

Statement of Community Involvement

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 Consultation Objectives

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Pringle Homes ('Pringle'/'the Applicant') to support a full planning application for residential development on land at Albany Drive, Copster Green, Ribble Valley, as being submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council ('RVBC').
- 1.2 The description of the development is:
- 'Full Planning Application for the Erection of 26 no. Affordable Dwellings with Associated Access, Gardens, Parking and Landscaping.'*
- 1.3 The Statement is prepared pursuant to Government advice which encourages applicants to consult the local community in preparing new development proposals to provide local people with the opportunity to shape new development in their area. Applicants are also encouraged to consult with other stakeholders in pre-application discussions.
- 1.4 The Statement therefore provides a full explanation of the pre-application consultation process and is accompanied by appendices which contain evidence of the consultation undertaken by the applicant. The outcome of the feedback received is also documented and this Statement will set out how the applicant intends to address the responses.
- 1.5 The report has the following structure:
- Review of the planning legislation, planning policy and guidance in relation to community engagement at national and local level;
 - Outline of the consultation process undertaken by the applicant;
 - Summary of the consultation responses received and how they have been considered by the applicant and their development team; and
 - Concluding comments.

Pringle Homes

- 1.6 Pringle Homes was founded in 1981 and is a family-run housebuilding company based in Lancashire 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. Their website expresses that *'we are committed to providing our customers with exemplary service. Our new homes are designed and built to the very highest standard, with the demands of the modern homeowner very much in mind'*.
- 1.7 They have delivered development sites in Ribble Valley, Preston and South Ribble, including Northcote Park, Langho; Pennington Gardens, Higher Bartle; and Collinwood Gardens, Hutton. Most recently they have completed a development of 17 dwellings 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).
- 1.8 A development of 37 affordable dwellings at Crow Trees Farm, Chatburn (known as Ravenwood) is also now in the final stages of construction to deliver a range of apartment, bungalow and semi-detached/ mews homes in partnership with MSV, RVBC recognised Registered Provider (RP) partner.
- 1.9 Pringle's developments are often in semi-rural areas with a focus on locations with good accessibility and transport links.

2.0 Planning Policy Context

2.1 Community engagement in the planning process has been given greater basis via the Localism Act 2011 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). Local authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to ‘front load’ the planning system and set guidance for developers in undertaking consultation on proposals in order to give local communities more involvement in the planning process.

2.2 The NPPF¹ promotes pre-application engagement and ‘front-loading’, stating that:

‘Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.’ (Para. 40.)

2.3 The NPPF goes on to state that:

‘[Local Planning Authorities] should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.’ (Para. 41.)

2.4 The NPPF also confirms at Section 12 (‘Achieving well-designed places’) that:

‘The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.’ (Para. 131).

2.5 The RVBC ‘Statement for Community Involvement’ was adopted in October 2021 and includes principles for dealing with planning applications including pre-application consultation with developers and the council’s approach for community involvement on planning applications including:

‘In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paras. 39-46) Ribble Valley Borough Council encourages pre-application engagement to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.’ (Para 17.1)

‘The Council also encourages applicants to engage with both the Council and the community/third parties before an application is submitted. This will give an opportunity to address issues before the planning application is submitted, thus potentially avoiding an application being in-validated and reducing the time to determine an application. [...]

¹ National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Developers are encouraged to submit a consultation statement with their planning application outlining who was consulted, the means by which they were consulted, the results of any consultation and how these have influenced the planning application proposals.’ (Para 17.3)

- 2.6 A revised SCI was released by the RVBC in May 2025 for consultation. The statement remains unadopted as this time. The new statement aims to:

‘to ensure that all sections of the public and community, including local groups and organizations, are actively involved in the planning process and are notified of plans that may affect them.’

3.0 Community Consultation Process

Consultation with RVBC

- 3.1 A pre-application advice request was submitted to RVBC on behalf of Pringle in January 2025 to allow the opportunity to *'approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way'* (Para. 39 of the NPPF).
- 3.2 This request was to facilitate an opportunity to formally present and engage with the Council in regard to a development opportunity on the site, with an attached sketch for a proposed affordable housing development and associated landscaping and parking. This pre-application request relates closely to the proposed scheme and is located on the same site area as the proposed development option now discussed in this Statement.
- 3.3 The pre-application discussions were intended to act as a precursor to submission of a planning application. It was considered that formal pre-application engagement with the Council would facilitate an effective platform to discuss the principles of developing the site to accommodate residential development.
- 3.4 A formal pre-application meeting was held at the Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe BB7 2RA, with representatives of RVBC, Pringle and Maybern attending.
- 3.5 On 12th February 2025, a written response was received from RVBC.
- 3.6 In summary of key points, 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 Core Strategy. It was referenced that justification to the criteria of these policies would be required given the site location. It was also noted that there were concerns that the level of affordable housing proposed would not likely be supported in the settlement, and that provision of such units in the location would increase the cost of living to potential residents due to lack of key services/facilities within walking distance of the site.
- 3.7 With further regard to the site's location and its sustainability, it was noted that previous appeal dismissals on the site would provide a material consideration against the proposal. As such, the site's location was deemed to be contrary to Key Statement DM12 and Policy DMG3.
- 3.8 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. Feedback to the pre-application advice request was therefore largely policy-based due to the site's location.
- 3.9 Following the pre-application response, considerations for the development proposals were undertaken by the applicant and the development team, and it was decided that an affordable housing scheme would still be progressed to a full planning application with further supporting justifications provided to address feedback points. Full regard to housing needs information as well as an updated position in respect of the Councils housing land supply is also to be undertaken.

Consultation with Councillors – Ward and Parish

- 3.10 In February 2026, the ward councillor of Clayton-Le-Dale and Salesbury was informed of the development proposal through an email from Maybern. This email included notification of a forthcoming planning application submission for the development of the land and provided a copy of a consultation leaflet that was to be sent to local residents; as attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.11 At the time of writing this SCI there has been no response to the email and information from the ward councillor.

Public Consultation

- 3.12 To assist the applicant in considering the need for the proposal and seeking local feedback on the proposals, the applicant has sought to engage with residents of Copster Green.
- 3.13 An information leaflet was circulated to approximately 60 properties in close proximity to the development site on the 5th and 6th February 2026. This outlined broad details of the proposal and invited feedback and any views on the proposal. A period of 15 days for the submission of comments via email or post was provided with the consultation ending on the 20th February.
- 3.14 The leaflet distribution catchment area included all homes within the immediate surroundings of the site. This included all properties located at Albany Drive, Brown Leaves Grove, Longsight Road and Lovely Hall Lane. A map of the catchment area of distribution is presented at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.15 31 consultation responses were received from residents via email; all were expressing objection to the development proposals. A summary of the main consultation responses received is presented at **Appendix 3**.
- 3.16 The feedback from residents can be summarised into the following points:
- The sites sustainability with regards to its location and surroundings;
 - Increased strain on local infrastructure and services;
 - Environmental impacts including loss of green space, impact on local wildlife, and increased noise and pollution during both construction and longer-term occupation;
 - Highway and parking concerns such as safety and congestion;
 - Impacts to character of the local area, including worries regarding the scale and impact of the proposal upon the surroundings; and
 - Impacts upon existing residents' mental health.

4.0 Consultation Assessment and Responses

Principle of Development

- 4.1 The application site immediately abuts the urban boundary of Copster Green, one of 23 Tier 2 Villages located within Ribble Valley, as identified within Key Statement DS1 of the Core Strategy (CS). Development in such a location should only be considered to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits.
- 4.2 With specific regard to the sustainability of the site, whilst RVBC concluded within the pre-application that the site was not considered to be located sustainably, due to limited access potential to key services on foot and its location within the open countryside, it is apparent that the site has strong linkages with surrounding larger settlements through its proximity to frequent bus services. NPPF para 110 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”* (NPPF, 2024). 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 of this, we believe that it is 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.
- 4.3 As per RVBC’s housing supply and delivery position, which has been confirmed in a recent appeal decision (ref: APP/T2350/W/25/3372635), it is now acknowledged that the Council does not have a 5-year supply. As such the weight to be applied to the development plan policies for housing supply and locational considerations is reduced and the ‘tilted balance’ of national planning policy is in place.
- 4.4 Although the site is designated as open countryside, the proposed development seeks to meet local need affordable housing criteria of Policy DMG2(2) and Policy DMH3² having regard to RVBC Affordable Housing Needs Assessment report. In this respect, the AHNA outlines a need in the ‘Rest of District’ for 33 affordable dwellings per annum (net need of 83 affordable dwellings per annum). The proposal will also provide toward the outstanding Borough wide need of 323 affordable unit completions per annum /total net need of 230 units per annum.
- 4.5 The site is not located within a flood risk zone and is not designated Green Belt or other landscape area nor within proximity to listed assets such that there are no undue policy or technical restrictions to its potential for development.
- 4.6 The Planning Statement to the proposal will provide further information on the accordance with national and local aims for the delivery of housing and affordable housing needs.

Local Infrastructure and Services

- 4.7 The most significant factor of concern to residents is the perceived lack of local infrastructure and services, particularly school, GP and dentist places to serve additional residents to the local area from residential development.
- 4.8 There are a number of nurseries and primary schools within a c.2 mile radius of the site that are determined at this time to be undersubscribed and could accommodate potential pupils from the site. High schools within a c. 3 mile radius of the site are understood to be currently operating at capacity. However it is generally recognised that such age pupils may travel further distances to access secondary school provision. Due regard to provision will be undertaken by the County Council statutory response to a planning application.

² Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014)

- 4.9 Other service concerns included GP availability. Brownhill Surgery is the closest GP surgery to the site (c.2.2 miles), and we understand is open to accepting new patients.
- 4.10 Worries regarding access to convenience stores, shops, facilities and wider service provision can be negated by the presence of nearby bus stops that are served by routes that run along the A59 and provide access to the surrounding larger settlements including Clitheroe, Whalley, Mellor and Blackburn (via bus service 25); Skipton, Barnoldswick, Clitheroe and Preston (via bus service 280); and Preston, Broughton, Longridge, Ribchester and Blackburn (via bus service 45). The site is also within relevant 2km walking and 5km cycle catchments of shops and facilities.
- 4.11 A lack of facilities in the local area for children, such as playgrounds or a field to play ball games for older children was also raised by residents. Copster Green Common within the north of the village is a multi-functional public open space for use of the residents. Furthermore, there are also numerous playing pitches within close vicinity to the site for sports and recreational provision. These include at Wilpshire Wanderers Football Club c1 mile away and Langho Football Sports & Social Club c1.7 miles away.
- 4.12 It is also important that the nature of the proposed scheme, being for affordable homes, will be primarily limited to those with a connection to the local area. Therefore, individuals and families to the new dwellings may well already be living within Ribble Valley and neighbouring areas such that there is likely to be a relatively low increase in local services demand.
- 4.13 A number of responses outlined current concerns with the drainage system on Albany Drive and that it is unable to deal with both surface water and foul waste from the existing properties and surrounding fields. United Utilities are said to have not replaced or maintained existing drainage features located close to the site, and it is also highlighted that the water supply pressure along Albany Drive is very poor. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been developed for the site that has determined that both surface water and foul can be adequately addressed at the site and this will be subject to full review by statutory consultees during the planning application process. Please refer to the technical section of the Planning Statement and the relevant reports submitted alongside the application.
- 4.14 Having regard to the above, the impact of the proposed development on infrastructure provision will be fully considered through the application. Any consultee comments regarding relevant contributions for additional provision (e.g. for education or healthcare) will be fully reviewed and could be provided for where necessary (secured either via a planning condition or Section 106 provision as may be relevant).

Affordable Housing Need

- 4.15 Another significant area of concern for residents was a perceived lack of need for housing and affordable housing in the location, as well as throughout tier 2 villages and the wider Ribble Valley area. A number of comments also raised that affordable homes were likely to have a negative impact on the character of Copster Green.
- 4.16 In preparing the development proposal, the applicant has had full regard to the national and local housing position and aims to provide for a range of tenures and unit sizes to address housing needs.
- 4.17 The Borough Affordable Housing Needs Assessment (AHNA) (2025) highlights a total gross need of 323 affordable unit completions per annum / total net need of 230 units per annum (a significantly higher position than the previous 2020 Report of 88 units). The committee report to the updated AHNA publication also referenced 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'*.
- 4.18 The AHNA now includes a level of need for tier 2 villages or 'The Rest of the District', at 33 affordable completions per annum (83 units as a net need). As such there is a requirement for such housing units

that is not currently being met. In addition, the RVBC Housing Land Supply Assessment of 2022 has indicated that over the last 12 years affordable housing delivery numbers are averaging only 66 per year. This suggests that more affordable housing is still required which this proposal will make a significant contribution to.

- 4.19 Further consideration to the provision and need for affordable housing in the Borough and Tier 2 Villages is explained in the Planning Statement, including having regard to the Government's aim to deliver 1.5m new homes. The applicant is also proposing dwelling designs that are of high quality and energy efficient and a layout that has full regard to the character of the local area.

Environmental Impacts

- 4.20 A number of responses have raised concerns including loss of greenfield land, impact on local wildlife, and increased noise and pollution during both construction and long-term occupation.
- 4.21 The site is not a public open space and does not have public access. It is privately owned and used for grazing purposes. The proposals will enable a significant amount of amenity space and landscaping to be provided on the land that would be accessible by both future residents and existing residents in the local area, and provide a high quality visual and landscaped setting to the proposed development.
- 4.22 The site and proposals have been fully assessed by Envirotech Consulting Ecologists to consider the baseline and current wildlife and habitat provisions of the site and the sites relationship to nearby designated areas. A full tree and hedgerow survey has also been undertaken, including of the health and age of trees by Woodsage Tree Consultants.
- 4.23 Main areas of quality trees and hedgerows have been retained on and around the site in the proposals. A clear strategy for replacement tree planting and the provision of higher quality habitats on the land area has been considered. The site layout and landscaping plans will demonstrate on-site landscaping provision and the relevant Ecology and BNG Reports will provide relevant information.
- 4.24 As a residential development scheme, the proposal is fully in line with the surroundings and is not an unusual use or of a scale that will result in significant environmental impacts such as air pollution to affect local air quality. The land is not in proximity to an air quality management area and as it is accessible by a choice of means, the level of traffic movements would not be significant to consider air quality mitigation measures.
- 4.25 Concerns to noise and disturbance associated with the construction of the units can be appropriately mitigated by a Construction Environment Management Plan that will be agreed between the applicant and the Council via the planning application. This will likely control how many construction vehicles can arrive and depart on any day and their delivery routes and times as well as the provision of wheel washing facilities, noise and dust measures to keep noise and dust to a minimum, and due regard to lighting (for example measures to ensure construction lighting will cease at the end of the operational day).
- 4.26 It is considered the proposal and supporting information submitted with the application and the appropriate use of planning conditions can ensure that the development proceeds in a responsible manner, protecting the environment and amenity of local residents during the construction phase and beyond.

Highway and Parking Concerns

- 4.27 Concerns have been raised in numerous consultation responses to possible increases in traffic generation, use of Albany Drive and impacts on the operation and safety of roads local to the development and parking generation.
- 4.28 SCP Transport Consultants has advised on the development of the site proposals and prepared a Transport Statement ('TS') to inform the development proposals. The TS fully assesses the proposed

traffic levels that would be associated with the development and has undertaken up-to-date traffic surveys to confirm existing traffic flows in the area and at surrounding junctions. In the TS, SCP have concluded that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the local highway network. The TS also considers the site is accessible by a choice of means, including the strong bus linkages to the surrounding settlements.

- 4.29 Access to the site via Albany Drive and the improvements to the field access point have been assessed in the TS to be suitable and considerations to construction vehicle access can be covered within a construction management plan.
- 4.30 Each dwelling will have an adequate amount of parking relating to the number of bedrooms and can be dealt with on the site area. Therefore, the impact of parking on local residents will be minimal.
- 4.31 It is considered that the applicant has acknowledged and addressed all highways concerns in preparing the development proposals. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable from a highway's perspective.

Impacts to Local Character

- 4.32 A small number of responses outlined their belief that this quantum of housing would negatively impact on the local character of the area including via scale and density.
- 4.33 With regard to local character, this is only a planning matter if the development character proposed unduly impacts or harms local aesthetic.
- 4.34 It is apparent that the density of the site is in keeping with its surroundings with Brown Leaves Grove at a density of approx. 32 dph also. Given the bungalow format of units on Albany Drive this is a slightly lower density, however the proposal has fully accounted for this by the inclusion of similar bungalow forms and their concentration at the north of the site.
- 4.35 The proposal also has regard to separation distances and relationships to existing dwellings to the north with primarily gable elevations (with no windows) located at closest arrangements to existing dwellings.
- 4.36 The proposed homes have been intentionally designed to fit local (RV) character and will be of a high quality construction and materials consistent with homes previously built by Pringle. Figure 1 and 2 (below) show previous affordable homes by Pringle at Northcote Park which are similar in style and design to those that are proposed for this site; the proposal scheme will also include a range of 2-3 bed units to enable occupation by a range of family sizes. Pringle are also building out an affordable scheme in Chatburn, again where the unit design and quality has been accepted by RVBC and local residents.



Fig 1. Affordable homes at Northcote Park, Langho



Fig 2. Affordable homes at Northcote Park, Langho

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Applicant has undertaken pre-application engagement with key stakeholders and the local community.
- 5.2 From the engagement process, the Applicant has gained a better understanding of the local context and afforded the opportunity for residents to feedback on key local issues and the proposal.
- 5.3 The comments and feedback received during the pre-application consultation with the local community have been reviewed and the applicant has responded to comments and questions raised and points will be fully addressed via the planning application submission information.
- 5.4 The Applicant considers that the pre-application consultation undertaken to be efficient, meaningful and effective.
- 5.5 The next stage of the consultation process will comprise the statutory consultation exercise undertaken by the Council upon validation of the planning application. The Applicant remains committed to working with the local community and the Council throughout the planning and development process.

Appendix 1 - Leaflet for public consultation



P
PRINGLE
HOMES

Public Consultation – New affordable homes at Land at Albany Drive, Copster Green
Have your say on an affordable housing development.

Dear Resident,

This leaflet is being circulated in order to notify the local community of a forthcoming planning application by Pringle Homes and to gather views about a potential residential development on land at Albany Drive, Copster Green.

Pringle Homes is bringing forward proposals for a new high quality, affordable housing scheme at land located to the immediate south of Albany Drive, Copster Green. As a local, family run developer, we are committed to delivering thoughtfully designed homes which meet local housing needs throughout the Borough.



About Pringle Homes

We have a strong track record at delivering quality homes across the North West, including our recent Ribble Valley developments, Northcote Park near Langho and our latest development in Chatburn, Ravenswood which have been very well received.

Our Proposal

We are proposing a development of 26no. high quality affordable homes to help address the pressing need for local housing throughout the Borough. This scheme is to include a mix of bungalows, mews and semi-detached dwellings, which are designed to cater toward a range of residents, from young families to older people, who may be looking for a modern, energy efficient home in an area of high demand for affordable homes.


A development proposal in this location would provide the following:

- A mix of ownership and rental opportunities to support different housing needs.
- A mix of 1 to 3-bedroom homes to cater for a variety of people.
- Public open space, new landscaping and habitat creation to enhance the local environment.

Your Feedback Matters

As part of our commitment to working with the community, we welcome your thoughts and feedback on the proposals before we submit a planning application.

 Email us at:
copstergreen@pringlehomes.co.uk

 Please share your views by

20th February 2026

We appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you.



Appendix 2 - Catchment Area for leaflet distribution



Appendix 3- Summary Table of Consultation Responses

Copster Green Consultation Summary Table					
Principles of Development	Local Infrastructure and Services	Housing and Affordable Housing Need	Environmental Impacts	Highway and Parking Concerns	Impacts to Local Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests the proposal does not adhere to Ribble Valley's Core Strategy, stating that previous attempts at gaining planning permission have been refused at appeal due to the site's unsustainable location. • References the proposal conflicts with a number of Key Statement and Policies of the Core Strategy. • Suggestions that Brownfield development should be prioritised over development of greenfield. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of walkable local facilities and services in relation to the settlement of Copster Green. • Suggests that doctor's surgeries are oversubscribed. • Suggests that local schools are oversubscribed. • Issues with drainage capacity and maintenance along Albany Drive. • Increased strain on existing services and amenities. • Lack of play and sports facilities. • The local bus service is said to be very poor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests there is no demonstrable or pressing need for additional housing within Copster Green or throughout Ribble Valley. • Reference to the prevalence of new housing developments throughout Ribble Valley (i.e. within Whalley and Clitheroe). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential environmental concerns including loss of green space, impact on local wildlife, and increased noise and traffic pollution during both construction and long-term occupation. • Suggested that the land is currently home to a number of different animals and that the development of the land will result in major disruption to them (dens, sets and nests). • Loss of the green space would impact people's physical and mental health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns surrounding the increased pressure this development would place on local roads and traffic levels, which are already congested at peak times. • Access for large, building related machinery cannot be served via Albany Drive due to its width. • Construction disruption. • Worries regarding increased volumes of traffic at school times. • Safety worries regarding Lovely Hall Lane and Longsight Road. • Poor maintenance of surrounding roads including Albany Drive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that the development is excessive for the location. • Proposed development is referenced as inappropriate in terms of scale, density and form, and is incongruent with the surrounding settlement. • The loss of Copster Greens value for its rural character and low-density environment. • Worries regarding the proposals impacts upon the nature and setting of the community.