



# ROMAN SUMMER



—  
**PLANNING STATEMENT**  
—

**BRIDGECROFT, LONGSIGHT ROAD, COPSTER GREEN**

—  
**APRIL 2026**  
—

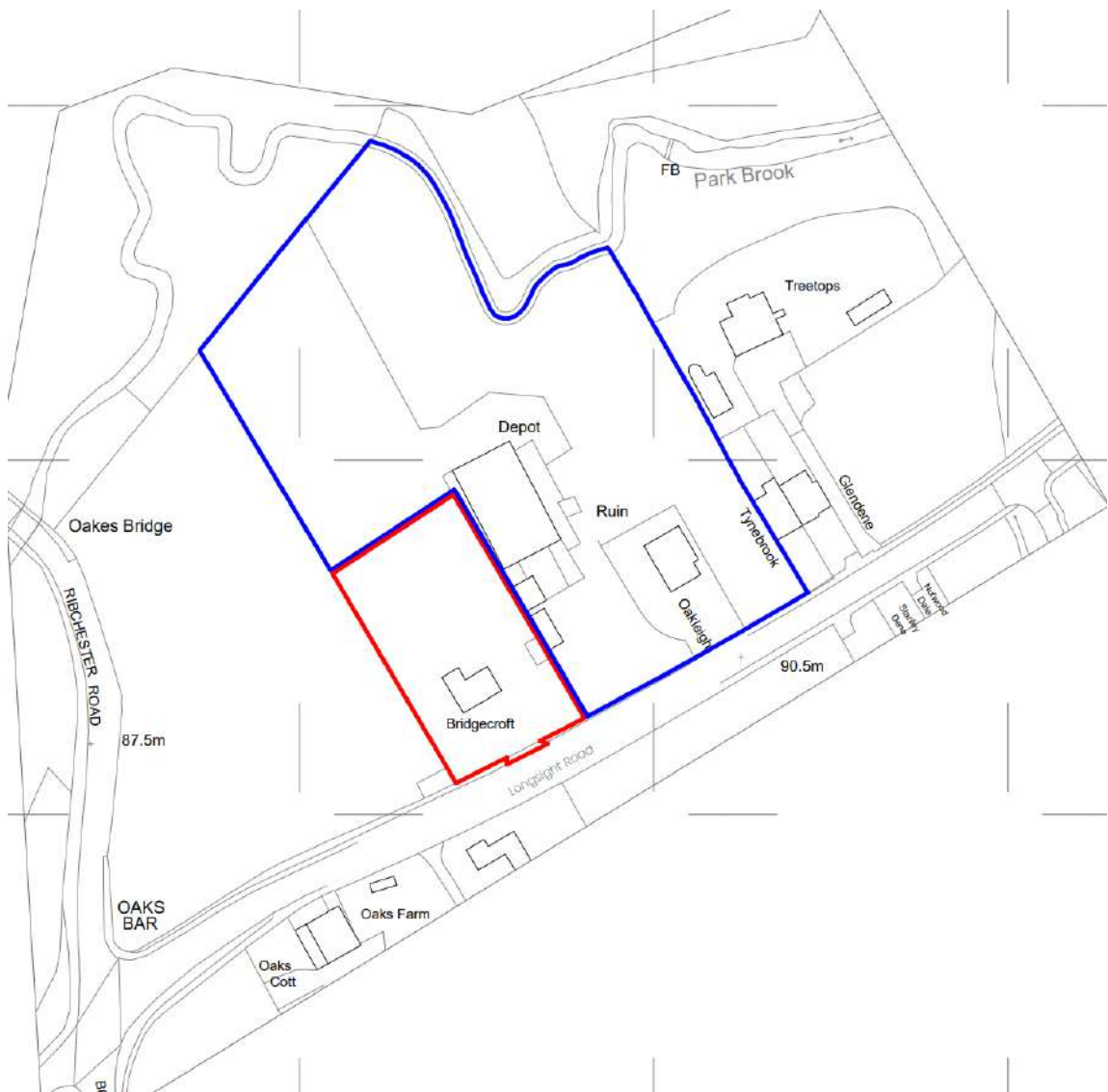
# PLANNING STATEMENT

## — BRIDGECROFT, LONGSIGHT ROAD, COPSTER GREEN PROPOSED REPLACEMENT SELF-BUILD HOUSE

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Introduction	3
2. The Site and Context	6
3. Pre-Application Feedback	10
4. The Proposal	12
5. Consistency with the Development Plan	16
6. Consistency with the NPPF	23
7. Overall Balance and Conclusions	26

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement supports a full planning application submitted by Dr. Javed Iqbal, which proposes the demolition of the existing dwelling known as 'Bridgecroft', Longsight Road, Copster Green, and the erection of a replacement self-build dwelling with garage and associated garden curtilage, hard and soft landscaping, to be accessed via a new access drive formed off Longsight Road, and the closure of the existing access. The application site is marked by the red line below, and the Applicant's wider land ownership is highlighted in blue.



1.2 This application follows helpful pre-application feedback provided by the LPA. That feedback was largely supportive of the proposal and is summarised in section 3.0 of this Statement. The scheme details have been adjusted in positive response to that advice.

- 1.3 This Statement summarises the content of the planning application and the proposal in what we hope is a clear and informative way. It assesses the merits of the planning application against relevant planning policies at both the national and local level, and discusses other material factors that call for consideration as part of the overall planning balance.

### **Application Content**

- 1.4 The application comprises:
- Application form
  - This Planning Statement
  - Design and Access Statement (Habitat Architecture)
  - Arboricultural Impact Assessment with Arboricultural Method Statement (Pennine Ecology)
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Pennine Ecology)
  - Bat Activity Survey Results Report (Pennine Ecology)
  - The following drawings (Habitat Architecture):
    - PL1.00 – Location Plan
    - PL1.01 – Site Plans
    - PL1.02 – Area Plans
    - PL1.03 – Existing House Plans
    - PL1.04 – Proposed Lower Ground and Ground Floor Plans
    - PL1.05 – Proposed First Floor and Roof Plan
    - PL1.06 – Proposed Layout Plan
    - PL1.07 – Proposed Demo and Level Plans
    - PL1.08 – Proposed Landscape Plan
    - PL2.01 – Proposed Elevations
    - PL2.02 – Proposed Elevations
    - PL3.01 – Site Sections

1.5 The remainder of this Statement is structured as below:

- Section 2.0 describes the application site and context.
- Section 3.0 reviews the LPA's pre-application advice.
- Section 4.0 describes the proposal.
- Section 5.0 discusses the consistency of the proposal with the Development Plan
- Section 6.0 discusses its consistency with the NPPF as important material consideration
- Section 7.0 sets out the overall planning balance and our conclusions

## 2.0 The Application Site and its Context

- 2.1 The application site is 0.33 ha and is located circa 4 km north of Blackburn.
- 2.2 It sites on the periphery of the village of Copster Green, which is served by its own primary school, a village hall and a pub.
- 2.3 Copster Green is well connected, with easy access to the M6 motorway. It is served by several local and regional bus routes providing connections to key destinations in the area. The main services include the no 25 route, which operates between Clitheroe and Blackburn, with stops in Copster Green (Wheatley Farm and Park Gate Road), typically running approximately every two hours throughout the day. The no. 280 is a more frequent service linking Preston, Clitheroe, and Skipton, with hourly departures. Additional services such as the 458 and 616 provide further links between Clitheroe and Brownhill or Lammack, respectively. Several school-focused services, including the 623 and 859, operate during peak times to connect students with Clitheroe Royal Grammar School and surrounding areas.
- 2.4 The image below identifies the application site in red in the context of Copster Green.



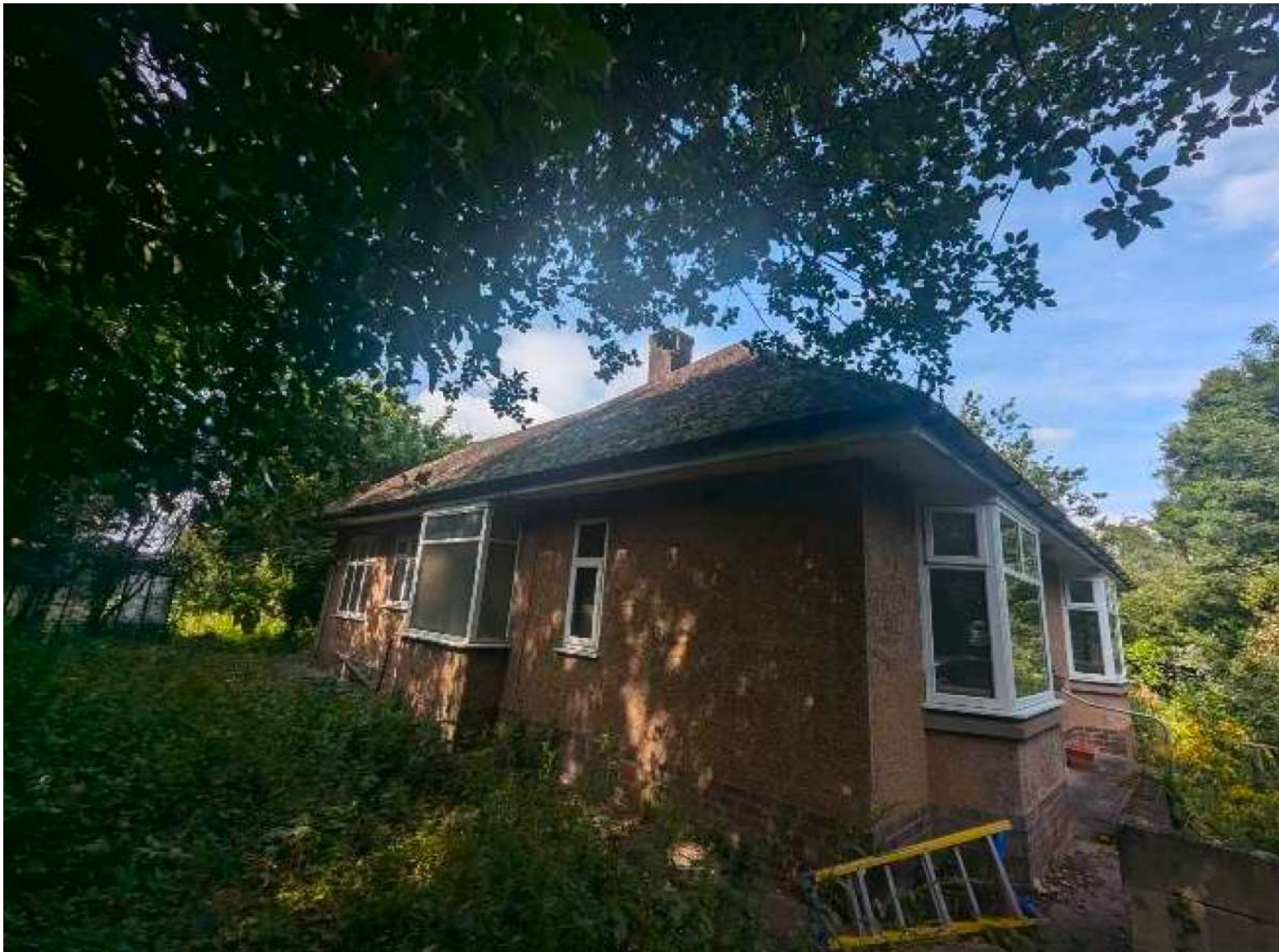
- 2.5 The site is currently occupied by a somewhat down-at-heel dormer bungalow known as 'Bridgecroft' (see photograph below).



- 2.6 The Applicant purchased the house in August 2024, and initially contemplated refurbishing it, and either selling or letting it. However, he has since considered the site's obvious redevelopment potential to provide a new home for his family, and hence this planning application.

- 2.7 Set within overgrown and unmanaged grounds, the dwelling presents itself as tired and outdated, lacking any architectural merit. Its shabby condition, combined with its restricted size and inefficient form and layout, provides a strong case for its replacement

with a new dwelling of higher environmental performance and superior architectural quality.

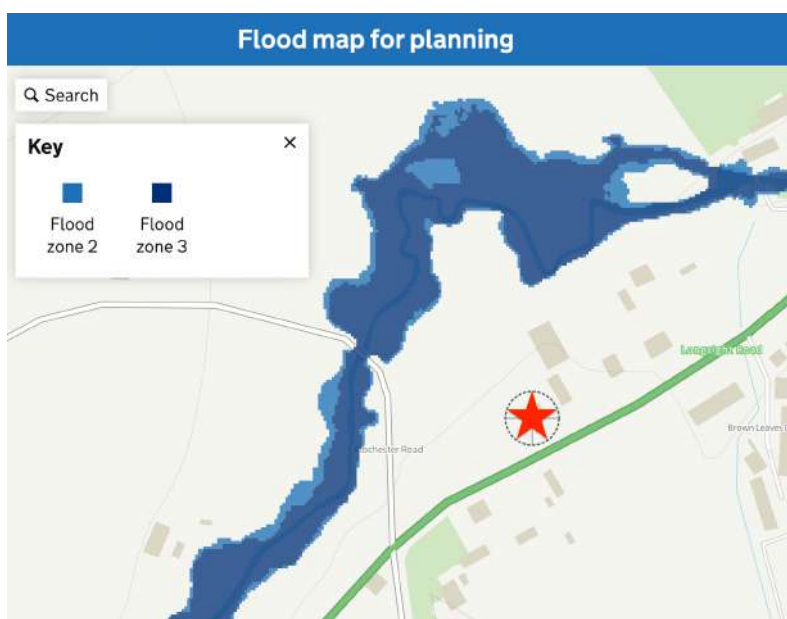


2.8 Beyond the house itself, the site contains a detached garage and is otherwise overgrown and untidy.

2.9 The site does not sit within or close to a Conservation Area, and, as confirmed on the extract below from Historic England’s Listing Map, it is not close to any listed buildings. The closest listed building is the Grade II ‘Oaks Bar’ at the junction of Longsight Road and Oaks Brow (road), but that is at some distant from the site, with no intervisibility. The proposed redevelopment will therefore have no bearing on the heritage status or legibility of Oaks Bar or any other heritage asset.



2.10 As confirmed on the extract below from EA’s Flood Risk Map, the site does not sit in a high flood risk zone, and the same map confirms that there is no localised flooding.



### **3.0 Pre-Application Feedback**

- 3.1 A slightly different / earlier version of the proposal was presented to the LPA as part of the pre-application process. A meeting was held with the nominated officer, and the LPA's feedback was duly set out in a helpful and broadly positive letter dated 18th December 2025 (ref: RV/2025/ENQ/00097). We summarise the content of that letter below.
- 3.2 The pre-application response confirms that the site lies within the Open Countryside, approximately 75 metres from the settlement boundary of Copster Green, and therefore outside of defined settlement limits. As a result, it was suggested that a number of policies within the Ribble Valley Core Strategy are engaged, including Key Statements DS1, DS2, EN3, EN4, H1 and H2 together with Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMG3 and DMH3, alongside relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.3 Notwithstanding the site's countryside location, the Council acknowledged that the proposal relates to the replacement of an existing dwelling. In this context, the pre-application response confirms that Policy DMH3 allows for the rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings in the open countryside, provided the building has not been abandoned and that the replacement would not have a greater impact on the surrounding landscape or require the extension of the existing residential curtilage. The officer indicated that, in principle, the replacement of the existing dwelling at the site would be acceptable subject to appropriate consideration of siting, scale and design.
- 3.4 During the pre-application discussions, the siting and scale of the proposed replacement dwelling were considered. The officer advised that the revised position of the dwelling within the plot, set further back within the site, could be acceptable in principle. However, a query was raised regarding the proximity of the building to the eastern boundary of the site, noting that the future use of adjacent land and buildings (also owned by the Applicant) had not been fully explored. Advice was also given that the proposed garage should remain limited to a double garage, with dormer features omitted and the ridge height limited to a single-storey scale. The scheme has been adjusted in response to that request.

- 3.5 In design terms, the Council noted that the proposal represents a contemporary architectural approach incorporating stone and render finishes with extensive glazing. The officer considered that the general design approach could be acceptable within the context of the surrounding development and landscape setting, subject to consideration of materials and its visual relationship with the surrounding landscape. Attention was drawn to the rear elevation of the dwelling, which it was suggested might be visible from longer distance views due to the topography of the site, and it was recommended that sections and visual assessments be considered to demonstrate that the proposal would integrate appropriately with the landscape.
- 3.6 In relation to residential amenity, the pre-application response notes that the nearest neighbouring dwellings are located at a reasonable distance from the site, including Oakleigh (the Applicant's current home) approximately 28 metres away. On the basis of the information provided, the officer did not identify any concerns regarding overlooking or privacy impacts, although it was noted that further detail relating to land levels and sections through the site would be required at the application stage in order to fully assess potential impacts.
- 3.7 The Council also provided advice on a number of technical matters. In particular, it was recommended that ecological surveys be undertaken, including a preliminary bat roost assessment of the existing dwelling. The retention of existing trees and vegetation where possible was encouraged, together with the submission of a landscaping scheme to soften the development and enhance biodiversity.
- 3.8 Overall, the pre-application response concluded that, subject to revisions to the detailed design and the submission of appropriate supporting technical information, the proposal for a replacement dwelling could represent an acceptable form of development.

## **4.0 The Proposal**

- 4.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling known as Bridgecroft and its associated garage, and the construction of a replacement dwelling with double garage. The new dwelling is conceived as a high-quality self-build family home designed to meet the long term needs and aspirations of our client.
- 4.2 By way of background, the applicant currently resides at the property known as 'Oaklea', located next-door-but-one to the application site. In the event that planning permission is granted, he intends - working alongside his appointed contractor - to supervise / project manage the construction of the replacement dwelling as a self-build project, before relocating there with his family.
- 4.3 As illustrated in the submitted drawings and the accompanying Design and Access Statement, the proposed dwelling has been designed to respond to the site's topography, landscape setting and the prevailing pattern of development along this part of the road. When viewed from the front, the building be largely screened by boundary landscaping, and will present as a two-storey dwelling, thereby maintaining a domestic scale that reflects the character of neighbouring properties.
- 4.4 The pronounced downward slope of the land to the rear provides the opportunity to step the building with the natural gradient, enabling the creation of a lower ground level and therefore three storeys of internal accommodation when viewed from the rear. This arrangement allows the dwelling to integrate with the site levels while providing generous internal living space, together with terraces and balconies designed to take advantage of the impressive views across the surrounding landscape.
- 4.5 The Design and Access Statement explains that the architectural approach has sought to create a contemporary dwelling of high design quality that sits comfortably within its context.



- 4.6 Careful consideration has been given to the selection of external materials to ensure that the new dwelling achieves a high standard of design while integrating appropriately with its surroundings.
- 4.7 The architectural language of the proposed dwelling draws inspiration from both traditional and modern forms of architecture found throughout the local area. The design incorporates a palette of high quality materials and simple architectural forms, including natural stone walling, areas of render finish, slate roof coverings, simple gabled and hipped roof forms, recessed window openings and robust masonry detailing, all of which reflect and reinterpret the characteristic features of surrounding development.

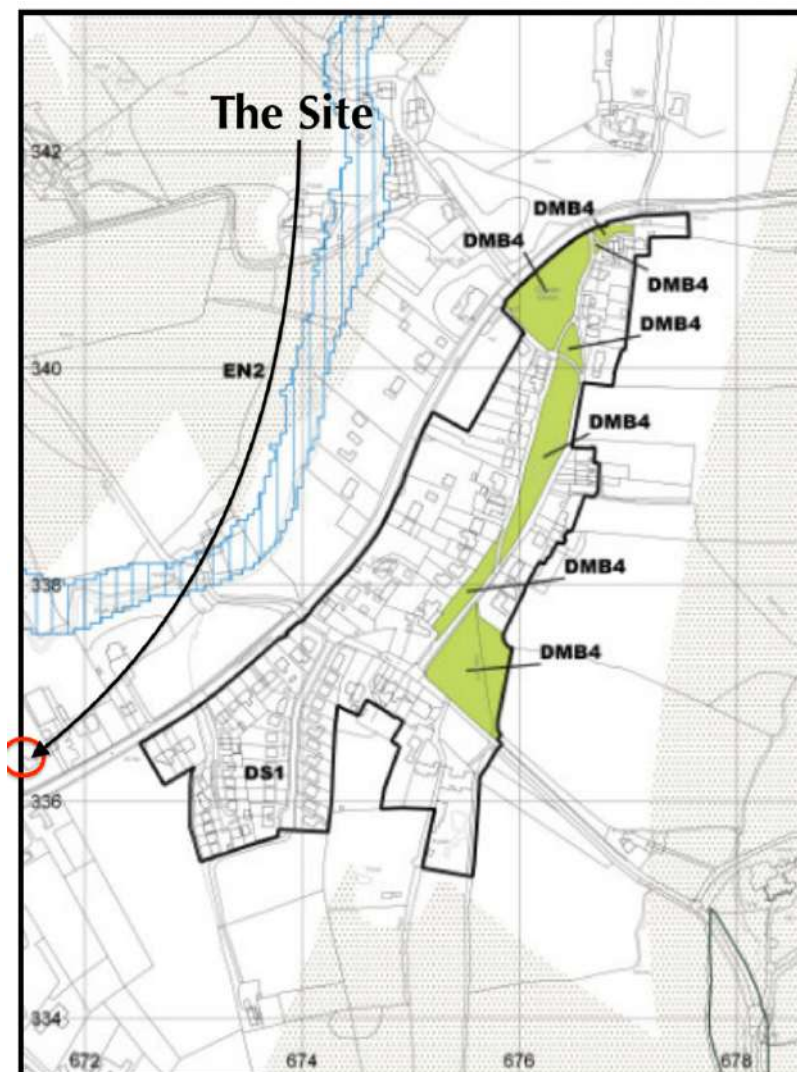
- 4.8 The roof is proposed to be finished in a dark natural slate, a material that is widely used across the local area. The use of slate will also contribute to the overall durability and longevity of the dwelling.
- 4.9 Fenestration will consist of aluminium framed windows and doors in a dark, recessive colour finish. The slender framing and darker tone will help reduce visual prominence while allowing the glazing to maximise daylight and views across the surrounding landscape. Glazed balustrades are proposed to external terraces and balconies in order to maintain open views from the principal living spaces without introducing visually heavy elements to the elevations.
- 4.10 The proposed double garage will utilise a complementary palette of materials to ensure visual cohesion with the main dwelling, including matching stonework and roof materials. Garage doors will be finished in a dark tone to coordinate with the window frames and other architectural elements.
- 4.11 The overall material palette has been selected to balance contemporary architectural design with a sensitivity to the character of the site and its surroundings. The use of robust, high quality materials will ensure that the dwelling weathers well over time while contributing positively to the visual quality of the area.
- 4.12 The proposal also includes the rationalisation and improvement of the site's access arrangements. The existing historic access points will be closed and replaced with a single, centrally positioned vehicular access, leading to a frontage parking and manoeuvring area, providing safe and convenient access to the dwelling and garage. This arrangement represents a more logical and safer form of access when compared with the current arrangement, while also improving the visual appearance of the site frontage.
- 4.13 The Design and Access Statement explains that careful attention has been given to the layout and organisation of the site to ensure that the new dwelling sits comfortably within the generous plot. The proposed building footprint remains well contained within the site boundaries, allowing substantial areas of landscaped garden to be retained to the front, sides and rear. The layout also ensures that the dwelling maintains

appropriate separation distances from neighbouring properties, thereby protecting residential amenity in terms of privacy, outlook and daylight.

- 4.14 The application is supported by a tree survey and impact assessment prepared by Pennine Ecological. This confirms that the site currently contains a mixture of overgrown and unmanaged trees and vegetation, some of which will require removal in order to accommodate the proposed development and associated access arrangements. However, the assessment also confirms that the proposal has been designed to retain most significant trees within the site where practicable, while ensuring that appropriate protection measures can be implemented during construction.
- 4.15 In addition to the retention of suitable existing trees, the proposal includes a comprehensive landscape strategy which will enhance the quality and structure of planting across the site. The submitted Proposed Landscape Plan includes new tree planting within the front garden and rear garden areas together with extensive areas of shrub and ornamental planting designed to reinforce the verdant character of the plot. The landscape proposals include new specimen trees and layered planting beds that will soften the appearance of the development, provide visual screening from the road and neighbouring properties, and contribute to biodiversity through the introduction of a range of suitable species.
- 4.16 Overall, the combined effect of the retained vegetation and proposed new planting will ensure that the new dwelling sits comfortably within a well landscaped setting, maintaining the green character of the site while delivering a more coherent and ecologically valuable landscape than the current unmanaged vegetation.

## 5.0 Consistency with the Development Plan

- 5.1 The development plan is the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted in December 2014).
- 5.2 The extract below (from the Policy Map Inset 13) confirms that the site sits just beyond the identified settlement boundary of Copster Green as it was identified 11 years ago.
- 5.3 In spite of that boundary prepared well over a decade ago, it is our contention that the application site / dwelling forms part and parcel of the settlement of Copster Green and calls to be assessed as such.
- 5.4 Copster Green is identified as a “Tier 2” settlement in the Core Strategy.



**Inset 13 - Copster Green**

- 5.5 **Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy** states that the majority of new housing will be concentrated the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. However, it also states that, in the 23 Tier 2 Village settlements (which includes Copster Green), development will need to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits. It adds that development that has recognised regeneration benefits, is for identified local needs or satisfies neighbourhood planning legislation, will be considered in all the borough's settlements, including small-scale development in the smaller settlements that are appropriate for consolidation and expansion or rounding-off of the built up area.
- 5.6 In that regard, the limitations and somewhat poor state of the current house and the overgrown, unmanaged site call for attention, and we suggest is an obvious candidate for change and 'regeneration' within the village context.
- 5.7 It is also important to emphasise that this proposal does not seek to introduce a new house, but rather replace an existing poor quality house.
- 5.8 Furthermore, we are aware that, in the recent appeal decision relating to land south of Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn (7 January 2026), the Inspector concluded that Ribble Valley can demonstrate only 3.45 years' housing land supply, significantly below the five year requirement. Consequently, the Inspector found that the relevant housing policies should be considered out-of-date and that the tilted balance in favour of sustainable development is engaged.
- 5.9 **Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** states that, when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.10 We suggest that the proposal is sustainable on various counts. It seeks to regenerate / make good and efficiently use a brownfield, unprepossessing site within the context of a sustainable village context. It will remove a poor quality house and introduce a far superior replacement of excellent design quality.

- 5.11 **Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations** reflects **Key Statement DS1**, stating that development should be in accordance with the development strategy and should support the spatial vision:

*'Development proposals in defined settlements 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.'*

- 5.12 We again suggest that the site forms part of this settlement (Copster Green), that the proposal is *'closely related'* and – whilst larger than the existing house – is very much *'appropriate'* to the scale of the site itself (which is sizeable and currently inefficiently used) and the remainder of the settlement.
- 5.13 We suggest that, simply because the site sits just beyond the defined settlement boundary does not equate to the existing house not forming part of the village. It is well established at appeal that Planning Inspectors will consider a variety of factors when considering village boundaries in the context of planning appeals. While settlement boundaries defined in Local Plans carry weight, innumerable Inspectors have recognised that sites outside these boundaries can be considered part of a village, depending on their physical relationship to the existing settlement, accessibility to services, and the character of the surrounding area.
- 5.14 For example, in APP/P1560/W/17/3184921) [Mistley, Essex], the Inspector noted that the site was located outside the defined settlement boundary, but had a stronger affinity with the village than the open countryside beyond. Consequently he allowed the appeal, recognising the site as part of the village context.
- 5.15 It is therefore part of our case that – irrespective of the fact that the Core Strategy defined the settlement boundary slightly distant from the subject site - the reality is that the site is closely linked with, affiliated to and forms part and parcel of the village. The proposal should accordingly be assessed as forming part of the village, rather than outside it.
- 5.16 However, we are mindful that the LPA may disagree with that assessment and stated in its pre-application letter that it considers that the site falls within the Open Countryside.

In which case, Policy DMG2 continues in stating that, outside the settlement areas, development must meet at least one of the following considerations:

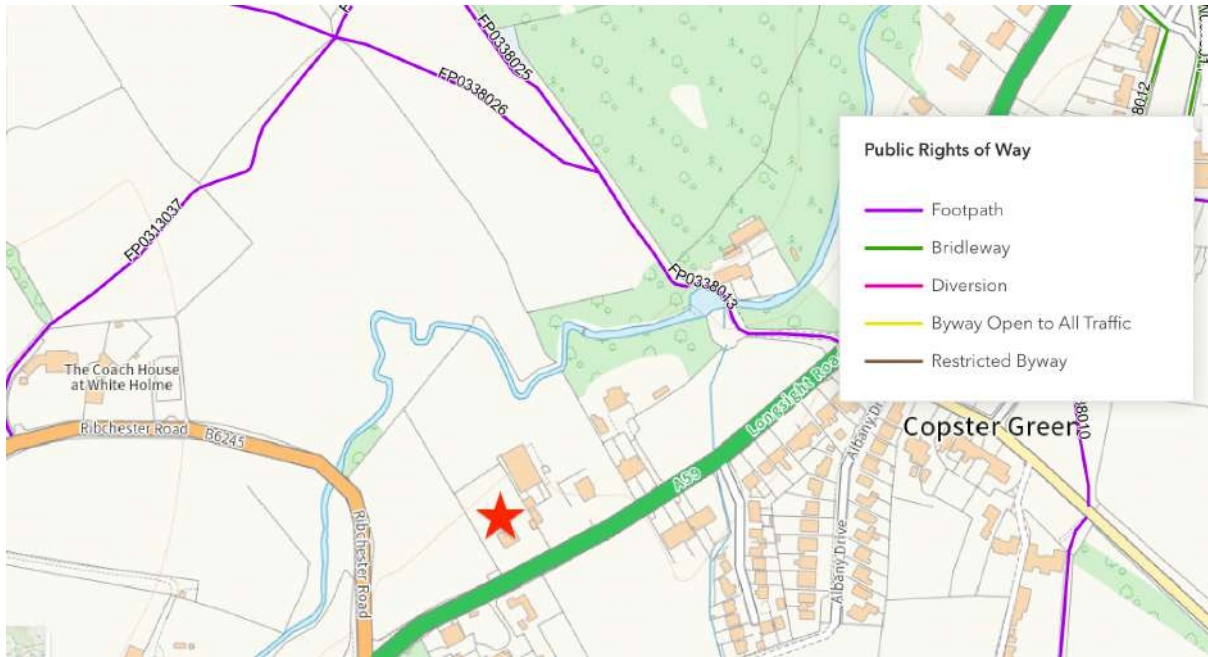
- The development should be essential to the local economy or social well being of the area.
- The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.
- The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need.
- The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.
- The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.
- The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation. Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.

5.17 The proposal intends to serve a local need in that our client – who already lives in the village and intends to stay there – wishes to build a self-build home for himself and his wife. No self-build plots are available elsewhere in the village, and as such this site represents the only such opportunity to serve our client’s housing need.

5.18 It is possible that Ribble Valley Council is in possession / knowledge of self-build plots that are available in its area, but our investigations have not revealed any. Here it is worth highlighting NPPF §73, which notes that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites, it tells local planning authorities that they should, *inter alia*:

*‘seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to **support small sites to come forward for** community-led development for housing and **self-build** and custom-build housing’*

- 5.19 None of the other criteria of DMG2 relate to the replacement of existing houses. That seems a peculiar omission, given that it is well established that replacing houses is generally deemed acceptable in principle, including in locations far more sensitive than this (for example, in the Green Belt).
- 5.20 We venture that it cannot possibly be the purpose or intent of this policy to resist all and any applications to replace existing houses anywhere in Ribble Valley unless those are located within defined settlements. That would be a perverse and illogical stance to adopt. It would also directly contradict the provisions of Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB, which explicitly states that - in the Open Countryside - residential development will be limited to, *inter alia*:
- *The rebuilding or **replacement of existing dwellings** subject to the following criteria:*
    - *The residential use of the property should not have been abandoned.*
    - *There being no adverse impact on the landscape in relation to the new dwelling.*
    - *The need to extend an existing curtilage.*
- 5.21 Considering those three criteria, the existing dwelling may be dated and is currently unused, but its use as a house has certainly not been abandoned.
- 5.22 In terms of the second criterion, there will be no materially adverse impact on the landscape. Whilst parts of the overgrown, unkempt planting will be removed to accommodate the new house, much will remain and will be supplemented by new planting. Aside from glimpsed (400 metre distant) views from PROWs (see extract on following page from LCC's PROW Map), seen in the context of trees and hedgerows, the rear of the proposed house will be close to imperceptible from public vantage points, and – apart from modification of the front entrance – public views from the front (Longsight Road) will be negligible.



- 5.23 In terms of the third policy criterion, there is no need or intention to extend the existing curtilage, which will remain the same as the existing house.
- 5.24 We therefore suggest that there is no conflict with Policy DMH3, which would bring into question any alleged conflict with DMG2 (as highlighted above), the intent of which cannot be to prevent the replacement of existing houses in the countryside, which is explicitly deemed appropriate in DMH3.
- 5.25 There is no conflict with **Policy DMG1: General Considerations**, which requires high standards of building design and sympathy / respect to the setting and context. The existing house is uninspiring. While the proposed house is larger, that in itself is not of overriding consideration. No policy exists (outside Green Belt) that states or infers that a replacement house must not be larger than the existing one. What is important is that the replacement house is well designed, respectful, contextual and results in no material visual or other harm.
- 5.26 The proposal will result in no such harm. It is of excellent design quality, respecting and reflecting features and materiality of the surfeit of types and styles of houses in the local area. That mix is striking in that there is not a 'fixed' style or character, but rather a 'mish-mash' of styles, architectural expression, size, height and materiality. The proposed home will sit very comfortably within that eclectic context as a stylish, quality new addition.

- 5.27 While an extent of tree loss will occur, much of that is of poor or mediocre, overgrown and unmanaged quality, most of which self-seeded. Substantial new, good quality, mixed tree and other planting will be introduced.
- 5.28 Having regard to the above assessment, we suggest that the proposal is consistent with relevant policies of the development plan.

## 6.0 Consistency with the NPPF

6.1 The NPPF is an important material consideration, and especially when it seems that Ribble Valley cannot currently demonstrate a satisfactory housing land supply.

6.2 §11 is clear that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which, for decision-taking, means:

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, 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.

6.3 Footnote 8 confirms that '*out of date*' includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

6.4 In view of the poor supply of housing land in Ribble Valley, policies that restrict new homes in the open countryside are '*out of date*' and cannot therefore be relied upon.

6.5 That being the case - and notwithstanding our earlier conclusion that the application is consistent with the development plan - it would be important to consider two tests if the LPA was to adopt a different position.

- 6.6 First, whether the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed.
- 6.7 Secondly, whether the proposal would result in any adverse impacts that would "*significantly and demonstrably*" outweigh the benefits, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land and securing well-designed places.
- 6.8 In the case of this proposal, we would succeed on both the above tests. The development does not affect any designated landscapes, heritage assets or other areas or assets of "*particular importance*" as identified in the Framework, and there are no adverse impacts that would "*significantly and demonstrably*" outweigh the benefits of the scheme when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole.
- 6.9 Rather, the proposal represents a sustainable form of development that makes effective use of previously developed land, replaces an outdated, poor quality dwelling with a high quality, well designed home, and will deliver environmental improvements through enhanced landscaping and biodiversity measures. In these circumstances, and having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in §11 of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted.
- 6.10 The application is responsive to NPPF §73, which (as highlighted earlier) notes that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out quickly. Also as noted earlier, to promote the development of a good mix of sites, it tells local planning authorities that they should, *inter alia*:
- ‘seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to **support small sites to come forward for** community-led development for housing **and self-build** and custom-build housing’*
- 6.11 Again, we have seen no evidence that Ribble Valley has identified, allocated or made available any self build sites in its area - and specifically in Copster Green where our client currently resides and wishes to remain part of the community.

6.12 §124 states that planning decisions should promote the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. It states that strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land. The application site is brownfield land.

6.13 §125 states that planning decisions should:

*'**promote and support** the development of **under-utilised land** and buildings'*

6.14 The application relates to under-utilised land.

6.15 In overall terms, therefore, we contend that the proposal is consistent with the NPPF as an important material consideration.

## **7.0 Overall Balance and Conclusions**

- 7.1 The site accommodates an existing dwelling and garage, both of which outdated and unprepossessing in appearance, and the house provides cramped, unsatisfactory living conditions.
- 7.2 The proposal is to demolish both existing structures and erect a new, larger, better quality replacement self-build dwelling of excellent design quality, fitting well within what is a very mixed architectural context in the local area.
- 7.3 From the overwhelming majority of public vantage points, the proposed dwelling will be imperceptible, hidden behind substantial vegetation (both existing and new).
- 7.4 No visual harm will arise, and nor any harm to the amenity of any neighbours.
- 7.5 The existing access arrangements onto Longsight Road are not ideal. The access arrangements will be consolidated and improved through the introduction of a single, centralised access point.
- 7.6 While an extent of tree loss will occur, much of that is of poor quality. Full hard and soft landscaping details are provided, including new tree planting. The landscaping has been designed to not only maximise visual softening and 'greening', but also deliver ecological / biodiversity benefits.
- 7.7 It is our contention that the site / dwelling form part and parcel of the village of Copster Green as a sustainable settlement. We have acknowledged that the site falls just beyond the village settlement boundary prepared well over a decade ago, but that boundary is not the be all and end all. It is well established (at appeal) that, whilst weight can be attached to such a settlement boundary, it is important to consider a site's context and relationship to / affiliation with the settlement. We suggest that any objective, logical assessment will conclude that the existing dwelling forms part of the village of Copster Green.

7.8 However, mindful that the LPA disagreed with that position at pre-application stage and deems the site to fall within the Open Countryside, Policy DMG2 states that, outside the settlement areas, development must meet at least one of its key considerations.

7.9 In respect of those, we maintain that the proposal is intended to serve a local need in that our client – who already lives in the village – wishes to build a self-build home for himself and his wife. No self-build plots are available elsewhere in the village, and as such this site represents the only such available opportunity to serve our client’s housing need. We have highlighted NPPF §73, which notes that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out quickly, and - to promote the development of a good mix of sites - it tells local planning authorities that they should, *inter alia*:

*‘seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing **and self-build** and custom-build housing’.*

7.10 We are also mindful of the Council’s current housing land supply situation and the implications of that having regard to NPPF guidance. As noted earlier in this Statement, in the recent appeal decision relating to land south of Chatburn Old Road, Chatburn (January 2026), the Planning Inspector concluded that Ribble Valley could demonstrate only around 3.45 years of deliverable housing land supply.

7.11 In circumstances where the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, paragraph 11 of the NPPF confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged and that policies which seek to restrict housing development are to be regarded as out of date. In such circumstances planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusal, or unless the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.

7.12 In this case there are no such adverse impacts. The proposal relates to the replacement of an existing dwelling within a well-established residential context on previously developed land. The scheme will deliver a high quality self-build home, improve the

visual appearance and environmental performance of the site, rationalise the access arrangements, and provide enhanced landscaping and biodiversity benefits. No material harm will arise in landscape, visual, heritage, residential amenity, ecological or highway terms. In these circumstances the proposal represents a sustainable form of development which accords with the overarching objectives of national planning policy. When assessed in the round, the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh any perceived policy conflict and planning permission should therefore be granted.

- 7.13 Perhaps more importantly, Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB, is explicit in confirming that - in the open countryside – the replacement of existing dwellings is acceptable subject to satisfying three criteria. All three are satisfied in this case. The residential use of the property has clearly not been abandoned; there will be no materially adverse impact on the landscape; and there is no need or intention to extend the existing sizeable curtilage.
- 7.14 Taking all of the above considerations together, the proposal represents a logical, sustainable and policy-compliant form of development. It will replace an outdated and visually unremarkable dwelling with a high-quality, well-designed self-build home that will enhance the appearance and environmental performance of the site, while respecting its landscape setting and neighbouring amenity. The proposal accords with the principles of Policy DMH3 relating to replacement dwellings in the countryside and is consistent with the broader objectives of the development plan when read as a whole.
- 7.15 When combined with the support within the NPPF for small sites and self-build housing, together with the Council's current housing land supply position, the planning balance clearly weighs in favour of the development. In these circumstances, we suggest that there are no sound planning reasons to withhold consent and the Local Planning Authority is respectfully invited to grant planning permission for the proposed development.