


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	26/5/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	27/5/26
----------------	-----------------	----	--------------	---------	-----------------	----	--------------	---------

Application Ref:	3/2026/0306				Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk	
Date Inspected:	14/5/26	Site Notice:	14/5/26			
Officer:	BT					
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:					REFUSAL	

Development Description:	Permission in principle application for erection of a single dwelling.
Site Address/Location:	Land to the West of The Croft, Sawley Road, Grindleton, BB7 4RT.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Grindleton Parish Council:	Comments provided, some of which oppose the application, and some of which support the application.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	Comments provided in relation to the unsustainable location of the proposal site. Additional comments provided outlining the information required for the technical details stage in the event of approval being granted.
United Utilities:	Consulted 5/5/26 – no response received.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
One letter of support and one objection have been received in relation to the proposal with the objection received summarised as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of the proposal upon the visual amenities of the area• Impact of the proposal upon the historic character of the area• Impact of the proposal upon highway safety• Impact of the proposal upon the ecology of the area	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN2: Landscape
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations
Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DMH3: Dwellings In The Open Countryside & The AONB

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:**3/2000/0437:**

Erection of conservatory (Approved)

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

The application relates to land located to the South-west of the residential property known as The Croft on the North-eastern outskirts of Grindleton. Access to the application site is from Sawley Road with the land subject to the application comprising a lawned area which forms part of the domestic curtilage area of The Croft. The application site lies within the Sawley Conservation Area and Forest Of Bowland National Landscape with residential properties bordering the Northern and Southern extents of the site. The River Ribble lies approximately 50 metres away to the South of the site with the wider area comprising a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks 'Permission in Principle' (PiP) consent for the construction of one dwellinghouse.

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 construction of one dwelling on land located outside of any defined settlement limits. As such, it is necessary to consider whether the location of the proposed dwelling would be compatible with the overall spatial strategy for housing growth within the Borough as identified within the currently adopted development strategy.

Key statement DS1 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy sets out the spatial vision for the Borough as follows:

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 principle settlements of:*
 - *Clitheroe;*
 - *Longridge; and*
 - *Whalley*

In the 23 remaining Tier 2 Village settlements, which are the less sustainable of the 32 defined settlements, development will need to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits.

In addition, Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy states:

Within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas development must meet at least one of the following considerations:

- 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*

In a similar vein, Policy DMH3 seeks to restrict residential development within the open countryside and Forest Of Bowland National Landscape to development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. The same policy also allows for the conversion of buildings to dwellings and for the rebuilding and replacement of dwellings under certain circumstances.

In terms of the Core Strategy policy tests, no evidence has been provided to demonstrate that construction of the proposed dwelling would be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area, nor has any evidence been provided to demonstrate that construction of the proposed dwelling relates to local needs housing to meet an identified need. In addition, the proposed development would not be used in relation to agriculture, small scale tourism, recreation or any small-scale uses that would be appropriate within a rural area. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling would be a new build property and would not involve the rebuilding or replacement of an existing dwelling or conversion of an existing building. Therefore the scheme fails to satisfy any of the exception criteria outlined in DMG2 and DMH3.

Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 seek to support development proposals which are well related to the primary road network and can be accessed by sustainable transport modes. This is in line with one of the overarching objectives of the NPPF to encourage sustainable development and in turn reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. The introduction of a new dwelling in this location is not considered to satisfy Key Statement DMI2 or Policy DMG3 or the NPPF by virtue of its open countryside location and distance from the villages of Grindleton and Sawley which are Tier 2 Villages and therefore considered less sustainable in the settlement hierarchy as outlined in the development strategy (Policy DS1).

Reference is made to recent planning appeal ref: APP/T2350/W/25/3372635 in the application's supporting statement as a means of justifying the locational aspect of the proposed development however the site in question (located on the Western extents of Chatburn) is accessed at the end of a cul-de-sac subject to a 30mph speed limit (Chatburn Old Road). In addition, there are also a wider range of facilities available in Chatburn serving general day-to-day needs, all accessed via footways from the junction of Chatburn Old Road and Bridge Street, thereby reducing the reliance on private vehicles, with the nearest bus stop to the referenced appeal site being sited approximately 300 metres away. In contrast, the proposal site occupies a rural location with the nearest bus stop being located on Sawley Road outside Bowland High School approximately 577 metres away from the proposal site. In addition, Sawley Road is an unlit 60mph road with no footways with only one commercial bus service operating on this route which is a two hourly daytime service Monday – Saturday only. As such, there is not considered to be a reasonable basis for comparison with regards to sustainability between the proposal site and the aforementioned appeal site.

Consequently, the introduction of a dwelling to the site as proposed fails to satisfy the requirements of Key Statements DS1 and DMI2 and Policies DMG2, DMG3 and DMH3 of the Core Strategy.

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 a new dwelling to the application site which is located adjacent to existing residential development. Notwithstanding any potential visual impacts and the impact on the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, given the presence of surrounding residential development situated adjacent to the proposal site on the Northern side of Sawley Road, the land use as residential in principle, is not considered inappropriate when taken in isolation.

Amount of development

In this instance, Permission in Principle is sought for the development of one dwelling within the application site. A proposed site plan has been provided in support of the application which shows that the site would comprise sufficient space to accommodate the scale of development proposed. As such, no concerns are raised at this Permission in Principle stage with respect to the amount of development being proposed. Notwithstanding this, it is also relevant to consider at this stage whether or not the amount of residential development could be successfully integrated within the landscape.

With regards to the above, Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF states:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.'

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows:

'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, including impact on landscape character.'

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF provides guidance in relation to proposals for development within the setting of Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscapes) as follows:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty...development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy provides similar guidance:

'The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.'

In this instance, whilst the land parcel subject to the proposal forms part of the domestic curtilage area pertaining to The Croft, the land within the confines of the submitted red edge is nonetheless void of any built form, with the land in question being read in the context of the open countryside which borders the Western extents of the proposal site when viewing the site from Public Right Of Way FP0321061. As such, the application site currently provides a positive contribution to the visual amenities of the area by virtue of its open and natural character. In this case the proposal seeks to introduce a detached dwelling to the application site along with a new access track, driveway and parking and hardstanding areas, all of which would detract from the openness of the site and its natural

and unspoilt character. Furthermore, the proposed development would read as juxtaposed in the context of the open fields and wider open countryside surrounding the Western extents of the application site when viewed from Public Right Of Way FP0321061. As such, it is considered that the proposed introduction of residential development would have a harmful urbanising impact upon the proposal site and its open countryside setting that would neither enhance or conserve the visual amenities of the surrounding National Landscape.

Consequently, the proposed development is considered to be in conflict with Paragraphs 135 (c) and 189 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.

Other Material Considerations – Housing Supply

In January 2026 an appeal decision determined that the Council's housing supply position is 3.45 years. Consequently, strategic policies DMG2 and DMH3 referenced above are considered to be out-of-date in so far as their ability to restrict housing from coming forward and there is a requirement for the Council to assess the proposed development against Paragraph 11 (d) (i) & (ii) of the Framework.

Paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF states:

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development...For decision-taking this means:

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date (this includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites – see footnote 8 of the Framework), 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

This assessment will be done in the concluding section of this report once all matters have been duly considered.

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:

Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with regards to the impact of the proposal upon on the visual amenities of the area and historic character of the Sawley Conservation Area. However, the application relates solely to principle of development and whether the proposal would align with the spatial and locational strategy of the borough.

The impact of the proposal upon the Forest of Bowland National Landscape has been previously assessed above in the 'amount of development' section. As this relates to the principle only, a full

assessment of the scheme cannot be made with regards to the specific size and scale of the dwelling and associated development and the potential for adverse impact(s) upon the character or visual amenities of the area and Sawley Conservation Area resultant from the development do not fall to be assessed within the scope of this application and would be reserved for consideration/assessment following the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review from the Local Highways Authority who in their response have made reference to a number of stipulations that would need to be met with regards to access, visibility, site layout, vehicular parking, cycle storage, refuse storage and construction management.

Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with regards to highway safety however the specific matters relating to highway safety fall to be assessed under details submitted with a 'Technical Matters' application and highway safety alone would not warrant refusal of this application.

Landscape/Ecology:

Appropriate surveys would be required to be undertaken and submitted in support of any subsequent 'Technical Matters' submission to ascertain as to whether the proposal is likely to result in adverse harm upon protected species / species of conservation concern and trees.

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 requirements or provide an appropriate exemption in accordance with Section 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) regulations 2024.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

For the above reasons the proposal fails to accord with the development plan however in light of the Council's housing supply position, it is necessary to assess the proposal against Paragraphs 11 (d) (i) and (ii) of the Framework.

Having regard to Paragraph 11 (d) (i) of the NPPF (flat balance), the application site lies within a National Landscape (Forest Of Bowland) which are identified as areas of particular importance subject to protection under the relevant parts of the Framework (see footnote 7 of the NPPF), with Paragraph 189 being relevant to this particular consideration. In this instance, it is not considered that the proposed development would enhance or conserve the visual amenities of the immediate or wider landscape for the reasons previously conveyed within this report. The proposed development would therefore be in conflict with Paragraph 189 of the NPPF which states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now National Landscapes). This conflict effectively means that the flat balance should be applied and this provides a strong reason to refuse the development. In which case it is not necessary to go on to consider Paragraph 11 (d) (ii). However, for completeness the LPA will go on to consider this.

Having regard to Paragraph 11 (d) (ii) (tilted balance), the Council considers Paragraphs 115 (a), 129 (c) and (d) and 135 (c) as being relevant to the development proposed under this application (see footnote 9 of the NPPF). As previously conveyed, the proposal site is not located within a sustainable location and future occupants of the proposed dwelling would be reliant upon the use of private motor vehicles to access services and facilities on a daily basis such as shops, schools and medical facilities. The proposal is therefore considered to be an unsustainable form of development and would therefore be

in conflict with Paragraphs 115 (a) and 129 (c) of the NPPF, both of which seek to direct development towards sustainable locations. In addition, and as conveyed above, it is not considered that the proposed development would enhance or conserve the visual amenities of the immediate or wider landscape. The proposal would therefore also be in conflict with Paragraphs 129 (d) and 135 (c) of the NPPF which seek to maintain the prevailing character and setting of areas and ensure that developments are sympathetic to their surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

In light of the above, the limited benefits that would arise from delivering one additional dwelling to the Council's housing supply is considered to be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the harm that would arise from the aforementioned Framework policy conflicts with regards to landscape / visual impact and sustainability. Consequently, the development as proposed under this application cannot be supported even through applying Paragraph 11 (d) (i) or (ii) of the Framework.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Permission in Principle be refused for the following reasons:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 01: | The proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the overarching objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) insofar that approval would lead to the creation of a new dwelling in an unsustainable location whereby there would be a reliance on private motor vehicles by occupiers of the dwelling to access key service and facilities. |
| 02: | The amount and type of development proposed conflicts with Paragraphs 135 (c) and 189 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, by virtue of the introduction of a new residential dwelling and associated development in a location which would result in a harmful urbanising impact upon the proposal site and its open countryside setting that would neither enhance or conserve the visual amenities of the surrounding National Landscape. |