



Planning & Affordable Housing Statement

**Land north of Whalley Road
Read**

**Full planning application for the
erection of 77 dwellings and creation
of community parkland, with
associated infrastructure**



CONNOLLYS

Applethwaite Ltd

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Report Drafted By	Report Checked By	Report Approved By
LG	JB	DC
12.01.26	29.04.26	30.04.26

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Connollys
Kingfisher Business Centre
Burnley Road
Rossendale
Lancashire
BB4 8EQ

T: 01760 508010

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1. INTRODUCTION

BRIEF

1.1 Connollys is instructed by Applethwaite Ltd (hereafter referred to as “the applicants”) to prepare this Planning Statement in support of a full planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council (hereafter referred to as “the Council”) relating to land north of Whalley Road, Read.

1.2 The description of development given in the planning application form is:

“Erection of 77 no. dwellings and creation of community parkland, with vehicular access from Whalley Road and associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping”

1.3 The application is accompanied by a full drawing package and a comprehensive suite of supporting technical documents, including:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| • Design and Access Statement | Woodcroft Design |
| • Built Heritage Statement | Tetra Tech RPS |
| • Archaeological Assessment | Tetra Tech RPS |
| • Preliminary Ecological Appraisal | Envirotech |
| • BNG Assessment | Envirotech |
| • Food Risk Assessment | PWA |
| • Minerals Resource Assessment | PWA |
| • Phase 1 Report and CMRA | PWA |
| • Mine Entry Investigation | PWA |
| • Noise Impact Assessment | Miller Goodall |
| • Air Quality Assessment | Miller Goodall |
| • Landscape and Visual Appraisal | PGLA |
| • Landscape Strategy | PGLA |

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Transport Assessment | Andrew Moseley Assoc. |
| • Travel Plan | Andrew Moseley Assoc. |
| • Tree Survey | Trevor Bridge Associates |
| • Statement of Community Involvement | Connollys |

THE APPLICANT

- 1.4 Our client is an award winning SME housebuilder and part of the Eric Wright Group. They have a track record of delivering high quality, much sought after homes across Lancashire. They have already successfully built out a number of sites within Ribble Valley, which have proven to be popular in adding choice and diversity to the local housing stock.
- 1.5 In light of this background and history within the borough, the development proposals at Whalley Road represent an ideal opportunity to continue the delivery of new homes, meeting the future needs of residents, particularly in the context of the significant shortfall in supply currently experienced by the Council. The proposed scheme will not only deliver mix, tenure and type with regard to the new dwellings proposed, but also in the provision of a living environment which is reflective of the wider setting of the site, with notable swathes of open land which will become publicly accessible as part of the proposals. The future of this public open space will be secured by suitably worded legal agreement.
- 1.6 Approval is sought for a total of 77 dwellings, occupying a modest proportion of the wider site. A comprehensive, landscape led approach has been taken to the design process and the layout as presented would secure a high quality development which responds positively to the characteristics of the site, its constraints and delivers a scheme which not only benefits future occupants but also the wider community.

PURPOSE

- 1.7 The purpose of this Report is as follows:
- To describe the site and surrounding area.
 - To identify any statutory or local planning-related designations affecting the site.
 - To provide details of the scheme that is now being brought forward.
 - To outline the pre-application discussions that have taken place.

- To outline the other documents submitted in support of the proposals.
- To consider the proposed development having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan.
- To consider any other material considerations.
- To outline the benefits of the scheme.
- To demonstrate that the tilted planning balance lies clearly in favour of the proposals.

1.8 This document should be read in conjunction with the suite of documents submitted in support of the planning application.

2. THE SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

- 2.1 The site as a whole comprises an undeveloped parcel of land, extending to roughly 19 hectares in area (see Figure 2.1 below). It is broadly rectangular in shape and bound to the east and the north by existing residential development along George Lane and Hammond Drive respectively.
- 2.2 To the south is Whalley Road (the A671), a key arterial route between Ribble Valley and Burnley and to the west is open countryside, though a heavily wooded area provides a clear, physical buffer to the land beyond.



Figure. 2.1– Site Location (edged in red)

- 2.3 Due to the aforementioned characteristics, the site has strong and clearly defined boundaries, and is visually well contained as a result. Its proximity and relationship to the existing settlement is also such that it represents a natural opportunity for a sensitively designed, proportionate expansion of the village whilst protecting its overall setting.
- 2.4 Internally, the topography of the site is such that the land slopes from east to west and from north east to south east. This is accounted for within the submission package and has been a key consideration in progressing detailed design and layout proposals. There are a number of trees scattered throughout the site, which have been taken into account and integrated into the scheme, securing their future and contributing to the high quality environment to be provided for residents.
- 2.5 Read currently has a relatively abrupt and harsh urban boundary on this western side of the settlement, with the development on George Lane providing a blunt, linear edge to the built form. The application site abuts this boundary and whilst it has historically been linked to Read Hall, this association has long since been severed, in both a physical and land use sense. It has accommodated intervening activities, including the extraction of both sandstone and coal.
- 2.6 The land is not publicly accessible at present and contains no rights of way within its core or two its boundaries.

SURROUNDING AREA AND SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS

- 2.7 The site is undeveloped but lies immediately adjacent to the existing urban area of Read, which is a 'Tier 1' settlement as defined in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. Surrounding land uses are largely residential, though due to the scale and role of the village in the settlement hierarchy, the immediate area contains a range of services and facilities which enable residents to meet their daily needs including shops, food takeaways, schools, places of worship, a petrol filling station, drinking establishments, commercial uses and outdoor leisure opportunities. The introduction of further housing in the area will clearly help to sustain these facilities through future expenditure and patronage.
- 2.8 Owing to its proximity to a key A road within the borough, public transport opportunities are readily available. The site lies on a bus route and stops are located only a short distance from the site. This provides for regular, daily mainline services to the larger towns of Burnley and Clitheroe and a number of destinations in between. This, in tandem with the walkable facilities available within the village provide existing and future residents clear alternatives to travel by private vehicle. As such the site is highly accessible.

- 2.9 In addition to the immediate road network, junctions 7 and 8 of the M65 are only a short distance from the site and provide connectivity to Burnley, Accrington and Blackburn, whilst the A roads provide access to Whalley and Clitheroe, which contain rail services to larger cities in the North West.
- 2.10 Read is considered a 'Tier 1 Village' within the Ribble Valley Core Strategy settlement hierarchy, alongside its immediate neighbour, Simonstone.
- 2.11 Key Statement DS1 advises that development will be focussed towards these areas, owing to the fact that they represent the more sustainable of the 32 defined settlements. Despite this, neither Read or Simonstone have seen any notable residential growth either before or during the lifetime of the development plan.
- 2.12 This is due, in part, to the tightly drawn urban boundary which leaves little to no available land with development potential and no policy allowance through the Core Strategy to develop outside of, but adjacent to the settlement.
- 2.13 In the absence of any proportionate growth in areas such as Read, the larger, principal settlements such as Clitheroe, Whalley and Longridge have carried the burden of accommodating new development and Barrow has also been the focus of substantial change. The strength of public opposition to new housing proposals in these locations indicates a feeling that they have accommodated more than their share of recent growth.
- 2.14 The spatial distribution of housing across the Borough has therefore been stymied by the aforementioned factors and areas such as Read have no benefitted from new housing stock or the potential for working aged residents and families to move in to the area. This creates stagnation in the housing market and presents an inability for residents to "right-size" to properties which meet their needs at a given point in their life.
- 2.15 Read contains an ageing population, with ONS statistics indicating that in 2024 the largest age profile in the East Whalley Read & Simonstone area was those between 50 and 54, representing 9.6% of the total 2,695 population. This is followed by those aged 55-59, 60-64 and 75-79, each comprising 7.4% of the population.
- 2.16 By comparison, none of the various cohorts between 20 and 49 exceed 5.4% of the overall population, with those in the 25-29 bracket being as low as 3.6%. When comparing this position to the national position, the older age groups are much higher than the national average and the younger age groups much lower (see Figure 2.2 below).

- 2.17 In addition to this, a significant number of the households, as of 2021, contain one or two people (24.8% and 39.8% respectively) with the number of three and four person households much lower (17.1% and 18.4% respectively). See Figure 2.2 below.
- 2.18 The lack of housing to accommodate mixed and diverse communities in such areas can have direct economic impacts, especially in a Tier 1 location where growth is both expected and encouraged in principle. The absence of a working aged population may ultimately impact on the viability of local services and the patronage which they receive from the immediate catchment.
- 2.19 Furthermore, the growing trend of those aged 50+ dominating the population demographics and potentially under occupying larger family properties are such that Read may become unaffordable for younger, local people or those in the nearby catchment.

SUMMARY

- 2.20 In summary the site comprises an area of vacant, publicly inaccessible private land, within an accessible and sustainable location, immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary. It has seen little housing growth in recent years, despite its classification as a sustainable settlement.

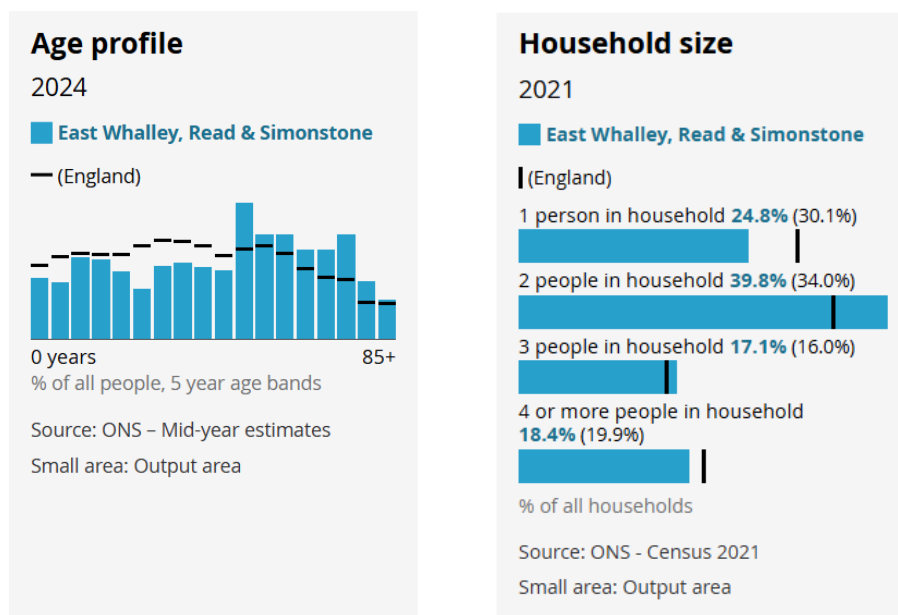


Figure 2.2 – ONS statistics

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The most relevant planning history pertaining to the site dates from 2016 (RVBC ref – 3/2016/1192) when an outline submission was made for the erection of up to 50 dwellings. The application was refused and a subsequent appeal dismissed in 2018.

3.2 The key findings from the appeal are as follows:

- The application was made in outline with all matters reserved other than access.
- Whilst four reasons for refusal were cited in the original decision notice, the appeal was ultimately considered against only two of those reasons. The first being that the proposals resulted in development in the open countryside, the quantum of which exceeded residual need for Read and Simonstone, causing harm to the development strategy within the development plan. The second being that the proposals would have adverse impacts with regard to the setting of the Forest of Bowland AONB and cause “irreversible harm to the visual amenity of the parkland landscape” which was deemed to contribute to the character of Read.
- With regard to the first matter, the Inspector found unresolvable conflict with the Core Strategy owing to the countryside location, beyond the settlement, whilst also accepting that the physical constraints of the associated boundary may be limiting supply.
- With regard to the second matter, the Inspector was failed to be persuaded that the qualities of the site were such that it should be considered a valued landscape with regard to the Framework reference, but did consider it to be ‘parkland’.
- In relation to the visual effects of new development to the eastern portion of the site, it was found that the visual impacts arising would largely be experienced at a local level, but accepted that harm to the setting of the AONB would be nothing more than minor.
- In relation to nearby heritage assets, the Inspector indicated that there would be some small harm to the setting of Read Hall, which is Grade II* listed,

though in finding the proposals to be unacceptable in other aspects, this harm was not deemed to be outweighed by public benefits.

- 3.3 The remainder of this Statement will demonstrate that the areas of concern raised by the Inspector were overstated and that this comprehensive, revised submission represents a wholly acceptable, landscape led development which not only delivers much needed housing but also provides a range of wider public benefits.

4. STATUTORY AND OTHER DESIGNATIONS

HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

- 4.1 The site is not within or adjacent to any identified Conservation Areas. There are no Listed Buildings within the site, but there are a number in the immediate vicinity, whose setting and significance have been taken into account, as detailed in the Heritage Statement prepared by Tetra Tech. These assets have been filtered for relevance and potential impact, and include:
- Read Hall – Grade II*
 - The lodge to Read Hall – Grade II
 - Read Park – non-designated asset
- 4.2 The Heritage Statement confirms that Read Hall’s significance is principally experienced within its immediate designed setting. It is established that there is effectively no inter-visibility between the Hall’s core grounds and the application site, with views being largely blocked by topography and the mature belt of screening provided by the Clough Syke plantation, a point which was agreed in earlier statements of common ground in relation to appeals at the site.
- 4.3 Although development would result in a modest reduction in the physical buffer between the settlement and the Hall in plan, the lack of joint experience and the long-established functional and visual separation mean that any perceptible effect on the Hall’s ability to convey its significance would be limited. The proposals would therefore cause less-than-substantial harm to the Grade II* Read Hall, and that harm is assessed as very low in degree.
- 4.4 These matters will be considered in greater detail later in this Statement.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 4.5 The proposed development sits in flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk in this regard. Areas of the site are highlighted as being susceptible to surface water flooding, though these lie outside of the proposed area of development.
- 4.6 The application is supported by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by PWA, which sets out the approach to drainage. This will be discussed in greater detail in Section 7 of this Statement.

HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS

- 4.7 Access to the site is to be taken from Whalley Road by way of a new, dedicated vehicular and pedestrian entrance, benefitting from the necessary visibility splays along the A671.
- 4.8 The application is supported by a detailed Transport Assessment, prepared by Andrew Moseley Associated which confirms that the proposed access arrangements, by way of a new priority junction, internal estate road and on site parking provision raise no undue highway safety concerns. Swept path analysis confirms that refuse vehicles will be able to comfortably enter and leave the site in forward gear on collection days.
- 4.9 In terms of the capacity of the surrounding network, the movements associated with the quantum of development proposed would not cause undue issues and are not predicted to in future when accounting for committed developments in the vicinity.
- 4.10 Additionally, the site boasts accessibility credentials which allow for travel by means other than private car, allowing future occupants to reach the range of services present in the village (and beyond) on foot, by cycle or via public transport.

GROUND CONDITIONS

- 4.11 The application is supported by a Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Assessment, incorporating a Coal Mining Risk Assessment prepared by PWA which sets out the key considerations and confirms that there are no insurmountable issues with regard to the underlying ground conditions and potential contamination.
- 4.12 The coal mining history of the site is known as is the presence of seams within the land. Subject to further investigation works it is not considered that these conditions present an unacceptable risk to the development and can be suitably mitigated. A separate report seeking to locate a mine entry and shaft was undertaken, and was established to present a minor risk to the proposed area of public open space, but can be mitigated by way of a suitable process of capping.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

- 4.13 There are no public rights of way which would require closures or diversion (temporary or otherwise) to facilitate the proposals.

LANDSCAPE & ECOLOGY

- 4.14 The site is not subject to any statutory landscape or ecological designations. The previously dismissed appeal confirmed that it did not constitute a 'valued landscape' and the Council's more recent pre-application advice reaffirms this.
- 4.15 The application is supported by detailed Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared by PGLA which assess the quality of the existing site and landscape, quantifies the potential impacts of the proposals. It confirms that the sensitivity of the landscape in this location is considered to be 'medium' and that visual connection with application site is when in close proximity to it.
- 4.16 The proposed development has been purposely located to the settlement edge and although there will be a degree of change to the setting, this will be in the context of a range of soft landscaping enhancements which will help the scheme to fully integrate into the immediate environs.
- 4.17 In light of these factors, the site is able to accommodate the level of development proposed without causing undue harm to the character of this area and for the reasons set out later in this Statement, the fact that the site does not represent parkland is a notable factor in establishing that the proposals are acceptable.
- 4.18 Furthermore, the Assessment confirms that no harm to the setting of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape will arise, as was established in determining previous planning applications.
- 4.19 An associated Ecological Appraisal prepared by Envirotech, which confirms that the land at present is considered to be of low value, primarily of modified grassland, having been grazed for some time. It contains limited potential for habitat but offers clear potential for enhancement associated with and to be secured by these proposals.
- 4.20 The appraisal also confirms that whilst the site may have previously been connected to Read Hall, detailed review of historic mapping, LiDAR, aerial imagery and field evidence indicates that this area does not demonstrably survive as part of a designed parkland composition in heritage terms. The absence of designed vistas, specimen tree planting, ornamental planting blocks, drives or pleasure ground features, together with evidence of former enclosure boundaries and agricultural land use, indicates that the site does not meet the definition of intact historic parkland.
- 4.21 Notwithstanding the above, the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has adopted a precautionary approach for calculation purposes, treating the site as 'wood pasture and parkland' affording it a higher biodiversity value.

- 4.22 The appraisal confirms that there has been no degradation of on site habitats and no irreplaceable habitats are present. The measures proposed to secure on site gain, including detailed management proposals, new tree and hedgerow planting, pond creation and watercourse enhancement, result in a 15.7% gain in habitat units, a 140% gain in hedgerow units and a 16.8% gain in watercourse units.
- 4.23 This more than satisfies the mandatory requirements and should be viewed as a notable benefit in favor of the development.

TREES

- 4.24 The Tree Survey undertaken by Trevor Brridge Associates confirms that that site contains trees ranging from Category A to C in terms of their overall quality.
- 4.25 The proposed development has been designed in such a way to ensure that these specimens, which are of amenity value, are retained and incorporated into the scheme, without any undue impacts on their root protection areas.
- 4.26 Accordingly, there are no arboricultural constraints which would warrant the withholding of planning permission in this instance.

MINERALS

- 4.27 A Mineral Resource Assessment has been prepared by PWA to support the planning application, owing to the site lying within a Mineral Safeguarding Area ('MSA').
- 4.28 The Assessment confirms that while granting the planning application would sterilise this portion of the identified mineral resources in Lancashire, given the geographical configuration of the MSA it is not expected that neighbouring areas to the south or west would be sterilised as a result of the proposed residential development. However, it is also important to note that the wider MSA extends for a significant distance and covers a large proportion of Lancashire, where any quarrying activities would have a lower negative effect on local communities.
- 4.29 Accordingly the MSA does not represent an unacceptable barrier to granting planning permission in this location.

SUMMARY

- 4.30 As demonstrated by the supporting technical reports, the site is not constrained by any local, regional or national statutory or non-statutory designations such that there would be significant or demonstrable harm were the site development in the manner proposed.

5. THE PROPOSED SCHEME

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The description of development given in the planning application forms is:

“Erection of 77 no. dwellings and creation of community parkland, with vehicular access from Whalley Road and associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping”

PROPOSALS



Figure 5.1 Proposed Layout

5.2 The submitted layout shows the delivery of 77 dwellings with associated infrastructure, occupying a modest amount of the wider site, which is to be given over and enhanced to create publicly accessible parkland.

- 5.3 The overall approach to the proposed layout was to focus development towards the existing, hard urban edge of Read whilst working with the topography of the land and delivering a softer gateway to the village when travelling from west to east.
- 5.4 It has been informed by the findings of the previous appeal at the site and the desire to secure a genuinely landscape led scheme which recognises and is sympathetic to its immediate environs and wider surroundings.
- 5.5 A single point of access is proposed from Whalley Road, with this arrival point framed by landscaping and establishing a clear and legible gateway to the development. Internally a primary estate road runs south to north, with active, landscaped frontages presented to the highway, creating attractive street scenes and allowing for good levels of natural surveillance, particularly on corner plots.
- 5.6 As development moves away from the existing settlement boundary and westwards into the site it becomes more informal, respecting its countryside facing outlook. The small groups of cul-de-sacs front the public open space to be created, with pedestrian linkages out to this area, securing high levels of connectivity and permeability in terms of movements on foot.
- 5.7 As is seen in the layout, existing mature trees are retained and incorporated into the scheme, further enhancing the high quality environment which is to be created but also ensuring that the edge of settlement character is retained and a fundamental part of the design process.
- 5.8 The proposed schedule of accommodation is detailed below and provides for a range of house types (16 in total), styles, sizes and tenures:

ACCOMODATION SCHEDULE							
Ref	House Type	Beds	Sq. Ft	FMV	Affordable	Total Beds	Total SqFt
Thu	Thursby Semi/Mews	3	1023	7		21	7161
Als	Alston - CT	3	1071	4		12	4284
Yew	Yewdale	3	1107	5		15	5535
Fir	Firbank	3	1154	5		15	5770
Cas	Casterton Det	4	1231	1		4	1231
Cas DA	Casterton Det	4	1231	3		12	3693
Win	Windermere Det	4	1363	3		12	4089
Lev	Levens	4	1430	2		8	2860
Mil	Milburn	4	1468	6		24	8808
Ken	Kentmere	4	1484	2		8	2968
Cal	Calder Outrigger	4	1741	6		24	10446
Cro	Crofton	4	1932	5		20	9660
Hav	Haverthwaite	5	2309	5		25	11545
Bar	Barton	2	760		8	16	6080
Whi	Whinfell – 7.5%	2	774		8	16	6192
Thu	Thursby	3	1023		7	21	7161
Total				54	23	253	
Grandtotal				77		253	97483

- 5.9 The mix includes 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties along with a number of bungalows and a policy compliant delivery of 30% affordable housing, available as intermediate housing and as affordable rent. The proposed affordable housing mix is as follows:
- **Affordable Rent:** 8 x Barton House Type (2 bed) and 3 x Whinfell House Type (2 bed bungalow)
 - **Intermediate:** 7 x Thursby House Type (3 bed) and 5 x Whinfell House Type (2 bed bungalow)
- 5.10 Both the market and affordable units will make a notable contribution to housing in the Borough, particularly in the context of the Government's expectations regarding the delivery of new homes and the significant shortfall currently experienced by the Council.
- 5.11 In terms of material palette, the surrounding area is mixed, however the development seeks to ensure an element of visual consistency throughout with the use of reconstituted stone to the walls and grey tiles to the roofs, though some variety is created through the forms of the house types and the use of render in some instances.
- 5.12 In making a full planning application, prepared by a known and reliable developer, the scheme in this case is able to make a telling and immediate contribution to local housing supply, when compared to other, speculative outline submission which have been made recently. The involvement of Applethwaite adds greater certainty around delivery and can help the Local Authority to resist less desirable or sustainable sites in meeting local need across the Borough.
- 5.13 A significant portion of public open space is provided to the west of the site, much larger than the proposed development, which will not only be available to occupants but also the wider public. The land benefits from no such access at present and the proposals mean that all residents in Read or beyond are able to readily and safely access this provision along clear, legible routes through the site.
- 5.14 Further, more detailed analysis on the full range of material considerations is provided in Section 7 of this Statement.

6. PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

6.1 A request for formal pre-application discussions was lodged with the Council was lodged in March 2025 with a meeting and written advice provided on the 25th July 2025. The subsequent advice can be summarised as follows but it should be noted that the written response was issued prior to the findings of the Chatburn Appeal:

- The development as presented would fail to meet any of the exceptions for housing in the open countryside;
- The accessibility credentials of the site would need to be demonstrated;
- The outcome of the previous appeal would need to be addressed insofar as it relates to matters of the development plan strategy for new housing, the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area, and the effect of the proposals on nearby heritage assets;
- In terms of the status of the land, the park has been assessed as of county or regional importance rather than national importance and thus is not included in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. It would appear that there are no special artificial landscape features recorded within Hammond Ground and on this basis it may well be that this section of the park was always of lesser significance;
- An application would need to be accompanied by an LVIA and that the quantum of development (circa 120 dwellings at that initial concept stage) would have impacts on the character of the area. The LIVA should assess the proposals from a range of public vantage points and also consider the Forest of Bowland National Landscape;
- Heritage appraisals will be required to assess potential impacts on identified assets and as the site mainly contains remains of significance, a written scheme of investigation should be provided;
- Detailed arboricultural information should inform the proposals and seek to retain higher quality and category trees;
- An ecological appraisal should establish the baseline value of the site and inform any BNG uplift;

- The proposed point of access from the A671 would need to be justified in terms of its position, arrangement and suitability for all types of user;
- An application should be supported by an FRA and drainage strategy to demonstrate that there will be no adverse flood risk impacts; and
- Affordable housing and housing for older people should be incorporated into the proposals, in line with policy requirements.

- 6.2 All of these matters have been taken into account and informed the final format of the proposals and the level of technical information which supports the application, as set out through this Statement.
- 6.3 In addition to the above, a process of public consultation was undertaken on behalf of the applicant, by way of a leaflet drop to those properties immediately adjacent to the site, including scheme information and directing residents to online information.
- 6.4 The feedback and findings associated with this process are contained within a separate Statement of Community Involvement submitted with this application.

7. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

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

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

7.2 In this instance, the Development Plan comprises:

- The Ribble Valley Core Strategy
- The Housing and Economic Development DPD

THE CORE STRATEGY

7.3 The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and is currently used in decision making. This was followed by the Housing and Economic Development DPD, which provided further housing and economic allocations, but did not alter the contents of the Core Strategy, and was adopted in October 2019.

7.4 Both documents are more than 5 years old and neither have been subject to any form of review. The Council’s efforts to prepare a new Local Plan have stalled in recent years, with the last notable milestone being a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise in 2021 and a Regulation 18 consultation in mid-2022. This process has recently been re-opened as preparation begins again.

7.5 In a revised Local Development Scheme, updated in November 2025, the Council have set out their stated ambition to have a new plan in place by the end of 2027/start of 2028.

7.6 Until such time that draft policies may begin to carry any weight, however, applications are to be determined in accordance with the Core Strategy, insofar as its policies are consistent with the contents of the most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework, advice set out in National Planning Practice Guidance and any relevant material considerations which may have a bearing on the assessment of a given development.

- 7.7 Other notable material considerations also have a bearing on the application of certain policies within the Core Strategy, namely the recent confirmation that the Council are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply ('5YHLS') following an appeal decision in Chatburn (PINS ref – 3372635) issued on the 7th January 2026.
- 7.8 In allowing the appeal for Permission in Principle for up to 9 dwellings, outside of the settlement boundary of the village, in the open countryside, the Inspector found the following:
- Supply should be calculated against local housing need using the new standard method, which results in a requirement for 311 dwellings per annum;
 - That past oversupply, whilst not specifically ruled out by the Framework or PPG, should not be used to reduce local housing need as that would *"impede the achievement of the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes"*;
 - Accordingly, a 'forward facing' approach to supply is the most appropriate method of securing the necessary supply and that this is not to *"be seen as penalising the Council, as has been suggested, rather, it is part of the solution to the acute housing crisis that exists nationally"*;
 - That, taking all of these matters into account, the Council's supply position is 3.45 years; and
 - As a result, paragraph 11d) of the Framework is fully engaged, rendering relevant policies with the development plan out of date.
- 7.9 As a result of these findings, the Council accept that the tilted balance applies in decision making and that any conflict with the spatial housing policies of the Core Strategy must be weighed against the sustainability credentials of a given site and the benefits accrued by the development, when considering the Framework as a whole.
- 7.10 The application site lies within the open countryside as defined in the Council's HED DPD Proposals Map and also falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. No other land designations (national or otherwise) are present within the site, though it is noted that Green Belt is located to the southern side of Whalley Road and to the north, albeit around half a kilometre away is the Forest of Bowland National Landscape (formerly known as the AONB).

- 7.11 Paragraph 11d) i) & ii) advise that permission should be granted for new development when the relevant policies are deemed to be out of date, 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.*
- 7.12 Footnote 7 of the Framework defines the circumstances in which policies are deemed to protect “*areas or assets of particular importance*”. Other than the presence of neighbouring heritage assets (a matter addressed in detail in this Statement and in the associated Built Heritage Statement) none of those listed are present at the application site. The balancing exercise set out in subsection ii) will be undertaken later in this Statement and confirm, unequivocally, that the weighting lies heavily in favour of approving the submission.
- 7.13 In light of the above and the Council’s housing land supply position, the following policies of the Core Strategy would be engaged in decision making for housing related development.

CORE STRATEGY – STRATEGIC POLICIES

KEY STATEMENT DS1 – DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- 7.14 This spatial policy advises that the majority of new housing development will be concentrated within an identified strategic site (Standen) and the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley.
- 7.15 In addition to these areas, a number of ‘Tier 1’ villages are listed, including Read and Simonstone, which represent locations to which development will be focussed as they comprise the more sustainable of the 32 identified settlements.
- 7.16 Due to the current 5YHLS in Ribble Valley, the requirements of this policy are out of date, however Read remains classified as a Tier 1, sustainable village.

KEY STATEMENT DS2 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 7.17 The approach set out in this policy broadly reflects the positive presumption, within the Framework, with regard to the approach to sustainable development. However, the NPPF has been updated several times since the Core Strategy was adopted and critically DS2 does not include the provisions set out in paragraph 11d) and therefore reduces the weight it can be afforded.

KEY STATEMENT EN2 - LANDSCAPE

- 7.18 This policy largely relates to the landscape character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as a National Landscape), seeking to ensure that it is protected, conserved and enhanced. This includes areas which contribute to the setting of the landscape, with development expected to be in keeping with local character, distinctiveness, scale, style and materials.

KEY STATEMENT EN3 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- 7.19 This policy promotes development which incorporates design and construction techniques to assist in addressing the causes and consequences of climate change. It also advises that in Mineral Safeguarding Areas, the County Council will be consulted prior to the determination of planning applications in these areas.

KEY STATEMENT EN4 – BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

- 7.20 Proposals will be required to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of an areas and avoid adverse impacts on sites of recognised environmental or ecological importance.

KEY STATEMENT EN5 – HERITAGE ASSETS

- 7.21 New development will be expected to conserve and enhance the setting and significance of identified heritage assets. The requirements and the relevant tests applied when considering development which affects such assets are set out in more detail within the Framework.

KEY STATEMENT H1 – HOUSING PROVISION

- 7.22 The contents of this policy, which sets out the housing requirement across the Plan period, have largely been superseded by changes at national level, with regard to the new standard method of calculating local housing need.
- 7.23 In defending the appeal in Chatburn, the Council accepted that supply should be measured against the outcome of this updated method, which equates to 311 dpa, with a 5% buffer applied.

KEY STATEMENT H2 – HOUSING BALANCE

- 7.24 New schemes for residential development will be expected to provide a suitable mix of housing, informed by housing needs survey and information held in the most up to date SHMA.

KEY STATEMENT H3 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 7.25 Development outside of defined settlements will be expected to provide 30% affordable units on site unless viability testing indicates otherwise. Qualifying schemes should also provide a proportion of affordable and market housing, suitable for older people.

KEY STATEMENT DMI1 – PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- 7.26 This policy advises that obligations will be considered on a site by site basis and with priority given to affordable housing, improvements to highway safety, open space and education provision.
- 7.27 As with affordable housing, viability will be considered in considering requests for any matters to be addressed by way of contribution.

KEY STATEMENT DMI2 – TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.28 New development should be located in such a way as to minimise the need to travel, incorporating good access by foot and cycle, with convenient access to public transport.
- 7.29 Schemes which offer opportunities for more sustainable modes of travel will be supported and major development will be expected to be accompanied by a comprehensive travel plan.

CORE STRATEGY – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

POLICY DMG1 – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.30 This policy requires development to address a range of general considerations, relating to matters such as:

- Design;
- Compatibility of land use;
- density;
- layout;
- relationship with surrounding land uses;
- sustainable construction methods;
- access and parking;
- heritage assets;
- the natural environment; and
- the level of existing and proposed public open space

POLICY DMG2 – STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

7.31 This policy is now largely out of date owing to the Council's current 5YHLS position. In general, it directs new development towards and within the principal and Tier 1 settlements. Beyond these areas development will only be supported in a limited range of circumstances, including housing which meets an identified local need.

7.32 However, these limitations cannot be imposed due to the significant housing shortfall currently experienced within the Ribble Valley and deference is given to the requirements of the Framework in applying to tilted balance in favour of new, sustainably located development which can make a meaningful contribution of housing supply.

POLICY DMG3 – TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

- 7.33 Development which benefits from sufficient public transport and associated infrastructure will be supported, with due regard to the relationship to the primary and strategic road network, the provision made for access for a variety of users, accessibility and the ability for development to support and strengthen village centres.

POLICY DME1 – PROTECTING TREES AND WOODLANDS

- 7.34 Any new development which may have a direct impact on trees will be expected to be supported by suitably detailed arboricultural information, demonstrating that no adverse will arise and that adequate tree cover is retained.

POLICY DME2 – LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE PROTECTION

- 7.35 This policy seeks to ensure that any important landscape or landscape features, such as walls, woodlands, hedgerows and trees are retained and where possible enhanced.

POLICY DME3 – SITE AND SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

- 7.36 Proposals which have an adverse impact on sites which benefit from statutory ecological protections will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits outweigh any impacts and incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity.

POLICY DME4 – PROTECTING HERITAGE ASSETS

- 7.37 This policy advises that development within the setting of a listed building, which causes harm to its significance will not be supported. These requirements are superseded to some degree by the more nuanced position set out within the Framework with regard to how harm, less than substantial or otherwise, should be weighed in decision making.

POLICY DME6 – WATER MANAGEMENT

- 7.38 This policy seeks to avoid development in areas at an unacceptable risk of flooding or which would result in risk elsewhere. Applications should be supported by details of surface water discharge in accordance with sustainable drainage principles.

POLICY DMH1 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRITERIA

- 7.39 Affordable housing will be made available to those listed within this policy, primarily involving those with a local connection or special circumstances which may apply. Housing for older people is also a priority due a general lack of provision elsewhere in the Borough.

POLICY DMH3 – DWELLINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE AND AONB

- 7.40 As with Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG2, this policy is out of date owing to the Council's housing land supply position.

POLICY DMB4 – OPEN SPACE PROVISION

- 7.41 Residential development on sites above 1 hectare will be expected to provide a suitable level of useable public open space, though no specific ration is provided.

APPRAISAL

- 7.42 In the context of the aforementioned policies, this Statement will now consider the proposed development and outline any clear material considerations which may have bearing on decision making.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 7.43 In terms of historic housing supply within the Borough, the Core Strategy established a housing target of 280 dpa on adoption in 2014, though this was preceded by the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (2008) which established a figure of 161 dpa for the Borough. This RSS position was derived as part of a sub-regional strategy of very purposely housing restraint in high demand rural areas, in order to facilitate and drive Housing Market Renewal objectives in areas such as Burnley, Hyndburn

and Blackburn and as a means to focus development in urban areas such as Preston, Blackburn and the City Regions of Liverpool and Manchester.

- 7.44 The figure contained within the Core Strategy was established prior to the first introduction of the Standard Method in 2018 but as with the RSS position, it is not considered to have accurately projected need and a combination of the two scenarios resulted in the artificial suppression of actual need in the Borough. Accordingly, the period of 'over-supply' enjoyed by the Council in recent years was, in reality, a true reflection of demand.
- 7.45 This is born out in ONS statistics which confirm that despite this level of delivery, affordability in the Borough has notably worsened. The house price to workplace-based earnings ratio worsened from 7.0 (2014) to 9.2 (2023); a 31% increase, reinforcing that historic plan provision was suppressed relative to demand. If 280 dpa had matched true need, affordability would have stabilised.
- 7.46 If housing affordability continues to worsen at the same time that a high number of homes are being built, it shows that demand for housing is still outstripping supply. In other words, even strong delivery has not been enough to ease market pressures. The continued affordability deterioration therefore supports the conclusion that the plan requirement was artificially constrained and did not reflect the real level of housing need.
- 7.47 Whilst the recent appeal in Chatburn did not delve in to the very real reasons for the recent over-supply, it confirmed that including utilizing these figures to reduce future supply was clearly contrary to the approach and spirit of the NPPF. It was established that forward facing approach must be adopted to meet the acute housing crisis faced in this country and that Local Planning Authorities should not see this as some form of punishment, but a necessity to build the homes required. This is especially the case when the housing shortfall is so significant, sitting at 3.45 years at the time of writing.
- 7.48 Turning to the application site, it lies outside of, but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary for Read, at its western edge. The physical form of the village stops abruptly, with the land in question framed by the vertical and horizontal emphasis of George Lane and Hammond Drive respectively. As a result the site is within the open countryside but has a clear physical and visual link to, and is contiguous with the village and would not be isolated or anomalous in this regard.
- 7.49 Despite being immediately adjacent to a Tier 1 Village, the Core Strategy would generally prohibit development in such locations, unless one of a limited number of exceptions were satisfied, by way of Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG2. However, the findings of the Chatburn appeal establishes that those policies are currently rendered out of date when it comes to decision making.

- 7.50 Section 38(6) confirms the duty to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Core Strategy is now over 10 years old and has not been subject to any form of review. Whilst an emerging plan is being prepared, this process is in its infancy and it is considered that the timescales for adoption are optimistic at best and wholly unachievable at worst.
- 7.51 Until such time as the Council are in a position to adopt a new plan, the only route to securing a 5YHLS is through the approval of suitably located sustainable sites, whether this manifests in granting permission at application stage or by way of appeal.
- 7.52 In the current supply position, it is evident that the settlement boundaries as presently drawn are no longer fit for purpose and are clearly unable to accommodate the level of development required. Any new Local Plan would need to revisit those boundaries and ensure that the more sustainable settlements, such as Read and Simonstone, contribute to future supply in a meaningful way. They have been unable to do so in recent history, due to the lack of available land within the defined boundaries to deliver proportionate numbers of homes.
- 7.53 The role of Tier 1 Villages is particularly important within the Ribble Valley, where the Forest of Bowland National Landscape presents a notable constraint to strategic level growth, due to its significant coverage across the Borough.
- 7.54 Therefore, whilst there would be some tension between the location of the site and Policy DMG2, this is clearly outweighed by other material considerations, primarily the absence of a 5YHLS and the compelling benefits that the development as proposed will deliver.
- 7.55 In this instance it is pertinent to note that the application is made in full by a long established developer with a track record of delivery in the Borough. Whilst a number of outline application have been made recently seeking new housing elsewhere in the Ribble Valley, they will require (if approved) periods of marketing to obtain developer interest, the submission of subsequent applications for Reserved Matters and the discharging of any relevant conditions before work is able to commence.
- 7.56 There are no such obstacles or potential delays at this site and the applicant is willing to accept a condition from the Council, securing a reduced commencement period rather than the standard 3 year timeframe. This ensures that the development proposed here is able to contribute meaningfully to the Council's immediate supply requirements and be deliverable in the 5 year horizon, in its entirety.
- 7.57 The proposals will deliver, in short:
- 77 high quality new homes in a sustainable location;

- A range of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties to maximise choice;
- A proportion of accessible bungalows to meet the needs of our ageing population;
- 30% affordable housing to improve ownership opportunities; and
- A significant area of public open space, available not only to future occupants of the development, but the wider community.

7.58 The sustainability and accessibility credentials of Read have been set out earlier in this Statement and its status as a Tier 1 Village places an expectation of growth, which is unachievable within the settlement at present. It benefits from local services, access to mainline, daily bus services and lies on an arterial route between Ribble Valley and Burnley, in close proximity to the motorway network. In spatial planning terms, it is therefore ideally placed to accommodate a proportionate amount of housing.

7.59 The proposed development is contiguous with the western boundary of the settlement and would therefore benefit from access to all of the above facilities. The design approach which has informed the application is intended to ensure that the majority of the land remains open and undeveloped, with the new built form concentrated to the eastern boundary of the plot and the western edge of the settlement. It is surrounded by existing development on two sides and the A671 to its southern boundary.

7.60 For all of these reasons, and in light of the current 5YHLS, the principle of development is wholly acceptable and as will be demonstrated in the remainder of this Statement, the matters which resulted in the dismissal of the 2018 have been fully addressed and present no barrier to the granting of planning permission.

LANDSCAPE IMPACT

7.61 The application site is not subject to any national or local landscape designations nor any environmental designations. Whilst the Forest of Bowland National Landscape lies to the north and the Green Belt to the east, neither encroaches into the land or has an influence on it.

7.62 A comprehensive Landscape and Visual Appraisal ('LVA') has been prepared by PGLA which confirms that the application site lies within National Landscape Character Area 35: Lancashire Valleys which provides broad characteristics for the wider area, as such greater emphasis has been placed on Lancashire County Council's – 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire'. The Strategy defines a number of character areas with sub-categories within this.

- 7.63 The land at Whalley Road falls within Character Type 6 – ‘Industrial Foothills and Valleys’ and the sub-area of the ‘Calder Valley’ (Area 6a). The guidance within the strategy has been incorporated into the design process and provides a baseline for the assessment within the LVA.
- 7.64 A total of 13 viewpoints inform the LVA and encompass the site from a variety of vantages. Key visual receptors are defined as being largely restricted to users along Whalley Road and those existing residents to the north, east and south west. The configuration of the public right of way network in the area is such that views are largely filtered by a combination of topography, soft landscaping and existing built form.
- 7.65 A detailed breakdown of the Landscape Value is set out within Appendix 1 of the document covering a range of matters, the findings are covered in brief below and should be cross referenced with the primary report:
- *Natural Heritage – Value: Low to Medium*
 - *Cultural Heritage – Value: Low to Medium*
 - *Landscape Condition – Value: Medium*
 - *Associations – Value: Low*
 - *Distinctiveness – Value: Medium*
 - *Recreational – Value: Low*
 - *Perceptual (scenic) - Value: Medium*
 - *Perceptual (wildness and tranquillity) - Value: Low*
 - *Functional – Value: Low*
- 7.66 These findings confirm that the overall landscape value, sensitivity and susceptibility is deemed to be ‘medium’ and all assessments, recommendations and conclusions are based on this position. As set out in the heritage and ecological submission which support the application, the site does not form parkland and it is not a valued landscape for the purposes of the Framework tests. It should not, therefore, be offered any elevated status in this regard.
- 7.67 The LVA confirms how the matters raised in the 2018 appeal decision have been considered and fully addressed in preparing this new submission. The approach is summarised below:

- the proposals are now focussed more clearly towards the eastern boundary of the land, adjacent to the settlement boundary, meaning that it will more clearly be seen as part of the village;
- the previously refused scheme proposed housing extending further west along Whalley Road, whereas the new scheme presents as a natural extension to the village and maintains a substantial gap to Read Hall, secured by way of the significant area of public open space which frames the proposals;
- the location of the proposed built form results in reduced visibility from the public right of way network in the area, which largely offers views of the central and western portions of the land;
- the development faces outwards from the village and creates a softer, transitional edge to the open countryside beyond;
- this in turn creates a more appropriate and improved gateway to Read, designed to contribute to and enhance local character; and
- the development now proposes a significant area of public open space, which will be subject to a range of enhancement measures designed to improve the quality and appearance of the site.

- 7.68 With regard to this final point, the LVA is accompanied by Landscape Strategy and detailed planting proposals to further emphasise that the proposals are genuinely landscape led. Measures include the retention and incorporation of existing natural features of interest, including a significant proportion of the existing, high quality trees and boundary treatments, alongside the introduction of wildflower planting, tree lined streets and ecological enhancements. All of these elements secure a significant betterment on the current situation.
- 7.69 The LVA confirms that from the range of chosen viewpoints, that it is only within close proximity to the site that there is any visual connection with the development. In views from distance, accounting for the proportionate scale and positioning of the proposals, the scheme would not draw the eye or appear as a prominent landscape feature, being seen in the context of the settlement.
- 7.70 The landscape is therefore able to accommodate the development without undue harm. Whilst there would be an obvious change in the character of the site in the short term, but a combination of sensitive design and detailed landscaping proposals ensure that the proposals would become fully integrated into landscape over time.

- 7.71 The overall landscape character area will benefit from the maturity of the introduced landscape which will help to integrate the site into the landscape and enhance the ecological and biodiversity of the green infrastructure in and around the development site.
- 7.72 In conclusion, having closely considered the findings in the previous appeal scheme, this revised application presents as a fully detailed, truly landscape led scheme, which works with the existing topography of the site and ensures that the development can be fully integrated into the landscape without having an adverse impact on its character and appearance.
- 7.73 The previous concerns have therefore been overcome and, in concert with the other technical considerations set out in this report, result in a compelling case for planning permission to be granted, in the context of the current housing shortfall and in directing development towards sustainable locations.

DESIGN, LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE

- 7.74 The surrounding area contains no prevailing architectural style and presents notable variety in the range of external materials used. At this edge of settlement location, the development pattern is primarily defined by the vertical emphasis of George Lane and the horizontal emphasis of Hammond Drive, both of which frame the site to the east and north respectively.
- 7.75 As set out in the Design and Access Statement, the evolution of the scheme has been clearly informed by landscape evidence and the desire to ensure that the scheme creates a softer, more sympathetic gateway to the village when compared to the current hard edge created by the rear boundaries of dwellings on George Lane.
- 7.76 The findings of the previous appeal have been scrutinised in detail and helped to inform the identification of developable areas; the street pattern and road hierarchy; the orientation of buildings; car parking provision; linkages and permeability within the development and the provision of a significant proportion of public open space.
- 7.77 The proposed density of the dwellings is commensurate with its edge of settlement location, with spacing between the dwellings which breaks up the street scene and allows for soft landscaping at key junctions and tree lined roads. Key landscape features are retained and incorporated into the scheme ensuring that it works within the broad character of the area.

- 7.78 The layout acknowledges the topography of the land to ensure that earthworks are kept to a minimum and dwellings are arranged in such a way as to offer natural surveillance over areas of POS and public walkways, with direct pedestrian access to the parkland.
- 7.79 The development includes a range of property types from bungalows to dwellings and with a range of sizes within those parameters, The overall height of the buildings is consistent with development in the immediate area, as is the quantum and density of development. Accordingly it would not appear anomalous in this setting.
- 7.80 The proposed palette of materials comprises art stone to the walls and grey tiles to the roofs, the intention being to provide an element of visual consistency throughout the site, but with variety provide in the range and mix of house types. Whilst there is a mixture of stone, render, red brick and ref roof tiles in the immediate area, with properties ranging in age and style, it is considered that the palette proposed within the site represents a suitable and appropriate finish.
- 7.81 The built form of the development will be supported by a high quality soft landscaping scheme, informed by the Landscape and Visual Appraisal, which ensures that the development is able to assimilate into its surroundings at the edge of the settlement, whilst also providing a high-quality environment for residents.
- 7.82 Existing swathes of woodland to the perimeter of the site would be retained and the minimal tree loss associated with the development (largely around the newly proposed entrance) would be compensated for by replacement landscaping to help maintain the green buffer around the site.
- 7.83 Internally the layout provides for soft landscaping within the street scene and around/within areas of public open space. This approach complements the existing character of the site and reflects its wider context. Each dwelling would also be afforded landscaped frontages and lawned, private rear gardens.
- 7.84 Interface distances within and beyond the site provide for more than sufficient separation to ensure that the amenities of existing and future residents is not compromised or unduly affected.
- 7.85 In summary the design and layout of the development, informed by a detailed landscape impact assessment and strategy, provides for a cohesive, high quality environment, complementing the surrounding area and creating a much improved gateway to the village.
- 7.86 For all these reasons the proposed layout is deemed to be wholly appropriate in this setting.

HERITAGE IMPACT

- 7.87 The application is supported by a detailed Built Heritage Statement prepared by Tetra Tech which comprehensively considers the range of matters associated with the proposed development and the surrounding assets which have been identified.
- 7.88 The first and most notable issue to address is whether the site should be considered as ‘parkland’ as found by the Inspector in dismissing the 2018 appeal. It is necessary to understand this as considerable (and disproportionate) weight was afforded to that status in refusing to grant planning permission.
- 7.89 It was established that the site did not constitute a ‘valued landscape’ for the purposes of the Framework, as part of that earlier decision. There has been no change in this regard and the matter will not be revisited.
- 7.90 The previous Inspector found that the site had the characteristics of parkland and therefore concluded it to be that. However, as the report from Tetra Tech confirms that the link between the site and Read Hall, and its contribution to its significance is tenuous for the following reasons:
- Whilst there was some historic association between the two in the past, the application site represented ‘agricultural hinterland’ which was incorporated into the wider estate;
 - Despite this, the trajectory of the two is markedly different, when considering the parkland which clearly surrounds the hall and the land beyond which may have had some association by way of ownership;
 - The site appears to have been purposely separated by the Hall by way of the Clough Syke Plantation, screening the sandstone quarry and coal pit impacts and creating a distinct area around the Hall away from these activities;
 - The site’s past agricultural use, the period of coal extraction and the differing land form mean that it does not represent a surviving element of the designed, early 19th Century landscape which principally defines Read Hall’s setting;
 - Cartographic and topographic evidence indicates the site that has a markedly different morphology from the western parkland that more clearly reads as the designed setting of Read Hall;

- LIDAR and aerial imagery show banks, ditches and tree-lines that align with former field boundaries rather than the specimen tree planting, axial drives or ornamental avenues typical of surviving parkland. The tree cover on the site reads as belts and boundary planting associated with later enclosure and woodland regeneration, not as deliberate specimen planting as part of a designed pleasure ground;
- In addition, the presence of former quarrying and coal-pit earthworks within the site underlines an industrial land-use history that further differentiates it from the principal designed landscape to the west; and
- Taken as a whole, these lines of evidence demonstrate that Hammond Ground does not retain the spatial organisation, planting strategy or visual relationships that would indicate survival of the early-19th-century designed landscape associated with Read Hall. While the land is historically associated with the estate and therefore has some historic association, that association does not translate into a tangible contribution to the Hall's setting in terms of designed character or legible historic landscape composition.

- 7.91 All of these characteristics mean that the site makes a low contribution to the significance of Read Hall. The assessment undertaken in the Built Heritage Statement follows Historic England's 'Good Practice Advice Note 3' (The Setting of Heritage Assets), which requires an evidence based approach to considering setting and reaches a conclusion on the parkland status due to all of the aforementioned matters.
- 7.92 In this instance the site's differing character, documented industrial activity, altered planting and intervening topography mean it does not reinforce the designed composition or key views that convey Read Hall's significance.
- 7.93 With regard to Read Hall itself, the Built Heritage Statement confirms that its significance is largely derived from its form and fabric as an early 19th Century country mansion, one of several designed by architect George Webster in the locality.
- 7.94 Historic interest comes from its association with John Fort and his early 19th Century reorganisation of the estate, alongside the value of surviving elements such as the remaining parkland which forms part of the setting and designed outlook from the hall.

- 7.95 The application site does not retain the spatial organisation, planting strategy or garden components that would demonstrate survival of Read Hall's early-nineteenth-century designed landscape. Whilst it has an historical association with the estate, that association is attenuated and does not translate into a meaningful, legible contribution to the designed setting.
- 7.96 The historic relationship between the site and the hall is therefore limited and accordingly its contribution is low as a result. Whilst the character of the area would change as a result of the proposed development, it would not be perceived from within the immediate grounds of the Hall nor in context with the Hall. Views to and from them are largely blocked by woodland and/or topography of the landscape.
- 7.97 This, in tandem with the significant physical separation and buffer by way of publicly accessible parkland to be created by way of the proposals, means that the relationship to the hall and estate, already materially weakened by previous uses and conscious separation, results in limited impacts.
- 7.98 The Archaeological Assessment also prepared to support the application includes a map regression exercise which confirms that whilst the site was incorporated into Read Park in the early 19th century and retains vestiges of that designed landscape, its character is also defined by a long history of mineral extraction.
- 7.99 Earthwork remains of a former sandstone quarry and two coal pits survive within the site, with further mining features recorded nearby. In the later 19th and 20th centuries heavy belts of tree planting have visually and functionally divorced the site from the surrounding parkland, creating a partly wooded enclosure.
- 7.100 Despite this enclosure, much of the site remains open and undeveloped and supports areas of open grassland/pasture and visible agricultural earthworks (banks, ditches and ridge-and-furrow), so the site now presents a mixed character of former industrial, agricultural and wooded parkland elements.
- 7.101 In conclusion the Heritage Statement confirms that:
- The site does not constitute parkland for a variety of reasons and should not be considered as such for the purposes of decision making;
 - The land only contributes minimally to the significance of Read Hall Park, a non-designated asset surrounding the hall;
 - The impact of the sensitively designed proposals would be very low with regard to this asset;

- The significance of the Grade II* listed Read Hall is primarily experienced within its immediate setting, which was designed to accommodate it. there is effectively no inter-visibility between the Hall's core grounds and the site, views being largely blocked by topography and the Clough Syke plantation; and
- the lack of joint experience between the site and the asset, and the long-established functional and visual separation mean that any perceptible effect on the Hall's ability to convey its significance would be limited. The proposals would therefore cause less-than-substantial harm, with that harm being at the lower end of the scale.

7.102 Whilst it has been established that a low level of harm would occur to a designated heritage asset, the Framework requires that any such harm is weighed against the public benefits of a proposal (para. 215) and in relation to non-designated assets, the lesser test of a 'balanced judgement' is necessary (para. 216).

7.103 The development would secure the following, clear public benefits:

- The delivery of both market and affordable housing and housing for older people, in a highly sustainable Tier 1 location, in the context of the current significant undersupply experienced by the Council and against the backdrop of a national housing crisis – this attracts **very significant weight** in decision making;
- The creation of mixed, inclusive communities in Read and significantly broadening home ownership opportunities, in the context of an ageing demographic within the settlement and a lack of housing land within the settlement boundaries as currently drawing – this attracts **significant weight** in decision making;
- The creation of new, publicly accessible parkland for use by future occupants and the wider community in perpetuity, representing a notable public asset and transforming the land from something which only has limited benefits to one which can serve future generations and provide access to high quality open space – this attracts **very significant weight** in decision making;

- Clear ecological benefits through the enhancement works which will take place in the publicly accessible areas, reversing previous decline and substantially improving the quality of the area – this attracts **significant weight** in decision making;
- The delivery of economic benefits insofar as it relates to employment and expenditure in the local supply chain during construction and subsequent patronage of local services and facilities by future residents – this attracts **moderate weight** in decision making

7.104 It is considered that these benefits clearly and demonstrably outweigh the low level of heritage harm which has been identified and therefore presents no barrier to granting planning permission at this site.

HIGHWAYS AND ACCESSIBILITY

7.105 The planning application is supported by a Transport Assessment ('TA') and Travel Plan ('TP'), both prepared by Andrew Moseley Associates.

7.106 The TA covers a range of topics including the accessibility credentials of the site, access arrangements and parking, trip generation and impacts on the surrounding road network, along with junction modelling to consider future impacts.

7.107 With regard to walkable services, within a 2km catchment there are a range of facilities including;

- Schools;
- Food retail outlets;
- Convenience stores;
- Outdoor leisure opportunities;
- A public house;
- Petrol filling station with convenience offer;
- Drinking establishments; and
- Places of worship

- 7.108 Within a 5km cycling catchment there are a wider range of opportunities, owing to the neighbouring towns and settlements which can be reached. This offers access to employment opportunities within designated sites around Padiham and Altham, alongside gyms, retail stores, restaurants, public houses, medical services and many other.
- 7.109 With regard to public transport, two bus stops are located within 290m of the site on Whalley Road. These stops offer mainline, daily services, running every 30 minutes Monday – Saturday and every 60 minutes on Sundays, between Burnley and Clitheroe. This clearly provides a viable alternative to travel by private car and reaches principal towns within Ribble Valley and in the neighbouring district of Burnley.
- 7.110 Taking all of these matters into account, and with due consideration to the Core Strategy designation of Read and Simonstone as Tier 1 in the settlement hierarchy, the site clearly represents an accessible and sustainable location for housing development of the scale proposed.
- 7.111 With regard to the local highway network, accident data within the most recent 5 year period confirms that there are no inherent safety concerns or demonstrable issues in the vicinity. A traffic survey was also undertaken to model the likely impacts from trips generated by the development, with due consideration to likely increases in traffic in the surrounding area, in the future.
- 7.112 The results confirm that the proposals can be accommodated without resulting any significant detrimental impact upon existing road safety or the capacity of the highway network.
- 7.113 In terms of access into the site, a new single point of ingress/egress for pedestrians and vehicles is proposed from Whalley Road, by way of a priority controlled T junction and associated ghost island. The necessary visibility splays (2.4m by 120m) is achievable in both directions and requires only minimal alterations to the frontage and all within the control of the applicant.
- 7.114 Internally, swept path analysis confirms that refuse vehicles can enter, comfortably negotiate the estate road and exit in forward gear. With regard to on site parking, a total of 154 spaces will be provided at an average of two per dwelling, with additional capacity provided on certain plots by way of garages. This represents suitable provision for development of this scale and nature and all of the properties will also be installed with EV charging equipment.
- 7.115 The Travel Plan which has been prepared to support the TA seeks to explore measures to make the site more sustainable and sets out a range of realistic targets to achieve this.

- 7.116 In light of all of these factors, it has been demonstrated that the site lies within a highly accessible and sustainable location and that there are no fundamental highway safety or capacity issues which would warrant the withholding of planning permission.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 7.117 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by the PWA.
- 7.118 The FRA confirms that the site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk in this regard. Whilst there are areas within the site identified as being at some low risk of surface water flooding, due to the presence of watercourses within the land, the developable area avoid these, meaning none of the proposed dwellings would be affected.
- 7.119 No other sources of potential risk were identified and due to the generally low likelihood of impact, no specific mitigation measures are required.
- 7.120 In terms of the site specific drainage strategy, the surface water hierarchy has been followed and due to land conditions, infiltration is not feasible. Accordingly, in the next order of priority, discharge to a watercourse was considered and found to be possible, owing to the presence of Clough Syke Brook.
- 7.121 It is therefore intended to direct attenuated flows to this watercourse, meeting greenfield run off rates at 18.40l/s, by way of underground storage system and flow control to an detention basin/pond at the southern boundary of the site within the public open space. In addition to assisting with drainage proposals, this helps with ecological gains and bringing the overall quality of the site to a much higher standard.
- 7.122 With regard to foul waters, it is intended to discharge to the combined public sewer which is present within Whalley Road.
- 7.123 In summary, the flood risk to future development is minimal as is the potential for increased risk elsewhere. The scheme will result in drainage better for the wider site by way of the system to be installed and surface water flows will be attenuated to match greenfield run off rates.
- 7.124 Therefore, the proposals present no unacceptable flood risk or drainage issues.

NOISE & AIR QUALITY

- 7.125 A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by Miller Goodall to consider the prevailing acoustic environment at the site as existing, and modelled any potential impacts arising from the siting of the new dwellings.
- 7.126 Following site monitoring it is confirmed that the primary source of noise in the vicinity is traffic using Whalley Road to the south of the development. Unless suitable mitigation is proposed the noise levels for a handful of dwellings adjacent to this boundary have the potential to exceed guidelines for both facades and in some instances, outdoor amenity areas.
- 7.127 Following the principles of good acoustic design, proposed mitigation is set out within the Assessment which confirms that subject to the use of glazing and ventilation systems, alongside close boarded fencing to boundaries adjacent to the affected plots, results in a noise environment within acceptable ranges. Accordingly, a more than acceptable standard of amenity can be secured for future residents.
- 7.128 In light of this and with matters which can be controlled by suitably worded, there are no inherent noise issues which would prevent the development from coming forwards as set out.
- 7.129 With regard to Air Quality, as Assessment has also been carried out by Miller Goodall which confirms that the development would not have a significant impact on local air quality and the overall quality is such that the site is wholly suitable for residential use.

ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

- 7.130 The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ('PEA') and associated BNG assessment and calculations, both prepared by Envirotech.
- 7.131 The PEA confirms that the site has been subject to detailed desk based and site survey work, in informing the findings of the assessments and the suggested mitigation. As existing the land presents as sheep grazed pasture with a number of trees scattered through it and significant areas to woodland to the west. It is no subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations nor would the development have an impact on others in the vicinity.
- 7.132 It should be noted that whilst the site does contain the remnants of some parkland features (see Heritage section above for further information) it is not recorded within the 'Wood Pasture and Parkland' category by Natural England, for ecological purposes, as it does not clearly retain the defining characteristics of a designed historic parkland landscape.

- 7.133 The PEA corroborates the findings with the Built Heritage Statement in this regard, confirming that physical and historic evidence, including the absence of designed vistas, specimen tree planting, ornamental planting blocks, drives or pleasure ground features, together with evidence of former enclosure boundaries and agricultural land use, indicates that the site does not meet the definition of intact historic parkland.
- 7.134 With regard to protected species, the nearest recorded Great Crested Newts are some 1600m away from the site, towards Whalley, with the core of the application site offering low value to amphibians due to its characteristics. This, along with the presence of residential development on three sides, means the likelihood of them using the site is low. Whilst there are ponds adjacent to the site boundary, their location, in the context of the proposed developable area, means that it is highly unlikely that any adverse impacts would occur.
- 7.135 With regard to badgers, the nearest recorded sett is located some 1250m away beyond the site. Whilst evidence of a sett and badger activity was identified in the woodland to the west of the site, it is not considered to be in active use and is possibly an outlier sett. It is established that there is a likelihood that badgers may pass through the new community parkland to be created, that the enhancements proposed as part of this application are likely to improve and enhanced foraging. The outlier sett can also be protected from the wider site by way of suitable fencing.
- 7.136 The PEA confirms that the site offers high quality foraging environment for bats due to the combination of individual trees, woodland, watercourses and connectivity to other such areas. The trees on site were assessed and some found to have potential roost features.
- 7.137 As in the case of badgers, the proposed enhancements to be delivered as part of this submission will result in clear enhancements in structural diversity for foraging the retention of trees means that there is no reduction in potential habitat.
- 7.138 In relation to the presence of birds, the site contains a range of features which are likely to support nesting, breeding and foraging. As with the other species above, the retention of the majority of the natural features on site, in tandem with the improvements proposed will secure enhancements beneficial to birds.
- 7.139 As a result of the above, no adverse impacts will arise to protected species or their habitats, as result of the proposals.
- 7.140 The PEA also sets out a detailed schedule of proposed enhancement and management to improve and sustain the longevity of the community parkland to be created. In the absence of any harm and with the

development securing clear betterment, this element of the proposals should be afforded very significant weight in decision making.

7.141 With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain, the development will secure improvements well above the 10% mandatory threshold, all to be achieved on site. This gain comprises:

- 25.84 habitat units - +15.70% gain
- 2.73 hedgerow units - +140% gain
- 1.25 watercourse units - +16.83% gain

7.142 It is prudent to note that whilst the site is not considered to be parkland and is not classified as such by Natural England, the BNG assessment has treated the site as 'Wood pasture and parkland' as the baseline, setting a standard of high distinctiveness with a higher biodiversity value. That, in turn, creates a higher target to be achieved in the proposed gain. If the site were classified strictly in accordance with UKHabs field descriptors as 'Modified Grassland with Scattered Parkland Trees' (rural trees), the calculated baseline biodiversity value would be lower

7.143 This robust and precautionary baseline position ensures that the uplift delivered by the scheme is not overstated, but it also should be accepted that the starting point differs as a result.

7.144 In summary, there are no insurmountable ecological issues which would prevent the granting of planning permission, conversely, the development results in clear, demonstrable enhancement to the benefit of local wildlife, species, habitats and the community as a whole.

TREES AND HEDGEROWS

7.145 The application is accompanied by a detailed Tree Survey prepared by Trevor Bridge Associates, which confirms the presence of a number of category A, B, and C specimens within the site and identifies root protection zones for them all.

7.146 In terms of removal, it is generally only necessary to fell trees adjacent to the newly proposed access point on Whalley Road. Other than this, trees of note and clear amenity value have been incorporated into the scheme and form an integral part of the layout, with suitable separation to avoid the RPA's.

7.147 The detailed landscaping proposal shows that significant new planting will be secured to enhance the character of the site and to help future management of the area, which has been suffering some gradual decline.

- 7.148 Accordingly there are no arboricultural issues affecting the development and the presence of existing trees has been crucial in fixing the final layout as presented in the application.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 7.149 The proposals have been designed in such a way as to ensure that the amenity of residents on George Lane and Hammond Drive are protected, by way of physical separation and ensuring that acceptable interface distances are achieved between primary elevations and habitable room windows.
- 7.150 It is also pertinent to note that the topography of the area is such that a number of the immediate neighbours would look over the development and largely have views of the roofscape rather than the full massing of dwellings individually or collectively.
- 7.151 Whilst it is accepted that the scheme will result in a change of outlook for some residents and the edge of the village, and although loss or alteration of private views is not a material planning consideration in its own right, it has been shown that the scheme has been sensitively designed and proposes a quantum of development which would not give rise to unacceptable impacts from neighbours.
- 7.152 Physical and natural features of interest at the site are retained and a new community parkland will be delivered to the benefit of the community as a whole.
- 7.153 The suite of technical reports which support the application demonstrate that no other issues would be present which would unduly affect the amenities of existing or future residents and in this regard the scheme is policy compliant.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- 7.154 The Applicant will discuss any potential developer obligations with the Council during the course of the application, with a view to securing matters such as affordable housing, the future of the public open space and others, depending on necessity and consultee requests.
- 7.155 With regard to affordable housing mix, it is intended to deliver a tenure of 11 properties for affordable rent and 12 as intermediate housing (see paragraph 5.9 of this Statement for further detail). Within this, 8 of the properties are to be bungalows, helping to meet need for housing suitable for older people.

PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.156 The lack of a 5 year housing land supply within Ribble Valley is not disputed by the Council and the fact that it falls as low as 3.45 years following the findings of the Chatburn appeal, means that shortfall is significant.
- 7.157 The absence of the necessary housing land supply engages paragraph 11d) of the Framework, which states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless one of two exceptions applies.
- 7.158 The most important policies in this case, contained within the Core Strategy, relate to the spatial distribution of new housing across the Borough and whilst Read and Simonstone are considered to be Tier 1 settlements, as sustainable as a result, development beyond the settlement boundaries, within the open countryside would generally be prohibited unless a limited number of exceptions are satisfied.
- 7.159 The first exception to the stance set out by Paragraph 11d) is whether the application of policies within the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance, including those relating to designated heritage assets, provide a strong reason for refusing the development.
- 7.160 The only such assets in this instance are the off-site heritage assets outlined earlier in this Statement and comprehensively considered in the Built Heritage Statement. It is established that only a low level of less than substantial harm would occur to those assets as a result of the development, and that harm would be substantially outweighed by the range of public benefits listed in paragraph 7.104.
- 7.161 The second exception to the presumption in paragraph 11d) is whether the adverse impact of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework taken as a whole, with particular regard to key policies which direct development to sustainable locations, make effective use of land and secure well-design places and the provision of affordable homes.
- 7.162 In this instance, a full planning application is made by a developer with a strong track record of delivery, particularly in the Ribble Valley where their housing has met with significant levels of demand due to its quality. It is therefore able to contribute notably to the Council's supply in the immediate term and deliverable within a 5 year window. The scheme contains a range of house types, sizes and tenures, helping to broaden home ownership in Read, a settlement which does not benefit from any notable land within its boundaries to accommodate the level of growth which should be directed towards such areas.

It is therefore necessary to look outside of the settlement for suitable sites to deliver new housing, with the land subject to this application being one of them.

- 7.163 With regard to adverse impacts, whilst the open countryside location of the site would not meet with Core Strategy requirements in terms of location, the adverse impacts of development in this location, adjacent to a Tier 1 settlement with a range of local services, facilities and access to public transport, can only attract minimal weight with regard to this conflict.
- 7.164 Whilst there would be some change to the appearance of the area, the extent of any impacts are minimal as set out in the LVA, due to the genuinely landscape led, fully detailed scheme which is presented, contrasting with the outline proposals subject to the earlier applications and appeals at the site. As a result, any conflict with the Core Strategy in this regarding would be minimal.
- 7.165 With regard to heritage assets, it has been shown that the impacts on Read Hall and its associated elements, that the proposed development would also result in only a low level of less than substantial harm.
- 7.166 Therefore, as a range of potential adverse impacts, the above are minimal and demonstrably overcome by the following benefits.
- 7.167 The delivery of 77 homes carries very significant weight in the context of the supply shortfall. It would provide a notable boost to local housing stock where the 5YHLS has been shown to be lacking and is not set to be addressed until a new Local Plan has been adopted, unless sustainable sites are granted planning permission or allowed by appeal in the meantime.
- 7.168 It is accepted that figures show on paper that the Council has been successful in delivering housing in the past, but it has been shown that demand in the area has been suppressed for some time and that affordability has been worsening within the Borough.
- 7.169 The Chatburn appeal confirms that there is an acute need for new housing in Ribble Valley. Whilst this is also a national issue, it does not diminish the importance of delivering 77 dwellings, with a policy compliant provision of 30% affordable housing units as part of this development, alongside housing for older people, which must be afforded very significant weight.
- 7.170 The development will secure the majority of the wider site as a new community parkland, open to all on an area previously inaccessible to the public. In addition to this, land management and enhancement proposals will result in a clear betterment and exceed the 10% BNG mandatory requirement, which is significant when the baseline taken means that the gains achieved represent a higher threshold of improvement. These elements must be afforded very significant weight in the balance.

- 7.171 The proposals would deliver clear economic benefits from the construction phase and the boost to the local economy from the expenditure of future occupants. The patronage of local services and facilities in places like Read is a significant factor in their success and longevity. The static population in Read in recent years, due to the absence of any housing growth, means that this expenditure should be welcomed and may further enhance the local offer available. This should be afforded moderate weight in the balance.
- 7.172 In summary the proposed development would accrue a range of benefits that carry significant weight, by way of the delivery of market and affordable housing, housing for older people, the creation of a community parkland and notable levels of biodiversity net gain. There would also be economic benefits in both the short and longer term which have moderate weight.
- 7.173 In terms of any adverse impacts in terms of locational suitability, character and appearance, and designated heritage assets, and the associated policy conflicts, these can carry only minimal weight for all of the reasons set out above.
- 7.174 These minor adverse impacts would not be outweighed, either significantly or demonstrably, by the clear range of benefits which would be achieved, when assessed against the Framework as a whole. The presumption and balance set out in Paragraph 11d) therefore weighs heavily in favor of the granting of planning permission.

CONCLUSIONS

- 7.175 It has been demonstrated above that the proposed development achieves the three overarching objectives of sustainable development, in securing:
- **Economic** – the development ensures that sufficient land is available, the right location to meet growth demands within the Ribble Valley, particularly in the context of significant housing shortfall, against the backdrop of a national housing crisis.
 - **Social** - the delivery of new housing in this location helps to diversify and strengthen the local community, broadening home ownership opportunities for a range of people both now and in the future, close to accessible services and facilities, with a scheme which helps to promote health and wellbeing through the provision of a significant area of high quality, publicly accessible open space.
 - **Environmental** – the proposals notably enhance the local natural environment, make an effective use of this land whilst preserving open space for the community and

improve biodiversity through a range of measures and management proposals, which can be secured as part of the planning process.

- 7.176 All of the above, in tandem with the matters outlined and discussed in this Statement, provide a compelling and heavily weighted case in favour of granting planning permission.

8. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- 8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

“In principle...any consideration which relates to the use and development of land is capable of being a planning consideration. Whether a particular consideration falling within that broad class is material in any given case will depend on the circumstances” (Stringer v MHLG 1971).

- 8.2 Material considerations must be genuine planning considerations, i.e. they must be related to the development and use of land in the public interest. The considerations must also fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned (*R v Westminster CC ex-parte Monahan 1989 refers*).
- 8.3 The Courts are the arbiters of what constitutes a material consideration. All of the fundamental factors involved in land-use planning are included, such as the number, size, layout, siting, design and external appearance of buildings and the proposed means of access, together with landscaping, impact on the neighbourhood and the availability of infrastructure.
- 8.4 The Courts have also held that the Government’s statements of planning policy are material considerations which must be taken into account, where relevant, in decisions on planning applications. These statements cannot make irrelevant any matter which is a material consideration in a particular case. But where such statements indicate the weight that should be given to relevant considerations, decision-makers must have proper regard to them. If they elect not to follow relevant statements of the Government’s planning policy, they must give clear and convincing reasons (*E C Grandsen and Co Ltd v SSE and Gillingham BC 1985 refers*).
- 8.5 Emerging policies, in the form of draft policy statements and guidance, can be regarded as material considerations, depending on the context. Their existence may indicate that a relevant policy is under review; and the circumstances which have led to that review may need to be taken into account.
- 8.6 In those cases where the Development Plan is not relevant, for example because there are no relevant policies, or policies in the DPDs pull in opposite directions so that there is no clear guide for a particular

proposal, the planning application should be determined on its merits in the light of all the material considerations.

8.7 In this case the following material considerations are relevant.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

8.8 A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (hereafter referred to as the Framework) was published most recently in December 2024. The following extracts are relevant and are reproduced below for ease of reference together with commentary where necessary:

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

8.9 Section 2 sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To achieve this, the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) **social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

8.10 The application proposals would deliver sustainable development in the following ways:

Economic	The development of the land would contribute to generating full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs within the construction industry over the build period, which would be a benefit to the economy of the local area. The new dwellings would help to vary the housing stock in the area and could encourage new residents into the Borough who would generate expenditure within the local economy, supporting local shops, services and businesses. This expenditure would in turn support jobs in the Borough as well as additional public sector jobs (e.g. teachers, doctors etc.) that would be generated as a direct consequence of the proposals. The proposals are fully commensurate with the economic dimension of sustainable development and would represent a welcomed contribution to the economy of the area.
Social	The proposals would help to broaden home ownership opportunities and create new, healthy communities within the area for both young families and older people and those in need of affordable housing. The proposals would also facilitate the creation of jobs within the local labour pool, both during construction and in the operational phase. The development would also provide for a significant amount of publicly accessible open space by way of the proposed parkland, which is currently in private ownership and performs no wider function.
Environmental	The proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on environmental issues and secure clear enhancements to the biodiversity of the wider area. The proposals would introduce a significant amount of new public open space, incorporating a range of ecological improvements and long term management proposals. The new properties would be constructed to meet current building regulation standards and therefore be energy efficient and provide EV charging to further reduce reliance on carbon and fossil fuels.

- 8.11 Paragraph 11 confirms that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In relation to the subject application, for decision-taking, paragraph 11 d) is relevant, and the tilted balance is engaged, owing to the Council's substantial shortfall in housing land supply.
- 8.12 This is a significant material consideration which renders the Core Strategy policies which control and direct the spatial distribution of housing, out of date.

DELIVERING A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF HOMES

- 8.13 Paragraph 61 sets out that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.
- 8.14 This must also be considered in the context of the newly imposed Standard Method, for which the Council benefit from no exemption or transitional arrangements. They must therefore work towards a targets of 311 dwellings per annum and it has been established that past oversupply cannot be used to offset or reduce this figure.
- 8.15 This site lies within a highly accessible location, immediately adjacent to a sustainable settlement and the scheme as proposed would make a significant and positive contribution to the Council's supply of housing. Being promoted by a long established developer with a strong track record of delivery also means that it would help to boost local supply, through the provision of 77 new homes for families and older people in the borough, in accordance with these Framework provisions.

DESIGN

- 8.16 The creation of high-quality buildings and places is outlined by the Government to be fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. A key element of sustainable development is good design, which should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 135 of the Framework sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) Function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

- c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscaping setting;
- d) Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses, and support local facilities and transport; and
- f) Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.

8.17 The proposals represent a genuinely landscape led scheme, has been informed by the nature of the site and in context, proposes a modest quantum of development whilst opening up the remainder of the land to public use. These are all important and considerable material benefits which accrue in favor of the development when set against the context and those policies of the Core Strategy which remain relevant.

ENVIRONMENT

8.18 The Framework also requires that development proposals should also prevent new and existing development from contributing to or being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.

8.19 No unacceptable impacts or risks have been identified with regard to these environmental matters, as confirmed in the comprehensive suite of technical reports and assessments which have been undertaken.

PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

8.20 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was launched on 6 March 2014 in its final form and has subsequently been updated on numerous occasions. The PPG replaces some 230 planning guidance documents but results in no amendments to the Framework.

8.21 Practice Guidance also updates and advises on the new Standard Method for calculating housing supply. It is not disputed by the Council that their new dwelling per annum target is now 311 as a result of the uplift which the new method brings, and that the Chatburn appeal confirms that their supply is currently at 3.45 years.

- 8.22 Regarding design, the PPG reiterates the guidance set out in the Framework; that good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development.
- 8.23 The PPG makes it clear that planning policies and decisions should seek to ensure the physical environment supports the three strands of sustainable development (i.e. economic, social and environmental) and in doing so issues including the promotion of local character; designing safe connected and efficient streets; incorporating a network of greenspaces; promoting cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods, should all be given careful consideration.
- 8.24 The PPG also reiterates the guidance set out in the Framework, that both Local Plans and planning decisions should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 8.25 This submission has demonstrated that the development is appropriate in terms of its location and by way of its visual and landscape impact, design, appearance, layout and scale and is therefore acceptable.

SUMMARY

- 8.26 Subject to the issues outlined above, there are a number of compelling material considerations which support the development as set out, enabling it to deliver much needed economic, social and environmental benefits in Ribble Valley.

9. SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 Connollys is instructed by Applethwaite Ltd to prepare this Planning Statement in support of a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council relating to land north of Whalley Road, Read.
- 9.2 The description of development given in the planning application form is:
- “Erection of 77 no. dwellings and creation of community parkland, with vehicular access from Whalley Road and associated infrastructure, parking and landscaping”.*
- 9.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:
- “where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.*
- 9.4 It has been demonstrated in this Planning Statement that the tilted balance, as set out in paragraph 11d) of the Framework is fully engaged, owing to the Councils development plan policies regarding the spatial distribution of housing being out of date, due to their lack of a 5 year supply.
- 9.5 The shortfall is considerable and as set out in the Chatburn appeal, it is necessary to deliver new, sustainable housing, being necessary as “part of the solution to the acute housing crisis that exists nationally”. This approach should underpin the decision making process in this instance.
- 9.6 It is set out herein that the proposals represent sustainable development, adjacent to a Tier 1 settlement which has accommodated little to no growth, and that there are significant benefits associated with the proposed development with no technical or material considerations that significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits.
- 9.7 Furthermore, the rationale for refusing the previous 2016 application and subsequent dismissal of the 2018 appeal, in relation to the parkland status of the site and the suggestion landscape impacts, have been comprehensively addressed and those matters have formed the basis of this submission.

THE BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS

- The development of a sustainably located site, immediately adjacent to a Tier 1 settlement which has made minimal contribution to housing supply in the borough prior to and during the lifetime of the Core Strategy;

- Significant, positive and immediate contribution to housing supply within the Borough with both market and affordable properties included in the scheme;
- Creating mixed, inclusive and varied communities, which in turn will support the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the area;
- Improvement and diversification of housing stock within the borough by way of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties, including bungalows within the scheme, meeting as wide a range of need as possible and broadening ownership opportunities;
- The provision of a substantial area of publicly accessible open space, on land which has never been available to the community and is to be subject to notable enhancements;
- New employment opportunities during construction;
- Expenditure in the local supply chain during construction;
- Expenditure from future residents supporting local services and businesses;
- Notable ecological and biodiversity enhancements through new planting and infrastructure; and
- No significant or demonstrable harm caused by the proposals.

9.8 For the reasons set out above we respectfully request on behalf of the applicant that approval be granted without delay in accordance with the requirements of the Framework.