

[REDACTED]

From: Contact Centre (CRM) <contact@ribblevalley.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 August 2026 20:21
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Application Comments - 3/2026/0488 FS-Case-866210346

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Lancashire

[REDACTED]

Planning Application Reference No.: 3/2026/0488

Address of Development: Land to rear of the nook snodworth rd bb68dr

Comments: Objection to Planning Application 3/2026/0488

Land to the rear of The Nook, Snodworth Road, Langho BB6 8DR
Proposal: Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access and landscaping

I wish to strongly object to planning application 3/2026/0488.

I ask Ribble Valley Borough Council to refuse this application because the proposal conflicts with the adopted development plan and would cause unacceptable harm to the Green Belt, the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, biodiversity and the established settlement pattern of Langho.

The applicant's Planning Statement itself confirms that the site is outside the defined settlement boundary of Langho and within the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore not simply a conventional housing development within the established built-up area of the village.

1. Conflict with the adopted development plan

The statutory development plan remains the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008–2028, adopted in 2014, together with the Housing and Economic Development DPD, adopted in 2019, and the associated Proposals Map.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Council's own website confirms that the Core Strategy and HED DPD form the adopted planning framework for the Borough.

The proposal should therefore first be assessed against the adopted spatial strategy and settlement boundaries rather than treating the provision of six additional houses as sufficient justification in

itself.

2. Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy

The proposal conflicts with Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

DS1 establishes the spatial strategy for the Borough and directs development towards the most sustainable settlements, including the Tier 1 villages.

Langho is a Tier 1 village, but this does not mean that every parcel of land around Langho is suitable for housing.

The purpose of the development strategy is to direct development to appropriate locations and prevent uncontrolled expansion into areas outside defined settlement boundaries.

The application site is specifically acknowledged by the applicant to be outside the defined settlement boundary of Langho.

The Council should therefore resist the attempt to treat the entire area between Snodworth Road and York Lane as though it were already part of the built-up settlement.

3. Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations

The proposal also needs to be considered against Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations.

DMG2 requires development to be in accordance with the Core Strategy's development strategy and to support its spatial vision.

For Tier 1 villages, development should consolidate, expand or round off development so that it is closely related to the main built-up area and is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing settlement.

This proposal is not a simple rounding-off of a small gap within the built-up area.

It is six new detached houses occupying approximately 0.54 hectares of land outside the defined settlement boundary. The development would introduce a substantial new residential form into an area which currently contains a residential garden, mature vegetation, landscaping and other semi-rural characteristics.

The proposal therefore risks undermining the very settlement strategy which DMG2 is intended to protect.

The Council should also have regard to the High Court's consideration of Ribble Valley's Core Strategy policies in *Ribble Valley Borough Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2021] EWHC 3092 (Admin). That case emphasised the importance of reading DMG2 in the context of DS1 and the settlement boundaries rather than using concepts such as consolidation or rounding-off to circumvent the spatial strategy.

4. Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside

The site's location outside the defined settlement boundary is particularly important in relation to Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside and the AONB.

The applicant cannot simply rely upon the site's proximity to Langho's facilities to make the site equivalent to land within the settlement boundary.

The adopted Core Strategy deliberately distinguishes between land within defined settlements and the surrounding countryside.

The Council should therefore consider whether the proposal satisfies the specific policy requirements applicable to residential development in the open countryside.

There is no demonstrated agricultural or other essential countryside-related need for these six dwellings.

5. The applicant's "limited infilling" argument should be rejected

The applicant's principal argument is that the proposal qualifies as limited infilling in a village under national Green Belt policy.

This should be treated with considerable caution.

Six substantial detached four-bedroom houses are not a minor insertion of one or two dwellings into an established frontage.

The application proposes:

- six detached dwellings;
- approximately 14,747 sq ft of new residential floor space;
- new residential access arrangements;
- new private residential streets;
- garages and parking;
- new domestic gardens and boundary treatments; and
- substantial changes to the existing landscaped garden.

The applicant's own Planning Statement describes the six dwellings as being between York Lane and Snodworth Road, but the existence of roads and boundaries around a site does not automatically make the land part of the built-up settlement.

The Council should consider the actual spatial relationship of the proposed development to Langho's built-up area, rather than simply the distance to shops, the railway station or other services.

Calling the proposal "limited infilling" does not make it so.

6. Green Belt – substantial harm to openness

The site is within the Green Belt.

National planning policy gives Green Belt protection substantial weight and requires development proposals to be assessed against the purposes and openness of the Green Belt.

The applicant seeks to rely principally upon an exception for limited infilling.

If the Council concludes that this is not limited infilling within a village, the proposal becomes inappropriate Green Belt development unless another applicable exception can be established.

The applicant's alternative argument that the site constitutes previously developed land should also be treated cautiously.

The applicant itself acknowledges that the site is a residential garden/curtilage. The fact that there are a greenhouse, garage, kennels, hardstanding and other domestic features does not mean that the whole 0.54-hectare garden should be regarded as previously developed land suitable for redevelopment.

National policy specifically recognises that residential gardens are not automatically to be treated as previously developed land.

The applicant should not be permitted to convert a large residential garden into six houses simply by describing parts of it as previously developed land.

7. The proposal would urbanise the site

The proposal would fundamentally change the character of the land.

The existing site contains mature vegetation, trees, garden areas, water features and other landscape elements.

The proposed development would introduce six houses together with:

- roads and driveways;
- garages;
- parking areas;
- lighting;
- domestic gardens;
- fences and walls;
- bins and other domestic infrastructure; and
- regular vehicle and pedestrian movements.

This would result in a significant increase in the developed and domesticated character of the site.

The fact that vegetation is proposed does not eliminate this impact.

8. The applicant's own LVIA identifies adverse effects

Importantly, the applicant's own Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment does not conclude that the development has no landscape impact.

The applicant's Planning Statement acknowledges that the LVIA identifies moderate adverse effects at site level, including effects on site landscape character, existing land use and topography.

It also acknowledges that the greatest visual effects would be experienced by the closest receptors, including The Nook and users of Footpath LA0306/022.

These admissions should be given proper weight.

The applicant's conclusion that wider landscape effects are negligible does not remove the identified localised harm.

Planning decisions must consider the actual effect on the character and appearance of the immediate area, not merely whether the development can be seen from a long distance.

9. Policy EN2 – Landscape

The proposal conflicts with Key Statement EN2 – Landscape of the Core Strategy.

EN2 seeks to protect and enhance the landscape character of the Ribble Valley and requires development to recognise the importance of landscape character and visual amenity.

The permanent replacement of a substantial landscaped garden with six large detached houses would cause harm to the existing landscape character.

New planting cannot recreate the maturity and established character of the existing vegetation for many years.

The Council should therefore give proper weight to the immediate landscape harm rather than relying upon proposed planting as mitigation.

10. Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

The proposal should also be assessed against Policy DMG1 – General Considerations.

DMG1 requires development to:

- achieve a high standard of design;
- be sympathetic to existing land uses in terms of size, intensity, scale and massing;
- consider density, layout and the relationship between buildings;
- protect the character of the landscape;
- avoid unacceptable effects on residential amenity;
- provide safe access;
- consider traffic and parking implications; and
- protect and enhance public rights of way.

The scale and intensity of six large detached houses on this site are not compatible with the existing character of the land.

The proposal would also introduce a substantially more intensive residential use into an area currently characterised by a single dwelling and its extensive garden/curtilage.

11. Highway and access concerns – Policy DMG3 and DMI2

The proposal should be considered against Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility and Key Statement DMI2 – Transport Considerations.

DMI2 requires new development to minimise the need to travel and provide good opportunities for walking and cycling and convenient public transport connections.

DMG3 requires consideration of matters including public transport, the relationship to the road network, pedestrian and cycle access and opportunities to reduce reliance upon private cars.

The applicant's own statement acknowledges that pedestrian connectivity is significantly better along York Lane than along Snodworth Road.

The proposed development nevertheless introduces additional vehicle movements onto both York Lane and Snodworth Road.

The Council should consider the real-world conditions of these roads, including their width, visibility, existing residential accesses, pedestrian conditions and the cumulative effect of development in Langho.

The fact that the existing access can technically be widened does not, by itself, demonstrate that the resulting development is appropriate for the location.

12. Public Right of Way

The application site adjoins Footpath LA0306/022.

The applicant proposes works to the footpath, including changes to its surface and boundary vegetation.

Policy DMG1 specifically requires consideration of the protection and enhancement of public rights of way.

The Council should ensure that the development does not reduce the amenity, rural character, safety or usability of this public route.

A public footpath passing immediately alongside six new houses would experience a fundamentally different environment from the existing landscaped setting.

13. Biodiversity – a significant on-site loss

This is a particularly important issue.

The applicant's own Biodiversity Net Gain assessment states that the proposed development would result in an on-site biodiversity loss of approximately 44.4%, with the site's habitat value falling from 1.08 area habitat units to 0.60 units.

The applicant therefore requires off-site habitat provision to achieve the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain.

This is not the same as demonstrating that the development has no ecological impact.

The existing site contains:

- mature vegetation;

- hedgerows;
- trees;
- grassland;
- scrub;
- water features;
- potential nesting bird habitat;
- trees with bat roost potential; and
- habitat used by other wildlife.

The Council should apply the mitigation hierarchy and seek to avoid ecological harm before relying upon compensation elsewhere.

This raises a direct issue under Key Statement EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity and Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation.

14. Existing pond and water environment

The applicant proposes removing the existing pond and replacing it with a new pond elsewhere on the site.

This should not automatically be regarded as an ecological enhancement.

The existing water feature is part of the site's established ecological and landscape character.

The Council should be satisfied that there would be no unacceptable impact on drainage, ecology, hydrology or biodiversity before accepting the proposed replacement as equivalent mitigation.

15. Trees and landscape structure

The existing mature trees and vegetation make an important contribution to the character of the site.

The proposal relies heavily upon retaining existing vegetation to screen the development.

That creates an inherent concern: if the screening vegetation is damaged, dies or is subsequently removed, the visual impact of the development could be substantially greater.

The Council should therefore attach significant weight to the existing landscape structure rather than assuming that proposed planting will always provide effective long-term screening.

This engages Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands and Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection.

16. Residential amenity

The proposal should also be assessed against DMG1's requirement that development should not adversely affect the amenities of surrounding properties.

The introduction of six houses into the existing garden/curtilage will inevitably increase:

- overlooking;
- vehicle movements;

- noise;
- lighting;
- domestic activity;
- parking activity; and
- general residential disturbance.

The Council should consider the cumulative effect rather than assessing each neighbouring property in isolation.

17. Housing need does not override site-specific harm

I recognise that Ribble Valley has a housing requirement and that housing delivery is an important material consideration.

However, housing need does not mean that every available piece of land is automatically appropriate for development.

The applicant relies heavily upon the Council's housing land supply position and the recent Langho appeal.

That does not remove the requirement to assess this site on its individual planning merits.

The recent appeal does not create an automatic presumption that every site around Langho should be developed.

The Council must still assess Green Belt status, settlement boundaries, landscape, design, highways, biodiversity, residential amenity and all other relevant considerations.

18. The new National Planning Policy Framework

The Government published a new National Planning Policy Framework on 17 August 2026, which is now the current national planning framework.

The Framework continues to require development to be properly planned and assessed against sustainable development, Green Belt, design, transport, flood risk and the natural environment.

It does not remove the requirement for development to be appropriate to its location or eliminate the need to consider the harm caused by individual proposals.

The Council should therefore apply the current NPPF rather than relying upon the earlier version referred to throughout the applicant's June 2026 Planning Statement.

The applicant's Planning Statement was prepared before today's new NPPF was published and therefore cannot be treated as a complete assessment of the current national policy position.

19. Emerging Ribble Valley Local Plan

The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan intended to replace the existing Core Strategy and HED DPD.

Although the emerging Local Plan may not yet carry full weight, the fact that the Council is

undertaking a comprehensive review of its development strategy is relevant context.

This application should not be allowed to undermine the Council's ability to establish an appropriate long-term settlement strategy for Langho through the plan-making process.

The proper place for determining the future strategic pattern of housing development is through the Local Plan process rather than through piecemeal applications on individual Green Belt sites.

20. Cumulative development pressure

This application must also be considered in the context of the significant development pressure already affecting Langho and the surrounding area.

The cumulative impact of multiple developments is a material planning consideration.

The question is not simply whether six houses, viewed in isolation, could be accommodated.

The question is whether allowing further piecemeal development outside the settlement boundary would progressively erode the settlement's defined edge, Green Belt openness, landscape character and infrastructure capacity.

Allowing each individual proposal because it is relatively small would risk precisely the cumulative urbanisation that the spatial strategy is intended to prevent.

Conclusion

This is not simply a proposal for six houses in an otherwise suitable residential location.

It is a proposal for six substantial detached houses on a 0.54-hectare site outside Langho's defined settlement boundary and within the Green Belt.

The applicant's own documents identify adverse landscape effects and a significant on-site biodiversity loss.

The proposal should therefore be refused because it conflicts with the adopted development plan, including:

- Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
- Key Statement DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Key Statement EN2 – Landscape
- Key Statement EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Key Statement H2 – Housing Balance
- Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
- Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
- Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility
- Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands
- Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection
- Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation
- Policy DME6 – Water Management
- Policy DMI2 – Transport Considerations
- Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

- together with the relevant provisions of the adopted HED DPD and Proposals Map.

I also ask the Council to assess the proposal against the current National Planning Policy Framework published on 17 August 2026, particularly its policies concerning Green Belt, sustainable development, design, transport, biodiversity, landscape and flood risk.

Most importantly, I ask the Council not to accept the applicant's characterisation of this proposal as merely "limited infilling" without critically examining the actual scale, form, location and effect of the development.

Six large detached dwellings, new access arrangements, garages, parking, domestic gardens and associated infrastructure would represent a substantial intensification and urbanisation of this Green Belt site.

The provision of six additional market homes is not sufficient to outweigh the site-specific planning harm.

For these reasons, I strongly request that planning permission is REFUSED.