the provision of cycle storage facilities. As such, the site was considered to be located in an area where there are opportunities for sustainable travel commensurate with the rural location and future occupants need not be unduly reliant on private vehicles, albeit that private cars would likely remain a mode of travel for many purposes
- Land at Charter Lane, Charnock Richard¹⁰ – the inspector concluded that ‘the development is likely to necessitate some reliance on the private car, but that is not an absolute bar on development. Specifically, the Framework recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport will vary between urban and rural areas as a factor which should be taken into account in decision making (paragraph 105)’.

6.7 As per the above, it is apparent that the site should be treated as an accessible rural housing location as encouraged in national guidance. As such, we consider this development proposal to adhere to policy DMI2 and DMG3 of the CS.

Housing Supply and Delivery

6.8 As the Council are only able to evidence a 3.45 year housing land supply this is a significant shortfall to a 5 year supply position.

6.9 Due to this, the development strategy and housing supply policies of the development plan are considered largely out of date and the tilted balance and presumption in favour of sustainable development apply. This reflects the position from the recent Chatburn appeal referenced above and being outlined in Officer reports to committee for recent housing planning applications and a Council appeal statement.

6.10 Key points in assessing whether policies are out of date include reference to:

- Whether they are overtaken by national policy position and changes – this would comprise the policies of NPPF to boost the supply of housing and to deliver identified housing needs, including for affordable housing.
- Assessing the ‘policies in the round’ and whether they are out of date for decision making purposes – in the Inspectors assessment of the appeal addressed above it was concluded that whilst proposal would conflict with the spatial strategy set out in the development plan due to the site lying outside the settlement boundary, as well as the proposal not meeting

⁸ APP/Y3940/W/25/3363961 – allowed 2025

⁹ Appeal Ref: APP/D3125/W/23/3317512 – allowed 2023

¹⁰ APP/D2320/W/22/3313413 – allowed 2023

any of the identified considerations or exceptions which are required for residential development to be acceptable in the open countryside, the inspector stated that:

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

- 6.11 In respect of the proposal, the most important policies are considered to be Key Statement DS1, as well as policies H1, DMG2 and DMH3.
- 6.12 These policies are now assessed to the NPPF and current aims for the significant delivery of housing to meet needs, including affordable needs, and against similar assessment as has been undertaken in the recent appeals and via the Courts.
- 6.13 Whilst Key Statement DS1 was not deemed to be out of date in the recent appeal in terms of the strategy to direct development to the principle settlement of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley, as well as other larger settlements, the element (criteria) of the policy which identifies that development within smaller settlements i.e. ‘Tier 2 Villages’ will be required to ‘meet proven local needs’ or ‘deliver regeneration benefits’ is considered out of date to national guidance which promotes boosting housing supply and sustainable rural development.
- 6.14 Policy H1 is considered to be out of date (as per the recent appeal) and housing numbers should be based on the standard methodology such that only a 3.45 year supply is present in the Borough.
- 6.15 As per the above, it can also be considered that Policy DMG2 is out of date. Notwithstanding this, the development proposal is able to meet at least one of several considerations relevant to development outside of the settlement boundary, as per criterion 3 and the provision of local needs housing which meets an identified need. This is further considered below in respect of affordable housing need.
- 6.16 Similarly, although Policy DMH3 is determined to be out of date, the development proposal is also able to meet criterion 1 which limits development within the open countryside to provide residential development which meets an identified local need.
- 6.17 Having regard to paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, where policies that are most important for determining the application are out of date, the “tilted balance” applies. This coincides with Key Statement DS2 of the CS which promotes the presumption in favour of development.
- 6.18 As such, planning permission should be granted unless policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposal, or any adverse impacts of granting permission would **‘significantly and demonstrably’** outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole (our emphasis).
- 6.19 In this respect, the application site is not subject to any form of protection nor an asset of particular importance having regard to footnote 7 – i.e. it is not Green Belt or subject to other historic, environmental or ecological designation. Further it would not result in encroachment onto protected land or require review of safeguarded land boundaries.
- 6.20 The operation of the tilted balance is therefore relevant above assessment against outdated policies of the development plan.

Affordable Housing – need and delivery

- 6.21 There is an identified need for affordable housing in the Borough. The 2025 AHNA outlines a Borough need for 323 affordable unit completions per annum /total net need of 230 units per annum. Similarly,

the study identifies an outstanding net need of 33 affordable completions per annum/ 83 units net in 'The Rest of the District' which contains the tier 2 village settlements as defined within the CS.

- 6.22 The AHNA also highlights that there has been a large increase in affordable housing need throughout Ribble Valley, with a steep rise from the 88 affordable dwellings per annum outlined within the previous SHENA (2020). Following this evident rise in required affordable need, it is clear that there is an *“acute need for affordable housing within the study area”* as recognised by Officers when reporting the new ANHA to the Planning and Development Committee in May 2025.
- 6.23 Having regard to these current yearly need figures, it is deemed an imperative that RVBC work towards meeting the identified need to adequately provide affordable completions throughout both the Borough and tier 2 village settlements. This is further confirmed through the emphasis within the AHNA that there is an identified need within the Borough across all sub areas such that this wider Borough need should also be sought to be met in the current and future years.
- 6.24 The application proposal would provide a clear contribution to the annual requirement of affordable units required throughout the Borough and 'The Rest of the District', actively providing toward meeting the outstanding affordable need immediately and in the future pipeline of affordable housing need. In this respect the scheme would provide almost 1 year's amount of required units to the affordable need/provision throughout the locality and the Borough, thus assisting in meeting the identified annual need in the short term.
- 6.25 In the absence of other market housing schemes across the Borough, especially throughout tier 2 village settlements coming forward via applications or approvals, the supply of affordable housing units as part of market housing schemes is also considered highly limited.
- 6.26 The provision of 26 affordable dwellings on the edge of the tier 2 village settlement will actively work towards meeting this need throughout the Borough and should be considered as an acceptable location for the proposal given the Boroughs current housing land supply shortages.
- 6.27 Whilst the previous appeal decision for the site in 2015 (APP/T2350/W/15/3134524) was dismissed, it was noted that the absence of a definitive (5 year) housing land supply position at that time carried significant weight and that the proposal would provide housing which could have been deliverable within the following 5 years to *“contribute to significantly boosting the supply of housing in the Borough”*.
- 6.28 Since that time it is highly relevant that a number of appeal decisions for affordable housing schemes on edge of settlement sites, including smaller settlements, have been allowed in the last 3 years where a 5 year supply has been lacking and an affordable housing need identified. In such cases, significant weight has been given to the need for the delivery of affordable housing and to addressing the governments aim to boost the supply of housing (both with and without the tilted balance in place). Such appeal decisions include:
- Cote Road, Aston, Oxfordshire – where it was also held that the units would contribute to meeting Borough need as well as local (village) need *‘whilst the identified need is not entirely specific to Aston that is not a policy requirement and the delivery of housing would support the significant district-wide need, as well as any unmet need in Aston itself’* There is a serious and significant shortfall in housing delivery and no expectation that the need for affordable housing will be met in the short term without the delivery of schemes like that the subject of this appeal.... The delivery of 40 affordable housing units is a substantial benefit’.
 - Church Lane, Sarratt¹¹ - where a lack of a five year supply of housing land and an acknowledged and pressing need for affordable housing, the inspector placed *‘substantial*

¹¹ APP/P1940/W/22/3300083 – allowed July 2023

positive weight on the proposed provision of up to 20 affordable homes. There would be further economic benefits from the construction of the proposal and then from expenditure by future occupants on local services'

- East of Rainbow Lane, Peasey Hills Malton¹² - where it was held that there was an acute and growing shortfall in affordable housing with the related social implications (comprising a need for 1,396 affordable homes in the 5-year period translating to some 279 affordable dwellings per annum (against an estimated annual supply of 13 affordable homes)). The inspector determined these factors, individually, merited very substantial supporting weight
- 6.29 Significant weight is therefore to be applied to the delivery of housing and meeting affordable needs, that is now supplemented with the increased national aim to boost housing delivery and cater for housing needs for all, and the wider acceptance of accessibility and sustainability provisions for rural settlement housing as referenced above.
- 6.30 The application proposal can provide a mix of unit sizes and affordable tenures with the final provision to be agreed during the application process as pre-application discussions on mix were not possible and discussions with an RP are ongoing. The identification of future occupiers will also be undertaken by the appointed RP with reference to the Council need and waiting lists as outlined in the AHS earlier.
- 6.31 The delivery of affordable housing is therefore considered in line with national planning policy and those elements of policies DS1, DMG2, DMH3 that remain up to date for local needs housing provision.

Design and Layout

- 6.32 Following on from the clear local need for the delivery of affordable housing in the Borough and area, the scheme has been designed as a high-quality proposal that provides a range of house types and sizes that can assist in meeting local need identified in the Council's waiting list information, and also accords with the affordable housing criteria of policy DMH1.
- 6.33 The scheme has also been fully considered in the context of the general design and management policies of the development plan (that remain up to date) and NPPF design and townscape aims for the creation of high-quality buildings and places, sustainable and accessible places to live, and to maintaining landscape and visual context.
- 6.34 The proposal has due regard to its context and the character of the settlement and adjacent development as is considered further in the Design and Access Statement. In this respect, the adjacent Brown Leaves Grove development provides a density of approx. 32 dph, being comparable to the proposal at 33 dph. The bungalow only form of the Albany Drive area is not now a form generally (solely) provided in development schemes, with government guidance outlining the need for higher density developments to assist in delivering the homes required. Notwithstanding, the scheme has sought to reflect the character of the Drive with the provision of bungalows at the northern end of the site where entering it from the Drive.
- 6.35 The units will comprise a mix of one-story bungalows and two-storey semi-detached and mews units constructed of brick and render materials that will reflect the local vernacular via scale and height, house types and designs and materials of existing properties on the surrounding residential roads. It will deliver a mix of two and three bed units designed to NDSS standards allowing an efficient use of the land in a quality layout, as per the key aim of national guidance. This density generally reflects the grain and typology of the surrounding settlement development to the north.

¹² APP/U2750/W/25/3371863 – allowed 2026

- 6.36 Information has not been made available to the applicant regarding updated waiting lists in the Copster Green area, whilst the suggested mix of house sizes (by tenure) of the AHNA (2025) has not been subject to consultation or examination for full consideration/testing (the AHNA outlines a mix of 1 bed – 10.38%; 2 bed – 44.15%; 3 bed – 38.96%; 4 bed – 6.5%). Notwithstanding, the greater level of unit sizes set out in the AHNA of 2 and 3 bed units will be met by the proposal. Similarly these units enable more flexibility to cater for smaller and mid size households and provide scope for some family growth. Provision of bungalows in the scheme also aligns with the provision for elderly residents in affordable unit delivery.
- 6.37 The design and materials of the units have also taken clear cues from the local townscape and surrounding properties as referenced in the DAS, including the simple elevations, use of gables, pitches and porches. The use of brick and frontage render with slate-like roofing as the materials palette would fully align with the predominate vernacular of the village and result in a high-quality appearance to the site. This will help the development meet Key Statement EN2 of the CS. Pringle Homes had delivered affordable housing locally both as part of the Northcote Park development, and more recently at the Crow Trees Farm development where the house types, similar to now proposed, were very well received by Officers and residents.
- 6.38 The land is accessible via Albany Drive by car, cycle and on foot via the adopted road with lighting and footpaths and a similar standard road with footpaths can be continued into the site to serve the units along with smaller scale private access roads. Driveways to individual units will then be provided to the front or side of units with parking to standards.
- 6.39 The main area of open space to the south and other small pockets of space located throughout the site will provide for informal recreation to residents and landscaping for ecological benefits. These are overlooked by units for surveillance and security.
- 6.40 All units include adequate private gardens and relative separation distances for amenity purposes.
- 6.41 The site is suitable for development in terms of topography, form and land conditions and would represent a logical extension to the settlement form by way of its physical relationship to the existing settlement and built form to the north and its containment by existing boundary trees and hedges particularly to the east and west which will act as a soft green buffer. The southern boundary of the site will be planted (with the exception of the access point to the equestrian facility). Boundary treatments and the escarpment within the equestrian area would thus prevent the development encroaching into the wider open landscape or into undeveloped long-range views.
- 6.42 The proposal is therefore considered to meet design and layout policy requirements laid out within policies EN4, DME1, DME2, DME3, H2/H3 and DMD4 of the development plan.

Impact on Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.43 The application proposals would not result in any significant impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents as a result of the location, orientation and adequate separation of the proposed units from surrounding properties and the retention of existing and provision of additional boundary landscaping and visual screening that would be provided.
- 6.44 The layout provides for bungalows or the gable elevation of two storey units being in closest proximity to existing dwellings to the north. The distancing between has regard to the 13m (gable) and 21m (rear) separation distances and meets in all but one part (that being an oblique and gable elevation relationship of a proposed bungalow to which there are no windows proposed on the gable).
- 6.45 The lighting of the road could be appropriately designed to prevent light spill beyond site boundaries for visual amenity (as well as for ecology considerations).

- 6.46 A Construction Management Plan would be utilised pursuant to a suitably worded planning condition to ensure that amenities are respected during the construction process.
- 6.47 As such, the proposals accord with the relevant amenity criteria of policies of the CS and the aims for high quality design in NPPF.

Conclusion

- 6.48 As above, it is apparent that the scheme immediately abuts the tier 2 village of Copster Green and is an acceptable and relatively accessible rural location for housing development given the current housing land supply and the tilted balance being engaged. As such, the housing locational and restraint policies of the CS are determined to be out of date and housing aims of national policy are more relevant.
- 6.49 There is a significant level of affordable housing need identified within the Borough and the locality, therefore meeting criteria 3 of policy DMG2 and criteria 1 of DMH3. The principle of the proposed development in proposing 100% affordable housing therefore accords with the adopted development plan.
- 6.50 The proposed scale and layout of the development has been designed with due considerations to the site's key characteristics, surroundings and technical matters. The scheme is also designed to protect neighbouring and future residents' amenity.
- 6.51 The following section provides assessment in relation to technical considerations.

7.0 Technical Considerations

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy

- 7.1 The development plan and NPPF include policies on flood risk and drainage. These policies state that proposals should where possible be directed away from areas which are at the greatest risk of flooding and should not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- 7.2 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy (DS) has been prepared by Flood Flow Ltd to support the planning application. This report confirms that the site lies within Flood Zone 1, therefore giving the site the lowest risk of river and sea flooding (which is less than 1 in 1000 (<0.1%).
- 7.3 Surface water flood mapping identifies small areas of low to medium surface-water flood risk in the wider area, particularly around the Albany Drive / Longsight Road junction where local highway drainage constraints exist. However, the development site itself is predominantly within very low to low surface-water risk zones and is not crossed by any identified deep overland flow paths. The development scheme has regard to this, and the small risk area is retained in the landscaped area at the north. No housing or access areas of the site are affected and in line with national guidance (para 177 of the NPPF), there is no requirement for a sequential test to be undertaken. The containment of this potential risk area in the landscaping area will also enable any surface water to be satisfactorily retained away from developable areas and then dissipate away.
- 7.4 The risk of groundwater flooding has also been assessed as low with no historical record of any sewerage flooding occurring.
- 7.5 As such, there are no undue flood risk constraints to the site development and the layout and form of development as proposed.
- 7.6 The FRA and DS has also assessed the surface water run-off potential from the site development areas (hardstanding and developed areas).
- 7.7 A proposed drainage strategy has been prepared that illustrates that surface water will be drained toward the west of the site via proposed outfall to an existing ditch beyond the site boundary. Necessary easement widths to enable connection to this system have been reflected in the layout, as well as SuDS features including the swale. The submitted DS preliminary design can therefore be fully detailed and agreed pursuant to a suitably worded planning condition.
- 7.8 Foul discharge would also be dealt with via the same route travelling through the site toward the western boundary via the existing ditch beyond the site's boundary. This could be made possible via the inclusion of a Bio-Discharge Sewage Treatment Plant within the strategy.
- 7.9 The FRA and DS considers relevant matters and confirms that the development of the site can be appropriately designed and managed to not result in flood risk at the site or beyond in line with policy DM6 of the CS and climate change and flooding policies of the NPPF and can utilize and build upon the existing drainage regime in the area for an efficient use of infrastructure.
- 7.10 The Sustainable Drainage Proforma is submitted alongside this application and this supports applicants in summarising and confirming how surface water from a development will be managed sustainably under current and future conditions.

Trees and Arboriculture

- 7.11 The development plan and NPPF outline that trees should be maintained wherever possible or replacement provision made if losses were to occur.
- 7.12 The site has been surveyed for the presence and health and standard of trees by Woodsage Tree Consultancy. The tree survey assesses trees within and along the perimeter of the site and concludes that there are 23 trees within or along the site boundary. There are also 4 separate tree groups. A number of medium and higher quality trees are present throughout the site, the majority of which are retained and planned around in the layout as proposed. Those which are not are highlighted below.
- 7.13 To account for the development proposals and given the current poor health of some trees on site, trees that are of lower quality (C to U category) are recommended for removal. These trees include T001, T019, as well as a part of G003 (these losses have also been assessed for ecological considerations as below). A single tree of moderate quality T12 (Category B) is also proposed for removal.
- 7.14 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has also been prepared which makes recommendations for erecting tree protection fences to retained trees and hedges to ensure there is no undue harm during the construction process. An Arboricultural Method Statement is also recommended if construction works are proposed in close proximity to retained trees; this could be secured and provided via a suitably worded planning condition.
- 7.15 Following the tree removals mentioned above, it is calculated that the proposal scheme will be required to provide for the planting of 11 new trees to mitigate for the loss. 30 new trees are indicated on the landscaping scheme provided by TBA therefore providing a higher number of trees than the baseline replacement requirement whilst new hedges are also proposed. The new planting at the site including species and planting densities and a management plan for the landscaping are detailed in the TBA plans and report.
- 7.16 Provision for trees and landscaping would therefore be in line with policies DMG and DME1 of the CS and the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.17 Envirotech Ecologists have assessed the site and prepared a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) assessing the site's habitats and potential to support wildlife.
- 7.18 The PEA which accompanies the application found that through the data search that there were no records of protected or notable species for the site, albeit there was record of protected or notable species within 2km.
- 7.19 Whilst the site is not located within a statutory protected site/area, it lies within a corridor of the Lancashire Grassland Ecological Network and non-statutory protected woodland is located within a 250m radius of the site boundary.
- 7.20 With regards to site vegetation and habitats, species assemblages recorded at the site are all common in the local area and are considered to be of low ecological value, comprising horse-grazed areas of modified grassland. Sympathetically landscaped open space is considered to offer habitat of comparable ecological value.
- 7.21 Whilst bats, nesting birds and common species of amphibian are known to occur in the local area, there was no conclusive evidence of any specifically protected species regularly occurring on the site or in the surrounding areas which would require direct action. A mature Ash tree (T3) within

Hedgerow 2 to the eastern edge of the site was determined to possess potential roost features suitable for multiple bats/small maternity roosts. However this tree will not be impacted by development.

- 7.22 Envirotech have also prepared a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment, along with a Biodiversity Metric to assess the sites baseline ecological value and the potential gain/loss of BNG onsite as a result of the proposals.
- 7.23 The BNG Assessment provides an insight into the habitats prevalent on site. Within this report the development site is described to mostly contain “*Low and or Very low distinctiveness habitats- these being ‘modified grassland’ and ‘artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface’*”. It is noted that there are no irreplaceable habitats on the site, nor are there any Very High distinctiveness habitats on the site. The site however does include ‘species-rich native hedgerow with trees’, determined to be a high distinctiveness habitat and a ‘rural tree’ (T19), which is considered to be a medium distinctiveness habitat.
- 7.24 As per the BNG Metric submitted alongside this application, it is apparent that the development proposals will result in a LOSS of 0.56 habitat units (-24.85%), a GAIN of 0.48 hedgerow units (+26.08%) and a GAIN of 0.02 watercourse units (+12.00%). From this it is clear that the onsite net change of habitat units falls beneath the required 10% increase and therefore the trading rules are not satisfied.
- 7.25 The BNG Metric also advises on the anticipated number of off-site units required to successfully offset the BNG deficit. Via the ‘Unit shortfall summary’ it is noted that +1.53 units of Habitat will be required. Envirotech advise that the deficit will be required to be secured through payment to a third-party provider/habitat bank. Off-site BNG units is now a recognised provision for many development schemes and is secured via the statutory BNG Condition discharge post planning permission.
- 7.26 In light of assessment of the submitted ecological and BNG information and delivery of off-site BNG units the development is in accordance with policies DME1, DME3 and DMG1 of the CS and relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Ground Conditions

- 7.27 REFA have produced a Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report (25151/GEDS) for the site.
- 7.28 This study has identified through historical mapping data and review of records that the site has been used for agricultural purposes since 1844. It also shows that the existing access track that runs along the northern and western boundary has been present from 2003.
- 7.29 There is no made ground indicated to be present on-site. There are also no records of contamination on the land or coal mining activity in the area.
- 7.30 A phase 2 site investigation is recommended from which a remediation strategy could be formulated along with verification proposals if necessary. This could be secured pursuant to a standard planning condition for submission of such information prior to development commencing.
- 7.31 In light of the above, provisions in line with Policies DMG1 and EN3 of the CS can therefore be met.

Landscaping

- 7.32 TBA have produced a Landscaping Scheme in support of the planning application. The proposed layout includes significant new planting that will enhance the biological focus of the site and also provide for a scheme that sits well with the landscape and visual context of the site and wider area.

- 7.33 The plans include provision to maintain a landscaped and habitat area within the southern section of the site (to the east of the access road). This area is to include heavy tree planting and Emorsgate EM2 wildflower meadow mix (to supplement the retained trees throughout this section of the site).
- 7.34 Additional landscaped areas throughout the development proposal can be found along the access road and private driveways in the forms of tree, hedge and grass turf planting and to the frontage parking areas to break up parking runs and limit parking in views in the longer street scene. This will also provide the cul-de-sacs with an active green frontage.
- 7.35 Due regard to the native species list of the Ecology Assessment has been undertaken in the provision of the landscaping proposals.
- 7.36 Public Open Space is plentiful throughout the site, with the main area being 0.07ha.
- 7.37 Hard landscaping provision including fencing to garden areas and boundaries and brick walls to garden areas on key corner plots has also been included in the scheme.
- 7.38 Full regard has therefore been given to the principles of the Development Plan in respect of landscaping namely policies EN3 and DMG1 as well as to the aims of NPPF for ecology and good design.

Sustainability

- 7.39 Achieving sustainable and energy efficient provisions within the development has been a key factor within the scheme development and on to its delivery as outlined above in relation to building design, use of materials, site landscaping and the accessibility of the site by a choice of means.

Transport Statement

- 7.40 The development plan outlines that new development should be located in accessible locations that are adequately served by existing highways, public transport and with safe and secure access for all. The NPPF also encourages accessibility by a choice of means and that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where residual cumulative impacts are severe.
- 7.41 Singleton Clamp & Partners (SCP) have prepared a Transport Statement (TS) (251150-TS) to support the planning application. In summary, the TS concludes that:
- The proposed development accords with relevant national and local policy aims with regards to transport and highways matters.
 - Road Safety Records (for the most recently available 5-year period ending mid-2024) show that no accidents have been recorded on Albany Drive or at the junctions of Albany Drive / Lovely Hall Lane and Lovely Hall Lane / A59 Longsight Road.
 - The access road for the site will be taken from the continuation/extension of Albany Drive, which features an existing 5.5m carriageway width with 2m footways to either side.
 - The private driveways and internal access roads throughout the site will feature visibility splays in both directions which accord with the guidance presented in Manual for Streets for a 20mph design speed.
 - The access and layout is designed to allow for the movements of a refuse vehicle. A swept path analysis has been undertaken of the site access and internal road layout (found in the Transport

Statement Appendix C) that demonstrates refuse vehicles can access the site and exit in a forward gear and turn within the main turning heads.

- The provision of 52 car parking spaces throughout the site adheres to the parking standards for 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings, set out by LCC within the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (2005) Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document 'Access and Parking.'
- Regarding the sites accessibility it is clear that the site is accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes. This includes walking, cycling, and public transport, affording alternatives to car travel. Bus stops are close by within a c.550m walk, enabling opportunity for access by bus to Clitheroe, Blackburn and Preston as well as other surrounding settlements. As such, the site is determined to be accessible by sustainable modes and has local amenities within close proximity. Access to the site on foot and by cycle is of a good standard and there are bus and train services within close proximity. The prospective residents of the site would not therefore be specifically reliant on the private car.

7.42 The development has also been assessed in terms of traffic generation and capacity of the adjacent network. From the assessment the development proposal is calculated to *'generate 16 two-way vehicle movements in the AM peak hour and 14 two-way vehicle movements in the PM peak hour. Volumetrically, this equates to around 1 additional vehicle movement every 3 to 4 minutes in both the AM and PM peak hour'*. Based on this traffic impact analysis, it is concluded that the proposed development will have a *'barely perceptible'* impact on the local highway network during the peak periods and will not result in a *'unacceptable'* or *'severe'* impact on the operation of the highway network or highway safety, which according to paragraph 116 of the NPPF, is the threshold under which development should not be prevented or refused.

7.43 Based on the above, it is concluded that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the local highway network and is highly accessible such that there should be no highways or transportation reasons to preclude the granting of planning permission and the scheme accords with relevant criteria of CS polices DMG3, DM12 and DMG1 and para 116 NPPF.

Technical Considerations Summary

7.44 From the above and assessment of the submitted technical reports, there are no technical matters which would preclude the grant of planning permission for the proposed development.

7.45 It is anticipated that a series of planning conditions to a grant of planning permission would be relevant and would be generally in line with standard technical matters that are covered by planning conditions.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The development has been assessed against relevant up to date policies of the development plan and found to be in accordance. However, given the Borough Housing Land Supply position, other housing policies and locational elements of housing policies are out of date such that the tilted balance of national planning policy is in place and relevant.
- 8.2 Other material considerations weigh in favour of the proposals including the national aims for boosting the supply of housing and meeting specific housing needs.
- 8.3 In respect of the three elements of sustainable development of NPPF, the proposal provides significant relevant benefits as follows:

Social

- Provision of affordable local housing that is an identified and current need both throughout rural areas and the wider Borough and that can be retained in local occupancy in perpetuity
- An experienced RP is in detailed discussions with the applicant for delivery of the site quickly to address this need
- Delivery of a range of house types and sizes including bungalows for varying household sizes and accessibility levels
- Provision of usable public open space on the site for the benefit of residents
- Delivery of a high quality and secure living setting
- Support to local facilities and services – via new population and consumer expenditure
- No material harm to public views
- No undue harm to existing residential amenity

Economic

- Local jobs support for construction companies and related local suppliers during the construction process
- Consumer expenditure from future residents to support local businesses

Environmental

- Accessibility by a range of means providing accessibility to nearby facilities and services to minimize car journeys and emissions
- Provision of landscaping and new tree and hedgerow planting to the site whilst maintaining key trees on and around the site

- No undue flood risk to arise and relevant sustainable drainage provision to be made
 - No harm to heritage assets
 - No undue harm to any environmental assets, habitats or protected species as demonstrated within the ecological survey, with appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented in accordance with the survey.
 - Delivery of a high-quality built environment that respects neighbouring uses and amenity
 - Development of a character and scale which is in keeping with the locality in terms of built and natural environment
- 8.4 Having regard to the Borough housing land position and main policies of the development plan relevant to the proposals being out of date, para 11(d) of the NPPF thus engages the tilted balance requiring planning permission to be granted unless:
- 'i) the policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance, as defined in Footnote 7, provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole'
- 8.5 The site is not subject to specific protection under this context and there are clear benefits that a grant of planning permission would deliver in line with the Framework.
- 8.6 Notwithstanding a previous decision on the site, more up to date interpretation of accessibility and sustainability factors for a rural settlement (including via recent appeal decisions) are afforded to the site, including via frequent bus services and walk/cycle catchments, enabling sustainable transport solutions and weight to support the proposal.
- 8.7 The clear housing and affordable need in the Borough and area that is evident in the most recent housing need study provides significant weight to support the proposal.
- 8.8 The supporting technical information to the application also demonstrates that the proposal accords with design, landscape and technical policies of the CS and NPPF.
- 8.9 There are no significant adverse impacts of the proposal and in line with the tilted balance the application should be approved.
- 8.10 Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that RVBC grants planning permission without delay.