


**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>	MC	<b>Date:</b>	30/04/2026	<b>Manager:</b>	LH	<b>Date:</b>	5/5/26
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<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2026/0247			 <p>Ribble Valley Borough Council <a href="http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk">www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	08/04/2026	<b>Site Notice:</b>	08/04/2026	
<b>Officer:</b>	MC			
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>				<b>REFUSAL</b>

<b>Development Description:</b>	Permission in principle application for the erection of up to 9 no. dwellings, with the exact scope of demolition and retention of existing buildings to be determined at the technical details consent stage.
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	Spout Farm, Preston Road, Longridge, PR3 3BE

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
No response received from Longridge Town Council.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
<b>LCC Highways:</b>	Having reviewed the documents submitted, together with site observations, Lancashire County Council acting as the local highway authority raises no objection to permission in principle subject to conditions.
<b>United Utilities:</b>	<p>General comments made in relation to drainage. United Utilities (UU) note that their response to a subsequent technical matters application will be based upon the information that is available at the time of response and full drainage details should be provided at the Technical Details Consent stage.</p> <p>They also note that an Easement and Restricted Covenants are located on and within the site and the applicant must ensure they are aware of how this agreement affects the application site and any future development.</p>

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
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Twenty objections have been received in response to the application raising the following issues/comments:

- The red line boundary encroaches into land not owned by the applicant
- Suitable access is not provided as the applicant doesn't own the land
- Spout Lane is incomplete and a Breach of Condition Notice has been served on developer
- The site to the north is not fully developed
- Concerns regarding the re-route of the Public Right of Way
- Significant improvements required for connectivity
- No footpath to bus stop on Preston/Grimsargh side
- There is no direct access point on to Preston Road
- Letters were sent out prior to bank holiday so insufficient consultation time
- Only some properties on estate adjacent were consulted
- Further development would be detrimental to wildlife
- The site is not previously developed land and has blended back into a semi-rural character
- The granting of this permission would extend the settlement boundary and result in loss of open land character

- A meaningful assessment cannot be made of the 'amount of development' as it is for between 1 and 9 dwellings
- The lack of housing land supply does to override the need to properly assess site specific harm

## **RELEVANT POLICIES:**

### **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy

Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Key Statement H1- Housing Provision

Key Statement H2 – Housing Balance

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations

Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility

Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection

Policy DME3 - Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

### **Adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan**

## **Relevant Planning History:**

### **3/2022/0006**

Proposed variation of Condition 2 - approved plans Condition 13 - Biodiversity Condition 14 - Landscaping of planning permission ref 3/2020/0309

Approved with Conditions

### **3/2020/0309**

Erection of 34 dwellings and associated works.

Approved subject to legal agreement

### **3/2016/0580**

Proposed residential development to provide 34no new dwellings and associated works.

Approved subject to legal agreement

### **3/2013/0782**

Development of 32 dwellings including affordable housing and alterations to existing access following site clearance.

Approved subject to legal agreement

### **3/2001/003N**

ERECT 15M HIGH MONOPOLE WITH 6 ANTENNAS AND MICROWAVE DISHES, EQUIPMENT CABIN AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT IN A FENCED COMPOUND

Refused

**3/1993/0295**

CHANGE OF WINDOW TO ADDITIONAL ENTRANCE

Approved no Conditions

**3/1992/0540**

MODIFICATION OF CONDITION 3 ON 3/87/0711 TO ALLOW THE USE OF PREMISES FROM 9 AM - 12 PM

Approved no Conditions

**3/1990/0672**

ERECTION OF DOMESTIC GARAGE

Approved with Conditions

**3/1990/0671**

EXTENSION TO USE OF CAFE AND ERECTION OF COVERED ACCESS

Approved with Conditions

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:****Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The site comprises an area of land known as 'Spout Farm'. The site is located to the south of the settlement of Longridge, immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary, within the Open Countryside. There is an existing farmhouse at the site and stone buildings which previously have been in commercial use as a former plant nursery. There is also an operational yard to the east of the site, which has been historically used as part of the applicant's forestry business, including the storage of heavy goods vehicles. All commercial uses have now ceased.

There is an access to the site off Spout Lane and the northern and western boundaries are bounded by trees/vegetation.

**Principle of Development:**

Permission in Principle applications may only deal with the principle of development and are not applications for planning permission. Any other details relating to any other material planning consideration are to be dealt with within any future Technical Details application. Planning practice guidance confirms the scope of permission in principle as being limited to matters of location, land use and amount of development. As such these matters have been assessed as follows:-

Location

The application seeks permission in principle for the erection of between 1 no. and 9no. residential dwellings. As such, it is necessary to consider whether the location of the proposed new dwellings would be compatible with the overall spatial strategy for housing growth within the borough as identified within the currently adopted development strategy.

When considering the principle of a new residential dwelling, Key Statement DS1 states that:

*The majority of new housing development will be:*

- *concentrated within an identified strategic site located to the south of Clitheroe towards the A59; and the principal settlements of:*
- *Clitheroe;*

- Longridge; and
- Whalley.

*In addition to the strategic site at Standen and the Borough's principal settlements, development will be focused towards the Tier 1 Villages, which are the more sustainable of the 32 defined settlements:*

- Barrow
- Billington
- Chatburn
- Gisburn
- Langho
- Mellor
- Mellor Brook
- Read & Simonstone
- Wilpshire

The first part of Policy DMG2 states that:

*'Development should be in accordance with the core strategy development strategy and should support the spatial vision.*

*1. development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement'.*

The second part of this policy requires development within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six considerations which are listed as follows:

- 1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area.*
- 2. The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.*
- 3. The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
- 4. The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
- 5. The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*
- 6. The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation'.*

Policy DMH3 seeks to limit residential development in the open countryside and AONB to development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need.

The site is located immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Longridge. The proposal would not be for local needs housing or meet any of the other exceptions for allowing development outside of the settlement boundary within the designated countryside, as such the proposal fails to accord with policies DS1, DMG2 and DMH3.

The most recently published five-year housing land supply figure for the Ribble Valley (base date of 31st March 2025) indicated that Ribble Valley Borough Council has a housing land supply of 6.2 years. However, a recent appeal decision (appeal ref: APP/T2350/W/25/3372635) has found that the Council no longer have a Five-Year Housing Land Supply and the housing supply is calculated to be 3.45 years.

The consequence of not having a 5YHLS is that paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in the decision-making process. On this basis the restrictive approach toward new housing development outside of settlements must be considered to be out-of-date.

Specifically for decision taking this means if the most relevant Local Plan policies for determining a planning application are out of date (such as when a 5YHLS cannot be demonstrated), granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination

In terms of areas or assets of particular importance referred to at subsection i) above, these are identified as habitats sites and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, or a National Landscape, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest...); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

The site comprises an existing farmhouse and stone built commercial buildings. These buildings are noted on historical maps from 1910 and due to their age, can reasonably be considered Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Whilst the building is considered to be a NDHA, the application site is not affected by any such areas or assets outlined above and as such, subsection i) does not apply.

In which case the tilted balance should be applied and sub section ii) of Para 11d) requires the LPA to consider whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

In terms of whether the site is in a sustainable location, as referred to at ii.) above and as required by policies DM12 and DMG3 of the RVCS, the site is located just outside the settlement boundary of Longridge, along Preston Road.

Whilst the site is located just outside the settlement boundary, the site is not located within close walking distance to the amenities within Longridge Town Centre. The site is approximately a 10 minute walk from a local convenience store at Mardale Road. However, this convenience store does not offer post office facilities and the post office is located over 20 minutes away by foot. Whilst the site is located within walking distance to a local pub and secondary school, the closest primary school by foot is Alston Lane Catholic Primary school which would involve walking along Preston Road which is a busy main road out of Longridge towards Grimsargh. In addition, the closest community centre/hall is located over 20 minutes away by foot.

When reviewing the bus services, it is noted that this is a frequent service running from 5.29am approximately to 23.46 approximately every half hourly in the morning, every 10-15 minutes during the day and every half hourly again in the evenings. Many objectors note that there is no crossing point to access the bus service heading towards Longridge as the developer as part of the 'Sandpipers' estate has failed to fulfil this requirement. The Local Highway Authority have suggested that at the technical details stage, upgrade works could be secured by planning condition as part of a Section 278 agreement.

Whilst there is a frequent bus service into Longridge and Preston, it is not considered that the bus route should be solely relied upon for the purposes of assessing whether a site is in a sustainable location. The walking route into Longridge to access key services and facilities and the primary school in the opposite direction is not considered to be an attractive mode of transport due to the busy nature of the road and the distance from the application site to such facilities.

As such, future occupiers of the dwellings are likely to rely on private motor vehicle to access key services and facilities, and the site is not considered to be a suitable or sustainable location for housing.

It is acknowledged that residential developments exist to the north and west of the site. Whilst the residential development to the north of the site at the 'Sandpipers' estate was granted under planning ref: 3/2020/0309 (and subsequently varied under planning ref: 3/2022/0006), the principle of development was established under a previous planning application from 2013 when a more light-touch approach to determining whether or not a site is sustainable was taken. In terms of the development to the west of the site, whilst the Council may have previously considered that site to be a sustainable location in 2017 (planning ref: 3/2016/0974), that scheme was for 275 dwellings and a local neighbourhood centre in an attempt to provide some facilities within walking distance for future residents.

### Land use

Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy stipulates that all development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature. In this instance, the proposal seeks to introduce new housing to the application site which is located within a predominantly residential setting (where the commercial use has ceased to use and would be demolished).

The applicants planning statement states that to facilitate the regeneration of this site, the proposed development encompasses the principle of demolition and site clearance and whilst the exact scope of demolition would be deferred to the Technical Details Consent stage, the applicant puts forward both the demolition of the farmhouse as well as its retention and integration into the scheme.

Notwithstanding the above, regardless of the final configuration of the site, the applicant confirms that the total net number of dwellings will not exceed nine.

As such, notwithstanding the objections to the scheme noting that the site has blended back into a semi-rural character, the proposed use of the land within the application site for residential development would be sympathetic to the prevailing residential character of the area. Accordingly, the proposed development would be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG1 and is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to land use.

### Amount of development

Policy DMG1 states:

'All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style...particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings...'

In this instance permission in principle is sought for the development of between one and nine dwellings. No indicative site layout has been provided.

It should be noted that the existing farmhouse is considered to be a Non-Designated Heritage Asset and any development within its surrounds would impact upon its setting. Notwithstanding the above, it is considered that the application site is of a sufficient size to be able to accommodate up to nine dwellings (eight additional dwellings, if the farmhouse were to be retained) with associated gardens and parking areas. As such, the proposed development would be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG1 and is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to the amount of development being proposed.

It is also relevant to consider at this stage whether or not the amount of residential development could be successfully integrated within the landscape. The immediate streetscene comprises of frontage development of a larger density to the proposed development (Sandpipers estate to the North) and the recently developed Alston Grange estate to the west, on the opposite side of the road. As such, the proposed dwellings would be read in this context.

As such, notwithstanding the final detailed design of the scheme, there is no objection on visual impact regarding the amount of development proposed.

#### **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**

This application relates solely to principle of development and whether the proposal would align with the spatial and locational strategy of the borough.

As such, the impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of surrounding residential properties does not fall to be assessed within the scope of this application and would be reserved for consideration/assessment following the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

#### **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**

The remit of assessment of the application is limited to solely that of the principle of the development and as to whether the proposed development would align with the spatial and locational aspirations for residential development within the Borough.

As such, matters relating to the potential for adverse impact(s) upon the character or visual amenities of the area resultant from the development cannot be fully determined or assessed at this stage and will be reserved for considerations/ assessment at any subsequent pursuant 'Technical Matters' submission(s).

#### **Highways and Parking:**

There have been a number of objections to the scheme on highway/pedestrian safety grounds, including access. Firstly, neighbours raise concerns that despite the planning statement suggesting there is, there is no direct access on to Preston Road and that the access from Spout Lane is not in the ownership of the applicant.

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) have provided comments on the scheme and note that the site currently has two existing access points, one access sits to the north of the site, leading from an unadopted road, Spout Lane and another access from Preston Road (which serves the farmhouse). Preston Road is classified as the B6243 and is subject to a 30mph speed limit passing the site. Whilst limited details have been provided during this stage of the Planning In Principle application within the supporting document, there is a suggestion that the site could utilise the access from Preston Road. The LHA consider that there are opportunities to create an access from Preston Road or Spout Lane and whilst there are concerns over conflict with the number of accesses in close proximity on Preston Road, the LHA is of the opinion that an engineering solution can be discussed at stage 2 and further information would need to be provided at a technical details stage, should planning approval be granted.

The LHA would look for an access which is a minimum of 5.5m wide, to support two-way traffic movement, as well as an access that can provide acceptable visibility splays. The access should also feature 2m footways on either side. The footway should also be supported by crossing facilities featuring tactile paving in line with inclusive mobility guidance. Given speeding concerns on Preston Road, the LHA would request that the applicant undertake a traffic study to assess traffic speeds. The traffic study would need to be carried out by an approved specialist showing the 85th percentile road traffic speeds in both directions, along with the numbers of vehicles, types of vehicles and the speed of vehicles passing the access, with the raw data being made available for review. They consider that the traffic study should be conducted over a 1-week period in a neutral month (I.E., April, May, June, September, October) and the survey should avoid school holidays, extreme weather, and other anomalies that could skew data.

In addition, submitted visibility splays should be in line with the 85th percentile of road traffic speeds and should be wholly within the land which the applicant controls and/or the adopted highway and nothing shall

be erected, retained, planted and / or allowed to grow at or 3 above a height of 0.9 metres above the nearside carriageway level which would obstruct the visibility splay of the proposed access.

The LHA also consider that a Transport Statement should be submitted in support of this application at the technical details stage.

Previously, there was a desire to create a 2m footway fronting the site, which would provide pedestrian access to a bus stops situated on Preston Road. However, this has not yet been implemented. As such, it is expected that the developer provides the footway which would benefit future residents of the site as well as other local residents.

The internal layout of the siter would also be assessed at the technical details stage but the LHA would expect the proposed development to comply with the LHAs parking guidance as defined in the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan.

#### **Landscape/Ecology:**

Appropriate surveys would be required to be undertaken (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal) given the close proximity to mature trees and submitted in support of any subsequent 'Technical Matters' submission to determine whether the proposal is likely to result in adverse impacts upon protected species or species of conservation concern.

In addition, at the 'Technical Matters' stage, the applicant would be required to demonstrate how the proposal would achieve the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net-Gain or provide an appropriate exemption in accordance with Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

#### **Other matters**

Comments from United Utilities indicate that there is an easement and restrictive covenants which run directly through the application site. An application for technical details consent would be expected to demonstrate how the development could come forward without compromising these assets. In any event, this would be a separate matter for the landowner to resolve with United Utilities. A Flood Risk Assessment would also be required at the technical consent stage as the site is at risk of surface water flooding.

There have been a number of concerns from the occupiers of neighbouring properties regarding land ownership. A number of concerns have been raised that the applicant does not own part of the site (in particular, the area used to access the site). It is suggested within the objections that the application should be refused as the applicant does not own the land.

It should be noted that whilst a Certificate B would usually be signed for a scenario where the applicant does not own the land, for a permission in principle application, this is not something that would result in permission in principle being refused and would be dealt with at the technical details stage.

A Public Rights of Way (FP0302118) runs through the application site. Notwithstanding concerns from objectors to the scheme that the route is currently blocked off, the LHA note within their response that they would be able to provide further advice on the route should the application be approved and progress to the technical details stage. They consider that the developer should include the Definitive Public Right of Way on plans provided in the future.

#### **Conclusion and Planning Balance:**

For the above reasons the proposal fails to accord with the development plan. However, as the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing supply Paragraph 11d is engaged. On this basis the restrictive approach toward new housing development outside main settlements must be considered to be out-of-date.

The tilted balance has been applied and as set out below the harms would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits so its application would not change the outcome.

Sub section ii) of Para 11d) requires the LPA to consider whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Paragraph 11d) section ii) also requires the LPA to have particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, and for the reasons outlined within this statement it is not considered that the development is in a suitable or sustainable location as there would be a reliance on private motor vehicle for future occupiers to access key services and facilities.

The benefits of the development have been considered, namely the delivery of housing especially in the context of a lack of 5YHLS, albeit the development would only contribute up to nine dwellings to the Council's housing supply as such this is considered to carry low/moderate weight. There would also be the benefit of consumer expenditure in the area, construction jobs and supporting the building industry supply chain. However, given the development is only for up to nine dwellings these benefits are considered to carry limited weight.

The granting of residential development in this location is considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and even on the application of the tilted balance, there would not be justification to grant planning permission.

As such, this application is recommended for refusal.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	That Permission in Principle be refused.
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<b>01:</b>	The proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) insofar that approval would lead to the creation of up to nine new residential dwellings in an unsustainable location whereby there would be a reliance on private motor vehicle by occupiers of the dwellings to access key services and facilities.
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