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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1. Executive Summary

1.1. This outline planning application is for a residential mixed use scheme comprising a mix of housing including family and affordable homes and a nursing home. The proposals have been prepared and submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) on behalf of Commercial Estates Group (CEG).

1.2. The statutory development plan, comprising RSS and the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan, identifies the need for 2,900 homes in the borough between 2003 and 2012 (at an average rate of 161 dwellings per annum). More recently, following the Council's review of housing numbers, Members endorsed a higher requirement of 4,000 dwellings between 2008 and 2028, which equates to an average annual requirement of 200 dwellings going forwards. This forms the basis of the Council's emerging Core Strategy Publication Core Strategy paper due to be published for consultation next week.

1.3. Recently-published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply.

1.4. Based on the adopted RSS, the council is currently only able to demonstrate a 3.3 year forward housing supply and is in the process of identifying land for more housing delivery in the short and medium term. This actually diminishes to 2.8 years based on the proposed revised housing target of 200 dwellings per annum, and even less if the NPPF's additional 20% is reasonably factored in.

1.5. The UK is currently emerging from a deep recession in which housing delivery has been further hit. The difficulty of securing a mortgage has exacerbated the housing crisis and there is a pressing need for housing delivery, in particular, family housing and affordable homes.

1.6. The Coalition Government is responding through changes that are very much focused on seeking to drive economic recovery. The house building sector is a key part of this and the New Homes Bonus arrangement will ensure that local communities benefit from new development.

1.7. In the Ribble Valley, the most sustainable locations for housing growth are the Key Service Centres which have the best transport links and availability of shops and other local services. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identifies the application site and scores it highly as a suitable site for new housing in this context.

1.8. Elsewhere, the Borough is further constrained by its environment, with large areas of the Borough designated as either Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or Green Belt. Therefore, the best place to achieve sustainable growth is in the less sensitive areas, close to facilities in the Key Service Centres, including Whalley. The Government has introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

1.9. A key part of the Council's vision, as set out in the emerging Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), is the support of vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres, meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. For this to be achieved and sustained, the service centres need investment and to be targets for growth to meet identified local needs. New development in Whalley will help underpin the village as a Key Service Centre.

1.10. The site is located within a short distance of the village centre of Whalley, with good access to services, facilities and public transport.

1.11. The proposed scheme will deliver much needed housing and help address the needs of the Borough and Whalley itself. It will contribute towards the Council's emerging overall target of provision of 200 dwellings per annum and provide a mix of housing, including 30% affordable homes, to help address local housing needs. The provision of a nursing home will also help address the needs of a growing elderly population and provide local jobs.

1.12. Throughout the UK local residents are expressing concern about development in their communities. Particularly in rural areas, Councils have to make important decisions that balance local feeling in some parts of the community with the needs of the wider Borough in order to meet a growing population.

1.13. In Whalley, many local residents are very vocal in their objections to new housing, however, this development can be achieved in a sensitive manner and deliver significant benefits for the wider community.

1.14. There are strong technical planning reasons why the application should be approved with a number of significant material considerations which weigh heavily in favour of the development. Furthermore, local opposition to a scheme is not, in itself, a material planning consideration, unless concern is based on evidence which constitutes a valid planning reason as to why the development is not acceptable.

1.15. The proposed development represents a high quality scheme that can be delivered to help meet future housing needs in Whalley and which will have a number of significant benefits including:

- Provision of high quality residential development on a sustainable greenfield site;
- Help meet the Council's housing requirements in the short and medium term;
- Deliver a range of sizes and types of housing including family homes;
- 30% affordable housing comprising a mix of unit sizes and tenures;
- Provision of a nursing home to help address the requirements of a growing elderly population;
- Deliver new jobs in Whalley from the nursing home;
- Provision of new public open space comprising a mix of formal open space provision and additional landscaping;
- Promotion of sustainable development making use of and investing in existing services and facilities; and
- Help secure investment, new residents and development to underpin and strengthen Whalley's future role as a Key Service Centre.

2. Introduction

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.

2.2. The proposal is for a residential mixed use development comprising up to 55 new dwellings (Use Class C3); 50 bed space nursing home (Use Class C2); car parking; open space; and ancillary landscaping. The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved for future determination.

2.3. This Statement is to be read alongside a number of other supporting documents, including:

- Design and Access Statement (Planit);
- Statement of Community Involvement (Indigo Planning);
- Transport Assessment (Bryan G Hall);
- Framework Travel Plan (Bryan G Hall);
- Flood Risk Assessment (Weetwood Environmental Engineering);
- Heritage Assessment (Northern Archaeological Associates);
- 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).

2.4. The proposed development does not fall within the threshold for EIA development, and therefore an ES is not required as part of this application. We request that the Council formally confirms this in writing on receipt of the application.

2.5. This Statement provides details of the proposed scheme and sets out an assessment of the development against the requirements of national, regional and local planning policy. It concludes that the proposal fully complies with policy at all levels 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 west of the centre of Whalley village. Known locally as Lawsonsteads, the site is greenfield and extends to 3.8ha in size. A site location plan is provided at **Appendix 1** and a more detailed description is included within the Design and Access Statement submitted with the application.

3.2. The site is bounded by Oakhill College and residential properties to the north. To the east it is bounded by open countryside and further east, the A671. To the south it is bounded by existing residential properties accessed from Clitheroe Road and Brookes Lane and to the west of the sites lies Clitheroe Road and the residential properties that line it.

3.3. The site comprises open fields with a track located to the south of the site, which does not appear to be maintained or used regularly. An unnamed brook/stream flows southwards through the site from the north-western boundary to the southeast of the site. The site slopes down to the southwest from the north and east.

3.4. There is currently no formal vehicular access into the site. Whilst access is a matter reserved for future determination, it is envisaged that a new point of access will be created along the site's Clitheroe Road frontage. This is shown on the illustrative masterplan submitted with the application (**Appendix 2**) and further details are contained within the accompanying Transport Assessment,

3.5. The site is located in the north east quadrant of the village which, in itself, has strong defensible boundaries. The site lies adjacent to the northern-most boundary of the Whalley Conservation Area, which extends across the majority of the village centre.

3.6. 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 10 miles east of Longridge. Further east lies Pendle and the Peak District, whilst to the west lies Preston.

3.7. 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 southwards. These stops are currently the most frequently served with a combined frequency of seven journeys per hour during peak times.

3.8. 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 of the centre of the site. Whalley Train Station is also within 1km of the site and provides services to Manchester, Blackburn and Clitheroe.

3.9. 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. Relevant Planning Policy

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

National Planning Policy

4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 27 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), a list of which are provided at Annex 3 of the document.

4.3. The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is a recurring theme throughout the document.

4.4. 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 a 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 waster and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy'*

4.5. 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

4.6. 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 '*converse heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance'* (paragraph 17).

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

4.7. The NPPF states that planning policies should take a '*positive approach to sustainable new development*' in rural areas.

4.8. 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

4.9. 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'.*

4.10. 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.

4.11. 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

4.12. 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.'*

4.13. 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'*.

4.14. 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'.*

4.15. 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

4.16. 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*'.

4.17. 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).*

4.18. 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*.'

4.19. 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

4.20. 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).*

4.21. 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

4.22. 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

4.23. 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

4.24. 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.

4.25. Paragraphs 133 and 134 set out the criteria against which an 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 an 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).

4.26. 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.

Localism Act (November 2011)

4.27. 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

4.28. 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).

4.29. 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.

4.30. The application proposals should therefore be assessed against the requirements of the statutory development plan and any other material considerations.

4.31. It is worth noting that the current local plan is now almost 14 years old and therefore the policies contained within should be considered in the context of more recent regional and national policy.

Local growth: realising every place's potential (White Paper, October 2010)

4.32. The new Coalition Government has recently published a white paper which outlines a new approach to growth, shifting power away from central government to local communities. In particular, it outlines proposals to enable places to tailor their approach to local circumstances and provides incentives for those places that support new growth and development.

4.33. The premise of the white paper is twofold; the need to restore stability to public finances

whilst also creating the right conditions that will assist businesses and help the economy to grow.

4.34. It identifies that local authorities have a critical role in supporting the economy of their area and have a wide array of mechanisms for doing so. Box 2.A identifies a number of key roles, including:

- supporting growth and development through ensuring a responsive supply of land that supports business growth and increases housing supply;
- supporting local infrastructure – transport investment, in particular is a key enabler of growth; and
- providing high quality services, such as schools and transport.

4.35. With regard to planning, the Government outlines intentions to 'pass power to communities' and restore confidence in the planning system. In particular, Paragraph 3.4 states:

> *"We also need to ensure that local communities which opt for growth are able to reap the benefits from doing so, changing the culture of planning so that the default position is in favour of development. Neighbourhoods will welcome growth because they will be sharing in the gains it produces, and because they will be able to shape how economic development looks and where it happens, subject to the requirements of national policy".*

4.36. It identifies incentives for local authorities to deliver sustainable economic development, including for new homes and businesses. In particular, it identifies proposals for a 'New Homes Bonus' which would see the Government providing match funding the additional council tax for each new home and property brought back into use for each of the six years after that home is built.

4.37. Box 3.B reaffirms the role of housing in driving growth as it can play a key role in supporting an efficient labour market, which is critical to economic growth.

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

4.38. RSS provides a framework for the physical development of the north west region over the next 15-20 years. It seeks economic growth through sustainable development, and provides a framework for addressing the scale and distribution of future housing development and setting priorities for dealing with issues such as the environment, transport, infrastructure and economic development.

4.39. RSS was adopted in September 2008 and forms part of the Statutory Development Plan.

4.40. Key objectives set out in Part 2 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.

<u>Regional Development Principles</u>

4.41. 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.

4.42. 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.

4.43. Policy DP3 promotes sustainable economic development which improves productivity and reduces inequalities.

4.44. 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.

4.45. The sequential approach seeks to firstly develop existing buildings, and then previously developed land followed by undeveloped land close to infrastructure and services.

4.46. 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.

4.47. 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.

4.48. 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.

4.49. 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

4.50. 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.

4.51. 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

4.52. 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.

4.53. 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.

4.54. Policy L2 encourages local planning authorities to develop an understanding of local and sub-regional housing markets to improve stock and overcome affordability issues.

4.55. 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

4.56. 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).

4.57. 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.

4.58. 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.

4.59. 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.

4.60. 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

4.61. 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.

4.62. 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.

4.63. 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.

4.64. 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.

4.65. 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.

4.66. 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

4.67. 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.

4.68. 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)

4.69. The Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan was adopted in June 1998. The following section refers to relevant saved policies of the plan.

4.70. 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*'.

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

4.72. 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.

Environment

4.73. 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'.*

4.74. 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.

4.75. 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.

4.76. 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.

4.77. Policy ENV17 requires applications for planning permission within or affecting conservation areas to assess the impact of the proposal on the conservation area.

Housing

4.78. 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'.*

4.79. 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 polices 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

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

Footpaths

4.81. 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

4.82. 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.

4.83. Policy T7 requires development proposals to provide adequate parking and servicing space.

Other material considerations

Addressing Housing Need in Ribble Valley (January 2012)

4.84. In January 2012, the Council published a revision to the Council's previous Affordable Housing Memorandum of Understanding (AHMU), which seeks to address not only the issue of affordability in the borough, but also the issue of housing needs of the elderly.

4.85. One of the main justifications for the review of this document is that the Ribble Valley has an ageing population that is projected to increase by 49% in the next 15 years.

4.86. The document sets out the threshold for providing affordable housing in new development. In locations other than Clitheroe and Longridge, for developments of 5 or more dwellings, the Council will seek 30% affordable units on the site. The Council will only consider a reduction in this level of provision to a minimum of 20% where supporting evidence, including a viability appraisal fully justifies a lower level of provision.

4.87. The document also identifies the need to provide appropriate accommodation for the elderly, to meet the needs of the Ribble Valley's aging population, which is projected to increase by 49% in the next 15 years.

4.88. For developments of 30 units or more, the Council requires 15% of the units to be for the elderly. Of that 15%, a minimum of 50% is required to be affordable and included within the affordable offer of 30%. The remaining 50% of the elderly accommodation can be sold at market value or rent.

Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Alternative Options (July 2011)

4.89. RVBC went out to consultation on its Issues and Options (Regulation 25 stage) in August 2010. The consultation document set out three main growth options, with a fourth option for an alternative growth option.

4.90. Following a review of the consultation responses received, it became apparent to the Council that no clear alternative option emerged from the consultation, but it was indicated that an alternative option was preferred. The Council therefore comprised and published its Alternative Options for consultation between June and August 2011. The document set out five alternative options A to E, to be tested alongside the original Options 1, 2 and 3. The five alternative Options can be summarised as follows:

- Option A: Development will be spread across the borough, allowing for small-scale development within all the borough's smaller settlements, creating opportunities for social and economic preservation and development for future generations. Provision will be made for development in the larger settlements, proportioned on the population distribution of the whole borough.

- Option B: Development will be spread across the borough, allowing for small-scale development within all the borough's smaller settlements, creating opportunities for social and economic preservation and development for future generations. Provision will be made for development in the larger settlements, proportioned on the population distribution of the whole borough.

- Option C: Development will be distributed across the borough, to allow an appropriate scale of development within all the borough's settlements, creating opportunities for

social and economic well-being and development for future generations.

- Option D: Development will be focused towards a single strategic site located to the south of Clitheroe, towards the A59. The area is of an appropriate scale to accommodate approximately half of the borough's required housing and economic development. Development will be permitted at other locations in the borough to meet identified needs distributed in accordance with Option C.

- Option E: Development will be focused towards land located at a single strategic location at Barrow. The area is of an appropriate scale to accommodate two thirds of the borough's required housing and economic development. Development will be permitted at other locations in the borough to meet identified needs distributed in accordance with Option C.

Draft Core Strategy (March 2012)

4.91. The Council has considered the findings of the responses to the Regulation 25 stage consultation and of the Alternative Options consultation, and has produced a Regulation 27 Draft Core Strategy report, which is to be taken to Members of the Planning Committee on 4 April 2012 for their endorsement ahead of it being put out to public consultation for six weeks.

4.92. Subject to agreement by Members, the preferred option is a hybrid of Options B and D, seeking to direct the majority of new housing required across the Borough into a single strategic site to the south of Clitheroe. The remainder of development is to be accommodated on land within or adjacent to the main urban areas of the borough, including Whalley which has a reported requirement for a minimum of 243 dwellings during the plan period. This figure remains to be validated through the examination process and therefore is subject to change, but clearly demonstrates the Council's acceptance of the principle of some new development being provided in Whalley.

4.93. It is anticipated that the Core Strategy will be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for formal examination in July 2012.

Local Development Framework Evidence Base

<u>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (November 2009)</u>

4.94. 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.

4.95. 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.

4.96. 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 3.**

<u>Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (December 2008)</u>

4.97. The Council's SHMA provides a comprehensive assessment of the structure and main characteristics of the housing market in the Ribble Valley.

4.98. 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.

4.99. 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)

4.100. 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.

4.101. NLP's findings and recommendations were published for public consultation in November 2011 which suggest a requirement in the order of 190-220 dwellings per annum.

4.102. Work undertaken independently on behalf of CEG in order to inform a response to the NLP work, suggests this requirement should actually be higher with provision of at least 270 to 310 dwellings (factoring in completions between 2008 and 2011) across the plan period. Members have since debated and endorsed the work undertaken by NLP for the purpose of preparation of the emerging Core Strategy. A mid-range requirement of 4,000 dwellings (200dpa) was agreed for the plan period. Again, this is subject to testing through the Core Strategy examination process but clearly indicates a significant requirement for new homes to be provided across the Borough.

Summary

4.103. 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.

4.104. Due consideration has been paid to the relevant policies contained within the soon-to-be revoked RSS, and the saved policies contained within the Districtwide local plan.

4.105. 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.

4.106. The application site is not in a sensitive location insofar as it is not in the Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or a Site of Specific Scientific Interest, and therefore the application accords at all levels.

5. Principle of Development

Rationale

5.1. As set out in Section 2, this application follows the refusal of an earlier proposal for a much larger development on the wider Lawsonsteads site (Application Ref: 3/2011/0111) (decision date 13 January 2012) comprising up to 300 residential units; a 50 bed space nursing home; a new one-form entry primary school; and associated access, car parking, open space and ancillary landscaping.

5.2. In determining this application, the Council accepted that the site is capable of being developed; the proposal would meet local housing needs; and, was capable of representing a sustainable form of development.

5.3. Nonetheless, at that time, the Council considered that by virtue of its scale, the application was premature ahead of the Council's emerging Core Strategy, in particular, the spatial vision for growth and how this related to Whalley. The application was subsequently refused by the Council on three grounds, namely; prematurity, impacts on visual amenity, and in heritage terms, on the Whalley Conservation Area.

5.4. There remains a pressing need for delivery of housing across the Borough and therefore proposals for the site have been revisited in light of the reasons for refusal of the previous scheme, in particular, the Council's landscape/visual and heritage concerns. The proposal has been informed by extensive landscape, visual and heritage assessment work and represents an appropriately designed response whilst still delivering much needed housing and elderly persons accommodation on and extremely sustainable site in one of the Borough's key locations for new development.

Meeting housing needs

5.5. 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).

5.6. 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 revoked and/or a new locally-derived housing target is endorsed by way of an adopted Core Strategy.

5.7. In this regard, the Council has recently agreed on 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.

5.8. 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. This is most recently recognised in an appeal decision relating to a residential proposal put forward by Gladman Developments Ltd for land in Clitheroe (Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/A/11/2161186) dated 26 March 2012. Paragraph 23 refers to there being a "claimed 3.3 years supply", which the Council did not dispute during the course of the Inquiry. However, it should be noted that this did not reflect any independent assessment of the supply by the appellant and work undertaken on behalf of CEG suggests that the actual position is lower.

5.9. A summary of the housing land supply position for the borough is provided at Appendix 4.

5.10. This is directly derived from a planning committee report (dated 10 November 2011) and does not reflect any additional discounting by the applicant.

5.11. In this regard, whilst the overall supply for the Borough sits well below the five year requirement of the NPPF, the actual forward supply relies upon delivery of all extant schemes in the next five years. We note that the net completion rate since 2003 has only been 129 dwellings against the annual requirement of 161dpa, despite this being a period with a largely buoyant housing market.

5.12. The shortfall compounds the housing need particularly in the next five years and means that the actual deliverable forward supply is likely to be reduced further (beyond the Council's own assessment of 10% slippage).

5.13. Looking forward, the emerging Core Strategy is intended to be a plan covering a 20 year period (2008-2028). Within the latest draft (Preferred Option), the Council identifies a housing target of 4,000 dwellings (at least 200dpa) pursuant to the findings of the NLP work.

5.14. Whilst the revised target is yet to be endorsed through the Core Strategy, applying this increased annual target, the current housing land supply position drops significantly to 2.8 years with a residual requirement for 3,767 homes to 2028 (based on the Council's figures as at 1 October 2011).

5.15. This highlights the compelling and pressing needs for the Council to identify new sites for housing now which will help meet both existing and future housing needs.

5.16. On the basis that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year forward supply of housing, NPPF is of considerable 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.

5.17. Given this, the Council should be planning to deliver an additional 20% buffer in accordance with the NPPF in the next five years. This again, adds further weight to the consideration of the Borough's housing land supply in determining this application.

Why Whalley?

Spatial Distribution

5.18. Policy G2 of the local plan defines the main settlements in the Borough as Clitheroe, Longridge, Whalley, Wilpshire and Billington.

5.19. The Council's emerging Core Strategy DPD identifies Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley as the Key Service Centres for the Borough.

5.20. 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.

5.21. 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.

5.22. 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 village which is within walking distance of the site and offers a number of services.

5.23. In contrast, Longridge sits on the periphery of the Borough and has no rail link thereby limiting its connectivity to the remainder of the Borough.

5.24. Both Whalley and the market town of 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.

5.25. Spatially, Whalley represents a suitable and sustainable location for future growth and development.

Population and household growth

5.26. The latest Census information available (2001) indicates that the total resident population of the Ribble Valley is 53,954 with a total of 22,225 households. Circa 9% of this population (both in terms of total number of residents and households) lives in and around Whalley. **Appendix 5** contains a plan showing the catchment area to which these figures relate.

5.27. By 2009, the total resident population of the Ribble Valley is estimated to have increased to 59,832 with a total of 25,089 households. The apportionment of both resident population and number of households in the Whalley catchment area has also increased.

5.28. The following table sets out projected population and household increases in the Ribble Valley and the Whalley catchment area between now and 2025.

Year / Catchment Area	Ribble Valley Borough			Whalley		
	Population	Household	% Increase in H'Hold Growth in Absolute Terms (Since 2001)	Population	Household	% Increase in H'Hold Growth in Absolute Terms (Since 2001)
2001	53,954	22,225	-	4,670	2,015	-
2009	59,832	25,089	13%	5,677	2,494	23%
2015	62,538	27,025	22%	5,927	2,661	32%
2020	64,601	28,759	29%	6,098	2,807	39%
2025	66,906	30,284	36%	6,249	2,915	45%

Figures taken from Experian, Micromarkateer Generation 3 Area Profile Report dated 5 January 2011

5.29. Whilst in percentage terms, the overall resident population and number of households in the Whalley catchment area is estimated to remain constant, beyond 2015, the actual population and number of households continues to rise.

5.30. In light of the above, there is therefore a demonstrable need for new housing to address changes in population and household growth across the Borough, including Whalley.

Existing housing provision in Whalley

5.31. Section 4 provided an overview of the key findings of the SHMA (2008). In particular, this identifies a need for more family and affordable housing provision in Whalley and the provision of further extra care accommodating to address the needs of a growing elderly population.

5.32. At a local level, the Council has historically undertaken housing needs surveys across the Borough, assessing individual settlement areas and villages.

5.33. The last survey undertaken in Whalley (January 2011) 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.

5.34. The applicant has previously sought 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.

5.35. 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;
- 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.

5.36. 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) 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.

5.37. In summary, Whalley is an area of both quantitative and qualitative housing need with a requirement for more family and affordable housing and accommodation to meet its growing elderly population.

5.38. The proposed scheme will deliver up to 55 residential units comprising a mix of family homes, affordable and starter homes to address short term quantitative and qualitative housing needs.

Ageing population

5.39. Demographic research indicates that Whalley has an ageing population which is set to increase significantly in the next 10-15 years. However, in order to inform proposals for the site and the approach to addressing this specific requirement, the applicant has previously sought independent advice on the suitability of the site for provision of care to the elderly.

5.40. The research undertaken is based on a 2.5 mile radius from the site (this is so as to exclude Clitheroe which operates as a separate housing market area from which users are unlikely to be drawn), taking into account the existing population profile of Whalley.

5.41. It concludes that current registered care provision is limited to two premises, both of which are constrained in terms of their services and facilities. Statistical analysis anticipates

approximately 30 people from the target area requiring nursing care however, there is no nursing care provision. The current provision of 18 registered dementia beds falls short of the anticipated demand level, with demand for this nature of care growing rapidly nationwide.

5.42. Planning activity within the target area is also limited. Whilst 'The Croft' nearby, applied to extend the existing premises in recent years (2008), the planning permission is yet to be implemented. There is also a proposal for provision of a 40 bed nursing home at Whalley Road, Clitheroe, as part of a mixed use scheme (Application Ref: 3/2010/0550), which was approved in January 2011, subject to the applicant entering into a S106 agreement. At the time of writing, this Agreement remains unsigned. Given its location within Clitheroe, it is unlikely to have an impact on the Whalley market.

5.43. Overall, the research concludes that demand exists in the target area for the provision of further registered beds, not least due to a strong forecast in the elderly (over 85's) population but also as there is an extremely limited number of registered beds and currently no nursing homes in the target area.

5.44. The proposal will deliver a 50 bed space nursing home to help meet current and future needs in the short to medium term.

Why Lawsonsteads?

5.45. In addressing quantitative housing needs across the Borough, the Council is required to identify suitable sites to bring forward development. The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) assesses all brownfield and greenfield development opportunities and confirms that there is a limited supply of brownfield land for future development both within and/or adjacent to existing settlements. The Council is looking to promote significant greenfield release in order to meet future housing requirements in and around the Key Service Centres, including Whalley.

5.46. In this regard, the application site is one of the Key Service Centres identified in the emerging Core Strategy DPD, and as such, is considered an appropriate location for housing development to meet the wider borough's housing needs.

Why now?

5.47. The Council's latest housing land monitoring indicates that it only has a limited forward supply of housing, contrary to the requirements of RSS and NPPF.

5.48. The quantitative housing need requirement is compounded by a shortfall in the delivery of housing in the Borough in recent years. As such, the Borough needs to provide a buffer of an additional 20% in order to address housing needs in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

5.49. Specifically, there is also a growing elderly population in Whalley and a limited supply of registered bed spaces and nursing care available.

5.50. The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved. On the basis that planning permission is granted within three months of submission of the application, factoring in time to market the site, apply for reserved matters approval and undertake the necessary infrastructure works in order to commence development, the earliest development could commence would be mid 2013 with the delivery of housing from late 2013/2014 onwards.

5.51. By this time, unless significant applications for development come forward and are supported by the Council and delivered much earlier, the overall supply position will worsen and the housing need and affordability gap will grow.

5.52. Furthermore, given that the Council is looking to submit the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State in Summer 2012, it is unlikely that work will start on the site allocations DPD until 2013.

This is unlikely to assist in the yielding of developments until it has reached an advanced stage, which is likely to be 2014 onwards.

5.53. The only way in which to secure the delivery of housing in the short term is to promote applications for development now in order to address current and future housing needs.

Local Resident concerns

5.54. As part of this application, the applicant has engaged with planning officers, by way of a formal pre-application meeting on 31 January 2012 and a meeting with Councillors Holgate and Hill on 2 April 2012. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) submitted in support of this application details the extent of public consultation and community engagement undertaken and how this has informed the proposals for the site.

5.55. Public consultation has not been undertaken as part of this application specifically. However, extensive public consultation was undertaken as part of the earlier application for the wider site. The issues raised during the previous public consultation period are still relevant to this scheme, given that the majority of comments related to the principle of development and infrastructure needs.

5.56. Concerns previously raised by local residents relating to the need for more housing is not unique to Whalley, or indeed, the Ribble Valley, with the issue about future growth and development now tied to the Government's localism agenda which has raised awareness within local communities.

5.57. Localism is important in influencing the nature and form of new development and ensuring that proposals deliver the right benefits to the local community. It is not intended to prohibit development and, in particular, is intended to enable provision of new housing in locations where people want to live with housing development recognised as a key driver of economic growth. Indeed, the NPPF continues to adopt a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

5.58. As set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, Whalley village was first established in the 600's and has gradually expanded and today has a population of more than 3,000. As a Key Service Centre, Whalley is likely to continue to grow in order to ensure future sustainability and longevity as a village.

5.59. The proposed development forms a natural expansion to the village and is being planned in a comprehensive but sensitive way to deliver a number of benefits to the existing and new community. It will provide more family and affordable homes to meet local housing needs and much-needed elderly care.

5.60. Local resident concerns raised to date are understandable but are not, in their own right, a material planning consideration unless based on evidence which constitutes a valid planning reason why the development is not acceptable.

5.61. There is a demonstrable, compelling and pressing need for more housing in the Ribble Valley including Whalley and this is an appropriate opportunity to deliver new houses in a very sustainable location. As such, the development should be supported by the Council.

6. Development Proposal

Design Process

6.1. The proposals for the Lawsonsteads site have evolved over the last two years, with the most recent scheme in direct response to concerns raised about the earlier application (refused in January 2012). In this regard, extensive technical and design work has been undertaken during the past three months to produce a sensitively-designed development proposal for the site, which addresses concerns raised previously in relation to potential landscape and visual amenity impacts. Further details on the design process are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

6.2. Formal pre-application discussions have been undertaken with officers and Members to inform the application approach.

Proposed Scheme

6.3. The application seeks outline planning permission with all matters reserved for a residential led mixed use scheme at land east of Clitheroe Road, Whalley. The proposed development is illustrated at **Appendix 2** and comprises up to 55 dwellings (including 30% affordable); a 50 bed space nursing home; open space, car parking and ancillary landscaping.

6.4. Individual elements of the proposal are described in more detail below.

6.5. However, with regards access, it is envisaged that a new point of access will be created along the Clitheroe Road site frontage. This approach was provided for in the earlier scheme and accepted by highway officers at Lancashire County Council (LCC).

Land Uses

Residential

6.6. The scheme comprises up to 55 dwellings (C3) based on an appropriate mix of sizes and types of housing, including new family and affordable homes, including two, three, four and five bedroom properties. The residential element of the scheme will cover an approximate site area of 3.8 Ha with an average density of 24 dwellings per hectare (dph). Residential development will be a maximum of two and a half storeys in height and will be sited within the annotated area as indicated on the Parameters Plan at **Appendix 6**.

6.7. It is proposed that 30% of the total number of units will be affordable in accordance with the Council's 'Addressing Housing Need in Ribble Valley' (2012) and comprise a mix of tenures to meet local needs. Draft Heads of Terms have been prepared and are submitted in support of the application.

6.8. Precise details of the access, siting, design, layout and landscaping of the residential element of the site will be provided at the Reserved Matters stage.

Nursing Home

6.9. The proposal includes provision of a 50 bed nursing home (C2). This will be a maximum of three storeys in height, approximately 2,000 sqm in size and occupy a site area of approximately 0.4 Ha This will be accompanied by ancillary parking and landscaping and be sited within the annotated area as indicated on the Parameters Plan at **Appendix 6**.

6.10. The access, siting, design, layout and landscaping of the nursing home will be addressed at

Reserved Matters stage.

Public open space

6.11. The proposed development makes provision for public open space including both formal and informal recreational areas. The application scheme has been designed to incorporate a network of green open space through the site equating to circa 1.17 Ha. This has been designed to ensure retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedgerows on site.

Timing of delivery

6.12. Subject to the length of time it takes to obtain outline planning permission and subsequent reserved matters approval, it is currently envisaged that development will commence mid-2013 with completions from late 2013/2014 onwards.

6.13. Based on provision of 39 open market dwellings and assuming average market conditions and a sales rate of 35 open market dwellings per annum (dpa), the build programme is estimated to last between one and two years (2013 to 2015). This is based on a single residential developer delivering the scheme. It is expected that 30% affordable housing will be provided in parallel in addition in a similar timeframe (over and above the 35 dpa).

6.14. It is expected that the proposed nursing home will come forward early in the site's development either in parallel with or shortly after the residential development is commenced.

7. Other Material Considerations

7.1. In addition to the acceptability of the principle of development as set out in **Section 5**, this section provides a brief overview of other material considerations weighing in favour of the proposed development.

7.2. The key issues to be considered are:

- Environmental acceptability;
- Heritage assets;
- Housing mix;
- Provision of open space;
- Transport and accessibility;
- Sustainability;
- Comprehensive development; and
- Job creation.

7.3. For the avoidance of doubt, we have not sought to repeat the information provided in earlier Sections but rather, make cross reference to where the necessary information is found.

Environmental acceptability

Landscape character

7.4. In accordance with Policies ENV3 and ENV13 of the local plan, the Design and Access Statement (prepared by Planit) provides details of the existing landscape character of the site and its wider context. In particular, regard has been had to the potential visual impacts of development of the site in preparing the illustrative masterplan. A full landscape and visual assessment of the proposal based on the parameters of development, is contained within the Design and Access Statement. This firmly concludes that landscape and visual impacts are acceptable.

7.5. In reaching this conclusion, it is proposed to retain existing trees and hedgerows where present along the boundaries of the site, in order to minimise the visual impact where possible. Further details and images are contained within the Design and Access Statement.

7.6. Additionally, existing trees will be supplemented by new structural and informal planting both within and on the perimeter of the site, details of which will be submitted at the Reserved Matters stage.

7.7. The application is accompanied by a detailed aboricultural survey (prepared by Jonathan Cocking Associates) detailing the position and dimension of all existing trees as well as the location and extent of wooded areas, groups of trees and hedgerows. The survey confirms that sections of H6 (hawthorn hedge) may need to be removed for access to the site (to be agreed at the reserved matters stage), however, this will not affect the overall character and treescape of the area. No other trees on the site are recommended for removal at this stage.

Biodiversity

7.8. In accordance with policies ENV7 and ENV9 of the local plan, a Phase 1 Habitat Survey (prepared by Baker Consultants) has been undertaken.

7.9. This confirms that the site is predominantly improved pasture which is of limited ecological value and that any impact from future potential development would not be ecologically

significant. However, it recommends that the boundary hedgerow is to be retained, as is the stream, and that lighting should be sensitively controlled to ensure there is no harm caused to commuting bats.

7.10. The masterplan has been prepared with regard to the findings of the ecological survey work, in particular, it retains a buffer zone either side of the stream that crosses the site to ensure that the stream can continue to function as a wildlife corridor. Furthermore, it is proposed to limit the number of crossings over the watercourses that run through the site.

7.11. In conclusion, the proposals fully accord with planning policy and there is no reason to withhold planning permission on grounds of biodiversity.

Heritage assets

7.12. Policy ENV14 of the local plan highlights the importance of preserving heritage features and Policy ENV17 requires applications for planning permission within or affecting conservation areas to assess the impact of the proposal on the conservation area.

7.13. The application is accompanied by an assessment of the historic environment. That relating primarily to below ground features has been prepared by Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA) and is based on a 1km wide corridor around the development site. It identifies a total of 57 heritage assets within the study area, including four scheduled monuments and 30 listed buildings but no registered parks, gardens or battlefields. The Whalley Conservation Area is also identified within the study area but the site does not lie within it. The potential impacts of the development on the Whalley Conservation Area are considered in this statement (below).

Below ground

7.14. With regards to the below ground impacts, the NAA assessment demonstrates that the site was probably part of the open field system around the medieval village and there may be potential for below ground remains of medieval archaeological activity, specifically within the northern field. The site may also have contained landscape elements associated with the managed water supply for the Cistercian abbey located on the west side of the village but there is the limited potential for earthworks associated with former boundaries and a reservoir being related to this.

7.15. The assessment concludes that there will be no impacts on any designated sites or undesignated sites of national or regional importance. Nor will the site have an unacceptable impact on the setting of the adjacent Whalley Conservation Area provided that the location and extent of public greenspace is carefully designed.

7.16. There is also limited potential for unrecorded prehistoric and Roman remains as well as medieval to post-medieval settlement remains to survive within the site.

Above ground

7.17. This Section of the Statement considers the impact of the proposed development on the (above ground) historic environment of Whalley. It is informed by the work undertaken by NAA and the findings of the Heritage Assessment undertaken by Indigo (dated 2011) in relation to the previous refused scheme. It also reflects the requirements of the NPPF as set out in Section 4 of this Statement, in addition to appropriate guidance in considering the impact of the proposed development. In particular; guidance on the Setting of Heritage assets (English Heritage, October 2011); the Whalley Conservation Area Appraisal (Adopted); and Whalley Conservation Area Management Guidelines (Draft).

7.18. Given the relationship of the site to the Whalley Conservation Area (WCA) and references to views to/from the WCA in considering the heritage impacts of the proposal, regard has been had to the design process set out in the Design and Access Statement. In particular, the

findings of the townscape character analysis which draws reference to the WCA and the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and photomontages that have been prepared.

7.19. The following sections consider the potential impacts of the proposal against policies ENV14/17 and the WCA.

Whalley Conservation Area Appraisal

7.20. The boundaries of the WCA were extended following a review carried out during the Appraisal process in 2006 as a consequence of which, an area south of the application site (Clitheroe Road/Brookes Lane) was included in the WCA. An addition was also made south of the river where the boundary was extended along Whalley Road and Whalley Old Road to protect the setting of the conservation area and, more particularly, that of Whalley Abbey. A copy of the Conservation Area Appraisal map is included at **Appendix 7**.

7.21. The Appraisal provides a Summary of Special Interest of the WCA, noting specifically;

- the ruins of a late 13th century Cistercian Abbey;
- St Mary's and All Saints' Church and churchyard;
- the principal commercial street, King Street, with its inns and variety of small shops; and
- the river setting and fields and open green spaces that provide an attractive rural character to the conservation area.

7.22. The Appraisal defines 3 Character Areas (Zones) within the conservation area:

- The Sands, Whalley Abbey and Church Lane;
- King Street; and
- Whalley Bridge and the river.

7.23. The new areas included within the extended boundary are not identified as falling within any of these Character Areas. The report recommending the boundary extensions describes the area closest to the site as representing late 19th century expansion of the town and including an 18th century (or earlier) lane, presumably Brookes Lane. The Appraisal makes specific mention of the inclusion of The Croft, a large property (now a care home) at the junction of Clitheroe Road and Brookes Lane, and a number of mature trees within its garden that are identified as extremely significant in views along King Street.

7.24. A number of important views are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map including some across the WCA. A number of references are made in the Appraisal to the character of Whalley and its conservation area being contained within a river valley and surrounded by hills that provide a rural setting to the village. Views from the Nab across the river are identified in this context, particularly towards Whalley Abbey and the railway viaduct beyond.

7.25. The Appraisal highlights the role of King Street as the principal commercial street in Whalley and notes that its busy traffic and few established pedestrian crossings is one of the principal negative features of this part of the conservation area. Similarly busy traffic is noted as a principal negative feature of the Whalley Bridge and river Character Area. In contrast the Appraisal notes the little traffic and peaceful character of The Sands, Whalley Abbey and Church Lane Character Area is a principal positive feature here (in the western part of the conservation area).

7.26. As part of a SWOT analysis the Appraisal identifies one of the most important positive features of the WCA to be the rural, open character of the village with trees and open green

spaces (please note that the Appraisal refers to Whalley as a 'town'). It notes that the tight urban form of Whalley means there are very few sites for development within the conservation area and identifies the open green spaces to the west of The Sands as a particularly valuable asset which should be protected from development. Threats to the conservation area are identified as loss of architectural details and use of inappropriate modern materials, loss of existing front boundary walls, and poor quality shopfronts.

Whalley Conservation Area Management Guidelines

7.27. At the time the Appraisal was prepared a public consultation document providing guidance on management of the WCA was produced (Whalley Conservation Area Management Guidance). The stated intention of the Guidance was to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the WCA. It reprised the Summary Special Character of the conservation area set out in the Appraisal, and the issues identified through the SWOT analysis. In following up the recommendations of the Appraisal the Management Guidance set out design guidance intend to counter the Threats identified to the WCA. It also provided design principles for new development in the conservation area which addressed such issues as:

- Urban grain
- Scale and density
- Height
- Massing
- Appearance, materials and detailing.

7.28. This public consultation document has not been progressed but, together with the analysis of Townscape Character Areas in the D&A, it does establish a basis for understanding an appropriate approach to development in Whalley in heritage terms.

Potential impact on heritage assets

7.29. The application site is located on the east side of Clitheroe Road at the northern edge of the settlement boundary. There are no listed buildings or identified archaeological assets within or adjacent to the site. It is separated physically from the northern edge of the WCA by existing built development. There is a potential impact from the proposal on the setting of the WCA and this is considered below. The Appraisal identifies busy traffic in the town centre as a negative feature so this assessment also considers potential impacts of an increase in traffic on King Street from the proposed development on the conservation area character.

Impact on Setting

7.30. Historically the town was a crossing point on the River Calder and pilgrim destination (related to the Abbey), and served as a centre for its agricultural surroundings before subsequently becoming a primarily residential (commuter) town spread around the commercial centre of King Street. Key to the character and significance of the WCA is the tight urban form of its historic central core set within later more dispersed development surrounded by its rural hinterland on the hills beyond. These surrounding hills are an important part of its setting and contribute to its significance. The conservation area itself is considered to have medium (regional) significance.

7.31. The topography of the town and the location of the application site is such that views from the central part of the conservation area towards the site are confined by existing development and it is not possible to see it from within the conservation area. The site lies close to where the conservation boundary has been extended at the east end of Brookes Lane and is glimpsed at various points through the existing development here.

7.32. The site is visible in wider views from the rising ground beyond the river south of the bridge, and from a public footpath along the north side of The Nab where it appears as the eastern extremity of a wedge of green space extending between the denser northern edge of Whalley development and the looser development interspersed with mature trees beyond, that rises up along Wiswell Lane.

7.33. The site sits at the more urban edge of Whalley when entering from the north and marks a transition between the more open and wooded character of development to the north and the closer, more urban form of development to the south. Views towards the site from the Nab are included in the LVIA incorporated in the Design and Access Statement (Viewpoint 3 on pages 69 and 70). In the context of the overall character of the WCA and its setting the site sits on slightly rising ground below a fringe of woodland that extends further north and east into the more open rural landscape and the hills in the far distance. North east of the site the large white buildings of Oakhill College stand out at the outer edge of the settlement.

7.34. The application is for a development of up to 55 houses and a 50 bed space Nursing Home. Illustrative proposals described in the Design and Access Statement provide for development of a scale and form (based on the defined parameters) that responds to the site's location at the edge of the settlement with a mix of house typologies that graduate from a tighter grain close to Clitheroe Road to a more open character progressing to the east. The Nursing Home is shown close to Clitheroe Road at the entrance to the site.

7.35. The height of the proposed development is indicated as two storeys for the housing and up to three storeys for the Nursing Home. The buildings are shown in a layout designed as a series of character areas, taking their influence from nearby development and typical built characteristics identified in Whalley, set within a landscaped framework that flows into its surroundings and integrates the proposed development within its wider context. Additional planting to strengthen the existing trees and hedgerows is envisaged along the existing stream and to encircle the east edge of the development as part of the illustrative proposals.

7.36. Visibility of the site within the wider conservation area setting is restricted so that the key view in which the proposals should be considered is that from south of the River Calder, as illustrated from Nabside Farm and Wood.

7.37. The development as illustrated contains the built form to the eastern part of the site immediately next to Clitheroe Road between the edge of existing development north of Brookes Lane and further buildings extending along Wiswell Lane. The form and layout illustrated seeks to integrate the proposal into the topography of the site and the immediate surroundings and eflect the grain of adjacent development through the adoption of character areas. The extension of the wooded stream corridor through the site and its connection with the bridleway running east from the end of Brookes Lane will enhance pedestrian connections and legibility through this area.

7.38. Additional landscaping as proposed will enhance the wooded character of this edge of the built up area and its visual connections to the more open development and countryside beyond.

7.39. The proposals as illustrated would introduce some change into views across the conservation area from the south and potentially into glimpsed views from the Brookes Lane area. The nature of the proposals illustrated demonstrate that the development would integrate sensitively into its surroundings through its form, layout, and landscaping. In this way the resulting change would not have a negative impact and in distant views from the south across the conservation area the setting would not be adversely affected as the surrounding wooded landscape would remain and be strengthened by new complimentary landscaping proposals.

7.40. In relation to the more immediate conservation area environs along Brookes Lane the proposals as illustrated would not intrude into its setting. The significance of the conservation area would remain unaffected.

Traffic Impact on the Conservation Area

7.41. King Street is the commercial heart of the village and is lined with a variety of buildings dating mainly from the 18th and 19th centuries in use principally for a range of retail purposes. These buildings are generally good quality, some being statutorily listed (Grade II), and have mostly been well maintained so that they form an attractive centre to the conservation area, generally providing a good sense of enclosure. The northern section of King Street is more open with buildings on the west side set back behind a wider pavement and front gardens whilst the bus terminus area and Memorial Gardens opposite open out the east side of the street.

7.42. The existing street environment has some good features (traditional paving slabs, setted areas) but suffers from poorly-defined road layout and parking areas which contribute to a degree of indiscriminate and intrusive parking including on the pavement. There are a number of car parks within the town centre that makes provision for long stay visitors. The management of the existing public and private car parks, however, is not well co-ordinated with the on-steet parking provision for short-stay visitors.

7.43. Details of surveys carried out to establish existing patterns of use and availability of parking spaces within the car parks and on-street are reported in the accompanying Transport Assessment (TA). On the basis that of the information provided in the TA, there is no shortage of parking provision in Whalley. However, it appears that within the shopping area, unconstrained on-street parking results in vehicles parking for more than 2 hours thus limiting availability at peak times and giving rise to concerns that there are parking and traffic problems in the village centre.

7.44. Traffic on King Street is at times constrained by existing uncontrolled road side parking and its associated manoeuvring which leads to the perception that busy traffic is a problem within the centre.

7.45. RVBC's Conservation Officer previously raised concerns that additional traffic from development of a larger site including the current application site would increase flows through the village centre and lead to an adverse impact on King Street and the significance of the conservation area itself.

7.46. This conclusion is borne out in the appeal decision in respect of proposed development at land to the north of Riddings Lane, Whalley (Appeal Ref APP/T2350/A/11/21499340). In his decision letter of 16 September 2011 the Inspector noted one of the main issues as

> *'ii) whether the proposals would adversely affect the heritage assets of the Whalley Conservation Area particularly as a result of increased traffic'.*

7.47. The Inspector discussed the increase in traffic associated with that proposed development, its anticipated effect on traffic flows in King Street, and the implications for the WCA. The projected increase in traffic (peak hour flows 1.7%) was deemed to be 'imperceptible' i.e. a person standing at the side of the road would not be able to tell the difference between existing and future flows with the development. This led the Inspector to conclude on the heritage issues that such an increase would not have an adverse effect on the conservation area. He also considered that any harmful impact on the significance of the WCA would be less than substantial (NPPF paragraph 134) and that the public benefits of the proposed development were considerable and strongly outweighed any such harm.

7.48. Similar conclusions to those drawn by the Inspector on that appeal can be drawn about the application proposal. The conclusion drawn by the TA is that, even adopting a worst case assessment for the potential traffic impact on the centre of Whalley will not be noticeable and therefore no specific mitigation measures are proposed (paragraph 11.6 of the TA).

7.49. Thus, substantial harm would not be caused to the significance of the WCA and there would

be no adverse effect on its character.

7.50. In addition the proposals include an offer by the applicant to assist the Highway Authority in improving availability of parking spaces in the town centre through introduction of on-street parking restrictions. This would assist in alleviating existing parking issues in the centre thus reducing the impact of traffic and enhance the character of the WCA.

7.51. The site is located outside but adjacent to the recently extended WCA although is not readily visible from within this. It lies on rising ground visible from higher ground to the south across the River Calder and the conservation area itself. The proposed development would be designed such that in views across the conservation area it would not dominate the surrounding rural landscape that comprises a key part of the setting of the conservation area and would thus not harm its significance.

7.52. With regards potential impacts on the setting of the WCA, based on the heritage assessment work undertaken in conjunction with consideration of potential landscape and visual impacts, the proposed development will integrate sensitively into its surroundings. There will only be limited glimpses of the site from the Brookes Lane area of the WCA. It can be concluded that the setting of the WCA will not be adversely affected and that its significance will remain unaffected.

7.53. The Conservation Officer has previously voiced concern about the impact of the additional traffic generated by the development on the character of the WCA, in particular the perception of traffic intrusion in King Street. The existing character of King Street as the main commercial centre of the conservation area is as a busy street with both through traffic and parking vehicles. A sense of intrusive and busy traffic is increased by the existing poorly defined road and parking areas, long stay on-street parking, frequent indiscriminate parking, and associated manoeuvring and congestion.

7.54. Development generated traffic would result in a level of traffic increase that would not be material on the operation of the surrounding highway network, nor would it be perceptible in the town centre even at the maximum peak hour. At other times traffic flows would be lower. In these circumstances the additional traffic would not result in any material harm to the significance of the WCA.

7.55. Additional measures offered as part of the proposals would also assist in reducing the impact of existing traffic and parking in the centre and its effect on the WCA character.

7.56. In conclusion, the proposals fully accord with planning policy and there is no reason to withhold planning permission on heritage grounds.

Flood risk and drainage

7.57. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 as defined in NPPF. On this basis, applications for development on sites over 1 hectare are to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

7.58. Weetwood Environmental Engineering has prepared an FRA which is submitted in support of the application. The site has not been identified as being at risk of flooding from groundwater, pluvial, sewer or highway sources.

7.59. With regard to surface water drainage, discharges from the site will be limited to the existing mean annual greenfield runoff rate up to 1 in 100 year event including an allowance for climate change, in accordance with NPPF. Prior to development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface water drainage system shall be prepared.

7.60. In terms of foul drainage, the applicant has undertaken initial discussions with United Utilities to inform an appraisal of existing service provision at the site. A summary of the position is provided in the Utilities Survey prepared by WSP with input from Weetwood. This confirms

that there is sufficient capacity in the existing Whalley Wastewater Treatment Works to accept the foul flows from the proposed development.

7.61. In conclusion, the proposals fully accord with planning policy and there is no reason to withhold planning permission on flood risk and drainage grounds.

Utilities

7.62. The Utilities Survey prepared by WSP and submitted in support of the application outlines the current position with regard to surface water and foul water drainage, gas, electric, telecoms and the impact of the development on these services

7.63. Based on the findings of the Utilities Survey, there is no reason to withhold planning permission on the basis of services provision.

Ground conditions

7.64. As the site comprises largely undeveloped open fields, little development has historically occurred with the exception of infilling of a reservoir in the 1950's / 1960's and the construction of a concrete slab to the north eastern corner in the 1990's.

7.65. A preliminary desk-top appraisal of the site's ground conditions has been undertaken by Sirius and this concludes that pollutant linkages are possible for a variety of receptors, principally through potential contaminants in any made ground or topsoil's on site. The study recommends further ground investigation works at the appropriate stage to allow foundation design and determination of any contamination constraints.

7.66. The applicant has also commissioned an Agricultural Land Classification report to confirm the suitability of the site in this regard. The report (undertaken by Soil Environmental Services) confirms that the majority of the site has been classified as Class 4 (Poor Quality), therefore confirming that the site is of limited value for the purposes of arable production.

7.67. Based on the findings of these surveys, there is no reason to withhold planning permission on this basis.

Housing mix

7.68. Policies H2 and H20 of the local plan and policy RDF2 of RSS seek to secure new housing that meets local housing needs and provides affordable homes.

7.69. Section 5 provides an overview of existing housing provision in Whalley based on findings of the Council's SHMA and local Housing Needs Survey. In addition, the applicant has commissioned its own research into the current housing market to inform the approach to housing provision on the site both in terms of market and affordable housing and the need for a nursing home.

7.70. The proposed development will provide a mix of house types including two, three, four and five bedroom dwellings. Within this mix, the applicant will provide 30% affordable housing (i.e. up to 16 units) based on a mix of tenures i.e. shared equity and social rented. The development will therefore enable local people to have better access to housing within the Key Service Centre of Whalley. In addition, the nursing home will meet the needs of a growing elderly population.

7.71. The applicant will enter into a S106 agreement with the Council to ensure provision of affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of both local and regional policy and NPPF.

Open space/recreation

7.72. Policies RT8, RT18 and RT19 of the local plan promote the provision of useable open space and the protection and improvement of public rights of way.

7.73. The indicative masterplan provides a landscape framework for the site, within which new open space to serve the development is provided. The masterplan currently makes provision for 0.47 Ha of open space which is more than adequate to meet the open space needs of the development and in accordance with the requirements of NPPF.

7.74. It is intended that the open space will include a mix of informal outdoor recreational and play areas, the details of which will be provided at Reserved Matters stage.

Transport and accessibility

7.75. Policies T1 and T7 of the local plan set out the transport and accessibility requirements for new development proposals.

7.76. Access will be a matter for determination at the Reserved Matters stage, however it is proposed that access to the site will be taken from Clitheroe Road. Details of this are provided in the accompanying Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan produced by Bryan G Hall.

7.77. The TA provides an assessment of the existing highway network and flows and assesses the impact of proposed development traffic from the site on its safe and efficient operation with access taken from Clitheroe Road. The TA demonstrates that the estimated level of traffic from the development can be adequately accommodated within the local highway network.

7.78. Further to comments raised at the public exhibition events held in relation to the previous application, the applicant has also undertaken detailed parking surveys to assess the level of existing parking provision available in the village, how this is utilised and existing parking patterns including on adjacent residential streets. The findings of this survey and the traffic impact analysis are set out in the TA.

7.79. The Framework Travel Plan sets out measures for encouraging sustainable travel including the provision of improved pedestrian and cycle links between the site, village centre and bus and train stations.

7.80. Notwithstanding the technical analysis, both the TA and Framework Travel Plan highlight the benefits of development in this location in promoting sustainable travel patterns. This reflects on the site's accessibility in terms of public transport; improved provision of pedestrian and cycle links; and, proposals for managing travel through Whalley village including existing car parking arrangements.

7.81. The proposals fully accord with the requirements of both local policies T1 and T7 and NPPF.

Sustainability

7.82. In accordance with the requirements of NPPF, the proposal seeks to locate new development where people want to live and in support of the existing community of Whalley. It will provide new housing, including affordable homes and accommodation for the elderly, to meet local housing needs.

7.83. The site is in a sustainable location with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community. Given the proximity of the site to the centre of Whalley which is identified as a Key Service Centre, development will promote sustainable travel patterns and reduce the need to travel.

7.84. Provision of a nursing home on site will create new employment on site and complement existing economic development in Whalley.

7.85. The site's overall location on the edge of the village will also add to the existing critical mass in terms of population and bring new residents into the community to support existing services and facilities and ensure the vitality and viability of Whalley centre in the future. The proposal therefore also accords with the requirements of NPPF.

7.86. An assessment of other elements of sustainability is contained within the Sustainability Assessment prepared by WSP and submitted in support of the application.

Renewable energy

7.87. In accordance with the requirements of RSS, the Council seeks to achieve 10% renewable energy provision on site within new development.

7.88. The accompanying Renewable Energy Statement prepared by WSP 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.

Comprehensive development

7.89. The proposed development will make a significant contribution to the village of Whalley by providing a mix of new housing to meet local needs, complemented by provision of a nursing home and the creation of additional new open space. The site itself is in a sustainable location and ties in well with existing services and transport infrastructure.

7.90. The proposal takes account of the site's wider context and will help meet the housing needs of the village.

Job creation

7.91. There are also added economic benefits to development of the nursing home on the site in terms of employment generation. We set out below some indicative employment generation figures.

7.92. A ratio of 1 carer to every 5 residents (morning) and 1 carer to every 7 residents (rest of the day) is a typical staffing structure for a nursing home. On this basis, approximately **8-10 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** jobs could be generated directly for care reasons. There is also scope to add in employment for administration/auxiliary functions and based on a nursing home of this size, an **additional 3-4 FTE jobs** could be generated.

7.93. In addition, there is likely to be indirect employment benefits as a result of expenditure on goods and services by the occupiers of the site itself, and induced impacts associated with local expenditure as a result of those who, either directly or indirectly, derive incomes from employment at the site. A typical combined indirect and induced multiplier which could be applied for a development of this kind is: based on 1 full time job supported directly, a further 0.2 full time jobs are supported through indirect and induced expenditure. Therefore **a further 6 FTE jobs** could be supported in the wider economy.

7.94. The scheme will also generate a significant number of temporary construction jobs.

7.95. In conclusion, the development will not only deliver new development and infrastructure to meet local needs, but further support the local economic base of Whalley and its role as a Key Service Centre, and the surrounding Ribble Valley area by providing both permanent and construction jobs. This represents a significant benefit to the Borough.

8. Conclusion

8.1. The proposed development accords with local, regional and national planning policy and will provide a sustainable residential extension to the village of Whalley.

8.2. This Statement has demonstrated that, whilst the site sits outside of the current settlement limits of Whalley, there are other significant material considerations which weigh in favour of development of the site. These are:

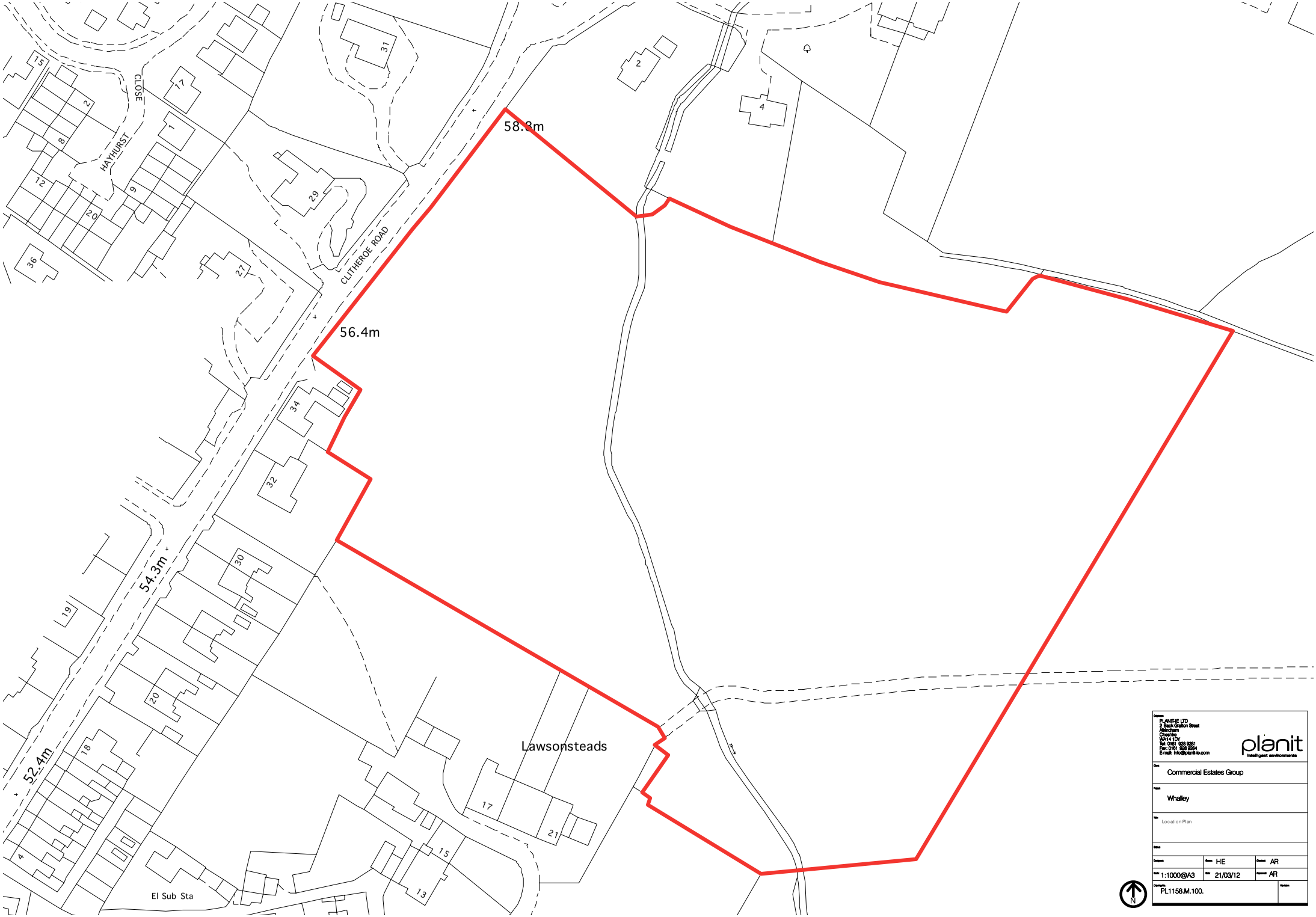
- the need for new housing and affordable housing;
- the suitability of this site in this location;
- the delivery of key infrastructure; and
- provision of jobs, supporting the local economy.

8.3. It will deliver benefits to the surrounding area, in particular, the site provides the best opportunity to:

- address Whalley's existing and future housing requirements with a high quality design-led development;
- provide a mix of housing types including a significant number of family, starter and affordable homes on-site which respect the existing character of the village;
- provide a new nursing care facility to meet existing and future forecasted growth in the elderly population and create additional jobs in Whalley;
- provide new on-site open space and recreational opportunities;
- promote sustainable development which makes best use of existing services, facilities and local transport links; and
- deliver a comprehensive scheme which addresses the infrastructure requirements of Whalley through phased development, which further supports and sustains the vitality and viability of the village.

8.4. Overall, the proposed development should be supported and outline planning permission granted.

APPENDIX 1



Consultant:
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planit
intelligent environments

Client: Commercial Estates Group

Project: Whalley

Title: Location Plan

Status:

Designed:	Drawn: HE	Checked: AR	
Date: 1:1000@A3	Date: 21/03/12	Approved: AR	
Drawing No: PL1158.M.100.		Revision:	

APPENDIX 2

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Whalley
Illustrative Masterplan
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28/03/12
PL1158.M.103.

APPENDIX 3

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.

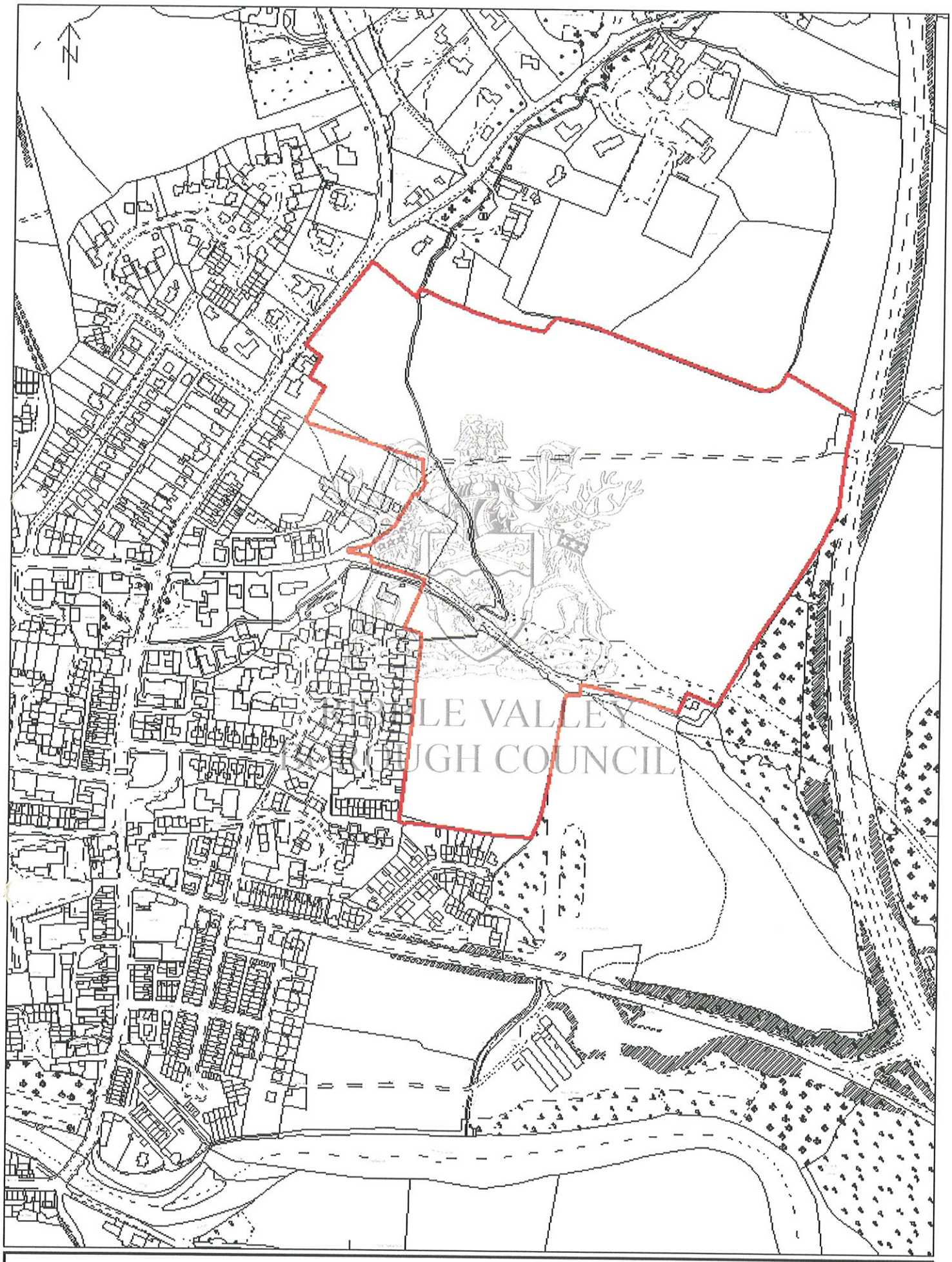
Sustainability Scoring Criteria

S1. Main Development Location:	3	S12. Within Conservation Area:	5
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		
S9. Within Landfill Consultation Zone:	5	S19. Any Bad Neighbour Land Uses:	3
S10. Constrained by Topography:	3	S20. Consultation Zone for High Pressure Pipelines:	5
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

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APPENDIX 4

INFORMATION

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2011
title: HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: COLIN HIRST – HEAD OF REGENERATION AND HOUSING

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Members with information on the most recent results of the Housing Land Availability Survey.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Council Ambitions – Understanding the housing position is key to the delivery of the Council's ambition to match the supply of homes in our area to identify needs.

- Community Objectives – The information in this report relates to a number of community objectives but is particularly relevant to the broad objective of conserving our countryside and enhancing the local environment.

- Corporate Priorities - This information is relevant to the local development framework which is the spatial expression of the Community Strategy.

- Other Consideration – None.

2 INFORMATION

2.1 The Council monitors housing land availability twice a year and produces a housing land availability report. This document provides the information with which to monitor housing development across the Borough. Monitoring continues to be critical to the process of determining planning applications and the Councils duty to ensure a 5year supply of developable land.

2.2 The report provides detailed information on sites with planning permission, sites under construction and enables the Council to create a picture of construction trends and activity rates together with base line evidence on the amount of land that is available to be brought forward. Copies of the full report are available for reference at Planning Reception and the members room on Level D.

2.3 Members will be aware that the relevant strategic basis against which housing land supply is monitored is the Regional Spatial Plan (RSS). The Council continues to monitor against the provision of 2900 homes between 2003 and 2021 to provide for a strategic provision of some 161 units per year. Work is continuing on a review of the strategic requirement as a consequence of the stated intention by Government to abolish the RSS and the need to provide a strategic position for housing delivery going forward.

2.4 The supply position for dwelling units as at October 2011 is summarised as follows:

• Units with full planning permission	163
• Units with outline planning permission	211
• Sites commenced, units remaining but not started	48
• Units under construction	114
• Conversions - not started	56
• Conversions –under construction	42
Total	**634**

60 Affordable housing units have permission (not started) and are included in the housing land supply once they commence.

The table at appendix 1 sets out a 5-year statement, as at October 2011 taking account of the necessary adjustments and smoothing to reflect activity over the monitoring period. Given that we currently plan for 161 units per year this shows that the Council cannot demonstrate an ongoing 5 - year supply of housing land as required by Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing.

2.5 PPS 3 is clear in terms of the guidance to apply when determining applications in the absence of a 5-year supply. Paragraph 71 indicates that;

" Where Local Planning Authorities cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites, for example where Local Development Documents have not been reviewed to take into account policies in this PPS (*pps3*) or there is less than five years supply of deliverable sites, they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in this PPS including the consideration in paragraph 69."

2.6 The fact that an authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply and consequently must have regard to the implications of paragraph 71, also has to be balanced with the need to apply paragraph 69. This retains the need in effect to ensure that in approving a residential development a number of key principles have to be considered. The saved local plan policies will be key-factors when determining applications albeit having regard to what material considerations need to be taken into account due to changing circumstances since those policies were formulated.

2.7 The requirement to consider applications favourably in the absence of a 5 year supply does not mean that there are to be no other policy or development control considerations, that could lead to a refusal. It should be noted that in most cases there would need to be clear and sound reasons for refusal where it does not harm policy considerations particularly as set out in paragraph 69. In addition PPS3 is also clear in that it states that authorities should not be refusing applications solely on the grounds of prematurity. The need for infrastructure to be in place to support the development would however be seen as a fundamental consideration and development ahead of any actual or programmed infrastructure may be seen as premature in that context.

2.8 Paragraph 69 establishes that

In general, in deciding planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should have regard to:

- Achieving high quality housing.
- Ensuring developments achieve a good mix of housing reflecting accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular, families and older people.

- The suitability of a site for housing, including its environmental sustainability.
- Using land effectively and efficiently.
- Ensuring the proposed development is in line with planning for housing objectives, reflecting the need and demand for housing in, and the spatial vision for, the area and does not undermine wider policy objectives eg. addressing housing market renewal issues.

2.9 The ongoing work being undertaken on the Core strategy will have regard to the issue of underlying housing numbers and further work on the strategic housing position will be reported in due course. Any changes to housing provision will need to be supported through evidence and analysis to ensure that the planned requirements are capable of justification and can be defended. This will include the need for consultation as part of the Core Strategy process. At this stage it is important to re-affirm for planning purposes the Council currently will continue to manage supply against the RSS provision.

2.10 Members will recall the approach introduced at the previous Planning and Development Committee to address the situation where applicants were not completing negotiations on Section 106 Agreements as a matter of urgency. This has given rise to a number of applications where formal approval awaits the completion of the Section 106, often on applications that would make a significant contribution to the supply of housing in the borough. These cannot be taken account of within the land supply calculations.

2.11 By way of illustration, there are currently a number of applications that are awaiting completion of the Section 106 for a variety of reasons and consequently do not feature in the supply calculation. In total, these represent some 263 dwellings that are not accounted for. Although 91 dwellings relate to recently considered applications, the remainder relate to older schemes. This highlights the concerns raised by the Head of Planning Services and the need to adopt a firm stance with applicants if we are to avoid a risk of over supply within the five-year accounting period.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1 Housing Land Availability Survey files
2 Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing – CLG - November 2006
3 North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 – GONW- Sept 2008

For details of the Housing Land Availability Schedule contact Sharon O'Neill extension 4506.

For further information on housing and strategic policy issues please ask for Colin Hirst, extension 4503.

1 OCT 2011

APPENDIX 1

Five year supply (2011-2016) based on previously adopted RSS figures and including permissions and completions up until 1st October 2011.

Planned Provision

a) Housing provision 2003/2021	2900	161/yr
b) Net dwellings completed 2003-2011 (8yrs)	1098	129 (1098/8.5)
c) Net dwellings required 2011-2021 (9.5 years) (adjusted to a revised annual rate)	1802/9.5	190/yr
d) Adjusted Net 5 yr requirement 2011-2016 (5yrs)	950	190*5 (annual equivalent smoothed over plan period)

a) Strategic housing provision based on previously adopted RSS figures.

b) Actual completions in monitoring period divided by number of years.

c) Residual requirements based on completions and plan period remaining. This figure gives the annualised requirement to attain planned figure.

d) Five year requirements based on the revised/adjusted annualised rate.

Identified Supply

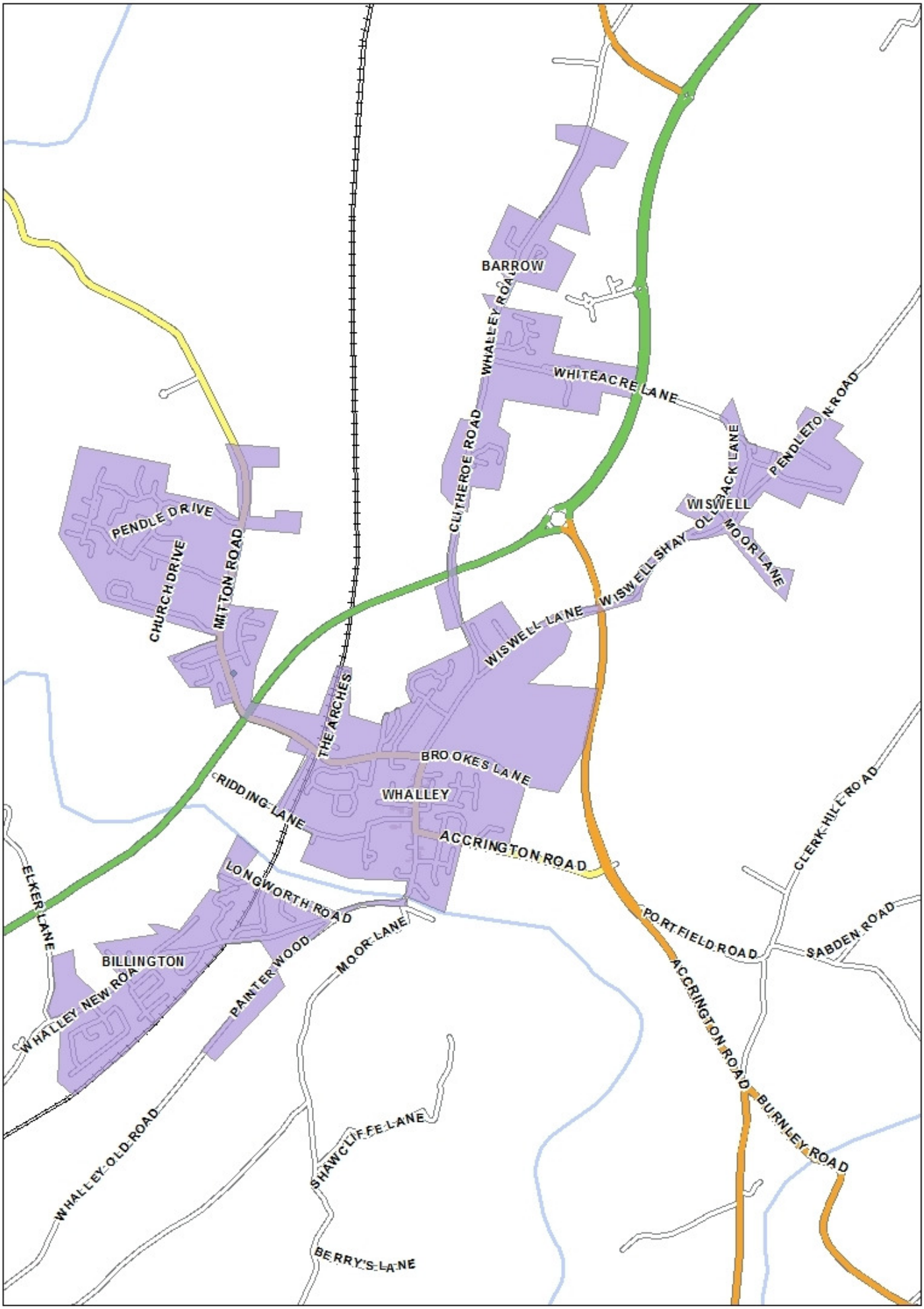
Supply of deliverable sites over 5 years (Housing Land Availability Survey April 2011)

Sites under construction	**156**
Deliverable permissions	(538)
(discounted by 10% slippage allowance but including affordable units)	484
Total Supply	**640**

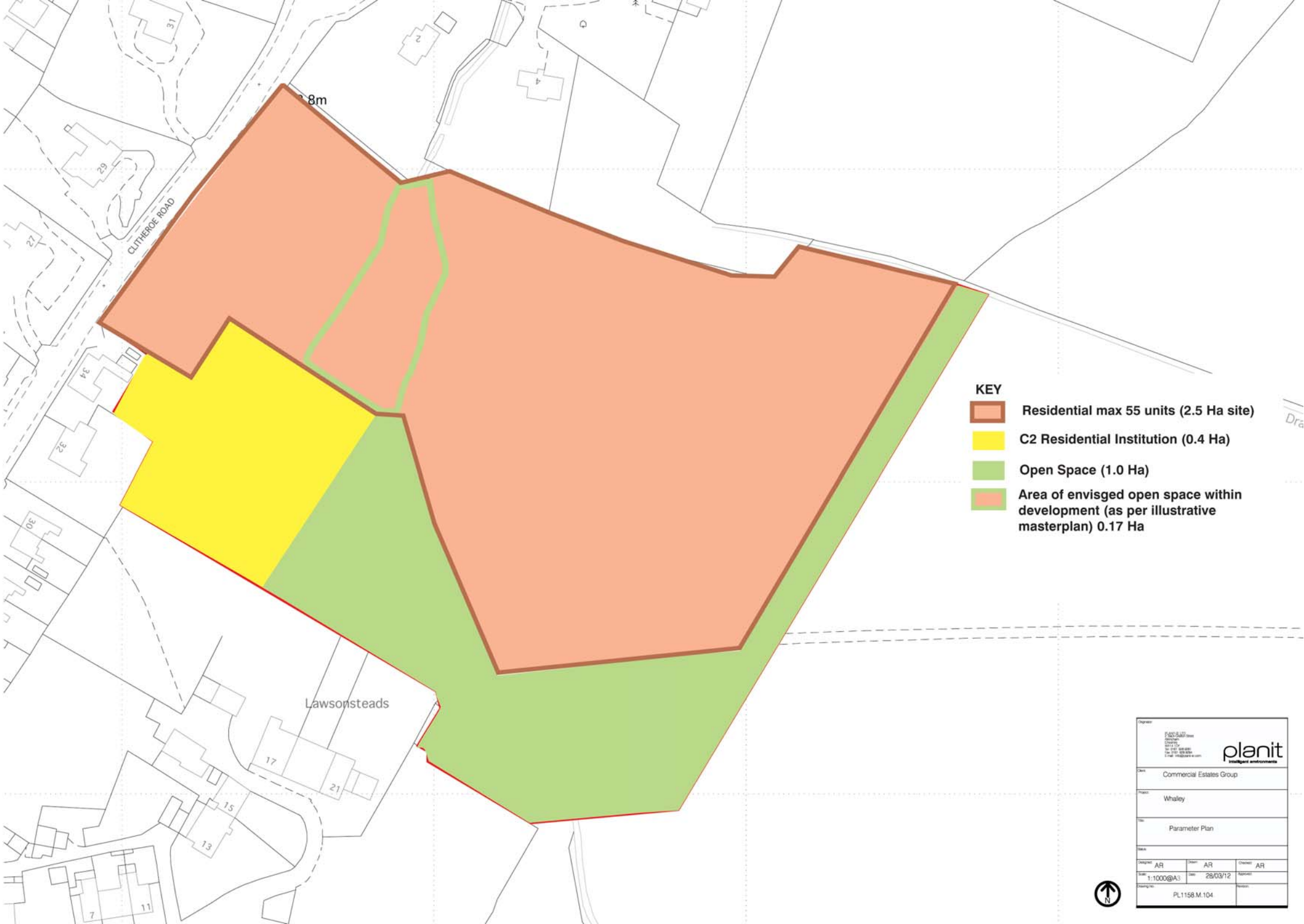
Equates to **3.3 yrs supply** at 5 year adjusted rate at 01.10.11

Actual supply: 3.3 yrs supply (640/190)

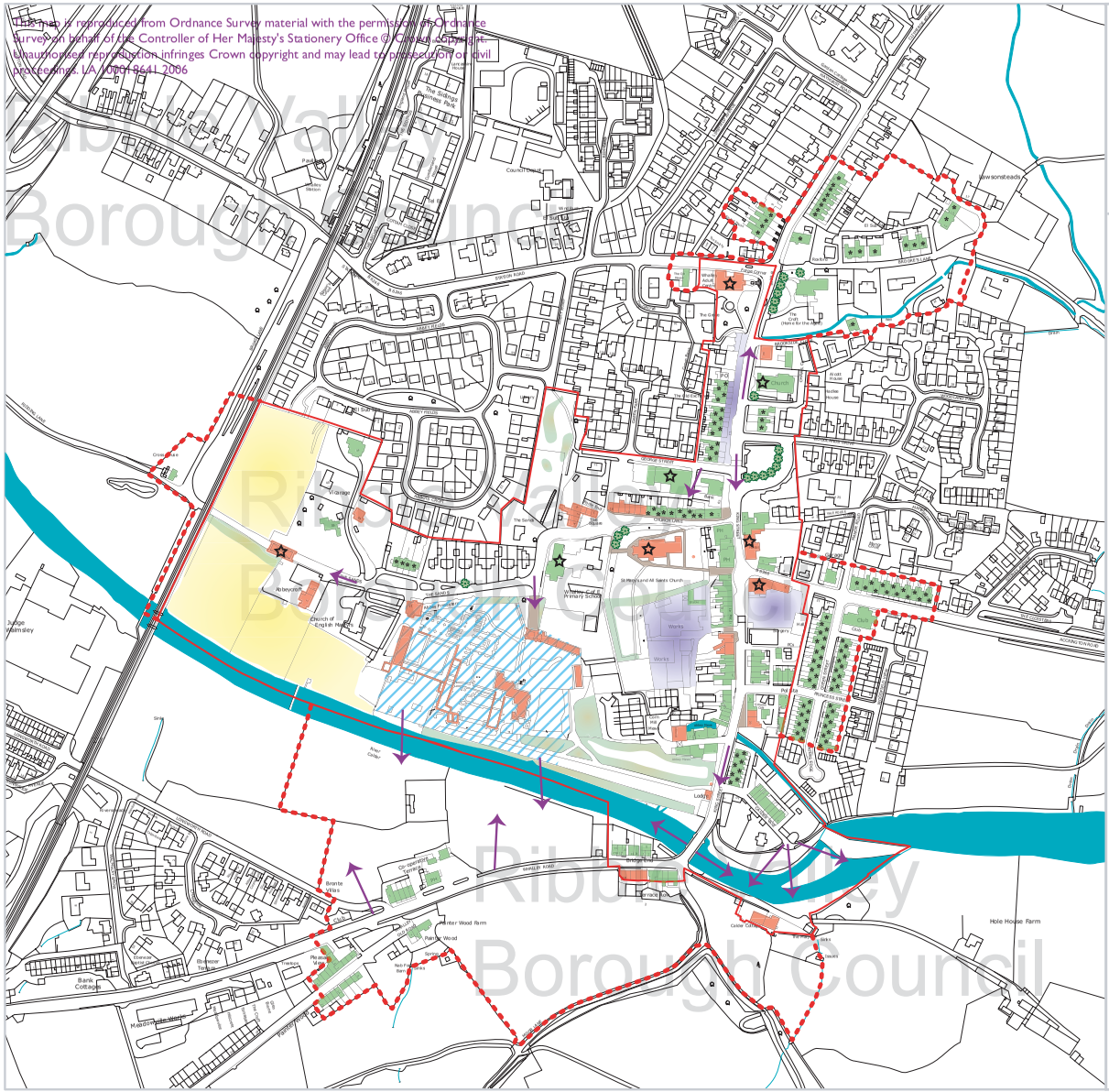
APPENDIX 5


BARROW
WHALLEY ROAD
WHITEACRE LANE
PENDLETON ROAD
CLITHEROE ROAD
WISWELL
OLD BACK LANE
MOOR LANE
WISWELL SHAY
WISWELL LANE
PENDLE DRIVE
CHURCH DRIVE
MITTON ROAD
THE ARCHES
BROOKES LANE
WHALLEY
CRIDDING LANE
ACCRINGTON ROAD
CLERK HILL ROAD
ELKER LANE
LONGWORTH ROAD
PORTFIELD ROAD
SABDEN ROAD
BILLINGTON
PAINTERWOOD
MOOR LANE
WHALLEY NEW ROAD
ACCRINGTON ROAD
BURNLEY ROAD
WHALLEY OLD ROAD
SHAWCLIFFE LANE
BERRY'S LANE

APPENDIX 6


8m
CLITHEROE ROAD
Lawsonsteads
KEY
Residential max 55 units (2.5 Ha site)
C2 Residential Institution (0.4 Ha)
Open Space (1.0 Ha)
Area of envisged open space within development (as per illustrative masterplan) 0.17 Ha
planit
intelligent environments
Commercial Estates Group
Whalley
Parameter Plan
AR
AR
AR
1:1000@A3
28/03/12
PL1158.M.104

APPENDIX 7



Ribble Valley Borough Council

Whalley Conservation Area

Townscape Appraisal Map

- Conservation area boundary
- Proposed extension to conservation area boundary
- Listed Buildings
- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Significant open spaces
- Historic surfaces
- Important tree groups
- Important trees
- Proposed Article 4 Direction
- Important views
- Focal buildings

N

Project	Land east of Clitheroe Road (Lawsonsteads), Whalley	LPA	Ribble Valley BC
Title	Appendix 1 - Whalley Conservation Area Map	Date: 12.10.11 Project No: 01920137 Drawing No: 01920137/App1 Drawn by: CC	
Client	Commercial Estates Group		

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