

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	4/8/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	5/8/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0487			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	17/7/26	Site Notice:	17/7/26	
Officer:	BT			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				
				REFUSAL

Development Description:	Permission in principle application for up to 6 dwellings.
Site Address/Location:	Turnpike Delph, A59, 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 for all users of the site.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service:	No objections – standing advice provided.
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United Utilities:	Consulted 9/7/26 – no response received.
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CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
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Two objections have been received in response to the application raising the following issues:

- Impact of the proposal upon highway and pedestrian safety
- Impact of the proposal upon drainage infrastructure
- Impact of the proposal upon educational provision

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:**3/2016/0035:**

Lawful Development Certificate (proposed) to use the existing storage area on Turnpike Delph site as general storage for the Gisburne Park Estate and holiday business (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 Skipton Road with the land in question comprising an area of hardstanding enclosed by hit and miss timber fencing and steel entrance gates with woodland encompassing the site's side and rear boundaries. The application site is currently vacant but was last in use as a salt store. The defined settlement area of Gisburn lies approximately 160 metres away to the South-west of the application site with the wider area surrounding the site comprising a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks 'Permission in Principle' (PiP) consent for the construction of 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 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, the site is located within the Open Countryside, outside of the settlement of Gisburn which is a Tier 1 settlement. Whilst Gisburn does offer key facilities such as a school, shop, post office, village hall and pub, these services 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. As such, and in light of this appeal decision which forms the basis of a material planning consideration, the settlement of Gisburn’s connectivity to the wider area is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Notwithstanding the above, analysis shows an absence of pavements, formal footpaths and cycle lanes along the section of the A59 highway between the application site and defined settlement area of Gisburn. In addition, the proposal has been subject to review from Lancashire County Council Highways who have confirmed that there would be no opportunities to provide a safe segregated footway connection on the land between the application site and defined settlement area of Gisburn due to the surrounding land levels along the A59 highway and third party ownership of the land in question. As such, it is not considered likely that future occupants of the proposed dwellings would be able to access public transport links, services and amenities within Gisburn by foot or bicycle as these would not be an attractive or safe mode of travel.

Consequently, future occupiers of the proposed dwellings would likely be reliant upon the use of private motor vehicles to access key services and facilities and the site is therefore not considered to be a suitable or sustainable location for housing.

This will be discussed in more detail in the planning balance section of this report.

Land use

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states:

‘Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.’

In addition, Paragraph 130 (c) of the NPPF states:

‘Local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework.’

Furthermore, 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 up to six new dwellings to the application site which in this instance has not previously accommodated any residential uses or permanent built form (the site appears to have been exclusively used for the storage of highways salt and associated materials from 1960 up until recently). In addition, the proposal site lies approximately 160 metres away from the nearest residential development in the area and defined settlement area of Gisburn, with no footpath or cycle lane connectivity in place between the application site and defined settlement area of Gisburn. Furthermore, and as previously conveyed, there would be no opportunities in this instance to provide a safe segregated footway connection on the land between the application site and defined settlement area of Gisburn due to the surrounding land levels along the A59 highway and third party ownership of the land in question. Consequently, the land use as residential in principle is considered to be inappropriate in this instance.

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 application site lies approximately 160 metres away from the nearest residential development in the area and defined settlement area of Gisburn, with the site being noticeably severed from the nearest built form in the area and read as part of the undeveloped land located between the application

site and defined settlement area of Gisburn and the woodland and wider open countryside which borders the Northern and Eastern extents of the proposal site. In addition, whilst the application site has a lawful use for the storage of highways materials, it does not currently accommodate any permanent built form, nor does it appear to have accommodated any built form historically. As such, it is considered that the introduction of up to six dwellinghouses along with associated site access, hard and soft landscaping, domestic curtilage areas and associated paraphernalia would have a distinctly urbanising impact upon the proposal site that would read as juxtaposed in the context of the open fields, woodland and wider open countryside surrounding the site. Furthermore, the visual impact and incongruity of the proposed development would be largely apparent in the public realm 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. As such, it is considered that the proposed introduction of residential development would have a harmful urbanising impact upon the visual amenities of the area. Consequently, the amount of development proposed, for up to six residential dwellings is considered to be in direct conflict with Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF and Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

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. The application site is not affected by any such areas or assets as such this subsection does not apply.

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, the impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of surrounding residential properties does not fall to be assessed within the scope of this application and would be reserved for consideration/assessment following the submission of 'Technical Matters'.

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 all users of the site and 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 extensive woodland 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 measures 0.3 hectares in area 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 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 been raised through the application's public consultation process however such matters would be assessed under details submitted with a 'Technical Matters' application. Concerns have also been raised in relation to highway safety through the application's public consultation process however as previously conveyed 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.

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 given that future occupiers of the proposed dwellings would likely be reliant upon the use of private motor vehicles to access key services and facilities. 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 six dwellings these benefits are considered to carry limited weight.

However, Paragraph 11d) section ii) also requires the LPA to have particular regard to key policies for directing development to safe and sustainable locations, with Paragraphs 115 (a) and (b) and 129 (c) being relevant to these considerations (see footnote 9 of the NPPF). As previously conveyed, it is not considered likely that future occupants of the proposed dwellings would be able to access public transport links, services and amenities within Gisburn by foot or bicycle as these would not be an attractive or safe mode of travel therefore future occupiers of the proposed dwellings would likely be reliant upon the use of private motor vehicles to access key services and facilities and the site is therefore not considered to be a suitable or sustainable location for housing. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Paragraphs 115 (a) and (b) and 129 (c) of the NPPF which seek to direct development towards sustainable locations whilst ensuring that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

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

RECOMMENDATION:	That Permission in Principle be refused for the following reasons:
01:	The proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the overarching objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) insofar that approval would lead to the creation of up to six new residential dwellings in an unsustainable location whereby there would be a reliance on private motor vehicle by occupiers of the dwellings to access key services and facilities.
02:	The proposed land use as residential and amount of development proposed conflicts with Paragraphs 124, 130 (c) and 135 (c) of the NPPF and Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy in as much that the proposed development would be unable to provide safe and suitable connectivity between the proposal site and defined settlement area of Gisburn for future users of the site and the introduction of up to six residential dwellings would also have a harmful urbanising impact upon the visual amenities of the area.