

BY EMAIL AND POST: *Daniela.Ripa@ribblevalley.gov.uk*

Ms Daniela Ripa
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Church Walk
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

Our Ref: 23210/A3/VR/LD
11th August 2014

Dear Daniela,

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
HIGGINS BROOK, LAND EAST OF CHIPPING LANE, LONGRIDGE

Request for Screening Opinion under Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning
(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

This letter and the supporting information represent a formal request, on behalf of Barratt Homes (Manchester), for a Screening Opinion from Ribble Valley Borough Council in accordance with Regulation 5 of the EIA Regulations 2011.

The Screening Opinion is requested in order to confirm our understanding that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would not be necessary for the proposed development.

The following information is provided as part of this Screening Request, in accordance with Regulation 5(2) of the EIA Regulations:

- (a) a plan sufficient to identify the land (Appendix B);
- (b) a brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and of its possible effects on the environment (set out below and in Appendix A); and
- (c) such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make (Appendices C-G).

Background

As you are aware the Applicant submitted a previous Screening Opinion for the Site on 25th March 2014, and a response to this was received from the Council on 15th April 2014. The Screening Opinion response concluded the following:

“Having screened the proposal against the selection criteria in Schedule 3 and evaluated the potential significance of the likely environmental effects, including in cumulation with other development, the local planning authority is of the opinion that the proposed development is not likely to have significant effects on the environment and as such, is not EIA development within the meaning of the [EIA] Regulations.”

The original Screening Opinion was based on a slightly smaller Site area than that now proposed.

The parameters of the scheme have also now been amended to include up to 520 dwellings, relocation of Longridge Cricket Club to provide a new cricket ground, pavilion, car park and associated facilities, a new primary school, and open space, landscaped areas and ecological enhancement measures. Whilst we do not consider that a Screening Opinion will now be required, for the avoidance of doubt, we hereby respectfully request that the Council undertake a Screening Opinion on the basis of the amended scheme, as set out below.

Site and Surrounding Area

The Site, shown edged on the plan (enclosed at Appendix B) comprises approximately 24.80 ha of Greenfield land to the north west of Longridge. The current use of the land is as agricultural grazing land and consists of a number of field sections, each enclosed by hedgerows containing scattered trees. The land is generally level with gentle undulations.

To the east, north and west of the Site is predominantly agricultural grazing land with open countryside beyond. The Site includes the land immediately adjoining the Site to the west comprising of Longridge Cricket Club and land at Chipping Lane, and further cricket pitch and Longridge Town FC pitches. To the south the Site is bound, from west to east, by the junction of Chipping Lane and Inglewhite Road, residential properties fronting Inglewhite Road, Sainsbury's supermarket and a vehicle repair and sales premises, and residential properties off Redwood Drive and its tributary streets. Immediately to the east is the buildings of Willow Farm and surrounding farm land.

Proposed Development

It is proposed to submit an outline planning application to develop the Site for approximately 520 dwellings, relocation of Longridge Cricket Club to provide a new cricket ground, pavilion, car park and associated facilities, a new primary school including open space, landscaped areas and ecological enhancement measures.

Parallel Proposals

The land and development to which this Screening request relates is detailed within this letter and in the enclosed documents. Barratt Homes (Manchester) have also submitted in parallel to this proposal, a detailed planning application for 106 dwellings on 7.08 ha of land that forms the eastern most field sections of the Site subject of this Screening Request, which is currently pending consideration (Application Ref: 3/2014/0438). That proposal, however, is the subject of a separate Screening request in order to be treated in isolation.

EIA Regulations

The proposed development does not fall within 'Schedule 1' of the EIA Regulations. It is considered to constitute 'Schedule 2' development, as an 'urban development project' in accordance with Section 10(b). The threshold for 'urban development projects' is an area exceeding 0.5ha; the Site is approximately 24.80 ha and it is therefore considered to comprise Schedule 2 development.

As defined in Regulation 2(1), if the development is considered to fall within Schedule 2, an EIA is required if any part of the development is to be carried out in a 'sensitive area'. In the case of the proposed development, neither the Site nor the adjoining land is classified as a 'sensitive area'. Although the Site area exceeds the threshold for 'urban development projects' the proposed development will not result in significant effects and, therefore, it is not considered to be EIA Development and no EIA would be required.

This conclusion has been drawn from the outcome of our review of the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development, set out in Appendix A to this letter.

Initial pre-application discussions have already been undertaken with the Local Planning Authority relating to the development of this Site and informal formal feedback relating to the validation requirements of a planning application. It is proposed that the outline planning application will comprise of the following:

- Application Forms;
- Correct Fee;
- Ownership Certificate;
- Agricultural Holdings Certificate;
- Location Plan 1:1250/1:2500 scale;
- Site Plan/Block Plan 1:500 scale;
- Existing Site Survey Plan 1:200 scale;
- Proposed Site Survey Plan 1:200 scale;
- Access Plan 1:100/1:200 scale;
- Landscape Proposals Plan 1:200/1:500 scale
- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement (including an Affordable Housing Statement);
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Tree Survey;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Transport Assessment;
- Draft Travel Plan;
- Air Quality Statement;
- Phase 1 Site Investigation;
- Nature Conservation/Ecological Assessment and related surveys;
- Drainage and Surface Water Assessment;
- Utilities Statement;
- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Statement of Community Involvement; and
- Draft Heads of Terms for S106 Contributions

We would be grateful for an acknowledgement or formal receipt of this submission, together with notification of the expiry date of the statutory period and confirmation that the Screening Opinion will be placed on the Public Register in accordance with Regulation 23(2). Please advise if you require any further information to form a decision.

Yours sincerely,



Vincent Ryan
Associate

cc. Mr John Macholc, RVBC
Barratt Homes (Manchester)

Enc. Appendix A: Summary of Selection Criteria for Screening the Proposed Development
Appendix B: Site Boundary Plan
Appendix C: Original EIA Screening Response from Ribble Valley Borough Council
Appendix D: Agricultural Land Quality Report (Fisher German)
Appendix E: Preliminary Landscape and Visual Overview (Tyler Grange)
Appendix F: Preliminary Ecological Overview (Tyler Grange)
Appendix G: Parameters Plan (E*scape)

HIGGINS BROOK, EAST OF CHIPPING LANE, LONGRIDGE

APPENDIX A

Schedule 3 EIA Assessment

APPENDIX A

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT HIGGINS BROOK, LAND EAST OF CHIPPING LANE, LONGRIDGE

Summary of selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development (based on Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations 2011)

The following selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development (based on Schedule 3 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011) have been reviewed with regard to the proposed residential development at Higgins Brook, Land East of Chipping Lane, Longridge.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	
Is it a Schedule 1 case?	No.
Is it a Schedule 2 case?	Yes. The proposed development Site exceeds the 0.5 hectare threshold for Schedule 2 10(b) 'urban development projects'
1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEVELOPMENTS	
(a) Size of the development	
Will the development be out of scale with the existing environment?	The Site is located on the edge of an existing settlement, which is a Principal Settlement within Ribble Valley, and is of scale appropriate to the location. There are no local factors which indicate a smaller scale development/threshold should be applied to the Site. A further consideration is that Longridge has been identified within the emerging Ribble Valley Core Strategy of needing in the region of 900 new homes to be built over the next 15 years.
Will it lead to further consequential development or works?	The development includes all necessary works including access.
(b) Cumulation with other development	
Are there potential significant cumulative impacts with other existing development or development not yet begun but for which planning permission exists?	Barton Willmore is not aware of any known existing developments or existing consents for development that would cause a significant cumulative impact on the environment when considered in parallel to the Site. Pre-application discussions with the local planning authority and County Council have informed the assessment methodology for measuring landscape and visual impacts and highway impacts and it is unlikely that these assessments will reveal any significant effects to warrant EIA. It was confirmed by the Council as part of the previous EIA Screening Opinion for the Site that an EIA was not required, however as the the parameters of the proposal have been amended, to include the relocation of the Cricket Club, an Screening Opinion has been submitted on this basis (Appendix C).
Should the application for this development be regarded as an integral part of a more	Paragraph 26 of Circular 02/99 stipulates that when determining whether an EIA is required, a planning application should not be considered in isolation and in some cases must

<p>substantial project? If so, can related developments which are subject to separate applications proceed independently?</p>	<p>be considered in respect of the wider scheme.</p> <p>Approximately 7.08 ha of the Site is the subject of a separate, parallel, detailed planning application proposing approximately 106 dwellings. That proposal was the subject of a separate Screening request, and it was confirmed that no EIA was required.</p> <p>For both the outline planning application, which is subject to this EIA Screening Opinion request, and the detailed application, access to the Site will be taken from the same point on Chipping Lane. This enables the smaller proposal to proceed regardless of the outcome of the outline planning application. Similarly, because the outline proposal will not change the development boundaries identified on the detailed proposal, the overlapping developments would have the same impacts. The proposals can, therefore, be treated independently.</p>
<p>(c) Use of natural resources</p>	
<p>Will construction or operation of the development use natural resources such as land, water, material or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?</p>	<p>The proposed construction and operation of the development will use resources in terms of land, water and energy as would be expected from a residential development.</p> <p>The operational phase of the proposed development will be designed to sustainable standards to reduce natural resource consumption in accordance with local and national planning policy and in accordance with Building Regulation requirements.</p>
<p>(d) Production of waste</p>	
<p>Will the development produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?</p>	<p>A site waste management plan will be implemented during construction of the proposed development and the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures for the operational phase of the development will ensure that any potential effects will not be significant. These include the removal of operational waste in line with Building Standards and good practice requirements and managed in accordance with applicable legislation.</p>
<p>(e) Pollution and nuisances</p>	
<p>Will the development release any pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?</p>	<p>The proposed development is residential and, therefore, no hazardous, toxic or noxious substances are expected to be emitted.</p>
<p>Is there a potential risk from leachates or escape of wastes of other products/by-products that may constitute a contaminant in the environment?</p>	<p>This is considered unlikely. Appropriate measures will be used to reduce the risk of accidental spillages of contaminants during the construction or completed development phases. The operational phase will not result in any hazardous by-products.</p>
<p>Will the development cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or</p>	<p>The potential exists for noise and vibration effects to result from the site preparation, demolition and construction processes. These potential effects will be managed in accordance with standard best practice measures and are not</p>

electromagnetic radiation?	<p>anticipated to generate significant adverse effects and are temporary in nature.</p> <p>Lighting from the proposed development will be minimised through sensitive design in accordance with relevant British Standards and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2011) Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light so as not to lead to any significant increase in light pollution or have an adverse impact on ecological resources. The Site is also adjacent to an existing settlement, which is an existing source of light glow.</p> <p>No electromagnetic radiation, heat or energy releases are expected other than those associated with normal residential development.</p> <p>A noise assessment and air quality assessment will form part of the outline planning application submission.</p>
Will the development lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	<p>Surface water run-off and foul water drainage will be managed on the Site during both the construction and completed development phases, with discharge either to ground (on site) or watercourse (off site). This is to ensure there are no adverse effects on the surrounding water sources. A Flood Risk Assessment will be undertaken and submitted with the planning application, alongside a suitable outline drainage strategy for the Site. The Site is identified as a "minor aquifer low" according to the Environmental Agency Groundwater maps and is not within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone.</p> <p>Foul water from the completed development drainage will be managed on Site in accordance with guidance from the relevant statutory undertaker.</p>
(f) Risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used	
Will there be a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which would have effects on people or the environment?	<p>It is anticipated that the appropriate best practice measures in accordance with Health and Safety legislation/requirements will be followed during the construction and operation of the development. This is to ensure the risk of accidents that would have effects on people or the environment is minimised.</p> <p>There are no anticipated significant risks of accidents during operation due to the nature of the proposed development.</p>
Will the development involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to people or the environment (flora, fauna, water supplies)?	<p>The proposed development does not involve the use, transport or production of substances or materials which would be harmful to people or the environment.</p> <p>During construction certain materials may be present on the Site which may be harmful to the environment. However, it is considered that through the implementation of appropriate environmental control measures there will be no significant environmental effects.</p>
Other characteristics	
Potential physical changes (topography, land use, changes in water bodies etc) from construction, operation	<p>Whilst no significant changes in topography are anticipated, there will be slight physical changes to the land to utilise it and deliver it for residential development. Additionally, the land use will change from agricultural land to developed residential</p>

or decommissioning of the development?	land with associated infrastructure, landscaping and public open space. The Site is not at risk of flooding, as demonstrated within the Land Classification Assessment and Environment Agency mapping system (Appendix D).
2. LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT	
(a) Existing land use	
Are there existing land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the development, e.g. residential, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying?	<p>The Site comprises agricultural Greenfield land and Longridge Cricket Club. The proposed development will change this use to predominately residential and associated public open space and infrastructure, such as highways. It is also proposed to relocate the Cricket Club and provide a primary school.</p> <p>Neighbouring land uses include similar agricultural land to the north and west, and predominantly residential to the south, as well as a Sainsbury's supermarket and premises used for the sale and repair of motor vehicles.</p> <p>The existing residential area to the south has views onto the Site. These views would change as a result of the development, during construction and operation of the proposed phases; however, there is very limited visibility from the settlement Core and Conservation Area. Views from the Playing Fields to the west are also filtered heavily by surrounding vegetation. There are no public rights of way over any of the land which would be affected by the proposed development.</p> <p>Construction traffic, noise and dust effects would also be likely in these locations; however these are not anticipated to be significant given the small scale of development and surrounding primarily urban nature.</p>
Is the development located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	The Site is predominately undeveloped agricultural land which is Agricultural Land Classification Grade 3B (with the exception of the current cricket pitch, which is developed and maintained land used for by the Cricket Club) (Appendix D). It is not considered to be high quality agricultural land and its loss would have only a small impact on agriculture in this region. The best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 2) is located to the west of the region outwith the settlement.
(b) Relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	
<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the development?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • groundwater resources • surface waters • forestry • agriculture • fisheries • tourism 	<p>The Environment Agency Groundwater Source Protection Zone maps confirm that the site is not located within or near to a groundwater source protection zones and outwith any area of flood risk, although partly in areas at risk of surface water flooding as confirmed by the Flood Risk Maps in the supporting Land Classification Assessment (Appendix D).</p> <p>A Phase 1 Site Investigation will be produced to accompany the planning application.</p> <p>The Site does not consist of the best and most versatile agricultural land and is Grade 3B.</p> <p>The Site does not fall within a Minerals Safeguarding Area.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minerals 	
(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment	
<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the development?</p>	<p>No statutory designations apply to the Site directly. The nearest designation is the Forest of Bowland AONB which lies approximately 1km to the north and north west of the Site. On the basis of the distance between the Site and the AONB and having regard to intervening landscape character it is not considered that the designation will be affected by the development.</p> <p>Whilst views of the Site do extend across the undulating lowland farmland towards the Forest of Bowland and outlying Bleasdale Moors, layers of hedgerow, farmland corpse plantations and scattered farmsteads filter views and increase the capacity of the landscape to absorb sensitive development.</p> <p>The Site's development boundaries have been determined on this basis and on the basis of the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Overview prepared by Tyler Grange (Appendix E). This has been taken into consideration as part of the proposed detailed design approach to reflect the character of the area and the views towards and from the AONB.</p> <p>The boundary to Longridge Conservation Area is approximately 60m to the south of the Site. It is essentially urban in nature and includes St Paul's church, which is partly visible from the Site. Given the residential nature of the Site and its surrounds, it is unlikely there would be significant effects on its setting, and there is very limited visibility.</p>
<p>Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies • the coastal zone • mountains, forests or woodlands • nature reserves and parks 	<p>See above for commentary.</p>
<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected?</p>	<p>A Phase I Ecological Assessment of the site has been undertaken, together with Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) surveys of nearby ponds to establish the potential of the ponds to support Great Crested Newts (GCN) and the need or otherwise for detailed surveys to be undertaken.</p> <p>The attached Preliminary Ecological Overview (Appendix F) concludes that the proposed development, if designed with multifunctional green infrastructure suitable for ecological enhancement measures, would not result in significant affects on protected, important or sensitive species.</p> <p>The proposed design assumes GCN presence at two ponds outwith the Site but within 250m. On this basis mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed, which, if provided, will ensure that there are no significant affects on the species as a</p>

	result of the development.
Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected?	No.
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	The Environment Agency Groundwater Source Protection Zone maps confirm that the site is not located within or near to a Groundwater Source Protection Zone. A Phase 1 Site Investigation will accompany the planning application.
Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected?	It is considered that there are no features of high landscape value located on or around the Site. The Forest of Bowland AONB is of a sufficient distance (approximately 1km) from the Site so as not to be affected by the development. The Site's development boundaries have been determined on this basis and on the basis of the Preliminary Landscape and Visual Overview prepared by Tyler Grange (Appendix E).
Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected?	The relocation of Longridge Cricket Club now forms part of the proposals and it is proposed to relocate the Cricket Club from its former location immediately to the east of Chipping Lane, to north of the development as shown in the accompanying Parameters Plan (Appendix G). It is not a public facility, and its operation will not be affected by the proposed development and will be improved. There are no recreational public routes that border or transverse the Site. It is anticipated that a pedestrian link will be provided to the south of the Site to an existing play area off Redwood Drive. This is not expected to result in any significant effects on the facility.
Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected?	A Transport Assessment will accompany the planning application. The proposed development is not of a scale that is anticipated result in significant effects on transport routes in the local area.
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	As a result of the location of the proposed development, local topography and surrounding landscape character, the development will only be highly visible from highways immediately adjoining the Site and land uses that border the Site. Extensive views of the Site by a high volume of people is not anticipated, outwith the existing nearby residential properties, Sainsbury's supermarket, cricket club and surrounding private farmland. The preliminary landscape and visual overview provided in Appendix E provides further details.
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be	The nearest heritage asset is Longridge Conservation Area, the boundary for which is located approximately 60 metres to the south of the Site. As a result of the intervening urban landscape the key qualities and views into and out of the

affected?	Conservation Area, and other notable vistas within the Conservation Area, have no relationship with or will be affected by the development. This is aided by the presence of existing modern residential development between the Site and the Conservation Area.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected?	The Site is on the periphery of the town of Longridge and located to the north of existing residential and commercial properties. As such, it is not considered that the proposed development is of a scale that could affect the locality significantly.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected?	<p>The Site is not located within or near an Air Quality Management Area ("AQMA"). The nearest AQMA is located in Clitheroe, approximately 15km from the Site. An air quality assessment will be provided as part of the application.</p> <p>The Site is Greenfield and has been in use for agricultural purposes since the 1800s. Consequently, it is not anticipated that contamination is present. A Phase 1 Site Investigation will form part of the application.</p> <p>There are no known areas of existing pollution on or surrounding the Site.</p>
Is the location of the development susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the development to present environmental problems?	<p>The Site is not located within an area susceptible to flooding and is not considered susceptible for any other hazards.</p> <p>A Flood Risk Assessment and Phase 1 Site Investigation will be submitted in support of the planning application.</p>

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT

(a) Extent of the impact

Will the effect extend over a large area?	The greatest potential effects are anticipated to be largely confined to the Site and the land immediately adjoining it. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment will address any issues raised in terms of the scale of effects. Some visual effects will be noted from distance, but the impact is unlikely to be significant on the basis of the Site's position immediately adjacent to the urban area. Traffic impacts are not expected to be significant or extend over a large area.
Will many people be affected?	Whilst it is recognised that the visual impact of the proposed development may change for existing residents to the south of the Site, it is not considered that these affects will be significant and affected dwellings are limited in number, which are principally those fronting Inglewhite Road, Crumpax Meadow, Firwood Close, Redwood Drive and Willow Park Lane.

	<p>No public footpaths transverse the Site, and there is limited visibility from the settlement core, Conservation Area and Playing Fields.</p> <p>It is anticipated that any affects are predominately confined to the Site area and the land immediately adjoining the Site, where the numbers of people affected is not considered to be significant.</p>
(b) Transboundary nature of the impact	
<p>Will there be any potential for transboundary impact? (n.b. Development which has a significant effect on the environment in another Member State is likely to be very rare. It is for the Secretary of State to check Environmental Statements to decide whether there is likely to be such an effect in each case).</p>	No.
(c) Magnitude and complexity of the impact	
<p>Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?</p>	<p>It is considered unlikely that there will be a large change in environmental conditions as the proposed development is for residential development, and the initial ecology and landscape findings consider that the scheme is appropriate with certain mitigation measures.</p>
<p>Will the effect be unusual in the area or particularly complex?</p>	<p>No. The proposal is for residential development in an urban area, and the relocation of the existing Cricket Club.</p>
<p>Will many receptors other than people (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?</p>	<p>A Phase I Ecological Assessment of the site has been undertaken, together with Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) surveys of nearby ponds to establish the potential of the ponds to support Great Crested Newts (GCN) and the need or otherwise for detailed surveys to be undertaken.</p> <p>The attached Preliminary Ecological Overview (Appendix F) concludes that the proposed development, if designed with multifunctional green infrastructure suitable for ecological enhancement measures, would not result in significant affects on protected, important or sensitive species.</p> <p>The proposed design assumes GCN presence at two ponds outwith the Site but within 250m. On this basis mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed, which, if provided, will ensure that there are no significant affects on the species as a result of the development.</p>
<p>Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?</p>	<p>The Site is not within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. Pre-application engagement with the County Archaeologist has revealed that the Site is anticipated to have any archaeological value, having regard to historical developments in the area.</p>

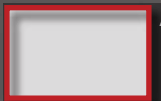
Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?	It is not anticipated that environmental standards will be breached as a result of the development.
Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected?	There are no protected sites, areas or features located in close proximity to the Site, that are likely to experience significant impacts as a result of the development. The supporting preliminary ecology and landscape assessments, and associated reports that are under preparation, demonstrate that there is unlikely to be any significant risk.
d) Probability of the impact	
Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?	Assessment of the impacts of the development on various factors is predicted through the preparation of detailed supporting planning application documents. The probability and scale of effects can therefore be established and none are considered to be significant to warrant EIA.
Is there a low probability of a potentially highly significant effect?	No significant effects are predicted to occur.
(e) Duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	
Will the effect continue for a long time?	Construction effects will be temporary (for a period of no more than 10 years) in duration and any operational effects will be permanent following completion of the construction phase.
Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?	Construction effects will be temporary in duration and the operational effects will be permanent.
Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?	Construction – intermittent Operation – continuous
If intermittent, will it be frequent rather than rare?	Construction effects will be frequent for the duration of that phase. Operational effects of residential development will be frequent.
Will the impact be irreversible?	The removal of Grade 3B agricultural land and its replacement with residential development, relocation of the Cricket Club and new Primary School, infrastructure, public open space and ecological enhancement will be permanent and irreversible. The effects of this are not considered to be significant given the lesser quality of the land and benefits that the development will bring. The parallel effects of the construction phase will be reversible.
Will it be difficult to avoid or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?	No significant effects are predicted. Effects that are predicted can either be mitigated or the benefits of the minimal effect will outweigh any perceived harm.

HIGGINS BROOK, EAST OF CHIPPING LANE, LONGRIDGE


APPENDIX B

Location Plan


Key



Application Boundary

n*ORTH



Scale 1:2500 (@A3)

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e*SCAPE
urbanists

Project Title
Higgin Brook, Longridge

e*SCAPE Job No.
013-008

Client
Barratt Homes

Drawing Number
013-008-P001b

Revision
REV F

Drawing Title
Outline Application Boundary Plan

Scale
1:2500 @ A3

Date
November '13

HIGGINS BROOK, EAST OF CHIPPING LANE, LONGRIDGE

APPENDIX C

Original EIA Screening Response from Ribble Valley Borough Council



RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

please ask for: Daniela Ripa
direct line: 01200 414518
e-mail: Daniela.ripa@ribblevalley.gov.uk
my ref: 3/2014/0223
your ref: Higgins Brook, Longridge
date: 15th April 2014

Council Offices
Church Walk
CLITHEROE
Lancashire BB7 2RA

Switchboard: 01200 425111
Fax: 01200 414487
DX: Clitheroe 15157
www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

Dear Mr Vincent Ryan,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS

Screening opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011

Proposed residential development with associated works on land to north west of Longridge and east of Chipping Lane, Longridge

I refer to the above request received by the local planning authority on 25th March 2014 for a screening opinion pursuant to Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. The request letter was accompanied by five appendices: Appendix A: Summary of selection criteria for screening; Appendix B: Site boundary plan; Appendix C: Preliminary ecological overview; Appendix D: Preliminary landscape and visual overview; and Appendix E: Agricultural land quality report.

This letter constitutes the formal screening opinion of the local planning authority in respect of the above development based on the information provided. In accordance with the Regulations and having regards to the National Planning Practice Guidance Annex: Indicative Screening Thresholds (Paragraph 057 Reference ID: 4-057-20140306) the Local Planning Authority has adopted the screening opinion that the proposal is not EIA development, the reasoning for which is set out below.

Reasoning:

Residential development comprising approximately 500 dwellings is proposed on a site measuring 23.93 hectares to the north of Longridge, within an area designated as open countryside in the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan. The proposed development constitutes an 'urban development project' under Column 1 Paragraph 10(b) of Schedule 2 and the site area exceeds the threshold of 0.5ha in Column 2. The proposal is therefore Schedule 2 development. However, the site is not within a 'sensitive area' as defined by the Regulations.

The local planning authority is required to assess whether the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location by screening the Schedule 2 development against the selection criteria in

Schedule 3 (the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the characteristics of the potential impact).

Characteristics of Development

The proposed development comprises of approximately 500 dwellings with associated open space, landscaped areas and ecological enhancement on 23.93 hectares of land. In respect of cumulation with other development, the local planning authority has considered consented developments, including within the Borough of Preston.

The proposed use of natural resources including land and production of waste during the construction process would be relative to that normally associated with urban infrastructure projects. There would be an increase in noise, disturbance, emissions and vibration resulting from construction works, but the extent of the impact is considered to be localised and there are no significant risks that would arise.

Location of Development

The site comprises of 23.93 hectares of grade 3B agricultural land within an area designated as open countryside. Longridge is identified in the draft Ribble Valley Core Strategy as one of the three main settlements to accommodate new residential development in the Borough.

The site is not located in a particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable location and has no known archaeological or mineral significance. The site forms part of the setting of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, however the nature of the proposed development is such that it would not have a significant effect on its setting. Localised impacts on the setting and views in respect of both the AONB and Longridge Conservation Area would be assessed by submission of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Heritage Statement with any planning application.

The site is known to contain ponds and hedgerows and the proposed development therefore has the potential to impact upon protected species including great crested newts, bats and birds. Ribble Rivers Trust also advise that they are aware of otters in the vicinity of the site and Higgins Brook is known to contain trout, lamprey, bullhead, salmon and eels, the latter two of which are protected under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act and EC Eel Directive. Comprehensive protected species surveys should be submitted with any planning application and consideration would need to be afforded to potential impact on Higgins Brook, including during the construction phase. Potential impacts during construction would be mitigated by management procedures, however mitigation such as attenuation ponds may be necessary if surface water is proposed to discharge to the watercourse.

Characteristics of Potential Impact

The development would introduce built form into previously undeveloped open countryside and whilst it would therefore have an urbanising effect, this would not amount to a significant effect, when considered alone and in cumulation with other development. There would be an increase in noise, disturbance, emissions and vibration resulting from construction works, but the extent of the impact, including cumulative, is considered to be localised. Similarly, in respect of visual impact, the development would be viewed against the backdrop of existing urban development and there would be no undue impact on the setting of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty due to mitigating distances. The development would not be

a major development of more than local importance and having regards to the location and characteristics of the development, it is concluded that that the characteristics of potential impact, when considered alone or in cumulation, would not amount to significant environmental effects.

Conclusion

Having screened the proposal against the selection criteria in Schedule 3 and evaluated the potential significance of the likely environmental effects, including in cumulation with other development, the local planning authority is of the opinion that the proposed development is not likely to have significant effects on the environment and as such, is not EIA development within the meaning of the Regulations.

It is noted that comprehensive ecological surveys, along with appropriate mitigation, enhancement and compensatory measures would be required to be submitted with any subsequent planning applications. Consideration should also be afforded to Higgin Brook and the proximity of the site to existing land uses, including Longridge Cricket Club and Willow Farm.

You are advised that the local planning authority's opinion on the likelihood of significant environmental effects is reached only for the purpose of adopting this screening opinion under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011. This screening opinion is given without prejudice to any subsequent consideration by the planning authority through the planning application process of the impacts of the proposed development and assessment of the acceptability or otherwise of the proposed development relative to development plan policy and other material considerations.

Should you wish to discuss the above, or require further clarification on planning application submission requirements, please contact my planning officer, Daniela Ripa, on the direct line number at the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

John Macholc (Chief Planning Officer)

HIGGINS BROOK, EAST OF CHIPPING LANE, LONGRIDGE

APPENDIX D

Agricultural Land Quality Report (Fisher German)



**AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY REPORT
LAND AT
WILLOWS FARM
LONGRIDGE
PRESTON
PR3 2TG**

**Prepared: 13th December 2013
For Barratt Homes**

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APPENDICES

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1. Summary

- 1.1 A study and survey of the land located directly to the north of the centre of the settlement of Longridge, Lancashire, was inspected by Fisher German on Tuesday, 10th December 2013. The land, which is in two ownerships and occupied by two different farmers, comprises of 10 separate field enclosures extending in total to approximately 56.7 acres (22.9 hectares). The majority of the land is down to permanent pasture and is used for livestock grazing with some limited silage production. Three of the fields on the western boundary alongside Sainsbury's supermarket, Longridge Road and the cricket ground are in long-term permanent pasture grass leys having been re-seeded within the last 10 years. These fields were being grazed by sheep at the time of the inspection.
- 1.2 The land slopes from the highest point at Willows Farm along the northern boundary of Longridge and slopes down to Longridge Road and the cricket ground. The fields adjoining the north of Longridge slope steeply down to a number of large field drains shown in blue on the enclosed plan at **Appendix 2**. Those three fields adjoining the cricket ground and Longridge Road are level, however are undulating throughout. There are several hollows and ponds across the block of land and a number of field drains and ditches. Those permanent pasture fields were being grazed by sheep at the time of the inspection. The land had obviously been grazed and silaged throughout the summer as there was minimal grass cover. The three most recently re-seeded fields had a good covering of grass. Weather conditions on the date of the inspection were dry and clear. The fields which sloped from Willows farm were dry. However, within the fields in the bottom of the valley along Longridge Road and the cricket ground there were several very wet patches. Surface water was lying in a number of areas.
- 1.3 The predominant soil type is a slowly permeable, seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soil. Fertility is moderate to low and land cover is typically seasonally wet pastures and woodlands, drainage is impeded and the predominant soil texture is loam. The appearance of the soil when inspected was predominantly clay loam across the block of land. The land is classified as Grade 3 on the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food (MAFF) Soil Survey of England and Wales 1968. Following the original classification surveys, a number of sites within Lancashire were re-surveyed following the introduction of the 1988 Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), surveying methods, resulting in many sites being previously of Grade 3 being split into sub-grades 3A and 3B. This specific site was not re-surveyed and the information is not available into the sub-grades of 3A or 3B.
- 1.4 The landscape character type is not defined on Magic Maps, DEFRA publication; however the property sits within a landscape of rolling and undulating areas above 1,000ft. The typical land type is hill ground and moorland. However, the land at Willows Farm sits on the hills sloping down to the valley bottom. The land cover would be typically described as heavy associated with base poor clayey and loamy soils where seasonal waterlogging is a main constraint to agricultural production on this ground type. The land cover is typically of permanent pasture. The broad land use within the area is livestock rearing and low input low output dairy farming.
- 1.5 The site at Longridge was not re-classified and re-surveyed and was therefore not split between sub-categories 3A and 3B. The overall land classification is of Grade 3. Based on research carried out, no land within the immediate surrounds of Longridge has been re-classified into either sub-categories 3A or 3B. Certain areas to the east, south and west of Preston were re-surveyed and have been split between the various

sub-categories. On the original MAFF publication map, as shown in **Appendix 5**, the majority of the area surrounding Longridge and that to the west, south and north is identified as Grade 3. There are further large swathes of land of Grade 2 situated further to the west around Kirkham, Myerscough, Hambleton, Fylde, Preesall and Hambleton. To the east of Longridge into the uplands and the moorland, the land classification is Grade 4 and 5.

- 1.6 This report, whilst providing descriptions on soil profiles observed, will comment on the physical characteristics of the land and how they interact with agricultural operations, but will not analyse the soil samples wetness and droughtiness characteristics. The report will not look to re-classify the current ALC grade, however, will comment and make recommendations on what the classification ought to be.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Fisher German were instructed by Barratt Homes to carry out a land quality assessment of the 56.7 acres of agricultural land which sits directly to the north of Longridge and to the east of Longridge Road. A location plan is enclosed at **Appendix 1**. The area of land included within the report is shown outlined red on the enclosed site plan at **Appendix 2**. That area outlined red and hatched blue is land owned and occupied by Mr Procter of Willows Farm. That area hatched green is occupied by Mr Procter and owned by the Estate of the Late George Newsham Deceased and the area hatched orange is again owned by the same Estate but occupied by a different Mr Procter. The majority of the land is down to permanent pasture. However, the three fields adjacent to the superstore, Longridge Road and cricket ground were re-seeded within the last 10 years.
- 2.2 The report provides information on soil resources, agricultural quality and comments on the current use of the land and provides opinions of the agricultural quality of the land based on the physical characteristics of the site. The report is based on a desktop survey of the soils and climatic conditions affecting the site. The survey also includes opinions from the surveyors following a walk over of the land carried out on Tuesday, 10th December 2013. Soil samples were taken and visually assessed and comments made. No samples have been submitted for laboratory examination.

3. Situation

- 3.1 The parcel of land lies directly to the north of the centre of the settlement of Longridge. The land is either accessed off Willows Park Lane through the farmyard at Willows Farm to the south of the block of land or through a number of field gates off Longridge Road which bounds the block of land on the west. The northern and eastern boundary adjoins farmland and the southern boundary of the land adjoins the residential estates of Longridge.
- 3.2 Longridge is a small town in the borough of the Ribble Valley in Lancashire. Longridge is situated approximately 8 miles to the north-east of the city of Preston at the western end of Longridge Fell and Longridge is to the north of the River Ribble. Junction 32 of M6 motorway where the M55 joins is approximately 7 miles to the west of Longridge. Blackburn is situated approximately 10.7 miles to the south-east with Clitheroe situated approximately 10 miles to the east. The Parish of Longridge had a population of approximately 7,500 recorded in the 2001 Census.
- 3.3 The town is home to 11 pubs, 7 restaurants, a public library, a number of primary and high schools and a number of large supermarkets.

- 3.4 The block of land can either be accessed from Willows Farm off Willows Park Lane and Chaigley Road or off Longridge Road which adjoins the boundary on the west. There are a number of 12ft gates directly onto the highway. The postcode for the block of land is PR3 2TG and the grid reference is SD60598 38050.
- 3.5 According to the Environment Agency Flood Risk maps, the block of land lies outside of the identified flood risk area from rivers and sea but the block of land in parts is at risk of surface water flooding. A copy of the Flood Risk Maps are contained in **Appendix 3**.

4. Methodology Field Work

- 4.1 A desktop study of existing soils and climatic information was undertaken followed by a detailed field work study to assess soil types and land types. The land was classified using the system outlined in the MAFF, now a DEFRA publication – Agricultural Land Classification of England & Wales – Revised Guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (October, 1988).
- 4.2 Field work was undertaken with a hand-held Dutch soil auger measuring 120cm. Across the parcel of land, 54 samples were taken up to an impenetrable layer. All the borings were taken at intervals equidistant from each other covering the land as shown on the site plan at **Appendix 2**. From the soil profiles taken a visual assessment was made to determine the characteristics of the soil. Samples from each auger boring site were taken and the profiles inspected. Photographs showing the soil profiles from each sample point can be seen at **Appendix 4**. A visual inspection of each soil sample was taken but no samples have been submitted for laboratory analysis.

5. Results

- 5.1 The provisional Agricultural Land Classification map shown at **Appendix 5** identifies one grade of land across the site. The ALC grade is identified as Grade 3. Under the MAFF Agricultural Land Classification system, land is graded according to the degree to which certain physical characteristics; in particular climate, relief, and soil impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. It is clear that the most versatile and productive land in the area that of land classification Grade 2 is situated to the west around the settlements of Kirkham, Great Eccleston, Pyling, Poulton-le-Fylde Myerscough, Fylde, Preesall and Hambleton. A full description of the classification and the criteria used to determine the grades can be found in the published MAFF report, an extract of which can be seen in **Appendix 6**.
- 5.2 Certain sites across the country were re-surveyed following the original 1960's surveys and subsequently the post-1988 Agricultural Land Classification maps have been published which show a breakdown of Grade 3 into sub-categories 3A and 3B. The site in Longridge was not re-surveyed and having further detailed discussions with Natural England, and having viewed the re-surveyed results on www.magicmaps.gov no further information is available as to whether the Grade 3 classification should be categorised as 3A or 3B. The sites within the region that were re-surveyed are to the east, south and west of Preston only.
- 5.3 It would appear from the land classification and what was observed during the inspection that the better, most versatile agricultural land, capable of growing a wide variety of crops is situated to the west of Longridge within the bounds of the M6, M55

and A585 running north towards Pyling and Crockerham. Further east from Longridge towards Clitheroe, agricultural use is restricted to cattle and sheep grazing only on the hills and moorlands.

5.4 Grade 3A is identified as “good quality agricultural land” and Grade 3B designated as “moderate quality agricultural land”. Grade 2 is identified as “very good agricultural land”. As mentioned, a full description of all the ALC grades is attached at Appendix 6. The majority of the site is classified as Grade 3, which is defined as “good to moderate agricultural quality land”. This is defined as land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timings and type of cultivation, harvesting or level of yield. Where more demanding crops are grown, yields are generally lower or more variable than on Grade 1 and 2.

5.5 The best and most versatile land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3A by planning policy guidance.

5.6 Assessment of agricultural land is based on the long-term, physical and chemical properties of the land as to how they may restrict its use. Land is graded from best (Grade 1) to worst (Grade 5). Such restrictions might include:-

- The range of crops that can be grown
- Yield levels
- Consistency of yield
- Cost per yield

These restrictions are governed by factors such as:-

- Climate: temperature, rainfall, aspect, exposure and frost risk
- Site: Gradient, micro-relief, and flood risk
- Soil: Texture, structure, depth and stoniness

5.7 The above factors therefore have been taken into consideration when arriving at the various conclusions.

6. Climate

6.1 The closest weather station to Longridge is situated at Stonyhurst, approximately 6.7 miles to the east. Available on the Met Office website are the average climatic data for the period 1981-2010. Summarised below are the main climatic parameters used in the determination of land quality.

Table 1 – Climatic Parameters

Site at Longridge, Lancashire	
Grid Reference	SD60598 38050
Altitude (range)	123m down to 103m
Average annual rainfall	1294.2mm
Average high temperature	12.7°C
Average low temperature	6.1°C

(Data sourced from www.metoffice.gov.uk – information has been calculated using data collected for the period 1981-2010 from the nearest weather station to the site's postcode).

- 6.2 In common with most of the rest of the UK, Longridge has an oceanic climate which generally features warm but not hot summers and cool but not cold winters with a relatively narrow annual temperature range as indicated. There are rarely any long prolonged dry periods as precipitation is generally evenly dispersed throughout the year. The highest average rainfall months are October, November and December where the average precipitation is 140mm per month. The lowest precipitation month is April with an average of 66mm. The results show an annual average rainfall of 1294mm, this indicates that this landscape is only suited to livestock grazing and growing grass for silage. England's average annual rainfall for the period 1981 to 2010 is 854.8mm. The percentage increase in the average annual rainfall in Longridge is 51% compared to England's average.
- 6.3 Water requirements for crops such as winter wheat are typically 450mm-650mm depending on the length of the growing season and for potatoes is between 500mm-700mm. This high rainfall is therefore well above the water requirements for these crops.
- 6.4 The temperature range, as indicated does not impose any restrictions on crop growth. The optimum mean daily temperature for wheat and potato growth is 18°C-20°C. According to the climatic data, the average high temperature is only within this range between the months of June through to August.
- 6.5 The combination of rainfall and temperatures as indicated identifies that the site is only capable of growing a narrow variety of crops; this is on the basis that the soils are free draining but hold sufficient water to reduce drought stress in the crops.
- 6.6 Climate has a major influence on land quality by affecting both the range of crops that can be grown and the cost and level of production. The effect on plant growth occurs partly through interactions with the soil and therefore the interactions between climate and the soil type is key. If the land remains wet and saturated for long periods access and the cost of cultivations and harvesting will be too high to be economically viable to grow many crops. The high rainfall is therefore a key limiting factor to agricultural quality.

7. Gradient and Flood Limitations

- 7.1 The land in Longridge slopes from the north of the town down towards Longridge Road along the northern boundary of the block of land. However, the bottom fields adjacent to Longridge Road are low lying and underfoot conditions during inspection were wet. There are several hollows and wet patches throughout the land and a number of large ditches and drains running south to north across the property. Although the land slopes down from the northern edge of Longridge, the gradient does exceed 11° and therefore gradient does not have a significant impact or restrict its agricultural use. The majority of the land is ploughable. Table 2 below gives the gradient limits for each grade and sub-grade and land.

Table 2 – Grade according to gradient

Grade/sub-grade	Gradient limits (degrees)
1	7°
2	7°
3a	7°
3b	11°
4	18°
5	> 18°

7.2 As detailed above, none of the land within the ring fenced block exceeds the 11° and therefore exceeds the Grade 3B classification.

7.3 According to the Environment Agency Flood Risk maps, all of the land lies outside the identified flood risk area from rivers and seas. It should be noted, however, that in the land adjacent to Longridge Road there are number of low lying pits and fields drains and underfoot conditions were wet with surface water standing on those fields. The flood risk map for surface water indicates a risk of flooding over certain sections particularly on the northern sections of the land. Some of the land falls in the high risk category. High risk means that each year, this area has a chance of flooding of greater than 1 in 30 (3.3%). This type of flooding can be difficult to predict, much more so than river or sea flooding as it is hard to forecast exactly where or how much rain will fall in any storm. The Flood Risk maps can be viewed in **Appendix 3**.

8. Soil and Interactive Limitations

8.1 It appears that there is one main Soil Association mapped over the site at Longridge. The predominant soilscape identified on the Soilscales Viewer Report taken from Cranfield University National Soil Resource is shown at **Appendix 8**. The soilscape identified is a slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but base rich loamy and clayey soil. Fertility is moderate with habitats typically of seasonally wet pasture and woodland. Land cover is grassland and arable with some woodland. Texture is loamy and this soilscape covers approximately 19.9% of England. Drainage is impeded.

8.2 The soil type identified spreads both south and west of Longridge and covers the majority of the region. There is a ridge of slightly acid loamy and clayey soil with impeded drainage to the north-west of the site where drainage is slightly improved and fertility is higher. The land cover typically is arable and grassland. The predominant soil type to the north is slowly permeable, seasonally wet acid, loamy and clayey soils where fertility is low. Predominant texture is loam and soilscape covers the hill and moorland to the north of Longridge. To the south there is a vein of freely draining flood plain soil of very high fertility with land cover typically of arable and again to the south there is a ridge of fertile, slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with better drainage

8.3 What was observed during the inspection confirms that the soilscape, as identified by the Cranfield University National Soilscales was correct. The clay content within the samples taken increased the further down the farm from the farmyard at Willows Farm down to Longridge Road. Clay was found in almost every sample taken however. Typically pure clay was present, on average, at a depth of 25cm – 20cm. Above this, the texture was predominantly loam or clay/loam. However, it was observed that it was a heavy textured soil throughout. The impenetrable layer that was hit ranged across the site from the deepest sample at 73cm and the shallowest

at 15cm. The deepest sample was taken on the lower lying ground. The majority of the samples appeared light brown in colour indicating a low content of organic matter content. A lot of the clay samples were grey and yellow and light in colour, some being bluey/grey. A number of the samples containing clay were very water logged, wet and malleable. The fact that clay is present implies poor permeability and impeded drainage. It is clear that the soil suffers from being seasonally wet, especially those fields in the lower lying areas adjacent to Longridge Road. It is clear the soil suffers from being seasonally wet which can limit and interrupt agricultural operations. It is assumed and appears that there are a number of field drains. However, the farmer confirmed these were very old and drainage was an issue.

8.4 All the boring samples were taken from land on Tuesday, 10th December 2013. Weather conditions were cool, dry and clear. Underfoot conditions were a mixture of dry and wet with the dry underfoot conditions being at the top of the farm, becoming wetter and more saturated down towards Longridge Road.

Table 3 – Soil Sample Observations

Sample No.	Depth (cm)	General Observations
1	40cm	Light brown in colour loam, texture heavy, down to pure clay, grey and blue in colour. Clay sample was 0cm – 15cm on the auger. Auger resistance – medium.
2	53cm	Light brown colour, loamy texture from ground level down to 33cm. 20cm down to 0cm clay loam texture. Tip pure clay, yellowy grey colour. Auger resistance – easy.
3	42cm	Light brown, loam texture. Not much clay throughout sample. Auger resistance – medium. Soil not malleable. However, heavy loam.
4	40cm	Loamy texture, then loamy clay and then finally pure clay 10cm down to the tip. Soil profile was moist throughout. Clay colour was light yellow, less clay than in samples 1 & 2. Auger resistance medium.
5	40cm	Darker brown loam throughout. Consistent colour throughout the sample. Heavy loam. Small amount of clay at the tip. Auger resistance – medium to hard.
6	36cm	Dark brown loam. Clay texture from 24cm down to 0cm. Clay was yellow and grey in colour and was dry. Auger resistance was hard.
7	38cm	Darker loam running into clay loam texture and then pure clay at 18cm in depth down to the tip. Clay colour was red at the end. Auger resistance hard.
8	37cm	Light brown colour, clay/loam texture present, clay/loam at the tip. Auger resistance – medium.
9	39cm	Dark brown colour loamy texture, clay present from the tip up to 15cm. Auger resistance – medium.
10	38cm	Loamy texture into clay from the tip of the auger to 18cm was yellowy/grey clay, very dense, malleable, red speckles throughout clay section. Auger resistance- medium to hard.
11	46cm	Dark brown loamy texture. Clay from tip of the auger to 25cm. Malleable, moist clay. Loamy sample was heavy. Auger resistance – medium.
12	41cm	Dark loamy texture, ground level down to 31cm then very

Sample No.	Depth (cm)	General Observations
		clayey and black. Possible signs of peat at the very tip. Auger resistance – hard.
13	33cm	Dark loam into clay loam into clay. Clay was yellow grey with specks of red. Auger resistance – very hard.
14	40cm	Lighter brown loam texture, although heavy. Clay present from 0cm up to 20cm on the auger yellowy grey clay. Auger resistance – medium.
15	48cm	Dark loam colour, loamy to loamy/clay texture. Fine sand particulars at the very tip. Sand was light grey/yellow colour. Auger resistance – medium.
16	64cm	Light coloured, loamy texture into clay at 25cm in depth down to 15cm on the auger and then from 15cm on the auger to 0cm at tip. Sandy texture, grey colour. Clay and sand were waterlogged. Sand particle were large. Auger resistance – very easy.
17	33cm	Loamy texture, light in colour, although heavy in texture, clay at the tip. Auger resistance –medium.
18	40cm	Light brown coloured loamy texture in to clay loam into pure clay. Pure clay hit at a depth of 28cm. Auger resistance medium.
19	73cm	Deepest sample. 73cm down to 35cm and the auger showed a light coloured loam, heavy in texture then from 35cm down to 0cm at tip, very hard, waterlogged clay. Clay was blue/grey, malleable and very moist. Auger resistance – easy.
20	41cm	Light colour, grey brown colour into darker brown loam into clay at 30cm in depth. Clay was dark and heavy. Auger resistance - medium.
21	40cm	Dark colour loam, texture was grainy and granular towards the tip at the deepest point. No clay present. Auger resistance – hard.
22	38cm	Dry and light brown colour loamy texture down to a depth of 26cm and then heavy clay. Auger resistance – medium. Sample dry.
23	42cm	Light colour, loam texture. However, heavy loam, clay texture present at a depth of 20cm down to tip. Auger resistance – medium.
24	32cm	Light brown, heavy loam. Clay present at 15cm on the auger down to 0cm. Dry sample. Auger resistance – hard.
25	40cm	Very dark texture, heavy loam/clay. Clay almost black in colour. Auger resistance medium.
26	35cm	Light brown, loamy clay, heavy in texture. 20cm pure clay down to 0cm at the tip. Grey colour. Auger resistance – hard.
27	38cm	Light coloured brown loam. Loam from 38cm on the auger down to 20cm then pure clay. Auger resistance – easy.
28	39cm	Light brown loam. Heavy texture, however, clay at 16cm on the auger down to 0cm. Light grey/brown clayey colour. Auger resistance – medium.
29	46cm	Moist, heavy clay loam sample. Clay at 30cm on the auger down to 0cm. Auger resistance – easy.
30	50cm	Dark, wet heavy loam, clay at 25cm down to the tip. Dark and black specks throughout the clay along with red speckles.

Sample No.	Depth (cm)	General Observations
		Auger resistance - medium
31	37cm	Light brown, loamy texture into orangey yellow clay. Auger resistance - hard.
32	42cm	Light brown into grey clay. Clay layer started at 27cm below ground level. Auger resistance - medium.
33	38cm	Light brown, clay loam texture. Clay then from 28cm below ground level comprising grey yellow colour. Auger resistance - hard.
34	51cm	Very wet and dark, heavy loam. Clay at 21cm below ground level, very malleable heavy clay. Auger resistance - medium.
35	32cm	Dark, heavy loam. Clay present at 12cm on the auger down to 0cm. Very dry sample. Auger resistance - very hard
36	41cm	Dark loam, heavy clay. Clay at 21cm on the auger down to 0cm. Clay was very dark brown, dry specks of orange throughout clay sample. Auger resistance - medium.
37	30cm	Dark brown loam, heavy sample into clayey loam texture following by pure clay at the tip. Orange in colour. Auger resistance - hard.
38	37cm	Dark brown, heavy loam into pure clay at depth of 27cm down to deepest point, clay colour was lighter brown. Auger resistance - medium to hard, hit very hard rock at the impenetrable layer.
39	23cm	Loam was light brown in colour into clay loam texture into clay at 13cm in depth down to the deepest point. Clay colour was orange. Sample was overall dry. Auger resistance - easy but hit hard rock impenetrable layer.
40	15cm	Clay throughout sample. Hit an impenetrable hard layer. Auger resistance - hard.
41	38cm	Light brown loam into heavy clay loam texture into clay at 17cm below ground level to deepest point. Auger resistance - medium.
42	45cm	Dark heavy loam, clay into pure clay at 19cm below ground level. Clay sample was grey yellowy clay. Auger resistance - easy.
43	35cm	Very dark loamy colour. Heavy loam texture. Clay at 15cm on the auger down to 0cm. Very dark clay colour. Auger resistance - medium.
44	41cm	Dark brown, loam. Heavy loam texture. Clay at 29cm in depth. Clay colour was very dark throughout. Auger resistance - easy.
45	46cm	Dark, loam clay texture. Colour - dark. Pure clay at the tip. Lighter in colour - grey. Auger resistance - easy.
46	27cm	Dark brown, loamy clay throughout. Very heavy sample. Clay at the tip with red specks. Auger resistance - medium.
47	38cm	Light brown in colour, loam clay texture. However, texture heavy. Clay at the tip. Auger resistance - medium.
48	38cm	Light brown clay loam texture. Sample heavy, red specks in the clay in the tip. Auger resistance - hard.
49	36cm	Dark brown colour into lighter orange colour and red at the tip. Sample was heavy loam texture into clay. Auger resistance - easy.

Sample No.	Depth (cm)	General Observations
50	38cm	Colour brown to light brown. Loam/clay into clay texture at the tip. Auger resistance – medium.
51	40cm	Dark brown colour, heavy loamy texture into clay/loam then pure clay at the tip. Auger resistance – medium.
52	32cm	Dark brown colour, clay loam texture throughout sample. Auger resistance – easy.
53	35cm	Sample very wet 35cm – 25cm on auger. Dark brown colour. Clay from 25cm to tip. Auger resistance – easy.
54	35cm	Dark brown colour, loamy clayey dry sample into clay at 25cm in depth to tip. Auger resistance – medium.

- 8.5 Based on the information contained within the table and the observations made on the day, the predominant soil texture is clay/loam. However, interspersed with this throughout the site there are pure samples of clay at an average depth of approximately 25cm – 20cm below ground level. There were one or two samples containing sand but only at the very tip and at depth in excess of 50cm. All these factors and findings point to the fact that the site is as per the soils report and suffers from impeded drainage.
- 8.6 Due to heavy nature of the soil and the fact that clay is present throughout points towards impeded drainage. The fact that some of the samples of clay were grey/blue and light in colour shows seasonal waterlogging. It was observed that there are number of wet hollows and surface water standing in some of the lower lying fields. There a number of pits across the site with large open drains and closed drains running across the land. It is clear that the soil is seasonally wet in certain places from time to time. Some of the samples taken showed evidence of waterlogged loam or clay. A number of the clay samples were blue/grey and yellow in colour which is a reflection of its natural drainage state. Continued waterlogging produces this colour and is known as gleying.
- 8.7 Soil wetness and droughtiness were not tested. However, it was observed that the top soil would be fairly permeable due to its relatively large soil particle size. The topsoil predominantly comprising loam would be fairly free-draining however the clay/loam topsoil would be less free draining and would retain moisture. The clay/loam and clay subsoil where pans have formed are not permeable, signs of this were observed where the soil was blue/grey.
- 8.8 The median duration of field capacity days, moisture deficit and moisture balance of wheat and potatoes which define droughtiness limits for ALC grades was not assessed and is not covered in this report.

9. Land Use

- 9.1 The land is in two separate ownerships and is occupied by two different individuals. The area hatched blue is owned and occupied by a Mr Procter of Willows Farm. The area hatched green is occupied by Mr Procter but owned by the Estate of the Late George Newsham Deceased and the area hatched orange is again owned by the same Estate but occupied by a different Mr Procter.
- 9.2 The majority of the land extending to approximately 43.6 acres is down to permanent pasture. Mr Procter, the owner of Willows Farm, runs an extensive livestock rearing unit

- with a flock of sheep and herd of store cattle. The cattle and sheep graze the land during the summer months with some fields kept back for silage production and are then grazed following silaging. Cattle are then housed during the winter and fed the grass silage whilst the sheep remain outside and graze throughout the winter months.
- 9.3 Mr Procter applies a 25:10:10 fertiliser compound and farmyard manure to the land. One cut of silage is taken from the two main silage fields whilst the rest of the farm is grazed.
- 9.4 The second Mr Procter occupies the remaining three fields adjoining Longridge Road, the cricket ground and the superstore uses them for grazing and silage production. These three fields had a good covering of grass during the inspection and appear to have been re-seeded certainly with the last 10 years with a grass/clover mix. Whilst there is a good covering of grass on these three fields, they were lying very wet with standing water in certain areas.
- 9.5 Fences on the boundary and internally were stockproof of a fashion, however, were in a dilapidated state due to their age. Certain areas had been patched but the boundaries did contain the stock. The land is either accessed from the south at Willows Farm along the northern boundary of Longridge or from the western boundary of Longridge Road either side of the cricket ground. There is one overhead cable running through the westerly most field towards the superstore. However, all poles were within boundaries. Various water troughs are present throughout, mostly within boundaries. It is assumed therefore, that the property has the benefit of mains water.
- 9.6 There are no public rights of over any of the land. However, it was observed during the inspection that a right of way is used on a regular basis due to the erosion on the ground by users from Redwood Drive on the southern boundary. A well-trodden footpath had developed running northwards towards the cricket ground. Other signs of trespass include a number of gates in the boundary from residential properties specifically those into the westernmost field adjacent to the superstore. Two gates from the end of gardens were observed allowing free access onto the land.
- 9.7 A number of manhole covers were observed in the fields adjoining the western boundary. It is assumed there is at least one water main/sewer however this has not been investigated. Physical obstructions such as water mains do restrict some cultivations and therefore have an impact on agricultural uses.
- 9.8 The block of land sits within a livestock rearing and low input, low output dairy farming land use system. Due to the soil type, climate and surface water flooding risk, arable cropping is restricted to those lower lying and well-drained fields. The predominantly clay/loam texture which is present within the block of land is capable of holding nutrients. However, with the high clay content which is hard and not permeable, this can lead to waterlogging which was observed. Although a loamy textured soil is suitable for growing crops, the clay content and heavy nature of the loam means that the soil becomes sufficiently wet as some cultivations may not be possible for many months of the year meaning that spring crops may need to be established which are less economically viable. A lot of that land along Longridge Road could not be driven on by heavy machinery in the early spring, autumn or winter. These factors are serious limitations to agricultural production and economic output. To improve drainage, new land drains could be installed. However, this would come at a very high cost and will probably prove to be uneconomically as it is classified at Grade 3.

- 9.9 The high annual average rainfall as identified earlier means that continued saturation of the ground and possibility of flooding in the lower parts would mean access to the land during cultivation and harvest periods could be restricted. This combined with a heavy land type restricts the use of the land. Lighter land of Grade 3A and 2, which has been identified to the west, would be capable of growing a larger variety of crops and can be used for a wider variety of uses simply because the combination of the climate and soil type allows access for longer periods of the year in order to produce and harvest crops. Land of this nature is more economically viable to drain and add nutrients and fertility to. A larger range of crops can be produced which achieves higher increased gross margins than the like of lamb and store cattle production.
- 9.10 Attached at **Appendix 9** are a number of photographs taken across the site showing its current condition and use.
- 9.11 As stated earlier, the site as Longridge sits within a predominantly stock-rearing region. A lot of the land within the settlement of Longridge is permanent pasture grassland on sloping valley hillsides where the land classification, as identified in Appendix 5, is Grade 3.
- 9.12 There are no written records or plans of the field draining system. There are open ditches and closed ditches across the block of land. However the farmer advised that the site is susceptible to waterlogging after periods of rainfall at specific low points across the property. There are believed to be land drains that take surface water from the field. However, these are very old and no recent investigation has been carried out to determine how efficiently they are working.
- 9.13 As shown in Appendix 6, the ALC grade definition of sub-grade 3A defines land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops especially cereals or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grasses, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crop. As discussed, due to the high level of annual rainfall and the soil type, it would be uneconomic grow cereals or potatoes on this land. It would also be physically difficult to harvest and cultivate cereal crops as access to the land due to its heavy nature and water holding capacity would mean establishing and maintaining high consistent yields of cereal crops would be very difficult.
- 9.14 Sub-grade 3B is defined as moderate quality agricultural land, capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.
- 9.15 The land at Longridge is capable of producing consistent and reasonable yields of grass and is well-suited to grazing livestock and production of silage crops.
- 9.16 Soil wetness, although not tested is a measure of how wetness of the soil adversely affects plant growth and imposes restrictions on cultivations or grazing by livestock. The important of this limitation is reflected by the widespread use of and dependence on field drainage in both arable and grassland areas. Excessive soil wetness adversely affects seed germination and survival, partly by a reduction in soil temperature and partly because of anaerobism. It also inhibits the development of a good root system and can in extreme cases lead to plant death. Soil wetness also influences the sensitivity of the soil to structural damage and is therefore a major factor in determining the number of days when the soil is in suitable condition for

cultivation, access and trafficking by machinery or grazing by livestock. The severity of the limitation is influenced by the amount and frequency of rain in relation to evaporation along with the duration or waterlogging and the texture of the uppermost layer of the soil. In less permeable soils as with the one at Longridge, the degree of waterlogging depends in part on the depth at which the soil becomes less permeable. As identified the clay subsoil was identified at approximately 20cm-25cm below the ground level. Topsoil texture influences the wetness limitation because of its effect on soil water retention and the mechanical properties of the soil. Soils with a high clay content tend to retain more water than sandy soils and therefore are slower to return to a workable condition after wetting. Such soils are high in mechanical strength which further reduces the period during which they can be effectively cultivated. The wetness class has not been established, however, a reasonable judgement would access the wetness class in either 3 or 4. This would identify a land classification in the range of 3A to 4. Further research into duration of waterlogging would need to be assessed to determine exactly what the wetness class is.

- 9.17 It is clear, based on the Agricultural Land Classification Map at **Appendix 5**, that the best and most versatile land of Grade 2 and 3A situated elsewhere within the region. The most versatile land of Grade 2 can be seen to the west of the site at Longridge.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 A study and survey of the 22.9 hectares (56.7 acres) of land situated at Longridge, Lancashire, has shown that land use is currently permanent pasture with grazing and limited silage production across the majority of the site.
- 10.2 The majority of the land, approximately 76.88% is in permanent pasture and is restricted to livestock grazing and limited silage production only.
- 10.3 The whole of the site is classified as Grade 3 under the MAFF Land Classification maps.
- 10.4 The site has not been split into either sub-grade 3A or 3B. However, it is the opinion of the surveyor that due to the high level of annual rainfall experienced within the region and the soil type as identified, the effect on plant growth due to the interactions with the soil type and climate means that the land would be re-classified as Grade 3B. The loam/clay textured soil suffers from waterlogging and would reduce the number of days when cultivations and harvesting could take place. Consistent yields of cereals or potatoes could not be achieved. But consistent yields of grass can be achieved which is part of the definition of land classification sub category 3B.
- 10.5 Government policy is to protect higher quality agricultural land with poorer grade land use as a preference. Sustainable development in rural areas defines the best and most versatile land as Grade 1, 2 and 3A. It is suggested therefore, based on the findings of this report that the land would identified as Grade 3B which would not fit into the bracket of higher quality agricultural land and therefore its loss to development would have a small impact upon agriculture in the region.
- 10.6 As identified, the best and most versatile agricultural land of Grade 2 is located to the west of the region.

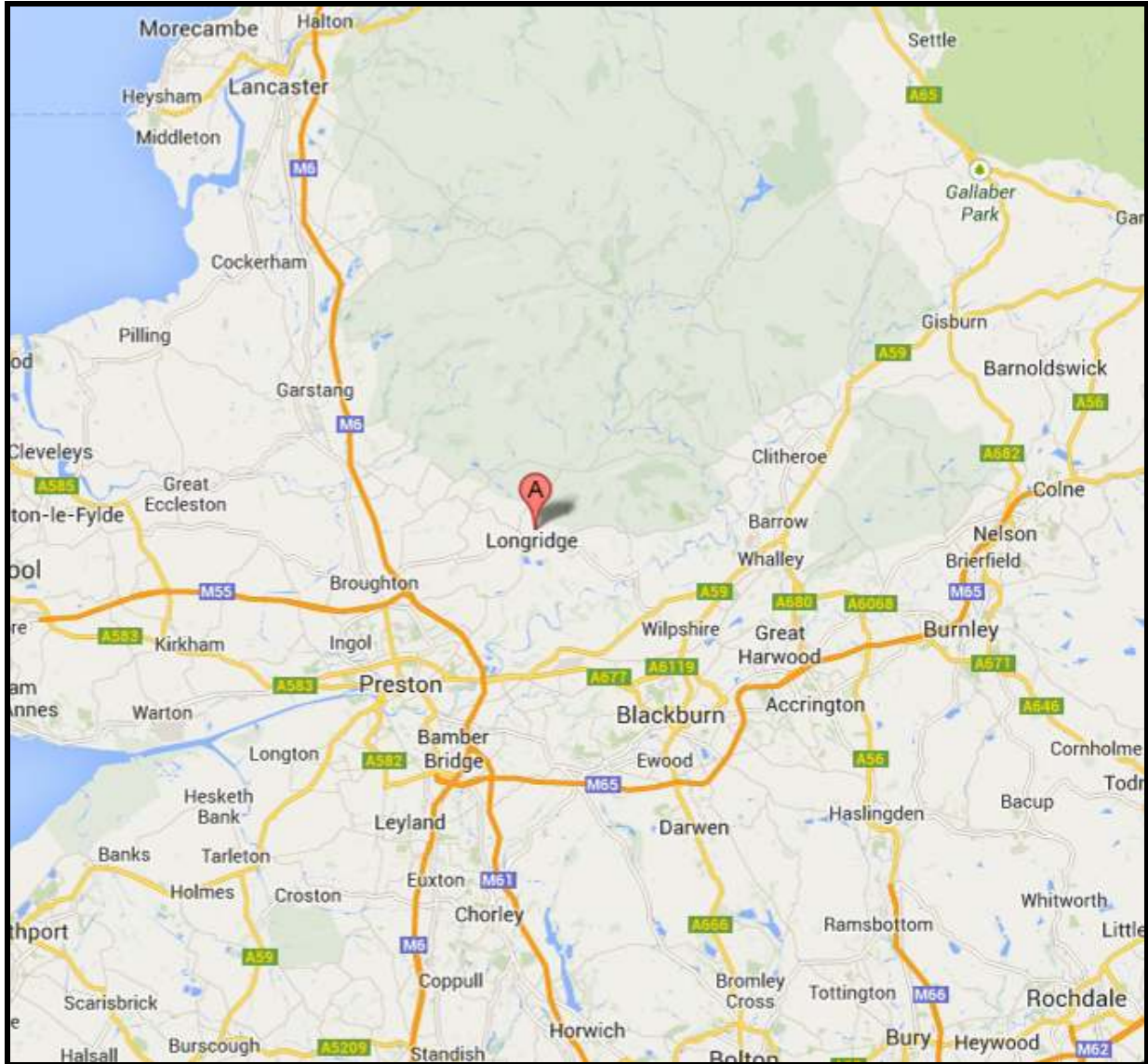
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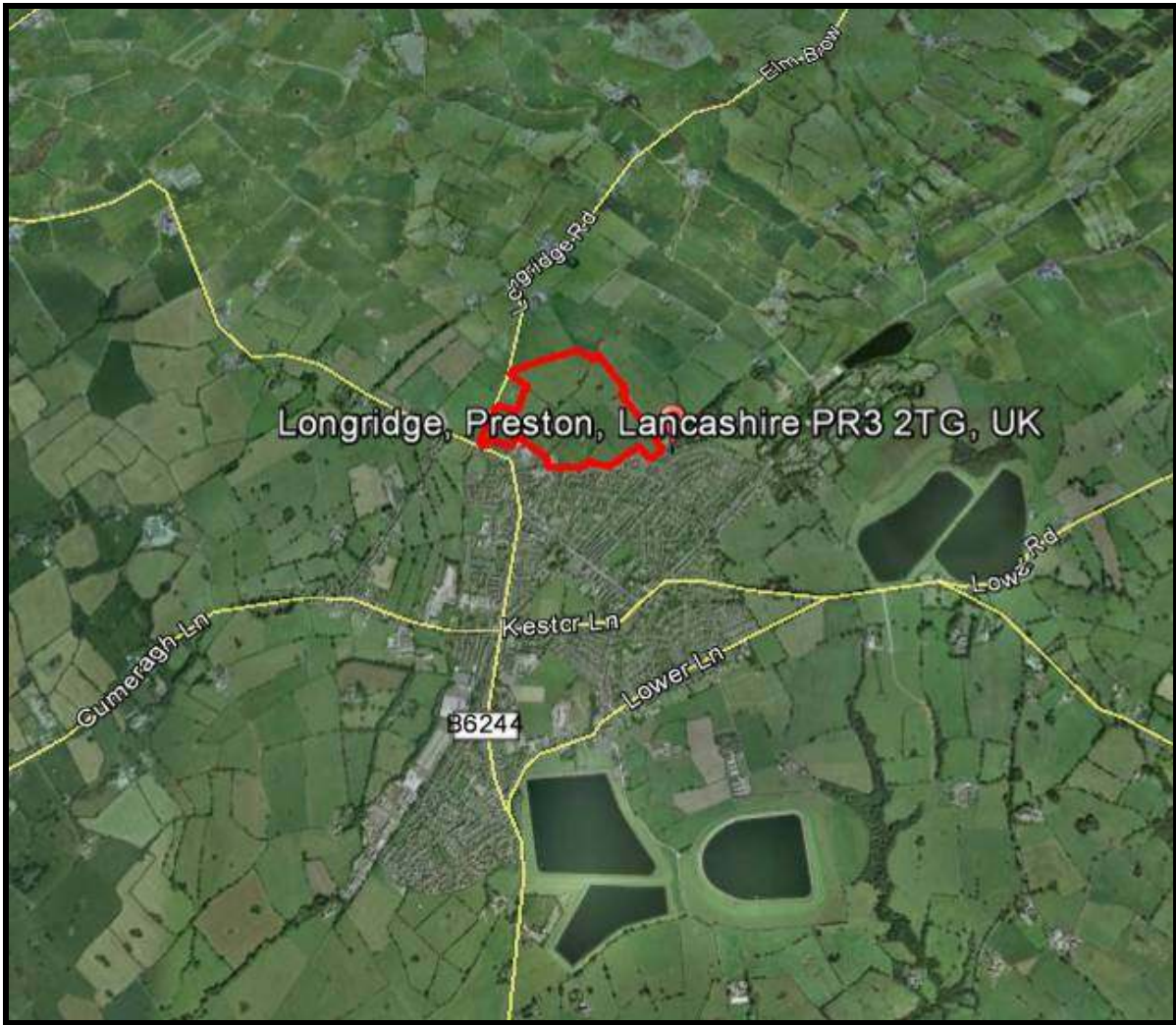
Matthew Burton BSc (Hons), MRICS FAAV
For Fisher German LLP

Signed Date.....

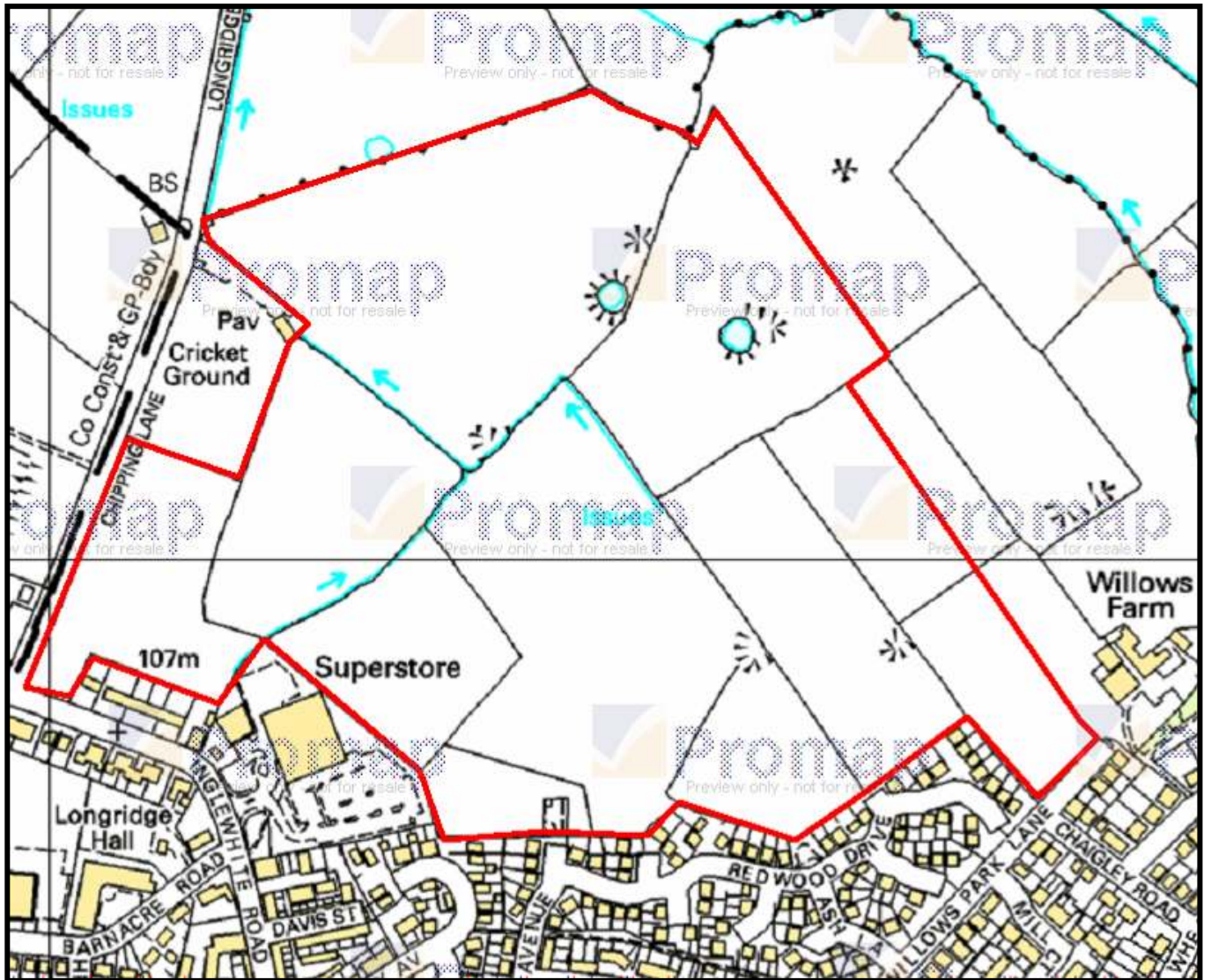
Becky Evans BSc (Hons), MRICS
For Fisher German LLP

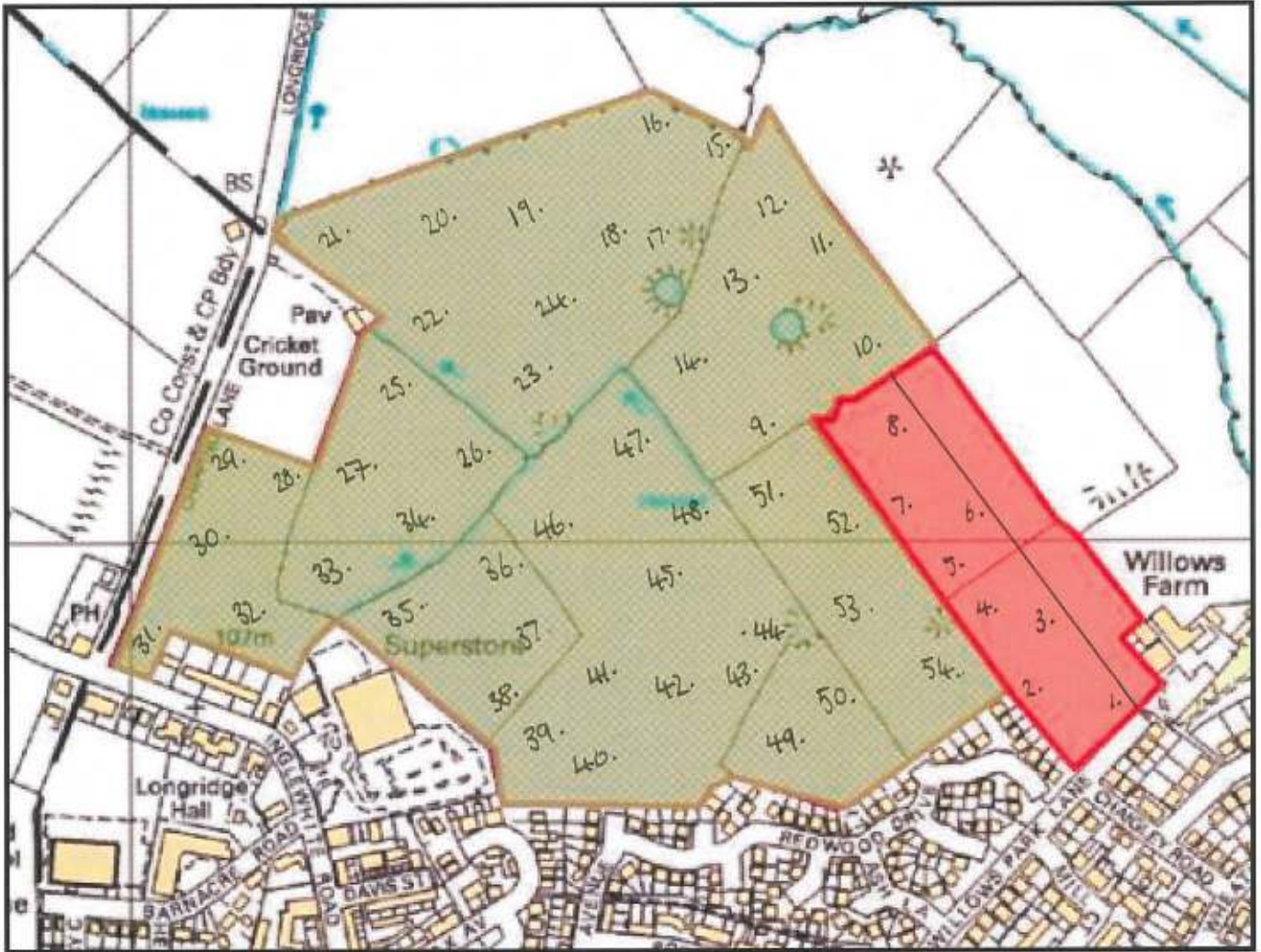
APPENDIX 1 – LOCATION PLAN

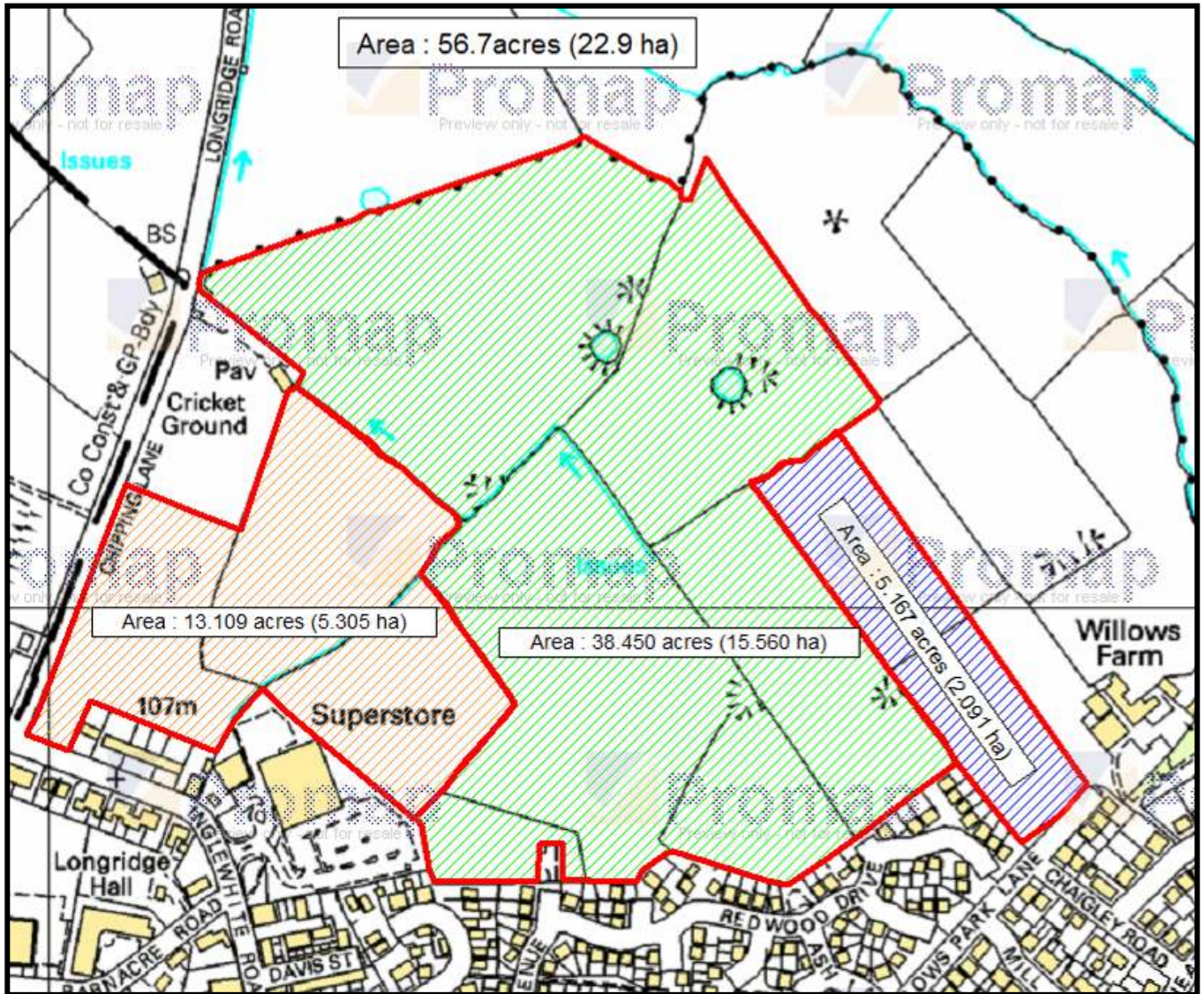




APPENDIX 2 – SITE PLAN

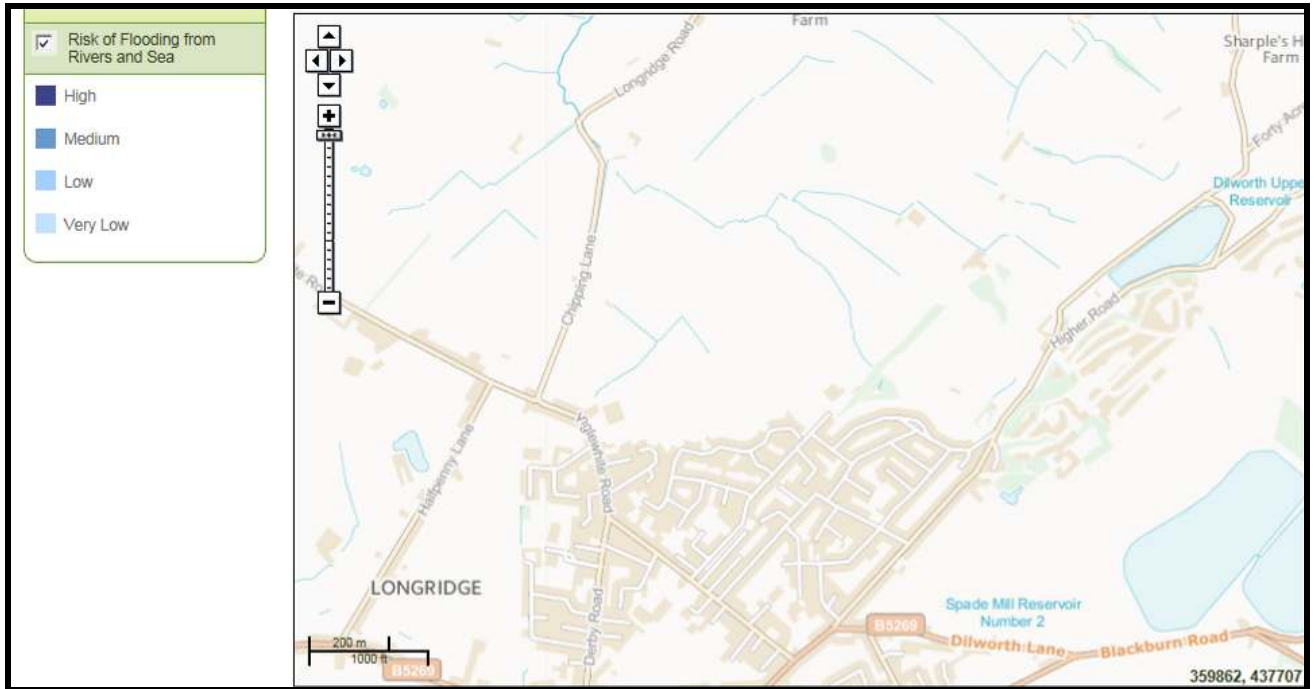




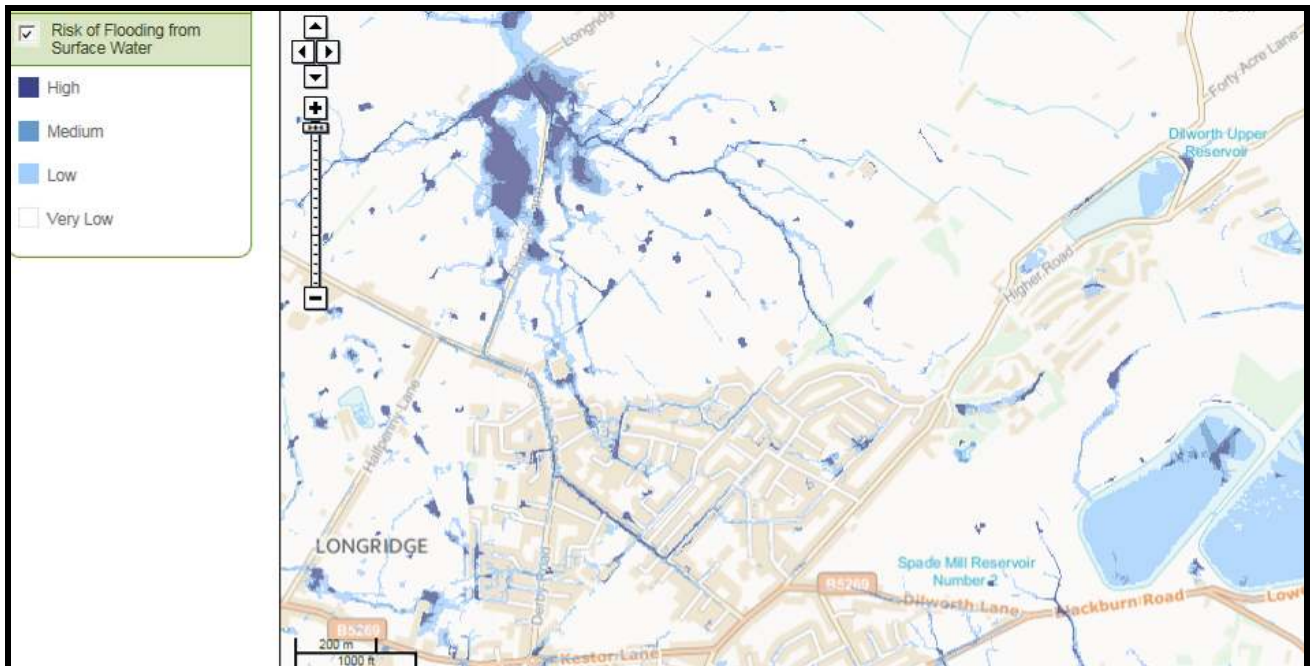


APPENDIX 3 – FLOOD RISK MAP

Flood Risk from Rivers and Sea



Flood Risk from Surface Water



High and Medium risk of surface water flooding

APPENDIX 4 – SOIL PROFILES

Site 1:





Site 2





Site 3



Site 4



Site 5



Site 6





Site 7





Site 8



Site 9





Site 10





Site 11



Site 12



Site 13



Site 14





Site 15





Site 16





Site 17



Site 18





Site 19





Site 20





Site 21





Site 22



Site 23





Site 24





Site 25





Site 26





Site 27





Site 28





Site 29





Site 30



Site 31





Site 32





Site 33





Site 34





Site 35





Site 36





Site 37





Site 38



Site 39



Site 40



Site 41



Site 42



Site 43



Site 44



Site 45



Site 46



Site 47



Site 48



Site 49



Site 50



Site 51



Site 52



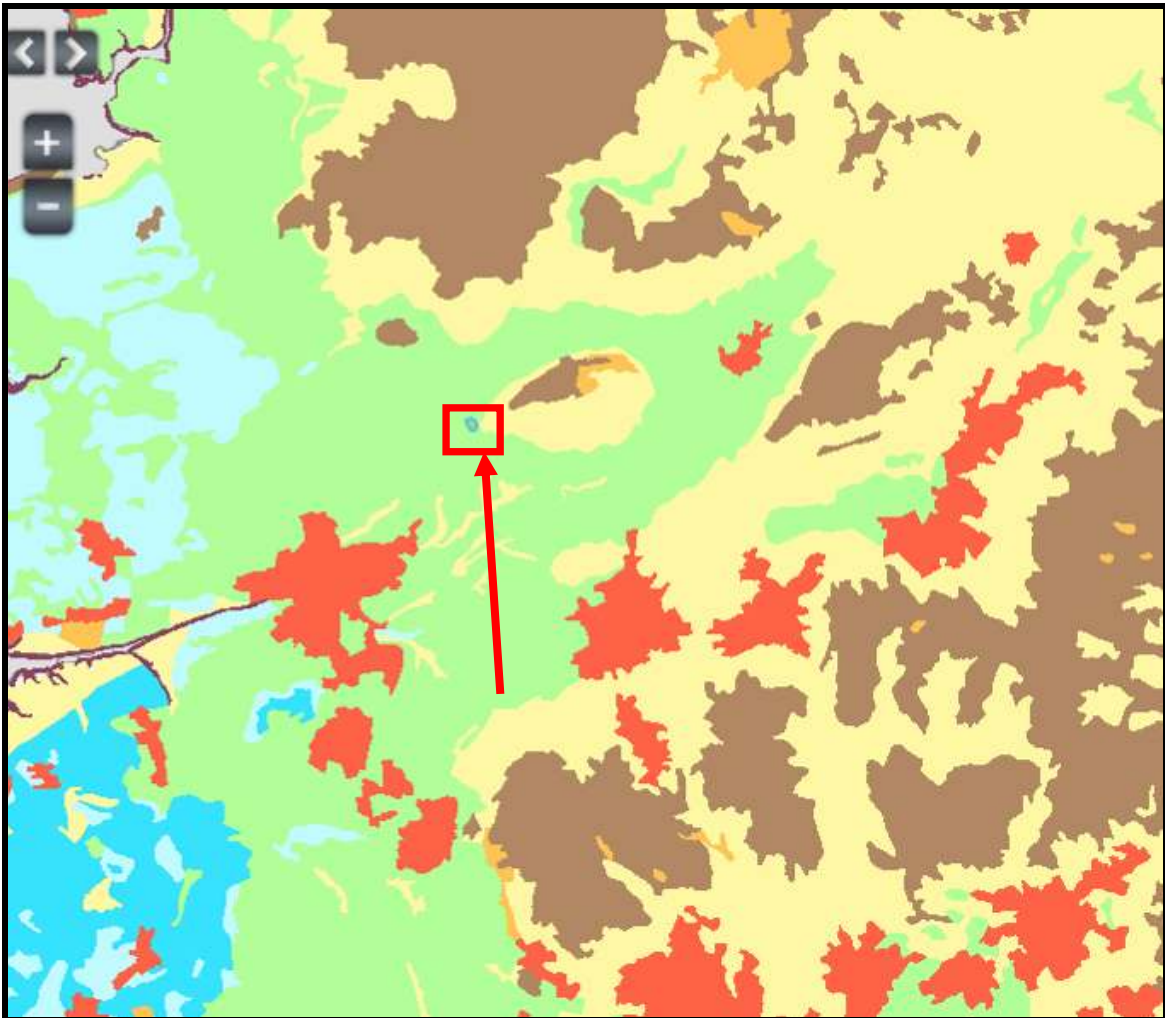
Site 53



Site 54



APPENDIX 5 – PROVISIONAL AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION MAP



Blue – Grade 2
Green – Grade 3 – Site at Longridge
Yellow – Grade 4
Red – Urban

NB – blue area within red box identifies postcode area and is not Grade 2 identification

APPENDIX 6 – ALC GRADE DEFINITION

GRADE 1 – excellent quality agricultural land

Land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown and commonly includes top fruit, soft fruit, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables. Yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality

GRADE 2 – very good quality agricultural land

Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in the grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.

GRADE 3 – good to moderate quality agricultural land

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timings and type of cultivation, harvesting or level of yield. Where more demanding crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on Grades 1 and 2.

SUBGRADE 3A – good quality agricultural land

Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops, especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops.

SUBGRADE 3B – moderate quality agricultural land

Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.

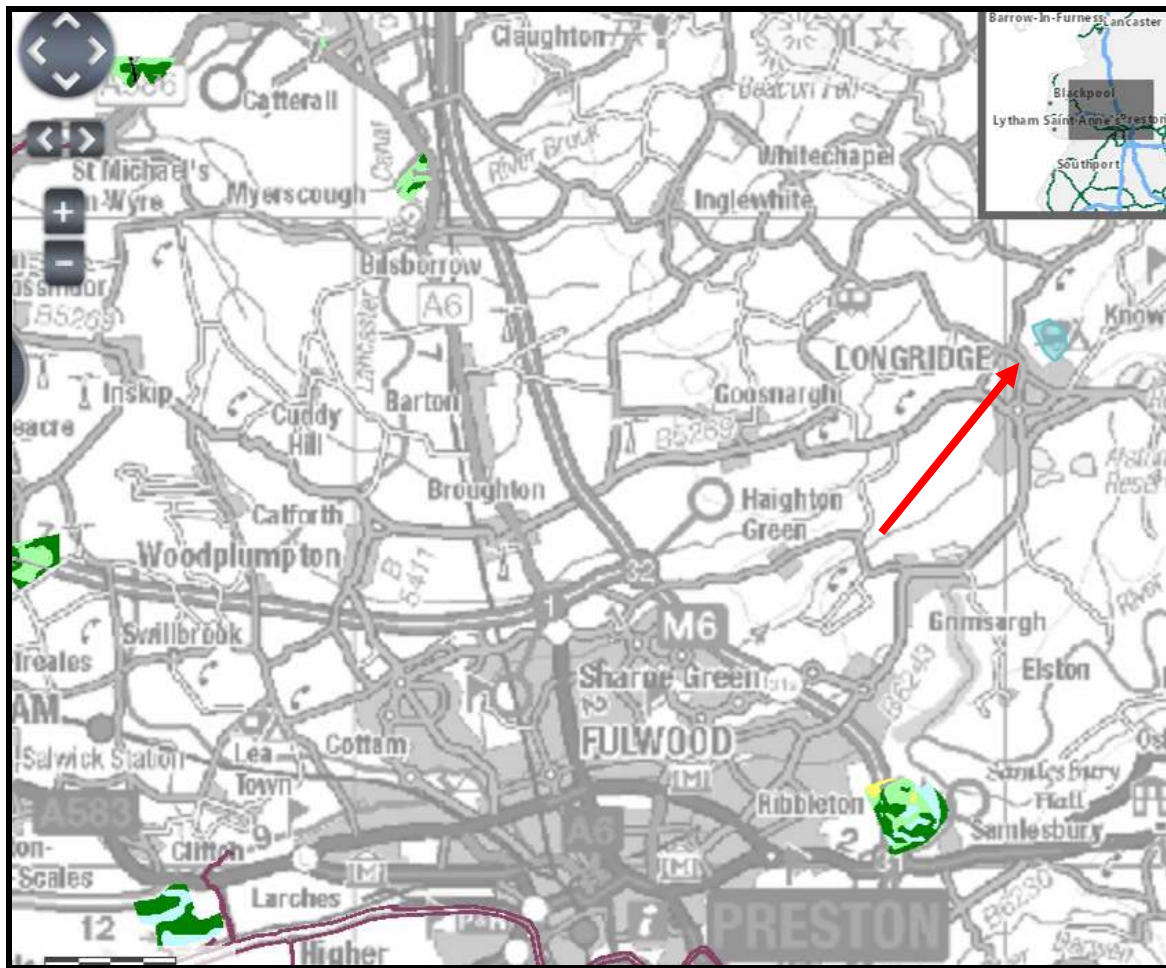
GRADE 4 – poor quality agricultural land

Land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and/or level of yields. It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (e.g. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates, yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.

GRADE 5 – very poor quality agricultural land

Land with very severe limitations which may restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.

APPENDIX 7 – POST 1988 ALC SURVEY

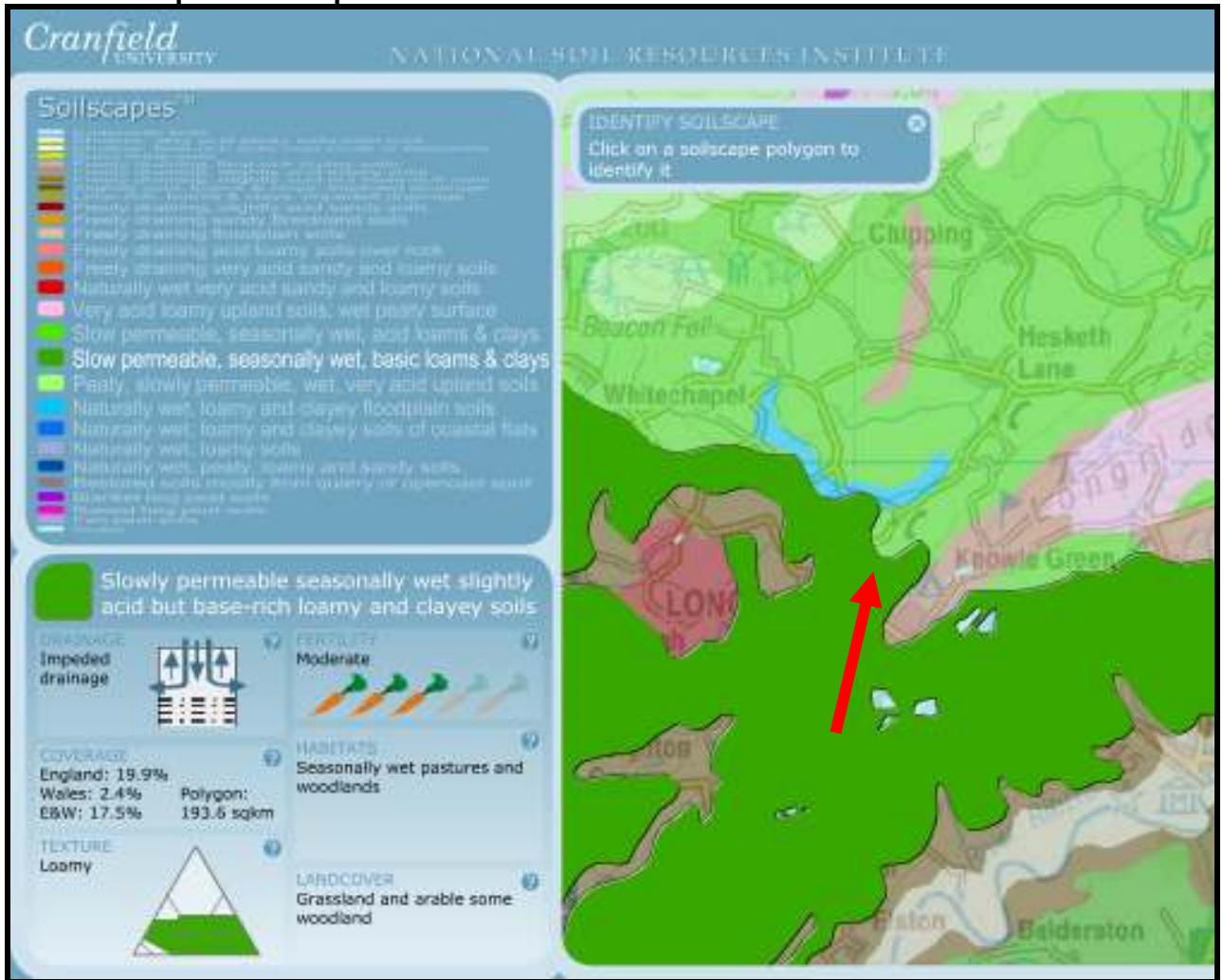


Only certain sites east and west and Preston were resurveyed and split between sub grades 3a and 3b.



APPENDIX 8 – SOILSCAPE REPORT

1. Principal Soilscape



Key points:

- Impeded drainage
- Moderate fertility
- Seasonally wet pastures

APPENDIX 9 – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS









































