

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	5/8/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	5/8/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0486			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	17/7/26	Site Notice:	17/7/26	
Officer:	BT			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Permission in principle application for up to 6 dwellings.
Site Address/Location:	Land to the South of End House Cottages (off A59), Main Street, Gisburn BB7 4HW.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Gisburn Parish Council:	Objections raised on the grounds of highway safety.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	Recommended for refusal of the application due to the absence of information to demonstrate that a safe and suitable means of access could be achieved.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service:	No objections – standing advice provided.
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United Utilities:	Standing advice provided.
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CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
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Objections have been received from eight households in response to the application raising the following issues:

- Impact of the proposal upon residential amenity
- Impact of the proposal upon the visual amenities of the area
- Impact of the proposal upon highway and pedestrian safety
- Impact of the proposal upon flood risk
- Impact of the proposal upon educational provision
- Impact of the proposal upon drainage infrastructure

The objections received also raise concerns with regards to the impact of the proposed development upon sewage capacity, water pressure and digital services in the area however such matters do not fall within the realm of material planning considerations and as such cannot be assessed as part of this application.

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations
Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands
Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection
Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:**BO 1159:**

Proposed filling station (Refused)

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

The application relates to a land parcel situated on the Eastern edge of Gisburn. Access to the application site is from the A59 Main Street via the access serving No. 1 – 3 End House Cottages with the land in question comprising an area of undeveloped grassland enclosed by timber post and rail fencing and shrubs and trees. The application site adjoins the Eastern edge of Gisburn's defined settlement area with the wider area surrounding the site comprising a mixture of residential development woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks 'Permission in Principle' (PiP) consent for the construction of up to six dwellinghouses.

Principle of Development:

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

Location

The application seeks Permission in Principle for the construction of up to six dwellings. As such, it is necessary to consider whether the location of the proposed dwellings would be compatible with the overall spatial strategy for housing growth within the Borough as identified within the currently adopted development strategy.

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

The majority of new housing development will be:

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

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

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

The first part of Policy DMG2 states that:

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

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

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

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

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

In this instance, the application site lies outside of the defined settlement boundary of Gisburn (the application site adjoins the Eastern edge of Gisburn’s defined settlement area) within the open countryside and the introduction of up to six market dwellings would not fall within any of the exception criteria required for development to comply with Policy DMG2 of the RVCS for a site outside of a defined settlement boundary. As such, the scheme fails to comply with Policies DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

In addition to the above, Policies DMI2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy require new development to be located to minimise the need to travel, with good access by foot and cycle and convenient links to public transport. In this instance, whilst the application site lies within the open countryside in strategic terms, the site adjoins the Eastern edge of Gisburn’s defined settlement area with Gisburn being a Tier 1 settlement with key facilities which include a school, shop, post office, village hall and pub. In addition, whilst it is acknowledged that there is no formal pedestrian infrastructure between the application site and the junction between Main Street and Strawberry Gardens, future users of the site would only have to cover a short distance of approximately 50 metres on foot to reach the nearest pedestrian infrastructure (pavement) and analysis shows that this can currently be achieved with relative ease through crossing a wide grassland patch and informal grass footpath within the roadside verge on the Northern side of Main Street. Furthermore, formal pedestrian infrastructure could be provided between the application site and the junction between Main Street and Strawberry Gardens (as stipulated in the response from LCC Highways) however the provision of such infrastructure would require further consideration at the Technical details stage.

Notwithstanding the above, the presence of the aforementioned services within Gisburn alone do not automatically equate to sustainability, as the wider connectivity of an area should also be considered. With regards to the local bus service, there are three school buses that stop at Gisburn (the number 631, 809 and 861) and the number 280 public bus which includes stops at the principal settlements of Clitheroe and Whalley. The 280 bus runs from Gisburn from 07:53 to 18:43 hourly Monday to Friday, 08:04 – 18:24 hourly on Saturdays and 09:45 to 17:45 every two hours on a Sunday. Journey times to Clitheroe are approximately 15 minutes and 30 minutes to Whalley. The bus service, including Sunday services are therefore limited and as such are not considered to be of a duration or frequency that would make travelling by public transport an attractive method of transport for future occupiers. Notwithstanding this, the Council is aware of a recently allowed planning appeal pertaining to a similar development on land sited adjacent to the defined settlement area of Ribchester (Appeal Ref: 6006097) whereby the Inspectorate deemed that the provision of similar bus services in Ribchester would not equate to future occupants of the dwellings in question being wholly reliant upon the use of private motor vehicles. Consequently, it is considered likely that future occupants of the proposed dwellings would be able to access public transport links, services and amenities within Gisburn on foot and in light of the aforementioned appeal decision which forms the basis of a material planning consideration, connectivity to the wider area is also considered to be acceptable. Accordingly it is considered,

on balance, that the future occupiers of the proposed development would not be wholly reliant on the use of private motor vehicles to access facilities and services necessary to meet their day-to-day needs.

Land use

Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy stipulates that all development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature.

In this instance, the proposal seeks to introduce new housing to the application site which is served by an existing access road and adjoins existing residential development (End House Cottages and the Strawberry Gardens / Fields estate). In addition, and as previously conveyed, it is considered likely that future occupants of the proposed dwellings would be able to access public transport links, services and amenities within Gisburn on foot from the site with relative ease. Accordingly, the proposed use of the land within the application site for residential development would be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG1 and is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to land use.

Amount of development

In this instance, Permission in Principle is sought for the development of up to six dwellings within the application site and in this instance analysis shows that the proposal site comprises sufficient space to accommodate the scale of development proposed. Notwithstanding this, it is also relevant to consider at this stage whether or not the amount of residential development could be successfully integrated within the surrounding landscape.

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

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

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

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

In this instance, the proposed development would be sited directly adjacent to the residential properties of No. 1- 3 End House Cottages and the residential properties which form the Strawberry Gardens / Fields estate, with the application site being read in the context of the aforementioned residential properties on approach to the site along the A59 highway upon entering and leaving the defined settlement area of Gisburn from the North-east and South-west respectively. Therefore whilst the site currently comprises an undeveloped parcel of grassland with no built form, the proposed development, by virtue of its proximity to Gisburn’s defined settlement area, would nonetheless be read as a continuation of the existing residential development which adjoins the Western extents of the proposal site. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed development could be successfully integrated within the surrounding landscape.

As such, the proposed development would be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG1 and is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to the amount of development being proposed.

Other Material Considerations

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

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

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

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

In terms of areas or assets of particular importance referred to at subsection i) above, these are identified as habitats sites and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, or a National Landscape, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest...); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change. In this instance, analysis shows the application site to be at risk of flooding from surface water however the Council is aware of recent planning appeal decisions (APP/H1840/W/23/3329778, APP/H1705/W/21/3281406 & APP/F0114/W/22/3313796) which confirm the issue of flood risk (including the application of the Sequential Test and any necessary mitigation) as a matter to be dealt with at the Technical details stage. Consequently, this is not a matter that can be taken into account at this stage therefore the provisions of subsection i) do not apply in this instance.

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

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

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

As such, whilst concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with regards to the impact of the proposed development upon the amenity of the occupiers of surrounding residential properties, this issue does not fall to be assessed within the scope of this application and would instead be reserved for consideration / assessment following the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review from the Local Highways Authority who in their response have made reference to a number of stipulations that would need to be met with regards to visibility splays, site layout, vehicular parking, electric vehicle charging points, cycle storage and information on trip generation. Notwithstanding this, the Local Highways Authority have recommended for refusal of the application in the absence of information to demonstrate that a safe and suitable means of access could be achieved for the site with regards to vehicular visibility splays and numerous concerns over highway safety have also been raised through the application's public consultation process however the specific matters relating to highway safety fall to be assessed under details submitted with a 'Technical Matters' application and highway safety alone would not warrant refusal of this application.

Landscape/Ecology:

Given that the proposal site is encompassed by trees appropriate survey work (arboricultural impact assessment) would need to be undertaken and submitted in support of any subsequent 'Technical Matters' submission to ascertain as to whether the proposal is likely to result in adverse harm upon trees.

From 6th August 2026 amendments to the current BNG legislation are due to come into force, making developments on site areas of less than 0.2ha exempt from mandatory BNG (unless on-site priority habitat is negatively impacted) however in this instance the application site exceeds 0.2 hectares in area (0.26 hectares) therefore at the 'Technical Matters' stage, the applicant would also be required to demonstrate how the proposal would achieve the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net-Gain or provide an appropriate exemption in accordance with Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

Other Matters:

Response to third party representations

Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with regards to the impact of the proposal upon flood risk however as previously conveyed, the issue of flood risk is a matter to be dealt with at the Technical details stage. Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with regards to the impact of the proposal upon the existing extent of educational provision within Gisburn however given that the proposal does not relate to major housing development this issue does not stand to be assessed under the current application or at any Technical Matters' stage. Concerns pertaining to the impact of the proposed development upon the area's drainage infrastructure have also been raised through the application's public consultation process however such matters would be assessed under details submitted with a 'Technical Matters' application.

Conclusion and Planning Balance:

As identified earlier in this report, the Council are unable to demonstrate a Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) and so paragraph 11d) of the NPPF is engaged and in this case the tilted balance applies and the proposal must be assessed against paragraph 11d) ii and a balancing exercise must be undertaken.

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

Paragraph 11d) ii) also requires the LPA to have particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, namely Paragraphs 115 (a) and 129 (c), and for the reasons outlined within the report, it is considered that granting of this Permission in Principle would, on balance, result in the creation of residential development in a sustainable location, particularly given that future occupants of the proposed dwellings would be able to sustainably access public transport links, services and amenities within Gisburn and given that connectivity to the wider area is also considered to be acceptable in light of recently allowed planning appeal ref: 6006097 which forms the basis of a relevant material planning consideration.

The adverse impact(s) of granting residential development in this location is therefore not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits in this particular instance.

As such, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:	That Permission in Principle be granted subject to appropriate conditions.
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