



Planning Statement

*Submitted as part of the Outline Planning Application for
Land to the east of Clitheroe Road (Lawsonsteads Farm), Whalley*

COMMERCIAL ESTATES GROUP

**Land east of Clitheroe Road
(Lawsonsteads), Whalley**
Planning Statement

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Site Location Plan

Appendix 2

Parameters Plan

Appendix 3

Screening Request dated 26 October 2010

Appendix 4

LPA Response to 2011 Screening dated 11 November 2010

Appendix 5

RVBC SHLAA Assessment of Application Site

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This outline planning application is for a residential led development, comprising a mix of housing including family and affordable homes and a new one form entry primary school. As a part of the development, a vehicular link will be provided through the site, between Clitheroe Road and the A671, to create an alternative route that avoids the centre of Whalley.
- 1.2. The application has been prepared and submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) on behalf of Commercial Estates Group (CEG). The site, known as Lawsonsteads, extends to 14.6 Ha and the application is for up to 260 new dwellings.
- 1.3. An application for up to 300 dwellings, a school and residential nursing home was refused consent in January 2012. The reasons for refusal related to impact on the setting and views into and out of the Whalley Conservation Area; development outside the defined settlement boundary and prematurity, ahead of the emerging spatial vision for the area.
- 1.4. Since that refusal, planning permission has been granted on the western portion of the site for up to 55 dwellings and a residential nursing home with access off Clitheroe Road. This permission has established the principle of development outside the defined settlement boundary in this location and was found acceptable in terms of the setting and views into and outside of the conservation area. The application was not considered premature ahead of the emerging spatial vision for the area.
- 1.5. Since the earlier refusal in January 2012, the draft Core Strategy has also advanced and was submitted to the Secretary of State in late September 2012. The draft, whilst still at a fairly early stage, identifies Whalley as a key settlement that will continue to accommodate housing growth over the plan period.
- 1.6. The draft plan is subject to considerable outstanding objections by a number of parties, including the applicant, who question its soundness, based on the proposed overall growth plans and the apportionment of housing, which is heavily influenced by a single strategic site at Standen. The EiP inspector has also raised questions such that the local plan examination has been deferred whilst additional and a more robust evidence base is prepared.
- 1.7. This application is for an additional 205 dwellings to those already approved. The parameters of development have been designed so as to address the previous concerns in respect of views into and out of the conservation area and wider visual impacts.
- 1.8. This quantum of new housing in this location is not premature, as it is not of such a scale as to predetermine the spatial strategy of delivering growth in the Borough. Whalley, as a key service centre, is identified to accommodate housing growth. This site is well placed to help accommodate some of that growth.
- 1.9. This is a deliverable and sustainable proposal that will help the Council meet its housing needs in a way that delivers a great many benefits including investment into new road infrastructure, affordable housing and education.
- 1.10. The development will also generate significant economic benefits associated with residential construction and job creation; welcome injection of expenditure into the local economy through future residents; and new homes bonus.
- 1.11. There is a recognised need for new housing in the Ribble Valley and this site is recognised as a sustainable solution to help deliver new homes in the short to medium term. The site

and proposal has been extensively tested over a period of three years with many technical reports and is known to be deliverable.

- 1.12. By addressing the previous Member concerns and reducing the quantum of development proposed, the application should now be able to be fully supported. It is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and in a settlement identified for growth in the emerging plan.

2. Proposed Development

- 2.1. This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Commercial Estates Group (CEG). It relates to proposals for development of land east of Clitheroe Road (otherwise known as 'Lawsonsteads'), Whalley, in the Ribble Valley. A site plan is enclosed at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2. The proposal is for a residential mixed use development comprising up to 260 new dwellings (Use Class C3); a one form entry primary school (Use Class D1); associated access; car parking; open space; and landscaping. The application is submitted in outline with all matters except access reserved for future determination.
- 2.3. The development will deliver up to 78 affordable dwellings (30%) and a proposed mix of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties. The overall mix and parameters of development are set out in the Design & Access Statement (DAS). Precise details of layout, design and landscaping will be provided at Reserved Matters stage.
- 2.4. A plan setting out the parameters of the development is enclosed at **Appendix 2** whilst an illustrative layout is contained within the accompanying DAS.
- 2.5. This Statement is to be read alongside a number of other supporting documents, including:
 - Design and Access Statement (DAS) (Planit);
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) (Planit);
 - Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (Indigo Planning);
 - Transport Assessment (Bryan G Hall);
 - Framework Travel Plan (Bryan G Hall);
 - Flood Risk Assessment (Weetwood Environmental Engineering);
 - Historic Environment Assessment (Northern Archaeological Associates);
 - Heritage Appraisal (Indigo Planning) [CHECK];
 - Ecological Appraisal (Baker Consultants);
 - Utilities Assessment (WSP);
 - Preliminary Assessment of Ground Conditions (Sirius);
 - Renewable Energy Assessment (WSP);
 - Sustainability Statement (WSP);
 - Tree Survey (Jonathan Cocking Associates); and
 - Agricultural Land Classification Report (Soil Environment Services).
- 2.6. In accordance with the terms of Regulation 5 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2011, we have submitted a screening request (**Appendix 3**) and await a formal response.

- 2.7. We note that an application for 300 dwellings, a nursing home and primary school (submitted in February 2011) was found not to require an Environmental Statement (see Council's response at **Appendix 4**) and we fully expect this smaller scheme to be assessed with the same conclusion.
- 2.8. This Statement provides details of the proposed scheme and sets out an assessment of the development against the requirements of relevant planning policy. It concludes that the proposal complies with policy, has significant benefits and should be supported by the Council.

3. Site and Surrounds

- 3.1. The application site is located to the east of Clitheroe Road, to the north east of the centre of Whalley. The site is greenfield and extends to 14.6 Ha in size. A site location plan is provided at **Appendix 1** and a more detailed description is included within the Design and Access Statement.
- 3.2. The site is bounded by Oakhill College and residential properties to the north. To the east it is bounded by the A671 and, in part, Spring Wood which is a designated area of Ancient Woodland. To the south and west of the site are more existing residential properties accessed from Clitheroe Road, Brookes Lane, Woodlands Drive and Sydney Drive. As such, the site is surrounded by existing development to three sides and the A671 to the fourth.
- 3.3. There is currently no formal vehicular access into the site although there is a gated field entrance to an unmade track, situated on the site frontage to the A671 Accrington Road.
- 3.4. There is an existing public footpath which crosses the site leading from Clitheroe Road/Brookes Lane to Spring Wood.
- 3.5. The site sits close to but outside the Whalley Conservation Area, the boundary of which was recently extended to include a selection of properties along Clitheroe Road and Brookes Lane.
- 3.6. The site has a gently sloping topography rising west to east from Clitheroe Road to the boundary of the A671. The Haweswater Aqueduct crosses the site underground (east to west) and continues through the settlement towards the north west. There is a pumping station located to the south east corner of the site. Whilst this sits outside of the application red line, there is a reserved access corridor across the site between the facility and Brookes Lane.
- 3.7. The site is located in the north east quadrant of Whalley and has strong defensible boundaries, with the A59 to the north, A671 to the east and the existing centre to the south and west. This has built up around Whalley's historic core and the River Calder.
- 3.8. In terms of the wider area, Whalley sits in the heart of the Ribble Valley. It is situated approximately four miles south of Clitheroe, three miles north of Great Harwood and ten miles east of Longridge. Further east is Pendle and the Peak District whilst to the west is Preston.
- 3.9. Clitheroe Road is a principal bus route with the nearest bus stop located directly on the site frontage, circa 270m from the centre of the development site. A complementary stop is on the other side of the road circa 50m south. These stops are currently the most frequently served with a combined frequency of seven journeys per hour during peak times.
- 3.10. There are also bus stops situated on Station Road (accessible via Brookes Lane) which provide services to Clitheroe and Blackburn. Whalley Bus Station is located within 550m from the centre of the site. Whalley Train Station is also within 1km of the site and provides services to Manchester, Blackburn and Clitheroe.
- 3.11. In terms of cycle provision, Regional Routes 90 and 91 of the Lancashire Cycleway pass close to the site on Clitheroe Road and Station Road, and in this vicinity are on-road cycle routes.

4. Principle of Development

Rationale

- 4.1. CEG has been promoting residential led development on this site for over three years. The Council accepts that it is a sustainable location and that Whalley, as a Key Service Centre, is identified as a settlement that will accommodate future housing growth.
- 4.2. In February 2011, CEG submitted an application (Reference 3/2011/0111) for 300 dwellings, a nursing home and a one form entry primary school. When it went to committee in January 2012, that application had no outstanding objections from any statutory consultee. It had received an objection from the Save Whalley Action Group and was refused planning permission on three specific grounds relating to:
 - i. The setting and views into and out of the Whalley Conservation Area;
 - ii. The change in character to the detriment of the visual amenities of the area; and
 - iii. Prematurity ahead of the emerging Core Strategy.
- 4.3. In April 2012, CEG submitted an application for 55 dwellings and a nursing home. This again drew objection from the local resident group and was refused planning permission in July 2012, against officer recommendation on the basis that:
 - i. The change in character would be to the detriment of visual amenities in the area;
 - ii. It would have a detrimental impact on the setting of and views into and out of the Whalley Conservation Area; and
 - iii. It would have an adverse impact on the operation of the highway network.
- 4.4. A duplicate application was submitted and, in November 2012, planning permission was granted for 55 residential dwellings and a 50 bed residential nursing home on a part of the site fronting Clitheroe Road (Reference 3/2012/0687). This permission established the principle of development in this location, outside of the former settlement boundary.
- 4.5. In the report to committee, officers' confirmed (at page 57) that the proposals represent sustainable development in the terms of National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.6. It was further accepted that the Council does not have an available five year housing land supply and that the development would help deliver market and affordable housing, for which there is an accepted and pressing need.
- 4.7. There remains a pressing need for housing in the Ribble Valley and in Whalley, to meet the projected requirements. This requirement will be the subject of debate at the Core Strategy Examination, which has been delayed as the Inspector has requested that the Council update its evidence base, to improve the potential of the Plan being found sound.
- 4.8. The recently consented scheme will help deliver housing over a two year period. The wider Lawsonsteads site can accommodate additional dwellings and deliver significant infrastructure benefits for the wider community.
- 4.9. The purpose of this application is, therefore, to seek consent for a larger development that takes on board the concerns and reasons for refusal of the earlier scheme through a landscape and heritage informed approach, yet still delivers the wider benefits in terms of

investment in infrastructure.

- 4.10. The scale of development (205 dwellings more than already consented), is not such that it pre-determines the direction of growth in the emerging plan. It could not reasonably be deemed premature against the draft Core Strategy, which identifies Whalley as a settlement that should accommodate growth.
- 4.11. In any event, Indigo has, on behalf of CEG made representations to the draft Core Strategy that Whalley can readily accommodate and sustain more growth than that planned in the current draft, which is important if the Council is to achieve its economic objectives. This application, however, does not rely on the need for any additional growth being identified through the plan making process. It is a sustainable proposal that stands squarely on its own planning merits.
- 4.12. This application will help demonstrate that this is a sustainable and deliverable site that is attractive to the market, an important consideration in terms of the national drive for economic recovery. RVBC has received a number of applications for large residential schemes, many in less sustainable and more sensitive locations than Lawsonsteads. Indeed, these applications have highlighted the importance to secure consent now on the remainder of the Lawsonsteads site, to minimise the risk of less suitable proposals being approved through appeal.
- 4.13. This proposal has been informed by extensive landscape, visual and heritage assessment analysis and represents an appropriately designed response whilst still delivering much needed housing in one of the Borough's key locations for new development. These factors are set out in greater detail in the Design & Access Statement Landscape and Visual Assessment, and the Heritage Appraisal.

Meeting housing needs

- 4.14. The North West RSS sets out a requirement for provision of 2,900 homes across the Ribble Valley between 2003 and 2012 (a rate of 161 dwellings per annum).
- 4.15. This represents the statutory requirement for delivery of housing across the Borough for the purposes of development control and until such time that the RSS is abolished and/or a new locally-derived housing target is endorsed by way of an adopted Core Strategy.
- 4.16. In this regard, the Council has agreed a revised figure of 4,000 dwellings (to be delivered 2008-2028, which equates to an average of 200 dwellings per annum) for the purpose of the Core Strategy. This figure has been accepted at a number of appeals (most recently at land off Milton Avenue, Clitheroe, Reference APP/T2350/A/12/2181354) to be the minimum figure that should be used to calculate housing supply. This figure was underpinned by work prepared by NLP, but has been challenged by a number of objectors to the Core Strategy, who point to evidence requiring a greater annual provision of housing, to meet economic growth objectives.
- 4.17. Even taking the 200 dwellings per annum figure, the Council accepts that it is unable to demonstrate a deliverable five year housing land supply as is required by Paragraph 47 of the NPPF. Based on the Council's latest Housing Land Availability Study (17 January 2013), the Council concludes it has a 4.69 year supply.
- 4.18. The Council's supply analysis is, however, a best case scenario. If, in accordance with common practice, the past shortfall (461 dwellings over the last 4.5 years), was added to the first five years of the plan (rather than spread across the plan period) to help boost early delivery, it would add 92.2 dwellings/year for the first five years to the 200 figure. $292.2 \times 5 = 1461$ dwellings. The 20% buffer is then added, making the requirement for the next five years 1753.2, or 351/year. Against a stated supply of 1294, this results in a 3.69 year supply. This remains a best case scenario and assumes that all of the consented sites that make up the supply will come forward in the next five years.

- 4.19. This lower supply also assumes that 200 per year is the correct evidence based requirement. CEG and many other objectors to the Core Strategy do not accept that it is. CEG has made representations setting out that the minimum annual housing requirement should be 270/year, and there is a strong case for a higher figure still.
- 4.20. Applying the past shortfall and 20% buffer to an annual requirement of 270 in the same way as set out above, results in a five year annual requirement of 435 dwellings. The 1294 stated supply in this more realistic and credible scenario is 2.97 years.
- 4.21. This highlights that there remains a compelling and pressing need for the Council to grant planning permission for sustainable development proposals and identify new sites for housing, which will help meet both existing and future housing needs.
- 4.22. On the basis that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year forward supply of housing, NPPF is of overriding material weight in determining this application. This is particularly the case given the age of the plan (Adopted 1998) and fact that the Council has persistently failed to deliver its housing target, particularly during the last five years.

Spatial Distribution

- 4.23. Policy G2 of the local plan defines the main settlements in the Borough as Clitheroe, Longridge, Whalley, Wilpshire and Billington.
- 4.24. The Council's emerging Core Strategy DPD identifies Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley as the Key Service Centres for the Borough.
- 4.25. It is worth noting that the former Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (JLSP) (Adopted 2005) also identified Whalley alongside Clitheroe and Longridge as a Key Service Centre and focus for development. This was to help promote regeneration and support its role as a public transport hub for the surrounding villages and rural area.
- 4.26. As a Key Service Centre, Whalley has an important role in terms of service provision for the surrounding rural areas. Its growth has the potential to sustain and underpin the economy of its rural hinterland and provide improved access to housing, services, education, healthcare and employment.
- 4.27. Whalley has good transport links to surrounding towns and villages and is served by the mainline railway between Manchester, Burnley and Clitheroe. It also has a bus station in the centre of the settlement which is within easy walking distance of the site and offers a number of services.
- 4.28. In contrast, Longridge sits on the periphery of the Borough and has no rail link thereby limiting its relative connectivity to the remainder of the Borough.
- 4.29. Both Whalley and Clitheroe form part of the central core of the Borough and their future expansion will have a significant positive impact on the surrounding rural villages which they serve.
- 4.30. Spatially, Whalley represents a suitable and sustainable location for future growth and development, which is recognised by the Council.

Existing Housing Provision in Whalley

- 4.31. The 2008 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies a need for more family and affordable housing provision in Whalley.
- 4.32. The January 2011 housing needs survey undertaken in Whalley identified a number of key issues:

- there is a lack of affordable housing stock in Whalley compared to the Ribble Valley and Lancashire as a whole;
 - there is a lack of affordable 'market' housing within Whalley with house prices 25% higher than Ribble Valley and 53% higher than the whole of Lancashire; and
 - the greatest need is for more affordable family housing.
- 4.33. The applicant has previously sought (in 2011) independent advice on the residential market in Whalley in relation to the wider Ribble Valley area, to identify specific housing requirements in terms of house types, mix, and the size of units, to inform preparation of the masterplan and application proposals.
- 4.34. The key findings arising from this research are set out below:
- Whalley operates as a micro-market which has remained more buoyant than most other settlements in the Borough since the downturn in the housing market in autumn 2007. There is, however, a limited supply of housing against significant pent up demand;
 - Housing within Whalley is of good quality and almost entirely private in terms of its tenure;
 - The minimum price for a two bedroom terraced property is £135,000 (with unrestricted on-street parking), highlighting affordability issues;
 - The strongest selling properties in Whalley are conveniently positioned, traditional terraced houses and larger 'character' properties suitable for family occupancy;
 - There is limited demand for apartments (i.e. one and two bedroom units) as these are generally regarded too small by elderly downsizers; and
 - The largest supply of any one property type in Whalley is of 2/2½ storey, four and five bedroom detached houses but there is a requirement for smaller detached three bedroom properties.
- 4.35. In general terms, despite the recent changes within the economy, house prices in the Ribble Valley are much higher than national averages. The Council's 'Addressing Housing Need' (January 2012) document states that the average mean house price in 2009 is £211,026 and the gross annual income needed for a mortgage is £54,264. The house price to income ratio is 9.8, which is the highest in Lancashire. Therefore, many people in the Borough cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market.
- 4.36. In summary, Whalley is a settlement with both quantitative and qualitative housing need with a requirement for more family and affordable housing and accommodation to meet its growing elderly population.
- 4.37. The proposed scheme will deliver up to 260 residential units comprising a mix of family homes, affordable and starter homes to address short term quantitative and qualitative housing needs.
- 4.38. 30% of the development will comprise affordable homes, a total of up to 78 affordable dwellings.
- 4.39. Overall, therefore, the objective of this application is to help deliver sustainable new residential homes to meet the identified need, also delivering a number of wider benefits including investment in infrastructure and education.

5. Relevant Planning Policy

- 5.1. This section sets out the policies which are relevant to the determination of this application.

National Planning Policy

- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2012. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies in a single document, which in turn revokes and replaces the previous Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes.
- 5.3. The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is a recurring theme throughout the document.
- 5.4. Paragraph 7 defines 'sustainable development' as having three dimensions; economic, social and environmental, which give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- ***'an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;***
- ***a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and***
- ***an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy'***

- 5.5. Paragraph 14 states that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless *'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; or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted'*.

Core Planning Principles

- 5.6. The NPPF establishes 12 planning principles which should underpin plan-making and decision-taking. Planning should *inter alia*; *'not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives'*. It should also *'proactively drive and support sustainable economic development'* to deliver the homes that the country needs. Planning should *'always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and building'*. Planning should promote the *'vitality of our main urban areas'* and make

effective use of brownfield land. Planning should *'conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance'* (paragraph 17).

Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy

- 5.7. The NPPF states that planning policies should take a *'positive approach to sustainable new development'* in rural areas.
- 5.8. In promoting strong rural economies, the NPPF advises that local plans should 'support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings' and 'promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages'.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 5.9. The NPPF requires all developments that generate significant amounts of movement to be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. Decisions on proposals should take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up in order to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure, safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Paragraph 32 goes on to state,

'development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe'.

- 5.10. Paragraph 35 requires developments to be located and designed where practical to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities.
- 5.11. The NPPF encourages the promotion of a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site (paragraph 38).

Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes

- 5.12. Paragraph 47 of NPPF states that in order to significantly increase the supply of housing, the government requires local planning authorities to
- *'identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (also moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; and*
 - *identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.'*
- 5.13. Additionally, the NPPF confirms that local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in the five-year supply if they have *'compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local areas and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply'*.
- 5.14. Paragraph 49 states;

'Housing applications should be considered in the context of the

presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites'.

- 5.15. Paragraph 52 states, *'The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages...'*

Requiring Good Design

- 5.16. Paragraph 57 stresses the importance of planning positively for *'the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes'*.
- 5.17. The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that developments *'will function well and add to the overall quality of the areas, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development'* (Paragraph 58).
- 5.18. Paragraph 61 stresses that, although the visual appearance of individual buildings is very important, the objective of securing high quality and inclusive design *'goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.'*
- 5.19. Paragraph 65 explicitly states;

'Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for building or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits).'

Promoting Healthy Communities

- 5.20. Through the NPPF, government encourages developments which promote active street frontages which *'bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity'*. It also supports *'safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas'* (Paragraph 69).
- 5.21. Paragraph 70 states that in order to deliver social, recreational and cultural facilities and services to local communities, planning policies and decisions should *'ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services'*.

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

- 5.22. Paragraph 100 advises;

'Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere'.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 5.23. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109).

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 5.24. The NPPF recognises at paragraph 126 that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and that they should be conserved in a manner consistent with their significance. Paragraph 128 requires applicants to submit, with any planning application, sufficient information about the significance of heritage assets affected by development proposals, to allow an understanding of the potential impact on that significance, including on any contribution made by its setting.
- 5.25. Paragraphs 133 and 134 set out the criteria against which a LPA should consider planning applications and requires consideration to be paid to whether or not a proposal will cause substantial or less than substantial harm. Where proposed new development would affect the setting of conservation areas a LPA is required to look favourably on proposals that preserve elements of an asset's setting that make a positive contribution to it (Paragraph 137).
- 5.26. In relation to the potential impact of a proposal on a heritage asset with archaeological interests, the NPPF requires developers to submit an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 5.27. This application is supported by a Historic Environment Assessment which addresses archaeological interests, and by a Heritage Appraisal which addresses the impacts of the proposal on above ground heritage assets and their significance.

Localism Act (November 2011)

- 5.28. The Localism Bill became an Act of Parliament on 15 November 2011. The emphasis of the Act is devolution of power to local authorities in unlocking barriers to economic growth. Delivery of new development, in particular housing, is key to driving the economy forwards.

Development Plan

- 5.29. For the avoidance of doubt, the statutory development plan comprises:
- The North West Regional Spatial Strategy (September 2008); and
 - The saved policies of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (June 1998).
- 5.30. Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by Order using powers provided for in the Localism Act. It is the Government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.
- 5.31. The application proposals should therefore be assessed against the requirements of the statutory development plan and any other material considerations.
- 5.32. The current local plan is now almost 15 years old and the NPPF is therefore a material consideration of significant weight. The objectives contained therein, for economic growth, have been further and consistently reiterated through Ministerial statements and policy changes emerging from DCLG. Appeal decisions have also regularly found in favour of housing development in sustainable greenfield locations for which there is a clear presumption in favour, to help boost housing supply.

Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RSS) (September 2008)

- 5.33. RSS provides a framework for the physical development of the North West region over a 15-20 year period. It too seeks economic growth through sustainable development and provides a framework for addressing the scale and distribution of future housing development, setting priorities for dealing with issues such as the environment, transport, infrastructure and economic development.
- 5.34. Key objectives include creating a more competitive, productive and inclusive regional economy alongside protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment and using resources and infrastructure efficiently and prudently.

Regional Development Principles

- 5.35. Policy DP1 seeks more sustainable decision making in planning with better use of land, buildings and infrastructure and the promotion of an appropriate mix of uses within a site or its wider neighbourhood. Proposals should contribute towards reducing the need to travel and assist people to meet their needs locally.
- 5.36. In order to achieve sustainable development, Policy DP2 seeks to promote sustainable communities which foster relationships between homes, workplaces and services; consider the economic, environmental and social implications of development; improve the built environment, health and education; promote safety and exercise; and, integrate and phase the provision of public services and facilities to meet needs.
- 5.37. Policy DP3 promotes sustainable economic development which improves productivity and reduces inequalities.
- 5.38. Policy DP4 seeks to make the best use of existing resources and infrastructure, through building on existing concentrations of activity and infrastructure which does not require new infrastructure investment, and where they do, are appropriately phased to coincide with its provision and follow a sequential approach to the location of development.
- 5.39. Policy DP5 aims to reduce travel demand, the need to travel, and increase accessibility through the location of development, promoting safe and sustainable travel, locating major growth in urban areas where strategic networks connect and public transport is provided, and making all new developments genuinely accessible by all modes.
- 5.40. Policy DP7 promotes environmental quality through reclaiming derelict land; promoting good quality design; assessing potential impacts in terms of traffic, air quality, noise and health; maintaining biodiversity, open countryside and greening towns and cities.
- 5.41. Policy DP8 relates to the mainstreaming of rural issues. It identifies the problems of rural communities i.e. housing affordability, economic diversification and access to jobs and services, and promotes the positive interaction between rural and urban areas.
- 5.42. Policy DP9 is concerned with emissions and climate change and states that as an urgent priority, plans, strategies, proposals and schemes and investment decisions should contribute to reductions in the Region's carbon dioxide emissions from all sources; take into account future changes to national targets for carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions; identify, assess and apply measures to ensure effective adaptation to likely environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change. The policy outlines a number of measures which can be incorporated into strategies and proposals in seeking to reduce emissions.

Spatial Priorities

- 5.43. Policy RDF2 supports the priorities of the Regional Rural Delivery Framework and *inter alia* seeks to maximise the economic potential of the Region's rural areas and improve access to

affordable housing.

- 5.44. The policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to identify a subset of towns and villages as Key Service Centres which:
- *'act as service centres for surrounding areas, providing a range of services including retail, leisure, community, civic, health and education facilities and financial and professional services; and*
 - *have good public transport links to surrounding towns and villages, or the potential for their development and enhancement'.*

Housing and Social

- 5.45. The plan's objective is to promote cohesive, mixed and thriving communities where people want and can afford to live. Specifically it aims to provide additional housing to meet changing needs, support economic growth, provide choice and address the requirement for affordable accommodation.
- 5.46. Policy L1 states that proposals, and especially housing, employment and mixed use schemes, should ensure there is sufficient health, sport, recreation, cultural and education provision for all members of the community.
- 5.47. Policy L2 encourages local planning authorities to develop an understanding of local and sub-regional housing markets to improve stock and overcome affordability issues.
- 5.48. Policy L4 requires authorities to plan, monitor and manage their housing supply and sets housing allocations. It sets the Ribble Valley an annual rate of 161 dwellings.

Transport

- 5.49. The thrust of policy is to secure a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport, integrate land use and transport, and reduce the adverse impacts of transport. Policy seeks to improve public transport infrastructure and services (Policy RT1).
- 5.50. Policy RT2 promotes a coordinated approach to managing travel demand, in particular, focusing of effort to reduce the proportion of car-borne commuting and education trips made during peak periods and tackling the most congested parts of the motorway network.
- 5.51. The policy seeks to ensure, *inter alia*, that new development is located where there is good access to public transport, backed by effective provision for pedestrians and cyclists to minimise the need to travel by private car; and the introduction of measures and incentives to influence travel behaviour, which should be developed alongside public transport, cycling and pedestrian network and service improvements.
- 5.52. Policy RT9 encourages Local Planning Authorities to develop integrated networks of attractive and safe routes for walking and cycling to widen accessibility and capitalise on their environmental, social and health benefits. Amongst other things, it identifies that high priority should be given to routes linking residential areas with employment areas.
- 5.53. When assessing proposals for new development, local authorities are to ensure that schemes incorporate high quality pedestrian and cycle facilities, including secure cycle parking. The policy advises that routes should connect with those in nearby developments, and provision of all facilities should take into consideration integration with likely future development.

Environment

- 5.54. Policy EM1 seeks to identify, protect, enhance and manage the Region's environmental

assets. In doing so, it encourages developers and Local Planning Authorities to seek to avoid loss of or damage to the assets, mitigate any unavoidable damage and compensate for loss or damage through offsetting actions which result in no net loss in resources.

- 5.55. In particular, the policy provides guidance on the need to consider impacts on landscape character, the natural environment, the historic environment and, trees, woodlands and forests.
- 5.56. Policy EM3 encourages delivery of wider spatial outcomes that incorporate environmental and socio-economic benefits by conserving and managing existing green infrastructure; creating new green infrastructure; and, enhancing its functionality, quality, connectivity and accessibility.
- 5.57. Policy EM5 derives from the need to deliver the EU Water Framework Directive, by protecting the quantity and quality of surface, ground and coastal waters and managing flood risk. In respect of new development, it encourages proposals to incorporate sustainable drainage systems and water conservation and efficiency measures.
- 5.58. Policy EM16 seeks to ensure a consistent approach to energy conservation, based on minimising consumption and demand, and promoting maximum efficiency and minimum waste in all aspects of local planning, development and energy consumption.
- 5.59. Policy EM18 requires new developments of at least ten or more units to secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable.

Central Lancashire City Region

- 5.60. Policies CLCR1 and CLCR2 seek to focus development and inward investment into the four main settlements of Blackpool, Preston, Blackburn and Burnley. Outside of these areas, the City Region contains a variety of smaller industrial towns, market towns and rural settlements that operate as key service centres and local service centres. These smaller settlements are recognised as making an important contribution to the wider rural economy, in accordance with Policy RDF2. This policy is based on the approach to development set out in the former Joint Lancashire Structure Plan (2005) which has since been superseded by the RSS.
- 5.61. Policy CLCR3 affords protection to the large protected green areas of the City Region, in particular, the Green Belt, the Forest of Bowland AONB and the Regional Parks. The policy seeks to improve access to open space networks, enhancing the urban fringe and recreational and educational facilities and promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of the physical environment and supporting biodiversity.

Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (June 1998)

- 5.62. The Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan was adopted in June 1998. The following section refers to saved policies of the plan.
- 5.63. Policy G1 sets out criterion against which all planning applications for development will be assessed. It states:

'All development proposals will be expected to provide a high standard of building design and landscape quality. Development which does so will be permitted, unless it adversely affects the amenities of the surrounding area'.

- 5.64. Policy G2 provides a settlement hierarchy and seeks to focus development into the key settlement areas including Clitheroe, Longridge, Whalley, Wilpshire, and Billington.

- 5.65. Policies G3 and G4 outline the scale of development appropriate within existing settlements whilst Policy G5 seeks to restrict residential development proposals outside the main settlement and village boundaries to those which are small scale and/or which meet a number of exceptions i.e. for the purpose of agriculture/forestry workers or provide 100% affordable housing.
- 5.66. RVBC has accepted through appeal decisions and through granting planning permissions for large scale developments outside settlement boundaries, that Policy G5 is out of date.

Environment

- 5.67. Policy ENV3 requires development to be in-keeping with the character of the landscape area and to reflect local vernacular, scale, style, features and building materials. It states:

'Proposals to conserve, renew and enhance landscape features, will be permitted, providing regard has been given for the characteristic landscape features of the area'.

- 5.68. Policies ENV7 and ENV9 require developers to demonstrate whether a proposal will have an adverse effect on protected wildlife species and/or to assess the impacts of a development within or adjacent to a County Biological Heritage Site or other site of local nature conservation importance. There is a presumption in favour of development where it will not significantly harm species or features of interest and Policy ENV10 seeks to secure adequate mitigation where an impact is identified.
- 5.69. Policy ENV13 relates to the protection of existing landscapes, including important landscape features such as hedgerows and individual trees. There is a presumption against development which will harm important landscape features, other than in exceptional circumstances i.e. satisfactory works of mitigation or enhancement would be achieved including rebuilding, replanting and landscape management.
- 5.70. Policy ENV14 seeks to preserve ancient monuments and other nationally important archaeological remains and their settings. The case for preservation will be assessed having regard to the intrinsic importance of the remains which will be weighed against the need for the proposed development.
- 5.71. Policy ENV16 seeks to control development within designated conservation areas. The Whalley Conservation Area has, at its heart, the Abbey and listed railway viaduct, but it has been extended to include Brookes Lane, close to (but not within) the application site. Policy ENV16 notes that the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area will also be a material consideration in deciding, development proposals outside the designated area which would affect its setting or views in to or out of the area.
- 5.72. The impact of the proposal on the setting of the conservation areas was given as a reason for refusing the earlier scheme. For this reason, this application is accompanied by a more detailed Heritage Appraisal which assesses the character and significance of the conservation area and the impact of the proposed development on its setting.
- 5.73. Policy ENV17 requires applications for planning permission within or affecting conservation areas to assess the impact of the proposal on the conservation area.

Housing

- 5.74. Policy H2 relates to development outside of settlement boundaries and, similar to Policy G5 sets out a number of criterion against which proposals will be assessed. In particular, it states:

'residential development will be limited to residential development

specifically intended to meet a proven local need'.

'development should be appropriately sited and landscaped and that scale, design and materials used must reflect the character of the area, and nature of the enterprise'.

- 5.75. Policy H20 relates to the provision of affordable housing associated with proposals outside settlements and on all sites other than infill sites within village boundaries. It seeks to provide 100% affordable housing on such sites in accordance with the exceptions set out in policies G2 and H2. Policy H21 requires all applications for development promoted to meet local needs housing to be accompanied by details of who the accommodation will be expected to accommodate and details of the methods by which the accommodation will be sold or let, managed and retained as suitable for its original purpose.

Open Space

- 5.76. Policy RT8 requires all residential sites over 1 hectare to provide adequate and usable public open space.

Footpaths

- 5.77. Policy RT18 promotes the improvement of public rights of way, bridleways and byways/unsurfaced, unclassified roads and will also seek to ensure the retention and maintenance of by-ways and unsurfaced, unclassified roads as part of the public rights of way network. Policy RT19 sets out a presumption against development that prejudices those footpaths which provide a link between villages and attractive open land and which are heavily used.

Transport

- 5.78. Policy T1 identifies the issues to which the Council will attach considerable weight in considering development proposals including, *inter alia* the availability and adequacy of public transport; the provision made for access by pedestrian, cyclists and those with reduced mobility; proposals which strengthen existing town and village centres and offer a range of everyday community shopping and employment opportunities by protecting and enhancing their vitality and viability; and, proposals which limit parking provision to discourage reliance on the private car.
- 5.79. Policy T7 requires development proposals to provide adequate parking and servicing space.

Draft Core Strategy (September 2012)

- 5.80. Not a part of the statutory development plan, the draft core strategy is a material consideration of only limited weight. In the Draft, key issues and challenges are identified for the Borough. These include high and unaffordable house prices; protection of AONB and Green Belt, employment and the loss of the young population from the Borough.
- 5.81. The Draft sets a vision for the Borough, repeating that in the Sustainable Community Strategy:

'An area with an exceptional environment and quality of life for all, sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres, meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.'

- 5.82. RVBC will seek to achieve the vision through growth, facilitated in a way that balances the need for development with the need to conserve the quality of the environment (paragraph 3.7). The Council recognises that housing choice will have to be widened and the housing market opened up for the younger population which, combined with improved business opportunities, should result in a reduced proportion of the young generation leaving the

Borough to access cheaper and suitable housing and employment opportunities (paragraph 3.8).

- 5.83. One of the strategic objectives set by the Plan is to match the supply of affordable and decent homes in the Borough with the identified housing need. However, the preferred option set out in the Draft, promotes a new strategic site at Standen which, ironically, does not obviously meet the need referred to in the previous sections. This option has received wide criticism and will be subject of debate at the EiP in due course.
- 5.84. Having set out the preferred option of a strategic site in one location, the existing settlements are then apportioned housing growth in relation to their existing size. Again, this approach is flawed and is subject to considerable objection, as apportionment should be informed and influenced by sustainability objectives rather than simply existing scale of development.
- 5.85. Despite all these shortcomings, the Draft does identify housing growth in Whalley and NPPF clearly states that housing requirements should be expressed as a minimum. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and there is a clear need for additional housing in Whalley. This presumption is an accepted position and set out as a Key Statement in the Draft Strategy.
- 5.86. The Council also sets out plans to boost business and employment development and considers Barrow Enterprise Park to be an important employment land resource with potential to provide growth. This site is close to the application site and such opportunities will link well with housing growth at Lawsonsteads in a sustainable manner.

Local Development Framework Evidence Base

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (November 2009)

- 5.87. Local planning authorities are required to demonstrate that they have a five year deliverable supply of housing land. RVBC has undertaken a SHLAA to identify the amount and general locations of land for possible future development in the Borough in order to meet this requirement.
- 5.88. The application site has been promoted through the SHLAA process as part of a wider site area and has been assessed by the Council in terms of its suitability for housing. The site (Ref: 138), referred to as 'Land at Lawsonsteads Farm, Brookes Lane, Whalley' is considered to be available for development in the short term (0-5 years), achievable and deliverable to help meet the Council's five year supply.
- 5.89. The site achieved an overall score of 82 (out of 100), after being assessed against various sustainability criteria. This is one of the highest scoring sites identified in the Borough. A copy of the Council's SHLAA assessment is provided at **Appendix 5**.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (December 2008)

- 5.90. The Council's SHMA provides a comprehensive assessment of the structure and main characteristics of the housing market in the Ribble Valley.
- 5.91. The report concludes that there is a growing requirement to meet the housing needs of existing residents by encouraging the provision of affordable housing, as well as increasing the supply of market housing to meet the demand from a growing population. The needs of the growing elderly population within the Borough are also a key priority which needs to be taken into account when determining new development proposals.
- 5.92. The assessment specifically states that '*affordable units should be prioritised in places such as Whalley...*' and that '*on-site provision of affordable units is desirable and should be the basis of policy*' (Page 101).

Ribble Valley Housing Numbers Review (November 2011)

- 5.93. Due to the impending abolition of the RSS and with it, regional housing targets, RVBC will be responsible for calculating its own housing requirement figures. The Council therefore commissioned Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners (NLP) to undertake a review of the housing land supply position and suggest a revised housing requirement for the Ribble Valley for the plan period 2008-2028.
- 5.94. NLP's findings and recommendations were published for public consultation in November 2011 which suggested a requirement in the order of 190-220 dwellings per annum. This evidence base underpins the Council's current requirement through Draft Key Statement H1 in the Draft Core Strategy, which promotes a requirement for a minimum of 4000 dwellings between 2008 and 2028 at a rate of 200/year.
- 5.95. As CEG and others have set out through representations to the Draft Strategy, 4000 dwellings is a substantial underestimate of the actual requirement and is not reflective of the evidence, which clearly suggests a materially larger figure if the Council's strategic objectives are to be achieved.
- 5.96. The concluding paragraphs of the NLP report recognised that the 4000 figure is lower than the latest CLG household projections and employment-led growth forecasts available at the time of writing *'to reflect realistic build rates of housing and constraints to delivery in the Borough' (paragraph 6.2, point 2).*
- 5.97. NLP further advised that:
- 'any figure that was significantly below this range would be unlikely to allow for the provision of a suitable level of affordable housing in the Borough; nor would it allow the Borough to pursue its economic growth objectives without potentially encouraging unsustainable levels of in-commuting from neighbouring districts.'* (Paragraph 6.2, point 3).
- 5.98. The NLP report was subject to a period of consultation prior to the final housing requirement being agreed by Members for the purpose of progressing the Core Strategy.
- 5.99. On behalf of CEG, a formal response was submitted challenging the approach to the housing numbers review undertaken by NLP. This was underpinned by a report prepared by Justin Gardner Consulting (JGC) (April 2011), commissioned independently by CEG. This response raised a number of serious concerns regarding the methodology, use of datasets etc, and concluded that endorsing a figure in the range of 190 to 220 dpa would not meet objectively assessed housing needs or support retention of a stable economy contrary to draft Key Statement EC1.
- 5.100. Rather, applying the NLP methodology but reflective of the (then) latest ONS population projections, JGC advised that a figure in the order of at least 270 dpa was required (5,400 dwellings overall).
- 5.101. As part of the consultation process, a number of other representations also challenged the findings of the NLP report (including the House Builders Federation and Regeneris Consulting), some of which advocate that the housing target should be as high as 350 dpa (or 7,000 dwellings over the plan period) to achieve economic growth objectives, a point that was acknowledged by the Inspector determining the Henthorn Road, Clitheroe appeal as 'credible and robust'.
- 5.102. As a result of these comments, NLP prepared a formal response in seeking to address some of the technical criticisms of their report and in advance of the Council taking a decision on the overall target for the purpose of advancing the Core Strategy. This was presented to Members of the Planning Committee with an accompanying officer report (dated 2 February 2012) which recommended that Members proceed to endorse a figure of 220 dpa (i.e. at the

higher end of the NLP suggested range).

5.103. That is to say that, having considered the representations of a number of bodies, many of which provided detailed evidence to support their concerns, NLP revised its view and was not supportive of the 200 figure but rather considered that it should be 10% higher.

5.104. Contrary to the evidence of NLP and the advice of officers, Members adopted a figure of 4,000 dwellings with an average of 200 dpa. The minutes of the meeting stated:

'It was felt by committee that NLP offer a robust evidence base with recognition of economic growth and the challenges ahead.'

5.105. Members were fully aware that the advice of NLP was to endorse a figure of 220 dpa. Nevertheless, the exact resolution taken from the minutes of the meeting was as follows:

'That Committee agree for the purpose of the Core Strategy that the housing requirement is set at the middle of the range advised by the Council's consultants, namely 4000 dwellings during the plan period (200 dwellings per annum) and that provision for a formal review to be undertaken within five years or less of adoption of the Core Strategy be included in the proposals'.

Summary

- 5.106. The NPPF is centred on a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Statutory Planning Policy requires local planning authorities to identify a five year supply of housing land, with either a 5% or 20% buffer, depending on how poorly a Council has performed in recent years in delivering houses. As a poor performing authority in these terms, RVBC has accepted that it has to apply a 20% buffer.
- 5.107. Due consideration has been paid to the relevant policies contained within the soon-to-be abolished RSS, and the saved policies contained within the District wide local plan.
- 5.108. The emerging Core Strategy identifies the direction of travel for the Borough, which identifies Whalley as a Key Service Centre and thus, a suitable location for new housing. The overall housing required to be delivered over the plan period has been under estimated, as set out above and its apportionment does not currently reflect a sound evidence base.
- 5.109. In any event, there is not currently a demonstrable five year supply of housing and there is a pressing need to deliver more open market and affordable homes in sustainable locations.
- 5.110. This application is for housing that will help meet the identified need in a location that has already been accepted as sustainable, through the granting of permission on a part of the site and through the Council's SHLAA, which identifies it as one of the most sustainable sites in the Borough.
- 5.111. The application site is not in a particularly sensitive location compared to many areas of the Borough. It is not in the Green Belt, nor in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or a Site of Specific Scientific Interest, and therefore the application accords at all levels.
- 5.112. As set out in the Design & Access Statement, the development can be readily accommodated with due consideration to the existing surrounding properties; views into and out of the nearby Conservation Area and from across the valley.

6. The Benefits of the Proposed Development

- 6.1. The NPPF sets a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraphs 14 and 197). Paragraph 7 sets out three dimensions to sustainable development, having an economic, social and environmental role.
- 6.2. RVBC has not got a demonstrable five year housing land supply. As such its Development Plan policies are out of date and, in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, permission should be granted for the proposed development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would “*significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits*” when assessed against the policies in the framework.
- 6.3. There are a great many benefits arising from this proposed development as set out below against the three dimensions to sustainable development described in the NPPF.

Economic Role

Investment into the Local Economy

- 6.4. The NPPF sets out that the planning system should contribute to building a strong, responsible and competitive economy (paragraph 7). The application, through providing open market and affordable housing, will introduce a new economically active population to Whalley that will provide a positive injection of capital into the local economy, helping support local jobs, services and facilities.
- 6.5. The latest family spending survey published by the Office for National Statistics in 2011 provides data for the 2010 calendar year on household expenditure. It shows that the average weekly household expenditure in the north west region during 2010 was £430.50. the survey also shows that, on average, each household in the north west spends £49.90 per week on housing costs. Since this spending typically goes to major national institutions with only modest impact on the local economy, this analysis deducts spending on housing from average weekly household expenditure.
- 6.6. This means that, during 2010 (net) average weekly household expenditure in the north west region was £380.60 which is equivalent to an annual figure of £19,791.20 in 2010 prices. Assuming that VAT of 17.5% (the prevailing rate in 2010) had been paid on all of this spending, the average annual household expenditure (net of indirect taxation and housing costs) was £16,848.68 for the north west region during 2010.
- 6.7. Based on the assumptions set out above, it is estimated that the gross additional household expenditure generated by the application scheme would be £4,380,657 per annum at 2010 prices. This assumes that the scheme's 260 residential units are fully occupied and that residents demonstrate spending patterns that reflect averages for the region as a whole.
- 6.8. This additional household expenditure of £4.38m is a gross effect. Not all will be spent in the local area but, even if 25% were assumed to leak out of the local area, the net additional household expenditure generated by the development in the local economy would be in the order of £3.29m per annum at 2010 prices.

Construction Jobs

- 6.9. The residential development proposed also represents a significant construction project which will generate turnover and employment for construction firms and a range of related trades. It is possible to quantify the construction and employment benefits of the proposed development based on an estimation of construction cost for the project.

- 6.10. The most recent data from the Annual Business Survey published in July 2012 reveals that total turnover in the construction sector (buildings) during 2010 was £182,647m. The average number of people employed in construction during 2010 was 1.382m, meaning that the average turnover per full time equivalent construction job in 2010 was £132,161.
- 6.11. Using a construction cost estimate of £34m and the average turnover per full time equivalent construction job in 2010 of £132,161, we estimate that the development will generate 257 person years of temporary construction jobs.
- 6.12. The standard convention in economic impact assessment is that 10 person years of construction employment equate to one full time equivalent post in the construction sector. This means that the construction of the scheme alone will support the equivalent of around 26 permanent construction jobs.
- 6.13. In addition, in economic impact terms, the scheme will provide young people with training and practical experience in a range of construction and engineering trades which is a further positive aspect and economic benefit of the proposal.

New Homes Bonus

- 6.14. In addition to the additional spend in the local economy and the benefits of the construction work generated by the development, the scheme will also deliver significant funds for the Council through the new homes bonus. Based on 260 dwellings with 30% affordable units, the scheme will generate approximately £2.5m in new homes bonus payments over a six year period. Such funds should be available for the Council to invest in local improvements in Whalley.
- 6.15. In addition to this significant financial benefit, the development will also generate additional Council Tax returns. Assuming these were Band D (£1,439 at 2010/11 prices), the development would generate Council Tax revenue of £374,000 per annum.
- 6.16. Overall, in economic terms, therefore, the proposed development has a significant number of benefits relating to capital expenditure, inward investment, job creation and financial revenue to the local Council.

Social Role

- 6.17. There is a well-documented national requirement for new housing and there is also demonstrable and accepted requirements for additional housing in the Ribble Valley. The RVBC document "Addressing Housing Need in Ribble Valley" (June 2011) states that *"Everyone living in the Ribble Valley should have the opportunity of decent and affordable homes."*
- 6.18. There is a clear and pressing need and demand for both affordable and market homes in this location.
- 6.19. The Housing Need Report notes that a corporate ambition of the Council is to match the supply of homes in the area with the identified housing need. A key priority of this and the Sustainable Community Strategy from 2007-2013 Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy is to maximise the supply of appropriate affordable housing.
- 6.20. A significant social benefit of the application, therefore, is that it will include a mix of up to 182 open market and up to 78 new affordable homes to help meet the identified need. It is proposed that the affordable dwellings would be built to lifetime homes standard.
- 6.21. The range, type and quality of residential accommodation proposed by this development is also well located in close proximity to the centre of Whalley, a key service centre which offers a wide range of local shops, services and other facilities. Ready access to public transport including buses and the train station; adjacent cycle routes and easy walking

access to the surrounding countryside, help encourage a healthy lifestyle for the future residents which is a further social benefit of the proposed development in this particular location.

- 6.22. Residents will have easy access to the countryside through the enhancement of the existing public rights of way, a further social benefit.

An Environmental Role

- 6.23. The NPPF sets out, amongst its core planning principles at paragraph 17, that planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes and businesses that the Country needs, and that such development should seek to contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. It sets out that allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value.
- 6.24. The application site forms a sustainable extension to Whalley, an identified key service centre within the Ribble Valley. The Council accepts that Whalley will need to accommodate additional residential development and proposes 375 dwellings over the plan period in the draft Core Strategy (May 2012). That figure is being challenged by a number of objectors who believe that Whalley can and should accommodate additional growth in a sustainable manner that will help underpin its role as a key service centre and boost the local economy.
- 6.25. Being located immediately adjacent to the centre of Whalley, the proposal will minimise the need to use the private car as Whalley's shops and services are all within easy walking distance.
- 6.26. It is also within easy walking distance of the railway station and bus stations which provide sustainable public transport routes to Clitheroe, Manchester and the wider area.
- 6.27. Although the site is currently undeveloped, the agricultural land quality has been assessed and concludes that it is of mostly poor environmental quality (Grade Four).
- 6.28. Much of the Ribble Valley is designated either as green belt or as an area of outstanding natural beauty. Other areas within the Valley itself are constrained by flood risk and are remote from public transport hubs. The application site, therefore, represents an opportunity to accommodate new residential development in a sustainable manner that has far less negative impacts on the environment than other more sensitive sites which are less accessible to key service centres and their facilities.
- 6.29. Development on the site will change the character of this part of Whalley. It will change the transition from the existing urban area to the rural area as you walk out of Whalley along the public right of way through the site. It will also be visible from across the Valley on the Nab.
- 6.30. These issues are addressed in the Design and Access Statement and the Visual Impact Assessment submitted with the application. In addition, the setting of the Whalley Conservation Area and the significance of any impact on that setting is addressed in the Heritage Appraisal submitted with this application.
- 6.31. The application seeks to retain landscape features on the site including additional planting to increase the belt of landscape trees adjacent to the public right of way. The illustrative layout plan and parameters plan identify how a significant green swathe will be retained through the site and the development has been pulled back from the north east corner, which is the most visible element when seen across the Valley.
- 6.32. The parameters plan identifies how 4.48ha of open space will be retained within the development site through a network of green open space which provides potential to deliver dedicated and informal playing facilities.

- 6.33. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 as defined in the NPPF. Weetwood Environmental Engineering has prepared a Flood Risk Assessment which is submitted in support of the application. The site has not been identified as being at risk of flooding for ground water, fluvial, sewer or highway sources.
- 6.34. With regard to surface water drainage, discharges from the site will be limited to the existing mean annual greenfield run off rate up to one in 100 year event including an allowance for climate change, in accordance with the NPPF. Prior to development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface water drainage system shall be prepared.
- 6.35. In respect of renewable energy, a statement has been prepared by WSP which outlines the estimated energy demands of the site and how 10% of the estimated requirement might be met on site both through building techniques and incorporation of a range of renewable energy measures

Proposed Link Road

- 6.36. The Transport Assessment sets out the benefits of development of the Lawsonsteads site in traffic and transport terms, in particular, associated with a new through route providing a direct route between Clitheroe Road and the A671.
- 6.37. This proposed road would not only act as a local distributor road for the Lawsonsteads development but also provide an alternative route for vehicles currently travelling through the centre of Whalley via King Street, reducing two way traffic movements during the peak periods. It would also serve to reduce the two way traffic movements along Wiswell Lane during peak periods, a further environmental benefit.
- 6.38. A reduction in through traffic along King Street would also improve the operating conditions that currently exist at peak times on this route. Therefore, the implementation of this link road alongside the introduction and enforcement of parking restrictions along King Street, would help address issues of congestion at peak times.
- 6.39. The Transport Statement demonstrates that any traffic relief that can be provided to the local network would be beneficial to the overall traffic conditions within Whalley and the Lawsonsteads site is the only site that offers real potential to provide traffic relief for Wiswell Lane and King Street. It has the potential to reduce 24-35% of trips in the morning peak from Accrington Road and King Street, and in the order of 25% to 37% reduction of trips in the evening peak. This diversion of traffic will provide considerable benefits to the centre of Whalley.
- 6.40. This is a significant benefit that is unique to the Lawsonsteads site and one that is in support of a greater level of housing development in Whalley in this location.
- 6.41. The principle of the creation of a new junction onto the A671 has previously been discussed between the applicant and the local Highways Authority and a highways design agreed in principle. This is a deliverable proposal that would deliver a significant strategic benefit to Whalley in traffic terms.

New Primary School

- 6.42. There is currently a lack of capacity at existing schools in Whalley to accommodate additional pupils at primary level. As a result, Lancashire County Council as education authority has been seeking financial contributions to provide new school places associated with new developments.
- 6.43. The Lawsonsteads site could accommodate a new primary school and is well located in terms of proximity to the centre of Whalley. This application seeks approval for a primary school and is a further benefit of this site that would address a recognised need.

Summary

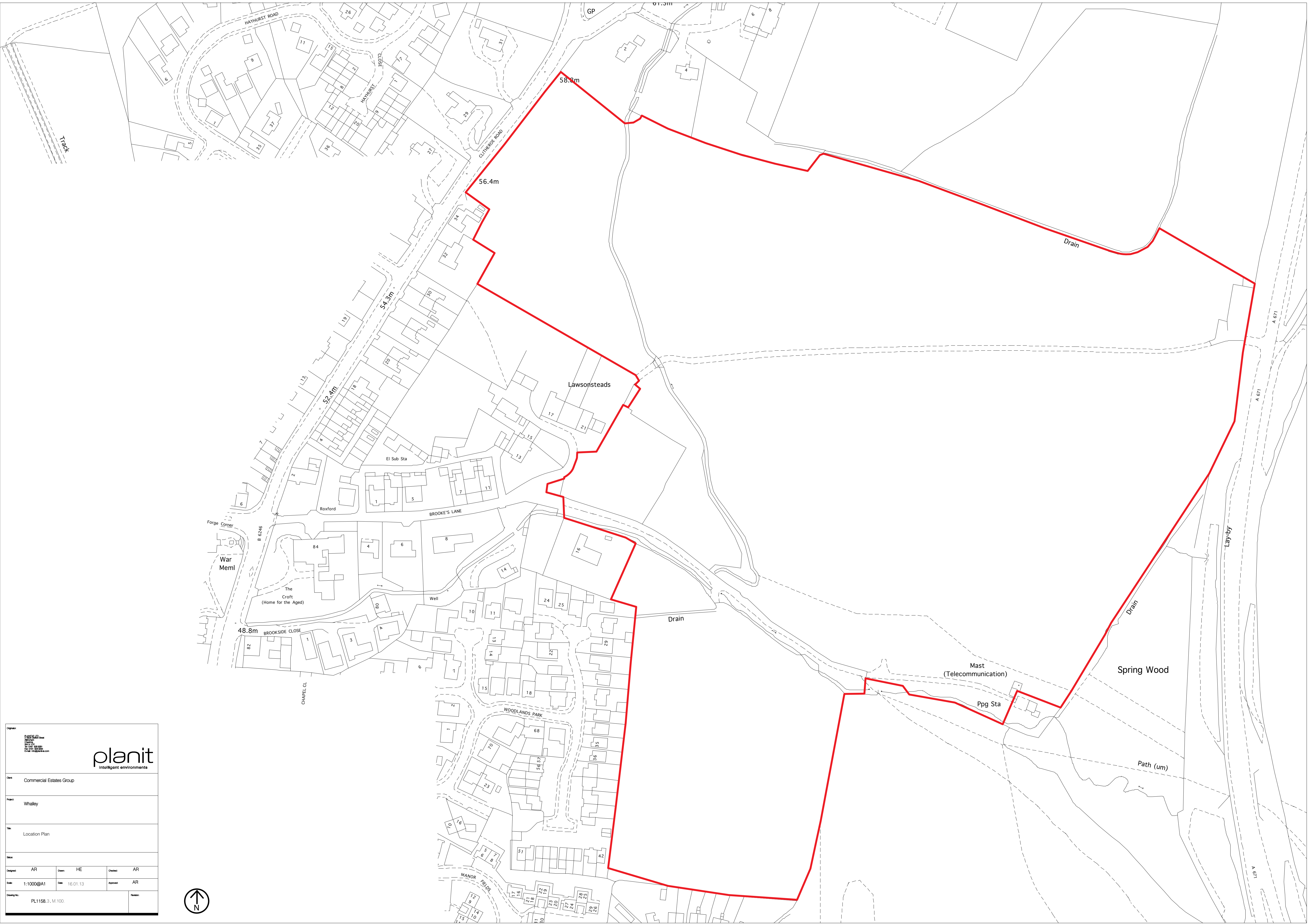
- 6.44. Overall, therefore, the application will deliver a significant number of benefits and is clearly sustainable in the terms of the NPPF paragraph 7.
- 6.45. In accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, given that the statutory Development Plan is out of date, permission for the development should be granted unless there are “*significant and demonstrable*” impacts that outweigh the benefits.
- 6.46. There are no such impacts that outweigh the benefits set out above or the clear presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.47. The reasons for refusal relating to the previous application proposals are fully addressed through the submission documents particularly in the Design and Access Statement; the Heritage Appraisal and the Transport Assessment.
- 6.48. In conclusion, there is no significant or demonstrable reason which would outweigh the clear benefits of granting approval.

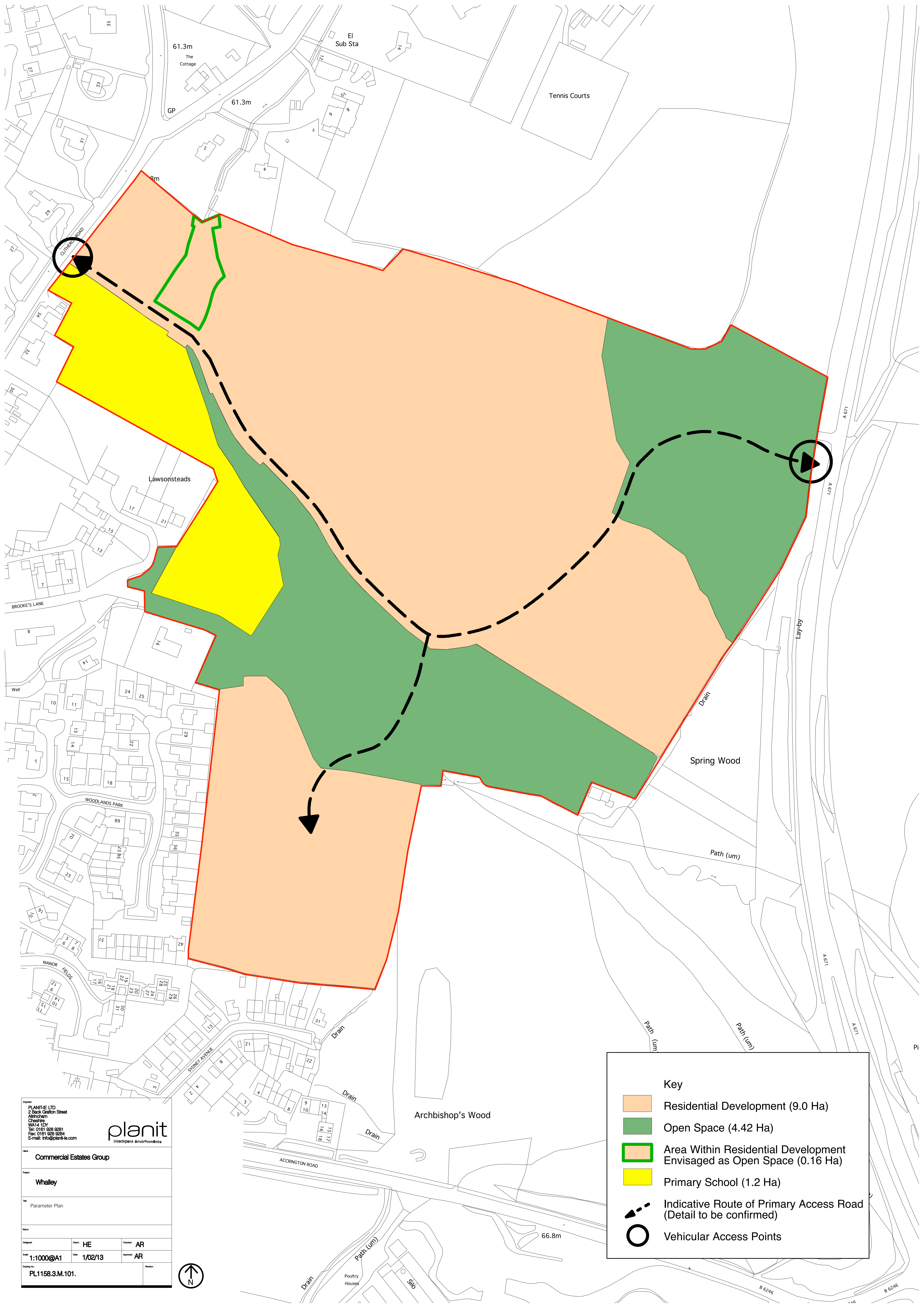
7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The proposed development accords with local, regional and national planning policy and will provide a sustainable residential extension to the village of Whalley.
- 7.2. This Statement has set out the considerable benefits of a residential led development in economic, environment and social terms. It represents sustainable development for which there is a presumption in favour of approving.
- 7.3. In addition, the supporting documentation addresses other concerns raised through previous applications and consultation with local residents. In concluding, we draw attention to two further benefits that can be achieved through approval of this application.
- 7.4. There are a great many benefits that would arise from new housing development at the Lawsonsteads site including:
 - New homes to enable more people to move into the area who might otherwise be priced out of the local market due to lack of supply;
 - New affordable homes to address local affordable housing requirements in Whalley in accordance with paragraph 47 of the NPPF;
 - A site well located to make best use of existing services, facilities and public transport linkages;
 - A new hill road that would significantly reduce traffic at peak times on Accrington Road and Kings street;
 - Land and permission for a new one form entry primary school;
 - A boost in household expenditure supporting the local rural economy and helping ensure future vitality and viability of existing services and facilities within the settlement, in accordance with paragraph 28 of the NPPF. This would result in spin-off benefits for adjoining smaller settlements in so far as the continued provision of services within close proximity;
 - Helping promote healthy communities through integration with the existing community hub at the key service centre which accords with paragraph 70 of the NPPF;
 - 260 new homes and a primary school would have an estimated construction value of circa £34m, equating to approximately 257 person years of temporary construction employment, or approximately 26 permanent construction jobs as a result of the investment;
 - It would generate net additional expenditure of £4.38m per year into the local economy;
 - It would raise a new homes bonus payment of approximately £2.5m over a six year period; and
 - It would also encourage further investment in existing infrastructure in the longer term.
- 7.5. The NPPF sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The evidence of the Council and that prepared on behalf of the applicant unequivocally supports the promotion of additional housing in Whalley. The application is identified as one of two key growth locations that should be brought forward. The Lawsonsteads site can offer two strategy

benefits through delivery of a new link road to help relieve traffic and congestion in the centre of the settlement and delivery of a site for new one form entry primary school.

- 7.6. Overall, therefore, the application should be fully supported and planning permission granted in accordance with national planning policy.





Originator

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Client

Commercial Estates Group

Project

Whalley

Title

Parameter Plan

Status

Designed

HE

Checked

AR

Scale

1:1000@A1

Date

1/02/13

Approved

AR

Drawing No.

PL1158.3.M.101.

Revision

planit

intelligent environments

Key

Residential Development (9.0 Ha)

Open Space (4.42 Ha)

Area Within Residential Development Envisaged as Open Space (0.16 Ha)

Primary School (1.2 Ha)

Indicative Route of Primary Access Road (Detail to be confirmed)

Vehicular Access Points



Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

FAO: Ms Sarah Westwood

26 October 2010

By email and post
sarah.westwood@ribblevalley.gov.uk
Our ref. SW/BD/192137

Dear Sirs

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (As Amended)

Proposed development at land east of Clitheroe Road, Whalley

We write on behalf of CEG Strategic Land Limited c/o Commercial Estates Group (CEG) and in accordance with the terms of Regulation 5 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 1999 (As Amended), to request an EIA Screening Opinion from Ribble Valley Borough Council (herein referred to as the "Council") with regard to proposals for the above site.

In accordance with Regulation 5 (2), this request is accompanied by a site location plan and a brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and its possible effects on the environment. The following sections of this letter conclude that an EIA and preparation of an Environmental Statement, is not required.

Site Location

The site is approximately 14.6 Hectares (Ha) in size and located to the east of Clitheroe Road adjacent to the settlement boundary of Whalley (see enclosed Site Location Plan). The site is 'L' shaped and is bounded by Oakhill College to the north; the A671 and Spring Wood to the east; Archbishops Wood to the south east; and, existing residential development to the south and west.

The site has direct frontage onto Clitheroe Road (B6246) providing access between the site, the centre of Whalley and other settlement areas. Given its location; surrounding land uses; and, proximity to existing residential development and services and facilities within Whalley, it forms a suitable extension to the settlement boundary.

Existing Conditions

The site comprises primarily improved pasture fields which incorporate a number of individual and group Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and grassland. The land slopes down to the west.

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**Also in London, Leeds
and Dublin**

The site has two access points. The principle access is taken from Clitheroe Road and is suitable for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle movements. A secondary access is also available from Brookes Lane, however, this is limited to pedestrian and cycle movements only.

In addition, the site also contains a Public Right of Way (Ref: FP29) which crosses the site from the west to the south east. This provides links to further routes, namely FP30 along Brookes Lane and FP28 and FP31 south of Spring Wood, however, these three routes sit outside of the application site.

Proposed Development

Further to consideration of this Screening Request by the Council, it is intended that a planning application seeking outline planning permission for a residential led development will be submitted. This will include provision of up to 300 residential units, a nursing home (50 bed spaces) and a 1 Form Entry Primary School with associated access, car parking, landscaping (both hard and soft and including retention of existing footpath links) and open space.

The application will provide details of access, with all other matters reserved.

In order to inform the process of EIA Screening, the scheme is based on a number of parameters i.e. quantum of development, building heights and development zones.

Based on these parameters, effective mitigation is proposed to ensure no unacceptable impacts on the surrounding area. This includes the use of significant landscape screening at the perimeter of the site and use of the sites topography.

EIA Screening

The proposed development falls within Class 10 (b) (Urban Development Projects) of Schedule 2 of the 1999 EIA Regulations and as the site exceeds the (0.5 Ha) specified threshold.

In order to identify, in broad terms, the type or scale of Schedule 2 development which is likely to be a candidate for EIA and, conversely, an indication of the sort of development for which EIA is unlikely to be necessary, Annex A of Circular 02/1999 lists criteria to assist the screening process. This is only guidance, and the Circular makes it clear that there is no presumption in favour of an EIA being required should developments either fall below or exceed these thresholds (paragraph 44, Circular 02/1999).

With regard to Schedule 2, Class 10 (b), paragraph A.19. the Circular advises:

“Development proposed for sites which have not previously been intensively developed are more likely to require EIA if:

- *the site area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or*

- *it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m2 of new commercial floorspace; or*
- *the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings)".*

In accordance with the EIA Regulations (1999) and Circular 02/1999, for all Schedule 2 development the local planning authority must determine whether or not an EIA is required. In making this determination, the local planning authority must take into account the relevant 'Selection Criteria' identified in Schedule 3 of the Regulations.

We have assessed the proposals against these criteria and conclude that whilst the site exceeds the 5 Ha threshold, the proposed development will not have a significant environmental impact on the local area, and thus will not require an EIA.

In reaching this conclusion, the following sections of this letter set out our analysis of the proposals against the requirements of Schedule 3, having regard to the following:

1. Characteristics of development;
2. Location of development; and
3. Characteristics of the potential impact.

Characteristics of Development

Size of development

As stated above, the site comprises 14.6 Ha of greenfield land adjacent to the settlement area of Whalley. The proposed development is for provision of up to 300 residential units, a nursing home (50 bed spaces) and a new 1 Form Entry Primary School. The proposal can be suitably accommodated within the site.

Accumulation with other developments

The Co-operative (Estates) has recently submitted an application for residential development (up to 85 units) relating to land north of Riddings Lane, Whalley. An EIA Screening Request was submitted to the Council (dated 3 September 2010) and subsequently determined, with the Council concluding that an EIA is not required.

Given the limited nature and scale of the Co-operative (Estates) proposal, the accumulation of this development (85 units) and that to which this Screening Request relates (300 units) does not exceed the 1,000 dwelling threshold identified at A.19. Annex A of Circular 02/1999.

Use of natural resources

The scheme has evolved utilising the principles of passive solar gain. It will be developed to high quality modern standards and will, if feasible, include on-site renewable energy resources. Furthermore, all buildings will be constructed in accordance with prevailing building regulations. The proposed development will not result in the use of natural resources that are considered to be in short supply.

Production of waste

The production of waste will be dealt with through regular collection by a suitable contractor (likely to be provided by Lancashire County Council) and future residents will be encouraged to recycle in line with existing Council wide objectives and arrangements. In this regard, the production of waste is not sufficient or of a particular significance for the purpose of EIA.

Pollution and nuisances

The proposal will result in an increase in traffic from the site, however, the development can be accommodated within the existing local highway network. Additionally, the layout, design and proximity of public transport facilities will seek to encourage travel other than by private car. Discussions with Lancashire County Council are ongoing regarding travel and transport matters, with the application to be accompanied by a full Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan.

As a result of increased development traffic, there will be some increased noise and air quality impacts, however, these are likely to be of limited significance when assessed against existing background noise levels. The site is not identified within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and is therefore not sensitive in terms of air quality.

During construction of the proposed development, measures will be adopted to minimise dust generation that might give rise to dust nuisance for existing local residents and businesses.

Full and robust assessments relating to noise and air quality will provide further clarification and evidence in respect of these issues. In addition, it is proposed that the application will be accompanied by a full assessment of the proposals with regard to nature conservation and biodiversity; drainage/flooding; foul sewage/utilities; archaeology/historic environment; and, landscape and visual impact.

In summary, it is considered that there is no likelihood of significant pollution or nuisance impacts arising from the development sufficient to require that an EIA is undertaken.

Risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used

The proposal is for a residential led development including provision of a new primary school, the nature of which is not likely to lead to an increase in accidents. It is not considered that an EIA is required on this basis.

Location of Development

Schedule 3 advises that the environmental sensitivity of the area will be determined having regard to the following matters:

- The existing land use;
- The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area; and
- The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to areas such as nature reserves and parks, protected wildlife habitats and landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

Existing land use

The site sits outside but adjacent to the settlement boundary of Whalley and comprises primarily improved pasture fields. Other habitats include streams, riparian woodland, broad-leaved woodland, mature/veteran trees (including a number of individual and group Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)) and grassland.

An initial Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken which has confirmed the presence of bats on site, however, there do not appear to be any other European Protected Species present. The implications of the ecological survey have been taken into consideration in masterplanning the site, in particular, with regard to an indicative landscape strategy utilising existing features on site and maximising opportunities for ecological enhancement.

As set out above, the application will be accompanied by a full assessment of ecological and landscape features on site and provide opportunities for preservation and enhancement through the development.

The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area

The Council is currently preparing its Local Development Framework (LDF) and a draft Core Strategy Issues and Options paper was published for consultation in August 2010. This highlights the need for the Council to consider the release of greenfield sites for development in meeting future housing needs, and in broad terms, identifies this site as one of two potential 'Areas of Search' in Whalley.

This approach is underpinned by the Council's assessment of the site's suitability for housing in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

(2008) which identifies it for development in the short term (0-5 years).

Whilst neither of these documents represents the Council's support for its development, they confirm the site as an opportunity for meeting future housing needs. Given the scale of greenfield land surrounding Whalley and within the wider area, the development proposals will not impact significantly on the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the Ribble Valley.

Absorption capacity

In accordance with the Regulations and Circular 02/1999, the site itself does not form part of any 'sensitive area' as defined at paragraphs 36 and 37 of the Circular.

However, the site sits approximately 2km from the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), but given the distance between the AONB and the site and presence of existing built development in the intervening distance, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated on the AONB.

There are no designated heritage assets within the site.

There are, however, four designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) within 2km of the site, as follows:

- Three high crosses in St Mary's Churchyard;
- Whalley Cistercian Abbey;
- Portfield Hillfort; and
- Whalley Bridge.

The significance of the setting of these scheduled monuments is not likely to be impacted on as they are not intervisible with the site.

The National Monuments Record (NMR) and the Lancashire Historic Environment Record (LHER) were also consulted to ascertain other designated heritage assets of relevance to the application. In total, there are 31 heritage assets listed by the NMR within 1km of the site. Of these there is likely to be an impact on the setting of two which are intervisible with the site. Details of these are set out below.

The Whalley Conservation Area is located to the south-west of the site and includes properties on Clitheroe Road and Lawsonsteads. The character of the conservation area is based on a small town, with tightly-packed narrow streets and lanes with a predominance of historic buildings. Important views are identified and there are none toward the site, the nearest being a view north along King Street. Any impacts on the Conservation Area will be fully considered in design terms as part of the application.

The site contains no known undesignated heritage assets. A Roman and a medieval coin have previously been found at the site.

It is therefore clear that this particular area does retain some potential for heritage assets from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. However, as described the site does not fall within a 'sensitive area' for the purposes of EIA. The application will be accompanied by an assessment of specific heritage assets, where necessary.

As such, it is considered that on the whole, the site does not contain any areas of significant sensitivity to warrant EIA in land use terms.

Characteristics of the potential impact

Schedule 3 further advises that the potential significant effects of the development must be considered in relation to those matters raised above and having regard, in particular, to the following:

- The extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population);
- The transfrontier nature of the impact;
- The magnitude and complexity of the impact;
- The probability of the impact; and
- The duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.

The extent of the impact of the proposed development is localised due to the nature and characteristics of the end use, and can be satisfactorily mitigated against.

Good construction and site operations will ensure minimal effects to the local environment, particularly residents, whilst its temporary nature will be offset by the significant benefits development will deliver. Effects will be mainly limited and local in nature.

The magnitude and complexity of the impacts are also minimal due to the type of development proposed. There will be some impact in terms of additional traffic generation but these are still minor as the existing wider and strategic highway network is capable of absorbing the additional traffic. There will also be some landscape and ecological impacts, however, appropriate mitigation will be provided resulting in enhancement to the existing environment. These factors will be addressed through relevant assessments submitted in support of the application.

The probability of the impacts is known, understood and quantifiable due to the type of development proposed. Residential and education development are relatively benign uses with little impact on the environment in this instance.

Conclusions

The site is large enough to accommodate the proposed development. The scheme will be constructed to high quality modern standards and include appropriate mitigation measures, where appropriate, to ensure that any identified impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.

Having considered the scope of environmental issues associated with development of the site and its relative low sensitivity, no impacts have been identified that are so significant to require an EIA to be undertaken.

The proposals represent an appropriate use of the site given surrounding land uses and the wider settlement area of Whalley. Furthermore, the site is located an adequate distance away from any environmentally sensitive areas as defined in the Regulations.

The proposed development will actually provide a significant number of positive impacts, including the provision of much needed family housing and affordable homes and new education provision, to meet requirements and ensure the sustainability of existing services and facilities in Whalley.

The information outlined above and enclosed with this letter is sufficient for the Council to assess the impact of the proposed development and to confirm that it is not EIA Development. In accordance with Regulation 7 (3) we await notification of the Council's Screening Opinion within three weeks of the date of receipt of this request (16 November 2010).

Without prejudice, in the unlikely event that the Council determines that the proposed development is EIA development, then we request a Scoping Opinion from the Council which clearly sets out, in writing, the Council's opinion as to scope of information that should be provided in an Environmental Statement. In accordance with Regulation 10 (5) this should be provided within 5 weeks of the Council adopting a Screening Opinion.

We trust that the enclosed is to your satisfaction, however, should you require any further information in support of this matter then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully



Sarah Williams

Enc: Site Location Plan

cc: Ms C Hirst, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Commercial Estates Group



RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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date: 11 November 2010

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Dear Ms Williams

RE: REQUEST FOR A SCREENING OPINION UNDER THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1999: REGULATION 5
PROPOSAL: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 300 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, A NURSING HOME (50 BED SPACES) AND A 1 FORM ENTRY PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING (BOTH HARD AND SOFT AND INCLUDING RETENTION OF EXISTING FOOTPATH LINKS) AND OPEN SPACE
LOCATION: LAND EAST OF CLITHEROE ROAD, WHALLEY

I write following your letter dated 26 October 2010 requesting a screening opinion to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required for the development of the land as outlined above.

Having regard to the information submitted, I can confirm that the Local Planning Authority is of the opinion that the proposal falls within Part 10(b) of Schedule 2 "Infrastructure Projects" of the Regulations and exceeds the threshold of 0.5 hectare

As per your request the Local Planning Authority carried out a full screening opinion to ascertain whether there is a need for an Environmental Impact Assessment and has concluded that it will not be necessary in this instance.

Yours sincerely

SARAH WESTWOOD
SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER

Ms S Williams
Indigo Planning Ltd
Lowry House
17 Marble Street
MANCHESTER
M2 3AW

SW11-11

STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT 2008

Site Details

Site Ref: 138
 Site Location: Land at Lawsonsteads Farm, Brookes Lane
 Town/Village: Whalley
 Current Land Use: Field
 Neighbouring Use: Residential and school and A682
 Visual Prominance: Prominent due to slope of site
 In Operational Employment Use: No
 Green/Brown field: Greenfield

Suggested By...

Name: Gary Hoerty Associates.

Potential Capacity: 583.6
 Gross Area (Ha.): 14.59
 Net Area (Ha.): 14.59

Availability	Achievability	Deliverability
Site Availability: 0 - 5 Years	Is the Site Achievable: Yes	Is the Site Deliverable: INCLUDED IN 5-YEAR SUPPLY
Is the Site Available: Yes		

Availability Comments: The site is either unregistered or has one registered owner and is therefore available

Achievability Comments: There is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site.

Sustainability Scoring Criteria

S1. Main Development Location:	3	S12. Within Conservation Area:	6
S2. Previously Developed:	5	S13. Impact on Listed Building/Setting:	5
S3. Covered by Essential Open Space:	5	S14. Impact on Scheduled Ancient Monument or Setting:	5
S4. Lead to Loss of Employment Land:	1	S15. In Archaeological Hazard Area:	5
S5. Car Parking at Minimum Level:	5	S16. Site Contains a TPO:	1
S6. Is Majority in Green Belt:	5	S17. Nature Conservation Area:	3
S7. Suitable Infrastructure:	5	S18. Development Adversely Impacts on Surrounding Uses:	3
S8. Can Infrastructure be Adapted:	5	S19. Any Bad Neighbour Land Uses:	3
S9. Within Landfill Consultation Zone:	5	S20. Consultation Zone for High Pressure Pipelines:	5
S10. Constrained by Topography:	3		
S11. Risk of River Flooding:	5		
S21. Other Constraints:	Path&Hawswater aqueduct through site, main rd at top of site&Oakhill college		Final Criteria Score: 82

Has the Site been Exclud No

Reason for Exclusion N/A

Any other Comments: Derelict farm so pot job loss, part of site already serviced TPO No 1 1957 & TPO No 3 1962 adj to site.



Site 138 Land at Lawsonsteads Farm, Brookes Lane, Whalley