

FORMAL STATEMENT OF OBJECTION

Planning Application 3/2026/0356

Proposed Residential Development at Hammond Ground, Read,
Lancashire

Submitted to

Development Management

Ribble Valley Borough Council

Church Walk

Clitheroe

Lancashire

BB7 2RA

Submitted by

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date

June 2026

Document Status

Personal Planning Representation

This document constitutes my personal planning objection to Application 3/2026/0356.

It is submitted in my capacity as:

- A neighbouring resident directly affected by the proposed development; and
- [REDACTED].

Whilst this document addresses wider planning issues affecting Hammond Ground, it also sets out the significant and direct impact the proposed development would have upon my own property and residential amenity.

This representation should be read alongside any separate technical submissions prepared by specialist planning, landscape, or heritage consultants on behalf of [REDACTED] or other interested parties.

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FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 3/2026/0356

Executive Summary

I write to object in the strongest possible terms to planning application 3/2026/0356.

This representation is made in two capacities.

Firstly, as the owner and occupier of one of the residential properties most directly affected by the proposed development.

Secondly, [REDACTED], which has been established to [REDACTED] the concerns of local residents regarding this proposal.

Whilst [REDACTED] will submit separate specialist evidence prepared by experienced planning, landscape and heritage consultants, this objection is my own. It addresses both the wider planning issues arising from the proposal and the very significant impact the development would have upon my own property and family.

Having carefully reviewed the application documents, I consider that the proposal should be refused for numerous independent reasons. More importantly, when those reasons are considered cumulatively, they demonstrate overwhelming planning harm which significantly outweighs any claimed public benefits.

This Statement of Objection demonstrates that Application 3/2026/0356 should be refused because it conflicts with the Development Plan and fails to overcome the fundamental planning objections that have consistently applied to Hammond Ground. The proposal would result in the permanent urbanisation of a highly sensitive landscape, harm the setting of Read Hall, erode the distinctive rural character of Read and have an unacceptable impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residents, including my own property. It also raises unresolved concerns regarding highway safety, three-storey development, inadequate landscape buffers, insufficient information on levels and overlooking, and uncertainty surrounding the long-term management of public open space.

A central question runs throughout this representation: what has materially changed since the Planning Inspector's 2018 appeal decision? At that time, despite the Council being unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the Inspector concluded that the harm arising from development at Hammond Ground outweighed its benefits. The site has not changed, the landscape has not changed, and the Core Strategy policies protecting its character remain substantially the same. In my respectful submission, the applicant has failed to demonstrate any material change in planning circumstances that would justify reaching a different conclusion today.

In summary, this application:

- would result in the irreversible loss of an important area of open countryside that forms part of the historic landscape setting of Read Hall and the village of Read;
- conflicts with the established character of the settlement and would urbanise one of its most sensitive landscape edges;
- fails to preserve or enhance the landscape character that previous planning decisions have consistently recognised as worthy of protection;
- would have an unacceptable impact upon neighbouring residential amenity through overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of outlook, visual intrusion, increased activity and noise;
- introduces three-storey dwellings in particularly sensitive locations immediately adjacent to existing homes;
- fails to provide sufficient information regarding finished floor levels, ridge heights, cross-sections and changes in ground levels to enable the Local Planning Authority properly to assess the true impact of the development;
- raises significant concerns regarding highway safety, including visibility splays, the adequacy of the proposed right-turn lane and the overall capacity of the highway network;
- proposes public open space without providing adequate information regarding its future ownership, management, maintenance or legal protection;
- contains a layout which gives rise to legitimate concerns that the proposal has been designed to facilitate future expansion into the remainder of Hammond Ground;
- provides only limited landscape buffering between proposed development and existing homes, suggesting that maximising developable land has been prioritised over achieving an appropriate relationship with neighbouring properties;
- represents an overly intensive form of development that fails to respond sensitively to the unique characteristics of the site.

This objection also questions whether the Local Planning Authority has sufficient information before it to determine the application at all.

In several important respects, the application lacks the detail necessary to assess its effects properly. Where significant uncertainty remains regarding matters such as finished levels, overlooking, long-term landscape management and future maintenance of proposed public open space, the Council should not simply assume those matters can be satisfactorily resolved at a later stage.

Planning permission should only be granted where the Local Planning Authority can be satisfied that development complies with the Development Plan and where all material planning considerations have been properly assessed.

In my opinion, that threshold has not been met. Accordingly, I respectfully request that Ribble Valley Borough Council refuses planning permission.

1. My Interest in this Application

I have [REDACTED] for [REDACTED] years and have a detailed understanding of the site, its landscape, its wildlife, its relationship with the surrounding village and the contribution it makes to the character of Read.

Unlike many planning applications, this proposal would not merely alter the wider appearance of the village.

It would fundamentally change the environment immediately surrounding my home.

The northernmost plots are located [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The proposed dwellings would replace open countryside with intensive residential development comprising roads, lighting, parking areas, domestic activity and substantial built form [REDACTED] my property.

The effect upon my family's enjoyment of our home would be permanent.

My objection is therefore based not only upon wider planning considerations but also upon the direct and substantial impact the proposal would have upon my own residential amenity.

For the avoidance of doubt, this objection is **not** motivated by any perceived effect upon property values.

Rather, it concerns the demonstrable planning harm arising from unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing development, visual intrusion and the permanent loss of the open landscape that currently forms the setting of my home.

2. The Importance of Hammond Ground

Hammond Ground is far more than an undeveloped parcel of land.

It forms one of the defining landscape features of Read.

Situated between the existing settlement and the historic parkland associated with Read Hall, it provides an important transition between village and countryside.

The openness of Hammond Ground contributes significantly to:

- the rural character of Read;
- the setting of Read Hall;

- views into and out of the village;
- local landscape character;
- biodiversity;
- public appreciation of the historic environment.

Its importance cannot simply be measured by ecological surveys or landscape plans prepared for the purposes of this application.

Its value lies equally in the contribution it makes to the identity of the village.

Once developed, that contribution can never be recreated.

The proposal would replace this open landscape with an estate of roads, dwellings, retaining structures, engineering works, parking courts, lighting columns and associated suburban infrastructure.

That transformation would be permanent and irreversible.

The Council must therefore be satisfied that such harm is clearly justified.

In my view, it is not.

3. Planning History and the Importance of Previous Decisions

One of the most significant material considerations in determining this application is the planning history of Hammond Ground.

This is not a site coming forward for development for the first time. The principle of housing development on this land has been examined on a number of previous occasions, including through planning appeals. Those decisions recognised the exceptional sensitivity of Hammond Ground and consistently concluded that residential development would result in unacceptable planning harm.

The Planning Inspector's decision in 2018 is one of the most important material considerations in determining the current application.

Although every planning application must be considered on its own merits, appeal decisions—particularly those issued on behalf of the Secretary of State following a detailed examination of the planning evidence—provide important guidance where the site, the relevant planning policies and the principal planning issues remain substantially unchanged.

In 2018, the Inspector considered proposals for development at Hammond Ground at a time when, as now, Ribble Valley Borough Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. Despite that significant factor weighing in favour of housing development, the Inspector nevertheless concluded that the

adverse impacts of developing Hammond Ground outweighed the benefits and dismissed the appeal.

That conclusion is highly significant.

The Council's inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply was one of the strongest policy arguments available in favour of granting permission. Yet even in those circumstances, the Inspector found that the landscape, heritage and environmental harm associated with development of Hammond Ground justified refusal.

The current application therefore raises an important question for the Local Planning Authority:

What material planning circumstances have changed since 2018 that justify reaching a fundamentally different conclusion?

In my view, the answer is very little.

The site remains the same. Hammond Ground continues to perform the same important function as open countryside and as part of the wider setting of Read Hall. The landscape characteristics that led the Inspector to conclude that development would cause unacceptable harm have not altered. Nor has the relationship between the site and neighbouring residential properties.

Equally important, the adopted Core Strategy continues to provide the policy framework against which the application should be assessed. While national planning policy has evolved since 2018, the overarching objectives of protecting valued landscapes, conserving heritage assets, securing high-quality design and safeguarding the amenity of existing residents remain firmly embedded within both national and local planning policy.

If the Council is minded to reach a different conclusion from that reached by the Planning Inspector in 2018, it should clearly identify the material planning changes that justify doing so. It is not sufficient merely to rely upon a revised layout or additional mitigation if the fundamental planning harms identified by the Inspector remain substantially unchanged.

In my respectful submission, the applicant has not demonstrated that those harms have been overcome. Instead, the current proposal continues to urbanise a highly sensitive landscape, adversely affect neighbouring residential amenity and erode the distinctive character of Hammond Ground. The reasoning underpinning the 2018 appeal decision therefore remains highly relevant and should be afforded substantial weight in the determination of this application.¹

The previous decisions recognised, amongst other matters:

- the contribution Hammond Ground makes to the setting of the village;

- the importance of retaining the openness of the site;
- the relationship between the land and the historic setting of Read Hall;
- the harm that would arise from extending built development into this landscape;
- the erosion of the distinctive settlement edge.

Those considerations remain equally applicable today.

If anything, they are now even more significant given increasing public recognition of the importance of protecting valued landscapes, biodiversity and local character.

The Council should therefore attach considerable weight to the consistent planning history of this site.

4. Policy Context

This application must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In considering this proposal, I respectfully ask the Local Planning Authority to give particular regard to the following policy objectives.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") requires development to achieve genuinely sustainable outcomes by balancing economic, social and environmental objectives.

Whilst the delivery of housing is an important objective, the Framework is equally clear that development should:

- respond positively to local character;
- recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside;
- create places with a high standard of amenity;
- protect valued landscapes;
- conserve heritage assets and their settings;
- ensure developments are visually attractive;
- provide safe and suitable access;
- secure biodiversity enhancement.

These objectives are not optional aspirations. They form part of the statutory planning balance.

In my view, this proposal fails to satisfy many of these requirements.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

The adopted Development Plan similarly seeks to ensure that development:

- respects landscape character;
- protects important environmental assets;
- safeguards residential amenity;
- responds to local distinctiveness;
- delivers high quality design;
- provides safe transport arrangements;
- enhances green infrastructure.

The proposal conflicts with these objectives in several important respects, particularly landscape impact, residential amenity and design quality.

5. Landscape Character and Visual Harm

The applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment significantly understates the importance of Hammond Ground.

It is not simply an undeveloped field waiting to be built upon.

It forms one of the defining landscape components of Read.

Its openness provides an essential visual transition between the existing village and the wider countryside.

Approaching Read, Hammond Ground provides one of the last remaining opportunities to appreciate the historic relationship between the village, Read Hall and the surrounding landscape.

The proposed development would permanently replace that landscape with suburban housing.

The introduction of estate roads, engineered levels, retaining structures, lighting columns, domestic curtilages, parked vehicles and substantial built form would fundamentally alter the character of the site.

This is not a temporary impact.

Nor is it capable of mitigation through landscaping.

Once urbanised, Hammond Ground can never again function as open countryside.

The applicant places considerable reliance upon new planting.

However, newly planted trees cannot replace mature open landscape.

Indeed, substantial planting may itself obscure existing views and alter the historic landscape character which the proposal claims to respect.

Landscape mitigation should not be confused with landscape preservation.

The proposal does not conserve Hammond Ground.

It replaces it.

6. Heritage and the Setting of Read Hall

The relationship between Hammond Ground and Read Hall(Grade II*) is of considerable importance.

Historically, the openness of this land has contributed to the appreciation of the Hall within its wider landscape. The applicant's arguments as to whether this land forms part of Read Park is simply unreasonable and contradicted within its own experts documents. A view of not only historical maps, but the current ordinance survey map shows it as so.

Although modern development has altered parts of the surrounding area, Hammond Ground continues to perform an important role in preserving that historic relationship.

The applicant appears to suggest that because Hammond Ground has been subject to agricultural use and landscape change over time, its historic significance has been diminished. That conclusion does not necessarily follow. Historic parklands are living landscapes that commonly evolve over centuries. Changes in management, agricultural use or planting do not automatically remove their historic significance or their contribution to the setting of a heritage asset. The relevant question is not whether the landscape has changed, but whether it continues to make a meaningful contribution to the significance and setting of Read Hall and to the historic character of the village. In my view, it clearly does.

The proposed housing estate would significantly erode this setting.

The cumulative effect of roads, houses, lighting, domestic activity and suburban infrastructure would diminish the appreciation of Read Hall within its historic landscape.

The applicant appears to assess heritage largely through the narrow lens of direct physical impact.

However, national planning policy is clear that the setting of heritage assets extends beyond their immediate boundaries.

The contribution made by surrounding landscape should not be underestimated.

The Council should therefore carefully consider whether the applicant has fully assessed the effect upon the significance of Read Hall arising from the permanent urbanisation of Hammond Ground.

7. Failure to Respect the Existing Settlement Edge

One of the clearest indicators of good masterplanning is the creation of a strong, defensible and permanent settlement boundary.

This proposal fails to achieve that objective.

Instead of providing generous landscape buffers, the development pushes housing unusually close to existing residential boundaries.

The proposed northern edge appears abrupt and engineered.

The relationship between proposed dwellings and existing properties gives the impression that the layout has been driven primarily by the desire to maximise the developable area of the site.

This has resulted in:

- reduced separation distances;
- limited opportunities for structural landscaping;
- increased overlooking;
- increased visual dominance;
- greater pressure upon neighbouring residential amenity.

The Council should ask whether a genuinely landscape-led scheme would position development in this manner.

In my opinion, it would not.

A landscape-led approach would establish meaningful green corridors, generous planting and a permanent defensible edge between village and countryside.

This proposal does none of those things.

Instead, it leaves a development edge that appears capable of future extension, a matter I address later in this statement.

8. Impact on Existing Residential Amenity – My Property

Introduction

The planning system recognises that one of the fundamental objectives of good design is to create places with a high standard of amenity for both existing and future occupants.

Whilst the application contains extensive information regarding the quality of accommodation proposed for future residents, comparatively little attention has been given to those of us who already live immediately adjacent to the site and whose homes will be permanently affected.

My property is amongst those most directly impacted by the proposal.

Unlike many objectors, I am not commenting upon a development that will simply alter the wider appearance of the village.

The proposed development would fundamentally change the environment immediately surrounding my home.

The [REDACTED].

Instead of looking across open countryside, my family and I would face the prospect of substantial residential development comprising roads, vehicles, lighting, parking courts, domestic activity and multi-storey housing.

The cumulative impact upon our residential amenity would be profound.

Existing Character

At present, my property enjoys an open aspect across Hammond Ground. As seen in Figure 3.

That openness is one of the defining characteristics of our home.

The absence of nearby development provides:

- privacy;
- tranquillity;
- visual openness;
- dark skies;
- uninterrupted outlook;
- a strong connection with the surrounding countryside.

These qualities have existed for many years and form an integral part of the way our property is experienced. Indeed in 2016 it was the main attraction of the property which was extensively remodelled and redesigned to take advantage of its locality.

The proposal would permanently replace this environment with the immediate presence of a suburban housing estate.

The change would be both dramatic and irreversible.

Overlooking

My principal concern relates to the degree of overlooking created by the [REDACTED]

From my assessment of the submitted plans, [REDACTED]

This represents a very significant change.

Currently there are no residential properties [REDACTED]

The proposal would introduce numerous windows from [REDACTED]

The issue is made considerably worse by the inclusion of three-storey dwellings.

Upper floor windows would inevitably create elevated viewing positions from which residents could look directly into neighbouring properties.

The submitted drawings fail to demonstrate satisfactorily that acceptable privacy standards can be maintained.

Indeed, because the application lacks sufficient information regarding finished floor levels and accurate cross-sections, it is impossible to determine the true extent of overlooking.

In these circumstances, the Local Planning Authority cannot reasonably conclude that neighbouring residential amenity will be protected.

Three-Storey Development

The inclusion of three-storey houses, (referred to as 2.5 storey houses) is particularly concerning.

Such buildings are materially taller than the surrounding built form and inevitably increase visual prominence.

More importantly, they substantially increase opportunities for overlooking.

Second-floor windows occupy a significantly higher viewing position than conventional two-storey development.

That additional height changes sight lines into neighbouring homes and gardens.

The application appears to treat these dwellings as though they are little different from conventional housing.

They are not.

The difference in height is highly significant when considering privacy.

I therefore respectfully request that the Council gives particular scrutiny to the location of all proposed three-storey properties adjoining existing residential boundaries.

Insufficient Information Regarding Levels

One of the most serious deficiencies within the application concerns the lack of detailed information regarding levels.

The submitted drawings do not provide sufficient information for neighbouring residents or the Local Planning Authority properly to understand:

- existing ground levels;
- proposed ground levels;
- finished floor levels;
- ridge heights;
- retaining structures;
- the relative relationship between existing homes and proposed dwellings.

This is particularly important because Hammond Ground is not a level site.

Relatively modest alterations in finished floor levels can produce very substantial differences in overlooking.

Without detailed cross-sections taken through the site and extending to neighbouring dwellings, it is impossible to assess:

- overlooking;
- dominance;
- visual intrusion;
- loss of outlook;
- the effectiveness of proposed screening.

This is not a minor omission.

It goes to the heart of whether the proposal is acceptable.

The Council should not grant planning permission whilst such fundamental information remains uncertain.

Loss of Outlook

I fully appreciate that planning law does not protect private views in themselves.

However, it does require the Local Planning Authority to consider the overall impact upon residential amenity.

The present outlook from my property is characterised by open countryside and mature landscape.

The proposal would replace that outlook with built development extending across the northern boundary of my property.

Instead of open fields, the outlook would comprise:

- housing;
- estate roads;
- parking areas;
- street lighting;
- boundary fencing;
- domestic structures;
- regular residential activity.

The resulting change would fundamentally alter the experience of living at my property.

Sense of Enclosure

The close proximity of the proposed dwellings would create a strong sense of enclosure.

The relationship between the northern plots and existing neighbouring properties appears unusually tight for a site of this sensitivity.

This is compounded by:

- the height of proposed buildings;
- uncertainty regarding levels;
- limited structural landscaping;
- the absence of meaningful landscape buffers.

Taken together these factors would significantly increase the perception that existing homes are enclosed by new development.

Noise and General Disturbance

The proposal would introduce an entirely new source of activity immediately adjacent to existing homes.

This includes:

- vehicle movements throughout the day;
- deliveries;
- refuse collections;
- visitors;
- external lighting;
- garden activities;
- children playing;
- dogs;
- general domestic noise associated with a modern housing estate.

None of these activities are objectionable in themselves.

However, when introduced immediately adjacent to properties that currently enjoy an open rural setting, they represent a substantial change in residential environment.

The applicant appears to give very little weight to these cumulative effects.

Construction Phase

Should planning permission be granted, neighbouring residents would also experience prolonged construction impacts.

Given the scale of the proposal these are likely to include:

- heavy goods vehicles;
- earthworks;
- excavation;
- piling (if required);
- dust;
- vibration;
- prolonged construction noise;
- temporary lighting;
- mud on the public highway.

Construction may continue for many months, or years.

Whilst temporary, these impacts are nevertheless material considerations and should not be underestimated.

External Lighting

The introduction of estate lighting, vehicle headlights, security lighting and domestic illumination would permanently alter the character of this part of Read.

Currently Hammond Ground provides an important area of relative darkness between the village and surrounding countryside.

The proposed development would inevitably increase light pollution.

This would affect not only neighbouring residents but also the wider rural character of the area.

Cumulative Residential Impact

The applicant considers each individual effect in relative isolation.

Planning officers, however, are required to consider the cumulative effect.

When viewed collectively the proposal would result in:

- overlooking;

- loss of privacy;
- loss of outlook;
- visual dominance;
- increased noise;
- increased activity;
- increased lighting;
- greater sense of enclosure;
- construction disturbance;
- permanent urbanisation immediately adjacent to existing homes.

Taken together these impacts represent a very significant deterioration in residential amenity.

In my respectful submission, they exceed what existing residents should reasonably be expected to accept.

The proposal therefore conflicts with the objective of achieving high-quality design that protects the amenity of existing occupiers and should weigh heavily against the grant of planning permission.

9. Highways, Site Layout, Future Expansion and Open Space

Highway Safety

Safe and suitable access is a fundamental requirement of the planning system.

Whilst I recognise that the Local Highway Authority will provide technical comments on this application, I nevertheless have significant concerns regarding the proposed highway arrangements and whether they adequately address the realities of traffic conditions on Whalley Road.

In my view, the application has not demonstrated that the proposed access arrangements can operate safely without creating additional risks for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

Visibility Splays

The applicant proposes visibility splays intended to demonstrate that safe access can be achieved.

However, I remain unconvinced that the submitted information fully reflects real-world conditions.

In particular, consideration should be given to:

- actual vehicle speeds rather than posted speed limits;
- seasonal vegetation growth;
- parked vehicles where relevant;
- driver behaviour approaching the junction;
- pedestrian movements;
- cyclists;
- school traffic;
- larger vehicles turning into and out of the development.

The Council should satisfy itself that the proposed visibility splays are capable of being maintained permanently and that they provide an appropriate level of safety under normal operating conditions.

If this cannot be demonstrated with confidence, planning permission should not be granted.

Right-Turn Lane

I am also concerned about the adequacy of the proposed right-turn lane.

Whalley Road already experiences periods of congestion and variable traffic speeds.

The application has not, in my opinion, demonstrated that sufficient highway width exists to provide a properly functioning right-turn lane whilst maintaining safe traffic flows in both directions. The highway is 7.2m wide with a narrowing path of 1.5m in the areas indicated for the extra lane.

In addition, the applicant state that existing walls and hedges will remain. This is clearly not possible if an extra lane is to be included within the design.

Should the right-turn facility prove inadequate, there is a foreseeable risk of:

- vehicles queuing within the carriageway;
- rear-end collisions;
- overtaking manoeuvres;
- increased congestion;
- conflict with opposing traffic.

Given that highway safety is a primary consideration, these issues require careful scrutiny before any planning permission is granted.

Internal Layout

The proposed internal road layout appears highly engineered.

Its geometry is characteristic of a conventional suburban housing estate rather than a development responding to the unique landscape qualities of Hammond Ground.

The extensive network of roads, parking courts and hard surfaces contributes to an urban form of development that sits uncomfortably within this sensitive landscape.

Rather than allowing the landscape to dictate the form of development, the landscape appears to have been adapted to accommodate a standard estate layout.

That approach fails to respect the special qualities of Hammond Ground.

10. Public Open Space

Throughout the application, considerable emphasis is placed upon the proposed public open space. Despite it only really accessible to the suggested new properties

The applicant clearly intends this feature to be regarded as one of the principal public benefits of the scheme.

However, there is remarkably little detail explaining how that open space would function in practice.

The application does not adequately explain:

- who will own the land;
- who will manage it;
- how maintenance will be funded;
- how long management obligations will endure;
- how landscape quality will be protected in perpetuity;
- what legal mechanisms will secure these arrangements.

Without this information, it is difficult to attribute significant planning weight to the proposed open space. While we expect any land suggested to be short term in nature and indicated simply to try and give the overall design more legitimacy, we are also concerned about practical matters such as litter, dog fouling, management of anti-social behaviour and increased security risks.

The Council should be cautious about relying upon benefits that have not been fully defined or legally secured.

Long-Term Management

Open space is only valuable if properly managed.

Poorly maintained public open space can quickly become neglected, visually unattractive and financially burdensome.

The application provides little confidence that long-term stewardship has been fully considered.

There is no comprehensive management strategy explaining:

- inspection regimes;
- replacement planting;
- habitat management;
- maintenance responsibilities;
- funding arrangements;
- governance structures.

If these matters are intended to be addressed through a future management company or legal agreement, the Council should require clear evidence before permission is granted rather than relying upon assumptions.

Section 106 Obligations

The applicant places significant reliance upon landscape enhancements and publicly accessible open space as benefits arising from the proposal.

If those benefits are material to the planning balance, then they should be secured through robust and enforceable legal obligations.

At present, there appears to be insufficient detail regarding the scope of any proposed Section 106 Agreement relating to:

- long-term maintenance;
- public access;
- future management;
- financial contributions;
- replacement of failed planting;
- stewardship responsibilities.

Without such certainty, there is a genuine risk that the promised landscape benefits diminish over time.

11. Concerns Regarding Future Expansion

One of my principal concerns is whether the current application represents the complete development of Hammond Ground or merely the first phase of a wider scheme.

I recognise that the Council must determine the application before it.

However, it is also entitled to consider whether the design and layout have implications beyond the current red line boundary.

Earlier in the application process, plans were submitted which illustrated development extending beyond the current application boundary.

Those drawings were subsequently withdrawn and replaced.

I make no allegation regarding the reasons for those revisions.

However, their existence inevitably raises a legitimate planning question.

They demonstrate that development beyond the current boundary has been contemplated.

The Council should therefore examine whether elements of the present scheme have been designed in a manner that could facilitate future expansion.

Estate Edge

Good planning seeks to establish a clear, permanent and defensible settlement edge.

This proposal does not achieve that objective.

Instead, the northern and eastern edges of the development appear relatively open and capable of continuation.

The limited landscape buffering reinforces this concern.

Rather than creating a permanent transition between village and countryside, the development appears capable of incremental extension should future applications come forward.

That possibility should be taken into account when considering the long-term planning implications of the proposal.

Pedestrian Routes

A further concern relates to the unusually extensive network of pedestrian routes shown within the application.

Whilst permeability is generally a positive design principle, the number and alignment of the proposed paths appear disproportionate to the recreational needs of a development of this size.

Their configuration raises a legitimate question as to whether they have been designed solely to serve the proposed development or whether they could also provide convenient connections into adjoining land should further phases be promoted.

I do not suggest that this, of itself, demonstrates an intention to develop adjoining land.

However, when viewed alongside the previously submitted drawings and the form of the development edge, it reinforces concern that the current proposal may not represent the ultimate extent of development anticipated by the applicant.

The Local Planning Authority should satisfy itself that it is not, inadvertently, approving infrastructure capable of facilitating incremental expansion into the remainder of Hammond Ground.

12. Landscape Buffers

One of the most striking features of the layout is the limited extent of meaningful landscape buffering between existing homes and proposed development.

On a site of such sensitivity, one would reasonably expect generous structural planting to create a gradual transition between existing residential properties and new development.

Instead, houses are positioned relatively close to existing boundaries, leaving limited opportunity for substantial planting.

This approach has several consequences.

Firstly, it increases overlooking and visual intrusion.

Secondly, it reduces opportunities to soften the appearance of the development.

Thirdly, it creates a harder urban edge that appears inconsistent with the landscaped design approach promoted elsewhere in the application.

The overall impression is that the desire to maximise the developable area has resulted in insufficient space being left for meaningful landscape buffers.

In my view, this represents poor placemaking and fails to respond appropriately to the sensitivity of Hammond Ground.

13. Drainage, Climate Resilience and Long-Term Infrastructure

Whilst I recognise that technical consultees will consider the drainage strategy in detail, I remain concerned that the application does not provide sufficient confidence regarding the long-term management and maintenance of the proposed drainage infrastructure.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) require effective management throughout the lifetime of a development. Their long-term performance depends not simply upon initial construction but upon inspection, maintenance, repair and replacement over many decades.

The application provides only limited information regarding these long-term responsibilities.

The Council should therefore be satisfied that:

- all drainage infrastructure can be maintained in perpetuity;
- responsibility for maintenance is clearly defined;
- funding mechanisms are secured through legally enforceable obligations;
- neighbouring properties will not experience increased flood risk should drainage systems deteriorate over time.

Given the changing climate and increasing frequency of extreme rainfall events, these matters are of growing importance and should not be left to future assumptions.

14. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

The applicant places considerable emphasis upon biodiversity enhancements.

Whilst any genuine biodiversity improvements are welcome, it is important that the Council distinguishes between enhancement and replacement.

The mature landscape of Hammond Ground has developed over many decades.

Its ecological value is closely linked to its openness, existing vegetation, wildlife corridors and relationship with the surrounding countryside.

Newly created habitats cannot immediately replicate those characteristics.

Furthermore, the success of proposed biodiversity measures depends entirely upon long-term management.

Without robust management arrangements, replacement planting, habitat creation and ecological enhancement may fail to achieve the outcomes currently predicted.

The Council should therefore exercise caution before attributing significant planning weight to biodiversity benefits that remain dependent upon future management over many decades.

15. Design Quality

The National Planning Policy Framework places considerable emphasis upon achieving high-quality design.

Development should respond positively to local character and create places that are distinctive rather than interchangeable.

In my opinion, this proposal falls well short of that aspiration.

The layout displays many characteristics commonly associated with standard volume housebuilder developments:

- repetitive plot arrangements;
- standardised road geometry;
- conventional estate layout;
- limited response to local topography;
- insufficient structural landscaping;
- development pushed towards sensitive boundaries.

Very little about the proposed development appears genuinely unique to Read.

Indeed, the same layout could be transplanted to numerous locations across the country with little alteration.

That is not good placemaking.

A site as important as Hammond Ground deserves a landscape-led approach in which development responds to the site rather than requiring the site to accommodate a predetermined estate layout.

16. This is Not Landscape-led Development”

Applethwaite repeatedly says the scheme is landscape-led.

If the landscape had genuinely led the design process:

- the houses nearest existing residents would have been moved away;
- generous landscape buffers would have been retained;
- the three-storey dwellings would have been relocated;
- the settlement edge would have been permanent;
- existing views would have been respected;
- the road alignment would have followed the landscape rather than engineering the landscape around the road;
- development density would have reduced towards the countryside.

"The submitted scheme appears to have been led principally by the objective of maximising the developable area of the site, with landscape mitigation subsequently fitted around that objective. That is fundamentally different from a genuinely landscape-led design approach."

17. The Precautionary Principle in Decision-Making

Throughout this statement I have identified a number of significant areas where information remains incomplete or uncertain.

These include:

- finished floor levels;
- ridge heights;
- cross-sections between proposed and existing dwellings;
- long-term management of open space;
- Section 106 obligations;
- stewardship arrangements;
- future maintenance responsibilities;
- the practical operation of the highway arrangements.

These are not minor details.

They relate directly to whether the development is acceptable in planning terms.

The Council should not simply assume that these matters can be satisfactorily addressed through planning conditions.

Where insufficient information exists to assess material planning impacts, the appropriate course is to refuse permission or require the applicant to provide the necessary evidence before any determination is made.

18. The Cumulative Impact of the Development

Planning applications should not be assessed by considering each issue in isolation.

The proper approach is to consider the cumulative effect of all identified harms.

Taken individually, each of the following matters gives rise to concern:

- loss of countryside;
- harm to landscape character;
- erosion of the setting of Read Hall;
- impact upon neighbouring residential amenity;
- overlooking;
- three-storey dwellings;
- uncertainty regarding levels;
- highway concerns;
- limited landscape buffers;
- uncertainty regarding future management of public open space;
- concerns regarding future expansion;
- standardised estate design.

However, when these matters are considered collectively, they demonstrate that the proposal represents a significant and unacceptable change to one of the most sensitive parts of Read.

The whole is substantially more harmful than the sum of its individual components.

19. Planning Balance

The applicant will no doubt argue that the proposal would deliver public benefits through the provision of housing, public open space and biodiversity enhancements.

I acknowledge that these are material considerations.

However, they must be weighed against the significant adverse impacts identified throughout this objection.

In undertaking that exercise, I respectfully submit that the following considerations deserve substantial weight:

- the irreversible loss of an important area of open countryside;
- permanent harm to landscape character;
- adverse impact upon the setting of Read Hall;
- unacceptable effects upon neighbouring residential amenity;
- the absence of sufficient information to assess key planning impacts;
- uncertainty regarding long-term stewardship of public open space;
- concerns regarding future expansion beyond the current application boundary;
- design that fails adequately to respond to the site's unique characteristics.

The planning balance therefore weighs firmly against granting permission.

20. Conclusion

Planning decisions are amongst the most significant responsibilities entrusted to a Local Planning Authority.

They determine not only the future of individual sites but also the long-term character of communities.

This application concerns one of the most sensitive and valued areas of Read.

Once Hammond Ground is developed, the openness, landscape character and relationship between the village, Read Hall and the surrounding countryside will be lost forever.

That loss cannot be mitigated through landscaping.

It cannot be recreated through replacement planting.

It cannot be reversed.

The proposal also places substantial new development immediately adjacent to existing homes, including my own.

The resulting loss of privacy, increased overlooking, visual intrusion, noise and urbanisation would fundamentally alter the character of our residential environment.

In addition, the application leaves numerous important questions unanswered.

Insufficient information has been provided regarding levels, building heights, long-term management of open space, stewardship arrangements and several aspects of the proposed infrastructure.

The Council should not be asked to determine a proposal of this magnitude whilst such important matters remain unresolved.

For all of these reasons, and having regard to the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and all other material considerations, I respectfully request that Ribble Valley Borough Council refuses planning permission for Application 3/2026/0356.

Such a decision would be consistent with previous planning decisions affecting Hammond Ground, would protect the character of Read and would safeguard the amenity of existing residents and future generations.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: _____

Figure 1 – Site Location



Figure 2 - Rear Elevation of Property

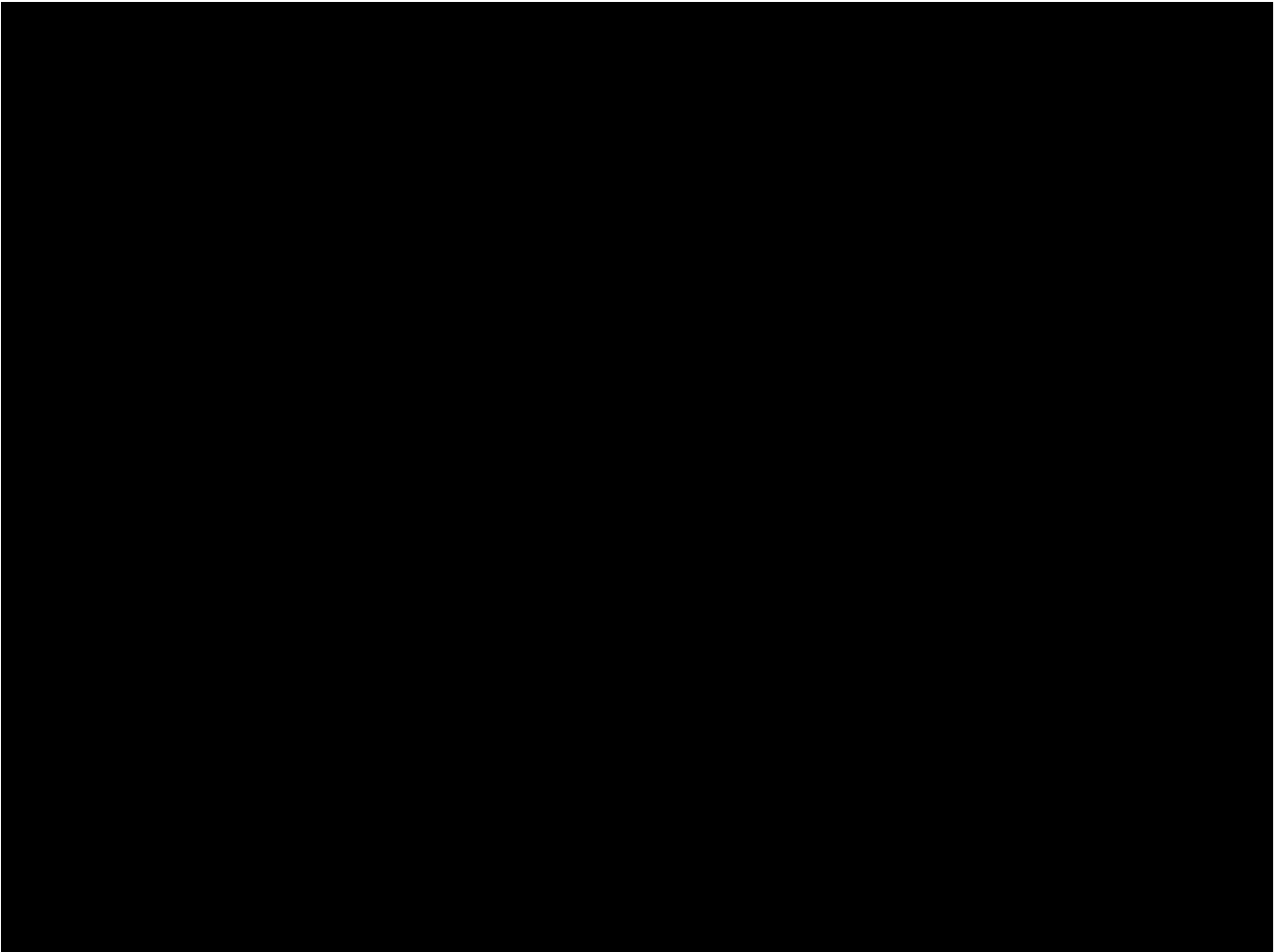


Figure 3

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



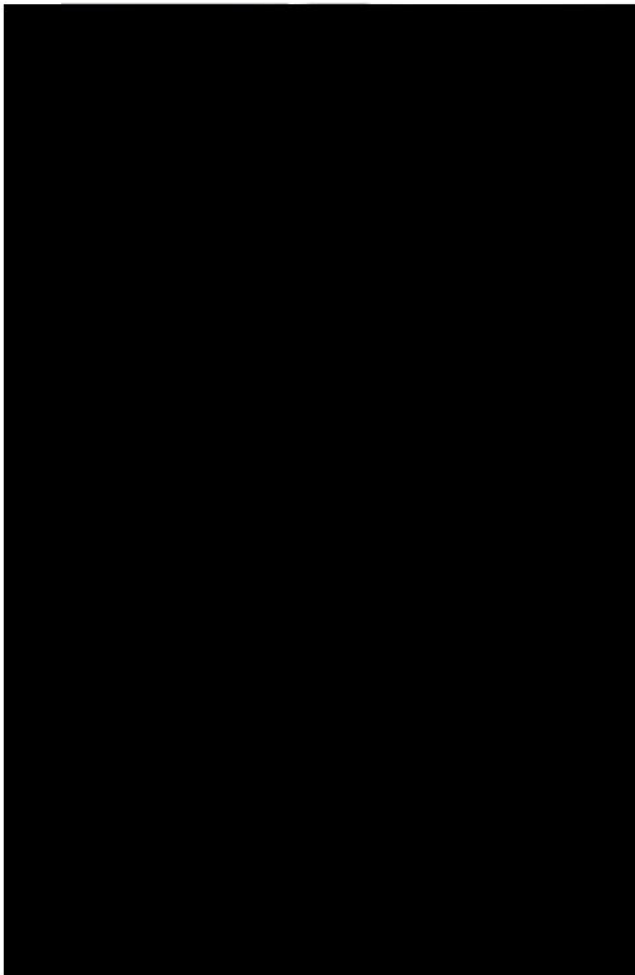


Figure 4 - 34 George Lane Indicated at Far North of Development

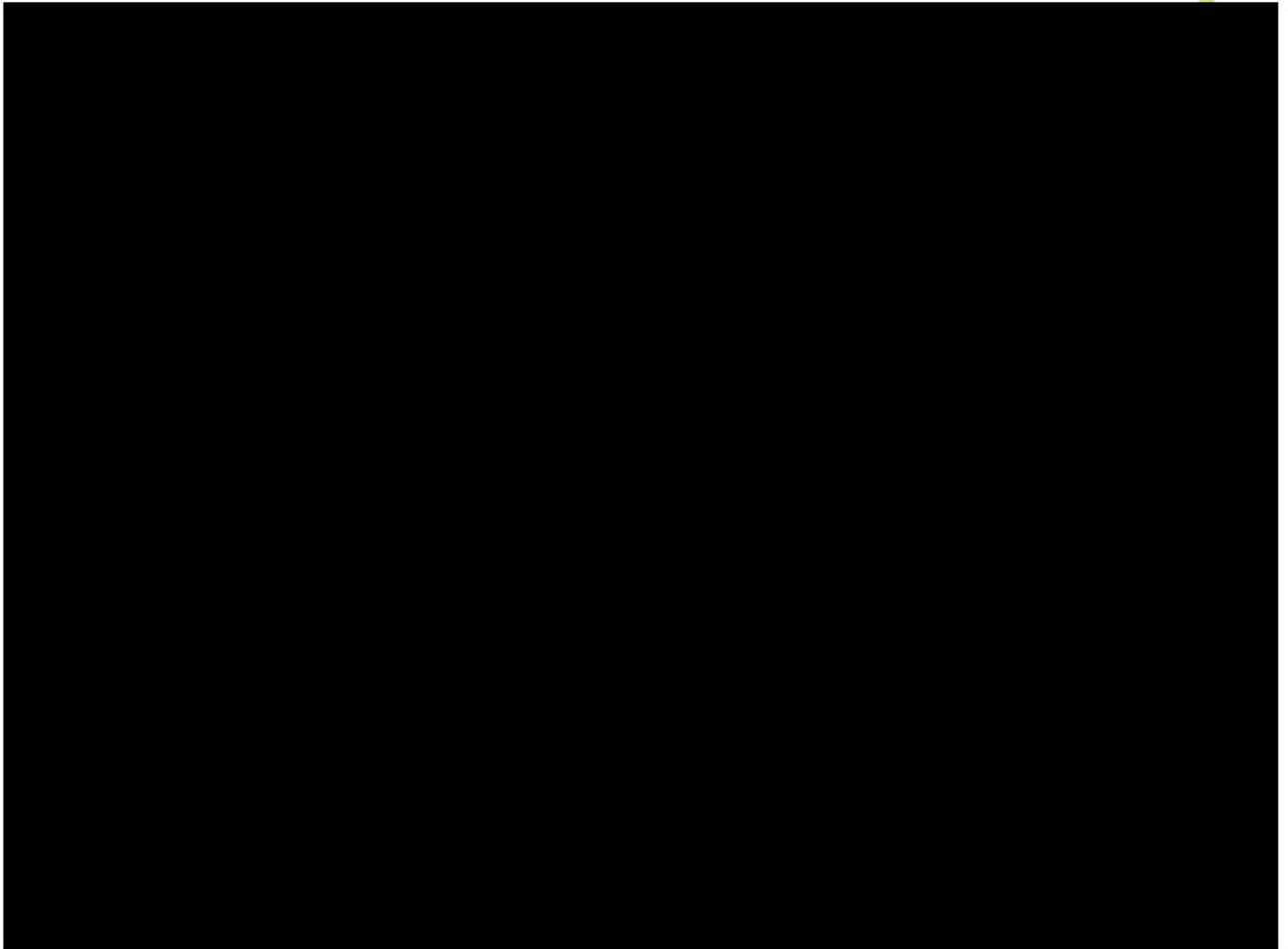
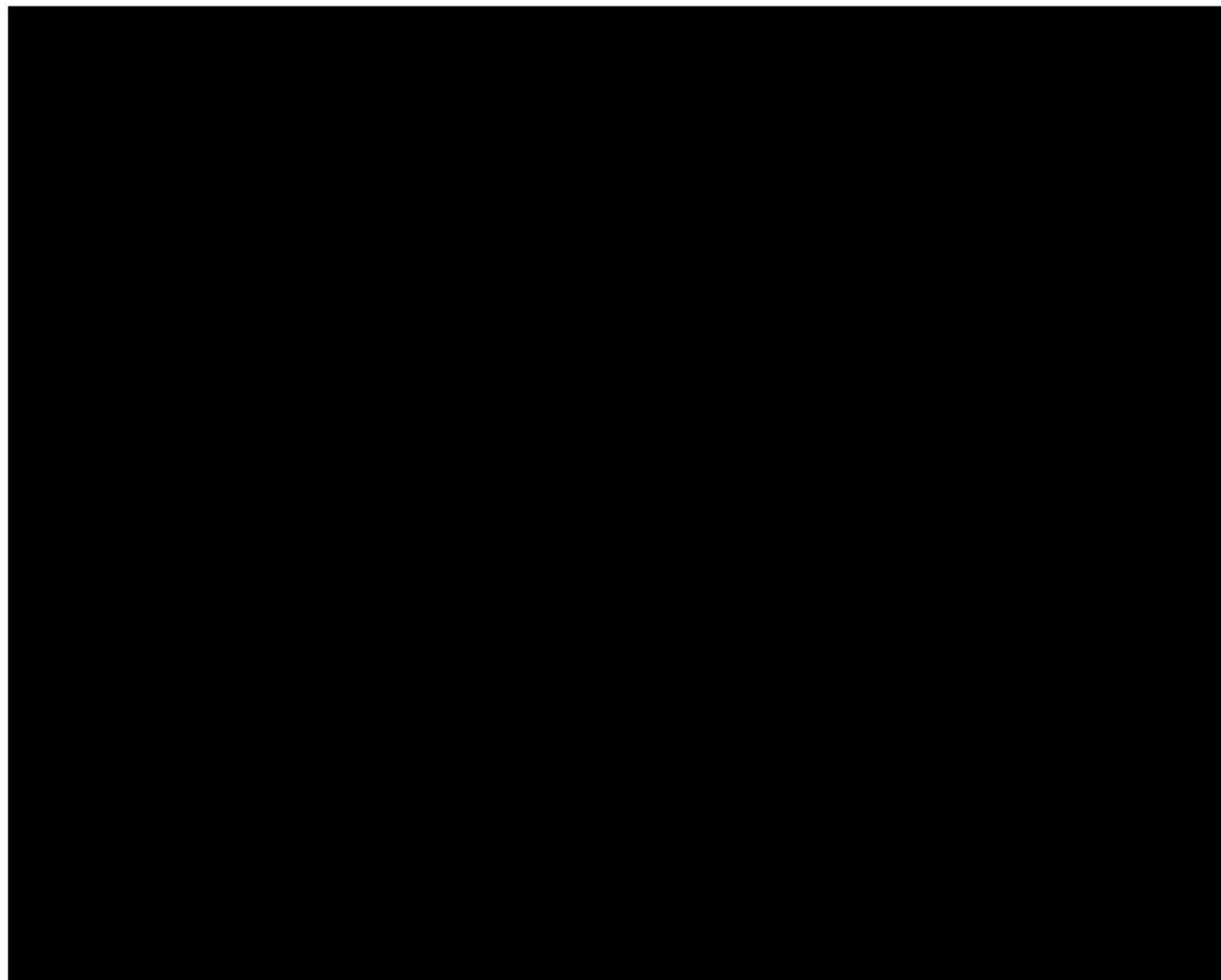


Figure 5 – Window to Window Relationship



Sight lines from windows at the front elevation of the northern most part of the development are obviously intrusive. This relationship is particularly concerning because

These

The proposed development would fundamentally alter that relationship. Instead of looking across open countryside, would face new residential development at close proximity. The occupants of the proposed dwellings would, whilst we would experience a significant loss of privacy and an increased sense of being overlooked.

Figure 6 – Perhaps the future? Initially included in the planning submission and then withdrawn and replaced with a document entitled ‘Phase 1’



Appendix A – Relationship Between My Property and the Proposed Development

When my [REDACTED] it was [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] and a [REDACTED] positioned and designed to maximise natural light and the uninterrupted views across [REDACTED]. The relationship between the [REDACTED] was therefore a fundamental design consideration and forms an integral part of the character and enjoyment of our home.

The proposed development would fundamentally alter that relationship. Instead of looking across open [REDACTED] a [REDACTED], including roads, parking areas, domestic activity and, in particular, [REDACTED]. Whilst I recognise that there is no legal right to a private view, the planning system does require the Local Planning Authority to consider the impact of development on the living conditions of existing residents. In this case, the proposal would result in a substantial loss of outlook, openness and residential amenity, replacing a tranquil landscape setting with an urban environment immediately adjoining our property.

One of my most significant concerns is the relationship between the proposed [REDACTED].

From my assessment of the submitted plans, the [REDACTED] This relationship is particularly concerning because the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

The proposed development would fundamentally alter that relationship. Instead of looking across open countryside, [REDACTED] would face new residential development at close proximity. The [REDACTED], whilst we would experience a significant loss of privacy and an increased sense of being overlooked.

The concern is heightened by the proposed three-storey dwellings and the absence of sufficient information regarding finished floor levels, ridge heights and cross-sections. Without this information, it is impossible to understand the true relationship between the [REDACTED].

Even if the separation distance were to approach the minimum distances often referred to in residential design guidance, such guidance is not intended to be applied mechanistically. The Council must also take account of the particular characteristics of this site, including the size and extent of the glazed rear elevation, the change from an open rural outlook to a built urban environment, the potential differences in ground levels, the height of the proposed buildings and the cumulative impact on residential amenity.

In my view, the application has failed to demonstrate that an acceptable relationship can be achieved between the proposed development and my property. On the information currently before the Council, it has not been shown that the proposal would avoid unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy and harm to the living conditions currently enjoyed by my family.

Appendix B

Policy Compliance Matrix

Planning Application 3/2026/0356

Hammond Ground, Read

This appendix identifies the principal planning policy issues arising from the application and explains why, in my opinion, the proposal conflicts with both national and local planning policy.

Planning Issue	Relevant National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Relevant Ribble Valley Policy Themes*	Applicant's Position	Why the Proposal Conflicts
Principle of Development	Plan-led decision making; Achieving Sustainable Development	Spatial Strategy; Settlement Strategy	Housing development is acceptable.	The proposal would permanently urbanise one of the most sensitive remaining areas of open countryside associated with Read.
Landscape Character	Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment	Landscape Protection	Landscape effects are limited and can be mitigated.	The proposal permanently replaces open countryside with built development. Landscape mitigation is not the same as landscape preservation.
Setting of Read Hall	Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	Heritage Protection	No significant heritage harm identified.	The proposal diminishes the historic relationship between Hammond Ground and Read Hall and erodes its wider landscape setting.
Residential Amenity	Achieving Well-Designed Places	Residential Amenity	Existing residents are not significantly affected.	Overlooking, loss of privacy, increased activity, lighting and visual intrusion would materially

Three-Storey Houses	Good Design	Scale and Massing	Height is acceptable.	reduce the amenity currently enjoyed by neighbouring residents, including my own property. Second-floor accommodation significantly increases overlooking and visual dominance when positioned close to existing homes.
Finished Floor Levels	Good Design; Decision Making	Design Quality	Submitted drawings adequately explain the development.	Insufficient information has been provided regarding levels, ridge heights and cross-sections to assess overlooking and dominance accurately.
Loss of Outlook	High Standard of Amenity	Residential Design	Existing outlook remains acceptable.	The proposal replaces open countryside with intensive built development immediately adjoining existing homes.
Sense of Enclosure	High Quality Design	Residential Amenity	Appropriate relationship achieved.	Houses are positioned unusually close to neighbouring boundaries with inadequate landscape separation.
Landscape Buffers	Natural Environment	Green Infrastructure	Proposed planting is sufficient.	Structural landscape buffers are extremely limited and appear secondary to maximising developable land.
Estate Layout	Well-Designed Places	Design Quality	Layout responds	The road pattern and plot arrangement

			positively to the site.	resemble a conventional suburban estate rather than a landscape-led design responding to Hammond Ground.
Highway Safety	Safe and Suitable Access	Highway Safety	Access arrangements are acceptable.	Concerns remain regarding visibility splays, right-turn provision and operational safety under real traffic conditions.
Right-Turn Lane	Transport	Highway Infrastructure	Junction design is appropriate.	The available highway width appears limited and further evidence should be provided that the proposed arrangement will operate safely.
Public Open Space	Healthy Communities	Green Infrastructure	Open space represents a major public benefit.	There is insufficient information regarding long-term ownership, maintenance, funding and stewardship to justify significant planning weight being attached to these proposals.
Section 106 Arrangements	Planning Obligations	Infrastructure Delivery	Matters can be secured later.	The application provides insufficient clarity regarding the obligations necessary to secure the long-term benefits relied upon in support of the application.
Future Expansion	Comprehensive Planning	Settlement Strategy	Current application considered in isolation.	Earlier submitted plans, combined with the present layout, give rise to a legitimate planning concern

Pedestrian Network	Healthy Communities	Design	Extensive footpath network improves connectivity.	that infrastructure could facilitate future expansion beyond the current application boundary. The scale and alignment of the footpath network appears disproportionate for a development of this size and warrants closer examination in the context of possible future expansion. Greater certainty is required regarding long-term maintenance, responsibility and resilience.
Drainage	Flood Risk and Climate Change	Drainage	SuDS proposals are satisfactory.	Long-term ecological benefits remain dependent upon successful implementation and ongoing management, neither of which are fully evidenced.
Biodiversity	Natural Environment	Biodiversity	Biodiversity Net Gain will be delivered.	Significant omissions relating to levels, sections, stewardship and infrastructure prevent a fully informed planning decision.
Adequacy of Information	Decision Making	Validation Requirements	Application contains sufficient information.	The applicant substantially understates landscape, heritage and residential amenity impacts whilst overstating uncertain future benefits.
Planning Balance	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	Development Plan	Benefits outweigh harms.	

Summary of Policy Conflict

Having considered the application against the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Development Plan, I respectfully conclude that the proposal conflicts with the fundamental objectives of the planning system.

In particular, it would:

- fail to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside;
- fail to respond appropriately to the landscape character of Hammond Ground;
- fail to conserve the setting of Read Hall;
- fail to safeguard the amenity of existing residents;
- fail to demonstrate that highway arrangements are satisfactory;
- fail to provide sufficient information regarding important material planning considerations;
- fail to establish a robust and enforceable framework for the long-term management of proposed public open space.

Accordingly, I respectfully submit that the proposal is contrary to both national and local planning policy and should therefore be refused.

Appendix C

Schedule of Principal Grounds for Refusal Sought

This schedule summarises the principal planning reasons why Application **3/2026/0356** should be refused. Detailed evidence supporting each ground is set out in the main body of this Statement of Objection.

No.	Principal Ground of Objection	Planning Harm Identified	Relevant Planning Considerations
1	Principle of Development	Unjustified development of a highly sensitive area of open countryside.	Development Plan; NPPF sustainable development and plan-led decision making.
2	Landscape Character	Permanent urbanisation of Hammond Ground and loss of an important landscape forming the setting of Read.	NPPF – conserving and enhancing the natural environment; local landscape policies.
3	Historic Setting	Harm to the historic landscape associated with Read Hall and erosion of its wider setting.	NPPF – conserving heritage assets and their settings; local heritage policies.
4	Settlement Edge	Failure to create a clear, permanent and defensible settlement boundary.	Design policies; landscape policies; placemaking principles.
5	Residential Amenity	Unacceptable impact upon neighbouring residents through overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of outlook and visual intrusion.	Residential amenity policies; NPPF design and amenity objectives.
6	Three-Storey Dwellings	Excessive height causing increased overlooking, dominance and visual impact.	Good design; scale and massing policies.
7	Site Levels	Insufficient information regarding finished floor levels, ridge heights and cross-sections prevents proper assessment of impacts.	Requirement for adequate information before determination; design and amenity policies.
8	Highway Safety	Concerns regarding visibility splays, access arrangements and the adequacy of the proposed right-turn lane.	NPPF – safe and suitable access; local transport policies.
9	Estate Layout	Standard suburban estate layout fails to respond to the site's	NPPF – achieving well-designed places; local design policies.

		landscape character and local distinctiveness.	
10	Public Open Space	Lack of certainty regarding ownership, maintenance, funding and long-term management of proposed open space.	Green infrastructure policies; planning obligations; sustainable management.
11	Section 106 Arrangements	Insufficient information regarding legal mechanisms to secure long-term public benefits.	Planning obligations; Infrastructure Tests.
12	Future Expansion	Layout raises legitimate concerns that infrastructure may facilitate future development beyond the current application boundary.	Comprehensive planning; cumulative impacts; settlement strategy.
13	Landscape Buffers	Inadequate structural landscaping between existing homes and proposed development.	Residential amenity; landscape integration; design quality.
14	Biodiversity	Claimed ecological gains are dependent upon uncertain long-term management arrangements.	Biodiversity enhancement policies; environmental objectives.
15	Drainage	Insufficient confidence regarding long-term management and maintenance of drainage infrastructure.	Flood risk; sustainable drainage; climate resilience.
16	Adequacy of Information	Application lacks sufficient technical detail to enable the Local Planning Authority properly to assess material planning impacts.	Procedural fairness; sound decision-making; validation requirements.
17	Cumulative Harm	The cumulative impact of all identified harms significantly outweighs any claimed public benefits.	Overall planning balance; Development Plan; NPPF.

Summary

For the reasons explained in detail throughout this Statement of Objection, I respectfully submit that Application **3/2026/0356** conflicts with the Development Plan and with key principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposal would:

- permanently urbanise an important and sensitive landscape;
- erode the rural character and historic setting of Read;
- cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring residential amenity, including my own property;

- introduce three-storey development in inappropriate locations;
- leave significant uncertainty regarding levels, overlooking and building heights;
- raise unresolved highway safety concerns;
- provide insufficient certainty over the future management of public open space;
- create a development edge that does not represent a permanent or landscape-led solution;
- be determined on the basis of incomplete information.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that Ribble Valley Borough Council **refuse planning permission** for Application **3/2026/0356**.