

5 HOUSING

5.1 General Introduction

- 5.1.1 The Lancashire Structure Plan 1991-2006 "Greening the Red Rose County" sets broad guide-lines for the scale of housing development to be met in the Ribble Valley. The location of this development is also influenced by the settlement strategy of the Structure Plan.

5.2 The level of new housing provision to be met

- 5.2.1 The Structure Plan calls for the release of enough land to provide about 2400 new dwellings throughout the Borough.

5.3 Completions to date

- 5.3.1 The Structure Plan has a base date of mid 1991. In the period to 1 January 1997 a total of 1330 new dwellings (including conversions) have been built. This leaves a requirement for 1070 new dwellings to be provided.

5.4 Existing sites and windfall sites

- 5.4.1 Against this residual requirement for new dwellings, sites which already have the benefit of planning permission, which are considered available for residential development can be counted.
- 5.4.2 It is also possible to make an allowance for small windfall sites which may be developed during the plan period. These are small sites which conform to the policies of the Local Plan which are too small to be specifically allocated.

Past rates of completion show that a realistic estimate of 60 dwellings per year can be taken into account. This provides 570 dwellings over the plan period.

- 5.4.3 This leaves a total of 500 new dwellings outstanding.

- 5.4.4 There are 30 sites of over 0.4 hectares in the Borough which already have the benefit of planning consent. Figures included in the council's housing land availability schedule show that these are capable of providing at least 778 new dwellings. The sites referred to are:

TABLE 1

SITE	OWNERSHIP	NO OF DWELLINGS
Pendle Road, Clitheroe	Gleeson Homes	88
Stonebridge Mill, Ribble Lane, Chatburn	Barnfield Construction	13
Kirkmoor Road, Clitheroe	St Vincents Housing Association	12
Adj A59 Sawley	Blackthorn Homes	12
Pimlico Road, Clitheroe	Crowther Homes	15
Chatburn Road, Clitheroe	Crowther Homes	14
RO Chatburn Road, Clitheroe	Crowther Homes	13
RO Chatburn Road, Clitheroe	Crowther Homes	30
Whalley New Road, Billington	Harrisons Engineering	2
Langho Centre, Longsight Road, Langho	Fairclough Homes	5
Pendleside Close, Sabden	I Roberts	2
Text House, Clitheroe	Archdiocese of Liverpool	8

Cockerill Terrace, Barrow	Schofield Construction	1
The Grange, Wilpshire	Holden Homes Ltd	17
Ribblesdale Mill, Ribchester	M Worthington & Co	11
Brown Street, Clitheroe	Chelford Homes	13
Adj Sunnyside Avenue, Billington	Stewart, Geldard, Petre, Wallbank	57
Hawthorne Farm, Clitheroe	Robinson & Spensley	36
Alston Lane, Longridge	Mr Haywood	2
Forest Becks, Wigglesworth	Mr Rogan	1
Accrington Road, Whalley	Mr Ainsworth	6
Osbaldeston Lane, Osbaldeston	Mr Sunter	1
Whalley New Road, Billington	W Whip	8
Woodfield Farm, Simonstone	Mr Bracewell	14
Gisburn Road, Bolton-by-Bowland	Mrs Bosonnet	7
Main Road, Newsholme	Mr Leyland	4
Brockhall, Old Langho	Brockhall Village Ltd	280*
Crumpax, Longridge	Barratt	72
Glendene, Wilpshire	Hindle & Walker	5
Feilden Arms, Mellor Brook	Leehand Properties	29
	TOTAL	778

:*280 of 400 granted consent expected during life of local plan

5.4.5 It can be argued that existing commitments adequately meet the strategic needs which the Borough Council has been set, and that no further allocations are required. This is not the case. It is a stated aim of this plan to achieve well planned sustainable growth in those areas best able to accommodate it. It is also important to provide a level of certainty regarding what will and will not be permitted, and in what location. The allocation of specific sites, and the definition of settlement boundaries which can endure in the long term (which include sites safeguarded for future development), will achieve this.

5.4.6 Government Guidance is clear that future development should be directed to a wide range of sites, both in terms of size and nature. This is intended to meet the needs of the public and all sectors of the building industry, the vast majority of sites in the borough at present are small or infill plots. At the time of this plan's preparation major developments are taking place on two sites in Clitheroe (Pendle Road, and Kirkmoor Road). The consents relate to earlier plan allocations, and having all commenced, are expected to be completed in this plan's life-span. As such they will add little to the long term requirement for a suitable range of sites.

5.4.7 Ribble Valley has two potential major sources of housing provision which it can be argued could be offset against the strategic requirement. These are the sites at Brockhall and Calderstones Hospitals (see Area Policies A2 and A3). Brockhall has now closed and an outline planning consent relates to the site which allows for up to 400 dwellings, however the Council has only allowed for 280 dwellings to be constructed during the plan period. The situation at Calderstones is more complex with the hospital not being due for (partial) closure until the year 2000. It is most unlikely that a development would commence immediately on closure and in view of this no allowance has been made for development at Calderstones during the life-span of this local plan. The one remaining site where a significant level of development is forecast is Primrose Lodge in Clitheroe (Policy A1) however its limits would be subject to a planning brief.

5.4.8 Development Sites

POLICY H1

The following sites are allocated for residential development:

LOCATION	SITE SIZE IN HECTARES	APPROX NO OF DWELLINGS
Castle Castings site, Clitheroe	0.98	27
Littlemoor House, Sabden	0.33	15
Total	1.31	42

5.4.9 The Council prepares a bi-annual housing land availability schedule and negotiates with the Housebuilders Federation to ensure that a five year supply of land is available in the terms set out in PPG3.

5.4.10 The monitoring procedures intended for this plan will closely examine housing land provision and supply. A lack of sites and a failure to meet Government Guidance on housing would be one reason to instigate a review of the plan.

DWELLINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

5.2 POLICY H2

Outside the settlement boundaries, as defined on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to:

1. Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or forestry or other uses wholly appropriate to the rural area.
2. The appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings, provided they are suitably located and their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must also be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction. (see Policies H15, H16 and H17 for further advice).
3. Residential development specifically intended to meet a proven local need. (see Section 5.14 for further advice).

The impact of proposals on the countryside will be an important consideration in determining all applications. Development should be appropriately sited and landscaped. In addition, scale, design and materials used must reflect the character of the area, and the nature of the enterprise.

5.5.2 The protection of attractive open countryside for its own sake is an important element of both national and county planning policy.

5.5.3 To achieve this, development in the countryside must be strictly controlled.

5.5.4 This does not mean that proposals for development which are either essential to the local economy or to the well-being of those living or needing to live in the countryside, will be resisted. One example of this is housing needed by agricultural workers.

5.5.5 In relation to agricultural workers dwellings, the need for the dwelling must be demonstrated by:

- i) Whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times;

- ii) The scale and nature of the enterprise;
- iii) The extent to which any existing accommodation in the area is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned. This will include an investigation of the presence of buildings suitable for conversion in the area which may be available.

5.5.6 In cases where the above tests are not conclusive a financial test may also be applied to provide further evidence of the genuineness of stated intentions to engage in farming or forestry.

5.5.7 The siting should be in accordance to these criteria:

- (a) wherever practical, the dwelling should be related to existing dwellings on the holding;
- (b) the dwelling should have limited impact on the landscape;
- (c) the development should not cause undue expense to any public authority or statutory undertaker;
- (d) dwellings should normally be of two storey construction of a design traditional to the area.

5.5.8 Dwellings provided under this policy should be of a size commensurate with the established functional requirements. Dwellings which are unusually large in relation to the agricultural needs of the unit or unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income it can sustain, will not normally be permitted. As a general guide the Council will not normally approve proposals which provide in excess of 120m² floorspace. In cases where the dwelling will be the principle dwelling on the holding the size restriction may be relaxed to allow for office space etc.

5.5.9 **POLICY H3**

Conditions will be attached to all consents for agricultural workers dwellings (determined under Policy H2, above) restricting the occupation of the dwelling to a person solely or mainly employed (or last employed) in the locality in agriculture or forestry, to dependants of such people residing with him or her, or to widows or widowers of such people.

5.5.10 Developments permitted under Policy H2 are allowed because of the special justification or need which exists. It is important that such houses remain in their intended occupancy. This will remove the pressure for further dwellings, help to maintain steady house prices for those employed in such practices in the area and reduce possible abuse of this policy relaxation.

5.5.11 For the purposes of this plan agriculture is as defined in Section 336 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990.

5.5.12 This policy will be implemented via the development control process.

5.5.13 **POLICY H4**

In cases where agricultural or forestry workers dwellings are approved, the Council will attach agricultural occupancy conditions on all other dwellings on the holding (where agricultural/ forestry workers are resident), where such conditions fairly and reasonably relate to the permitted development.

5.5.14 In cases where an extra dwelling can be justified it is important to ensure that existing dwellings, not covered by occupancy conditions, are also protected. This will help to reduce

possible pressure for further dwellings in the future. This policy will be implemented via the development control process.

- 5.5.15 Government guidance sets out in PPG7, Annex 1 paragraph 119, that when granting permission for a new agricultural dwelling, local planning authorities should be aware of the scope for imposing an occupancy condition not only on the dwelling itself but also on any existing dwellings on the unit. This will help to reduce possible pressure for new dwellings in the future.

- 5.5.16 This policy will be implemented via the development control process.

5.5.17 POLICY H5

In determining applications for new agricultural or forestry workers dwellings the Council will have regard to the recent history of the holding. Particular attention will be paid to sales of dwellings previously used by farm/forestry workers to people not employed in agriculture. Where this has occurred permission for new dwellings will be refused unless special justification is available.

- 5.5.18 It is important that the justification for such dwellings exists. In cases where dwellings have recently been sold it is clear that the agricultural need for a new property has been artificially created.

5.5.19 POLICY H6

Where existing dwellings are subject to conditions restricting occupancy to those employed in agriculture or forestry, applications to remove such conditions will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- (a) The essential need which originally required the dwelling to be permitted no longer applies in relation to the farm unit and the dwelling will not be required similarly in the longer term on either the holding or in the area; and
- (b) Reasonable attempts have been made to dispose of the dwelling for occupation in compliance with the original condition.

- 5.5.20 Changes in the nature of farming and the demand for dwellings in rural areas can lead to increased pressure for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions. However, there is generally a presumption against removing them otherwise the exceptional reasons for permitting the dwellings originally would be undermined. However, there may be genuine circumstances when a dwelling is no longer required in the longer term for the purposes originally intended. Determination will be based on a realistic assessment of the continuing need for the condition bearing in mind that it is usually the need for a dwelling for someone solely, mainly or last working in agriculture in the area as a whole and not just on the particular holding that is relevant. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that reasonable attempts have been made to dispose of the dwelling in compliance with the condition at a reasonable price, for a suitable period of time and that no reasonable offers have been refused. Where necessary, the advice of an independent agricultural adviser will be sought to affirm the situation.

- 5.5.21 This policy will be implemented via the development control process.

5.6 SUBDIVISION OF PROPERTIES

5.6.1 POLICY H7

Within settlements, as defined on the proposals map proposals to convert large houses or other properties into flats or separate houses will be approved subject to the criteria of Policy G1.

In areas of open countryside such proposals will be refused unless specific justification exists.

- 5.6.2 The provision of flats and smaller properties within settlements can make a useful contribution to the range of properties and prices available. This may prove very important to young residents
- 5.6.3 In areas of open countryside such subdivisions can have a similar effect to new buildings, with increased pressures for car parking and garaging increased pressures on curtilage etc.
- 5.6.4 This policy will be implemented via the development control process. As well as the normal development control criteria regard will also be taken to the history of the building and any previous use, the need for housing in rural areas and the benefit of the availability of smaller units in such areas. The determination of applications for the re-use of buildings would also be subject to policies H15, H16 and H17.

5.7 UPPER FLOOR USES

5.7.1 POLICY H8

The Borough Council will approve proposals to convert upper floors in the town centres of Clitheroe and Longridge and in village centres for residential use. This is subject to the other policies of this plan.

- 5.7.2 It is expected that this policy will operate mainly in the town centres. The use of upper floors for residential use can make a useful contribution to the range of properties and prices available. This may prove very important to young residents. There is a significant amount of unused floorspace on upper floors in the main shopping streets of the town centres. The re-use of these can have added benefits such as enhancing the vitality of the street scene, increase of investment in the building stock and increased security for properties in these areas.

5.8 EXTENDED FAMILY ACCOMMODATION

- 5.8.1 The general ageing of the population has led some householders to look at the possibility of accommodating elderly or dependant family members within their existing dwellings. Modern dwellings are often not large enough to provide suitable accommodation. The permanent use of a spare bedroom can sometimes prove to be disruptive giving neither the relative concerned nor the family satisfactory independence or privacy.
- 5.8.2 An increasingly popular solution to this problem is to extend the family dwelling in order to provide modest accommodation which is self contained

5.8.3 POLICY H9

The Borough Council will approve applications for the extension of properties to provide accommodation for elderly or dependant relatives subject to the following criteria:

- (i) the proposal conforms to the provisions of Policy G1 of this plan;
- (ii) the development must be capable of integration into the main dwelling or a use which is ancillary to the use of the main dwelling house when circumstances change.
- (iii) the extension should generally speaking provide only a modest level of accommodation.

- 5 8 4 This policy is intended to be applied in circumstances where the creation of an extra dwelling would normally be refused
- 5 8 5 The policy is a reflection of the fact that special circumstances may apply which justify a temporary relaxation of normal planning controls. The temporary nature of the additional accommodation should be respected in terms of size and layout of the extension so that it can be integrated into the main dwelling when necessary
- 5 8 6 Conditions (often linked to a Section 106 Agreement) will normally be attached to any consent to prevent subletting or sale of the extension as a separate dwelling unit.
- 5 8 7 In exceptional circumstances the use of a building which is separate from the main dwelling may be approved. A Section 106 Agreement will however be required to regulate future uses.

5 9 RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS

5 9.1 POLICY H10

Proposals to extend or alter existing residential properties within the plan area will be considered on the basis of the scale, design and massing of the proposal in relation to the surrounding area. Proposals which conform to the criteria set out in Policy G1 will be considered acceptable.

- 5 9 2 Although residential extensions and major alterations will mostly be acceptable in principle problems relating to scale, design, massing may still occur. In particular over large extensions can have a similar effect to wholly new development in terms of landscape and street scene. In addition extensions can cause problems of loss of light or privacy for neighbouring residents. Careful design and siting can however overcome this.
- 5 9 3 This policy will be implemented through the development control process.

5 10 REST HOMES & NURSING HOMES

5 10.1 POLICY H11

Proposals for the change of use of properties to rest homes or nursing homes, or for the construction of purpose built facilities will be considered acceptable providing the following criteria are met:

- (i) the proposal should conform to the provisions of Policy G1;**
 - (ii) community facilities should be readily accessible and available;**
 - (iii) any existing property should be large enough to provide the required accommodation (bedrooms, bathrooms, communal rooms, etc) without the need for substantial extensions which would have a detrimental effect on the area.**
 - (iv) adequate parking, turning and manoeuvring facilities should be available within the site curtilage;**
 - (v) the property should have a garden area suitable for use by residents.**
- 5 10 2 The attractive towns and villages of the Ribble Valley have always been popular areas in which to retire. Pressures for rest home provision have been noted in the past, and in view of the general ageing of the population may continue.
- 5.10 3 This policy clearly sets out the circumstances in which applications are likely to be successful

5.10.4 In preparing this policy it is apparent that sites should be reasonably level and that access to facilities such as shops, post offices, churches and places of entertainment should be easy and distances short. Applications for development in the open countryside or in the smaller villages without these facilities are therefore likely to be refused.

5.10.5 In assessing the suitability of developments the impacts of neighbouring properties will be a primary consideration. For example the impact of increased vehicular or pedestrian activity on nearby residents is an important consideration. Potential noise from communal facilities or kitchens will also be taken into account in determining applications. These factors will apply mostly to the conversion of terraced or semi detached properties, however developments in close proximity to detached properties may also lead to difficulties.

5.10.6 Safe access for the parking of cars, ambulances and vans and for the safe manoeuvring of delivery vehicles is also important. This should be available to the Council's normal required standard (see policy T7) and should not be designed in such a manner that they are detrimental to the amenity of the locality.

5.11 CURTILAGE EXTENSIONS

5.11.1 POLICY H12

Proposals for the extension of curtilage will be approved if:

1. the site is within a settlement;
2. the site is on the edge of a settlement providing:
 - (a) (i) the new curtilage boundary follows an easily identifiable feature such as a road, stream or hedgerow; or
 - (ii) the curtilage extension brings the boundary into line with existing adjacent properties; and
 - (b) the extension will not cause visual harm to the landscape; or
 - (c) the extension improves the visual quality of the site.

5.11.2 Curtilage extensions on sites wholly outside settlements will normally be refused. Curtilage extensions into open countryside change the nature of the landscape by the planting of ornamental plants, laying of lawns etc. In addition garden sheds and outbuildings together with the uses of curtilage such as clothes drying can have a harmful effect on the quality of the landscape in the Borough.

5.12 REBUILDING/REPLACEMENT OF DWELLINGS

5.12.1 POLICY H13

Within settlements the rebuilding or replacement of dwellings will be permitted. This is subject to the provisions of Policy G1.

5.12.2 There are a number of properties in the Borough which are either substandard or in need of major improvement. This will normally be considered acceptable, however the new house created must not conflict within the amenities of neighbouring properties. In addition the opportunity provided by replacement or rebuilding to ensure that parking and access arrangements are safe and convenient should not be overlooked. Rebuilding does not mean that normal requirements for good design and use of appropriate materials will be relaxed.

5.12.3 This policy will be implemented through the development control process.

5.12.4 POLICY H14

Rebuilding or replacement of dwellings will be permitted in the open countryside, subject to the following criteria:

- (i) the residential use of the property should not have been abandoned. (If this is the case Policy H2 will apply);
- (ii) the impact on the landscape will be assessed in relation to that of a new dwelling. As such very careful consideration to design and use of materials must be made. In addition, excessive increase in the size of property will not be permitted;
- (iii) the creation of any extra curtilage will be assessed in relation to Policy H12;
- (iv) the terms of Policy G1 will apply.

5.12.5 Substandard properties and those in need of extensive repairs are not only found in towns and villages. This policy still places an emphasis on allowing such development to take place, but because the work will take place in the attractive open countryside special care must be taken over the appearance.

5.12.6 As a general guide increases in property size will be restricted to 50 cubic metres (or 10% of the property size whichever is greater) in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Elsewhere the original volume of the dwelling should not be increased by more than 70 cubic metres or 15% (whichever is greater). These general restrictions are imposed for two main reasons. Firstly the stock of properties in rural areas in need of such works are generally older properties. These have been built from traditional materials in a style common to the area. Because of their history they have generally been used as local workers cottages, as such their normal size is relatively small. The development of much larger properties would be out of keeping with the character of the area.

5.12.7 The second reason for the size restriction is an attempt to safeguard existing buildings which can potentially be repaired or renovated. If large size increases were to be allowed the potential to demolish and rebuild a totally different large new house would provide a loophole to the general settlement strategy of this plan and threaten existing traditional properties.

5.12.8 In most cases the planning permission will have a condition attached which removes permitted development rights for further extensions. This does not mean that extensions will necessarily be refused, just that planning permission will be needed.

5.12.9 This policy will be implemented through the development control process.

Note

Neither policy should be interpreted as advocating any development which adversely affects the setting of a building of historic or architectural interest or the quality of the building itself.

5.13 THE CONVERSION OF BARNS AND OTHER BUILDINGS TO DWELLINGS

5.13.1 The policies in this section of the plan are made in response to steady pressures for this type of development. This pressure looks set to continue, in view of the number of potentially suitable properties, and recent changes in government guidance which mean that the redundancy of the building for its original purpose is no longer an issue.

5.13.2 Traditionally constructed buildings bear the bulk of this pressure. These are very much a part of the Ribble Valley's character and heritage. The objective of allowing conversions or alternative uses is to keep these buildings well maintained and protect them as a feature within the landscape for future generations. In addition the conversion of properties to

dwelling adds to the number of homes to be provided in the Borough over the plan period. This helps to safeguard undeveloped greenfield sites from development.

- 5.13.3 In setting out the benefits of conversions it is important to stress that those features which make the building an important and interesting part of the Borough should not be lost. These policies therefore concentrate on the design of the final development. It is hoped that they prove beneficial to all concerned.

5.13.4 THE LOCATION OF THE BUILDING TO BE CONVERTED

POLICY H15

Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings in situations where:

- (i) there need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure;
- (ii) there would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area;
- (iii) there would be no unacceptable harm to nature conservation interests;
- (iv) there would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy; and
- (v) within the AONB the proposal should be consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.

- 5.13.5 The conversion of appropriate buildings within settlements or which form part of already defined groups is acceptable. Problems arise however where isolated buildings in the landscape such as barns are proposed for conversion. The local landscape can be damaged and a degree of urbanisation imposed upon an otherwise wholly rural view. This is linked to additional factors such as garden areas, car parking facilities, garages, sheds, even the presence of washing lines which are totally out of keeping within the rural setting of the building. These are discussed further in Policy H16.

- 5.13.6 In many instances the isolated roadside barn is a traditional feature within the AONB and needs protecting from inappropriate development. In determining applications for reuse of the building the Council will have regard to the contribution the building makes to the AONB and the effect any such proposal would have on the natural beauty of the area.

- 5.13.7 In relation to criteria (i) regard would be taken to the need to provide the utility services such as water and electricity as well as the provision of other public services such as refuse, postal services and the school bus. It is recognised that often the individual expense to the authority would not be significant but the cumulative effect could involve considerable expenditure in the provision of public services.

- 5.13.8 The policy will be implemented through the development control process.

5.13 THE BUILDING TO BE CONVERTED

POLICY H16

Conversions of buildings to dwellings will be granted providing:

- (a) the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alterations which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building, the Council will

require a structural survey is submitted with all planning applications. This should include plans of any rebuilding which is proposed;

- (b) the building is of sufficient size to provide for minimal living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building;
- (c) the character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building is worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting;
- (d) the building, if provided under permitted development rights, has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise.

5.13.10 The basic aim of this policy is to enhance and protect the natural beauty of the Borough. Clearly buildings to be converted should be worthy of being retained in their own right. Modern farm buildings, or properties constructed in a style or in materials not in keeping with the area will not be considered as suitable for conversion.

5.13.11 The property must be capable of a satisfactory conversion without the need for major demolition or rebuilding works. This is because such development is the equivalent of building a wholly new dwelling. This would not normally be allowed in the rural areas of the Borough.

5.13.12 Farm buildings are operational structures with a functional simplicity which is an essential part of their character. If a building is to be converted this should be done with minimal changes to the roof slope, amendments to the eaves line or the addition of extensions or porches. This will help to retain the original form of the building.

5.13.13 Rural buildings often provide roosting or breeding sites for protected rare species, such as bats and barn owls. Where this occurs any development proposal will be assessed in relation to Policy ENV7.

5.13.14 Finally the building must have a genuine history of use. Proposals involving buildings erected with an apparent future aim of conversion will not be granted consent.

5.13.15 This policy will be implemented through the development control process.

5.13.16 DESIGN MATTERS

POLICY H17

Planning permission for the conversion of buildings will be granted providing:

- (a) the design of the conversion is of a high standard and is in keeping with local tradition, particularly in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings;
- (b) the impact of the development or the effects of the creation of a garden area, together with any garaging or car parking facilities or other additions, will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated;
- (c) the access to the site should be to a safe standard, or should be capable of being improved to a safe standard without harming the appearance of the area.

5.13.17 This policy acknowledges the importance of good design to protect the rural environment. In design terms the basic idea is that traditional farm buildings should remain largely unaltered and remain looking like farm buildings after conversion. Traditional buildings do have their own individual charm but they are basically simple straight forward buildings constructed by

local workmen using local materials. Conversion of listed farm buildings to residential use can seldom be carried out without significant damage to the fabric of the building. Such development will only be allowed as a last resort in securing their conservation. Policy EMP9 refers to alternative uses which may be more sympathetic.

5.13.18 Alterations necessary to accommodate modern living and working conditions often make conversion difficult if the original character of the building is to be retained. Most farm buildings have unbroken roof spaces, a limited number of windows and largely open interiors. It is possible to convert farm buildings without changing their character by recognising these principal features and by not trying to achieve maximum possible floorspace. It should be remembered that these are not new buildings, they are conversions of special buildings. This should be reflected in the final scheme. Too many doors and windows, the insertion of dormers, roof lights and chimneys and the alteration of roof trusses will devalue the character of traditional farm buildings and that of the surrounding environment.

5.13.19 The following guidance indicates the general design requirements which the Borough Council will normally require:

(a) Roofs

The single most important external feature of a traditional farm building is the roof, seen at a distance, they tend to dominate elevations. Large unbroken roof slopes are a characteristic within the Borough which should be respected. Dormers are not usually found on agricultural buildings and even small roof lights catch the eye by reflecting open sky or sunlight. An alternative may be a suitable opening in the gable end to supplement light level.

Normal roof lights have the disadvantage of an upstand which visually jars with the roof profile. Flush fitting roof lights with concealed integral gutters are now available. Also, it is now possible to obtain special non-reflective glass to fit into the roof light. Single storey farm buildings should remain single storey accommodation.

(b) New Openings In Walls

Agricultural buildings are characterised by a limited number of window and door openings. Conversion to a single dwelling-house is generally preferable to the creation of more than one dwelling, since this will easily involve fewer new window and door openings. Apart from the wagon door openings, windows and doors are commonly small and insignificant on agricultural buildings. In conversions, the type, proportion and detail of existing openings should be observed, the proportion and size of existing openings should also be taken into account, when determining the accommodation to be provided within the building. Any additional doors and windows should copy existing patterns. Large wagon door openings should be used to provide the majority of internal natural light by constructing an inconspicuous frame set back into the building. The use of leaded light windows should be avoided.

(c) Materials

With any conversion, as much of the original fabric should be retained as possible. Where rebuilding is unavoidable, then existing materials should be used. When modern materials are used for repair or rebuilding, they are invariably obvious and immediately noticeable. In order to maintain converted farm buildings in an authentic condition, new work should blend harmoniously with old; reproduction slates and tiles, reconstituted stone, concrete and aluminium and plastic are generally unacceptable materials.

(d) Extensions and Additions

Farm buildings are operational structures with a functional simplicity which is part of their appeal. Changes to the roof slope, amendments to the eaves line, addition of porches and chimney stacks will contribute to complexity and a loss of original character. It is important that farm buildings are preserved in their original form without alien, urban additions or alterations.

(e) Rainwater Goods

Rain is often allowed to run off the eaves of farm buildings without a roof drainage system. Therefore any new rainwater gutters and downpipes should be discreet and mounted if possible using stirrup brackets rather than a fascia board. Rainwater downpipes should be as few as possible and position on the less prominent elevations wherever possible and made of metal in a traditional design.

(f) Interiors

Design solutions should be found which avoid disturbing the existing roof timbers and which do not require raising external walls. Traditional farm buildings will most effectively retain their character if the interior is left open, at least in part, to give an impression of the pre-converted space. Open layouts help natural light penetrate from a limited number of openings to illuminate a relatively large area of floorspace. Internal divisions should be kept to a minimum in sympathy with the structural main divisions of the building. Staircases and doors should be contemporary in design.

(g) Curtilages

Traditional farm buildings are generally associated with yards or open field locations. In order to maintain the agricultural character of converted buildings in their new use, they should retain their open setting. Farm buildings are simple and unfussy. Suburban paraphernalia, patio equipment, interwoven fencing, greenhouses, swimming pools and sheds can detract from their agricultural setting. The curtilage of a converted farm building should remain open and uncluttered. The treatment of boundaries should reflect the buildings rural character; post and rail fences, timber gates of the five bar type will be encouraged.

(h) Access

Proposals should normally involve the use of an existing access whenever practical. If a new access is created it should be designed to an appropriate standard as determined by the appropriate highway authority (Highways Agency regarding trunk roads, County Surveyor regarding others). Highway safety will be a primary consideration, however, the Council will also require careful design and landscaping. Materials used must be sympathetic to the character of the area. New access tracks should not be significantly longer than existing. Where a new access is created the existing access should be blocked up and the track removed.

5.13.20 EXTENSIONS TO CONVERTED RURAL BUILDINGS

POLICY H18

In its determination of applications for change of use of rural buildings to dwellings, the Borough Council will impose a condition requiring that any future extensions or external alterations to the dwelling including any development within the curtilage as defined in schedule 2 Part 1 Clauses A to E of the Town and Country Planning General Development order 1988 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that order) shall not be carried out without the formal consent of the Borough Council.

Proposals to extend or alter previously converted rural buildings within the plan area will be considered on the basis of the scale design and massing of the proposal in relation to the character of the existing building and the surrounding area. Proposals should be in keeping with the local tradition in terms of design, materials, geometric form and window and door openings.

- 5.13.21 It is important that the design principles contained in Policy H17 are maintained. This policy is intended to ensure that any additions or alterations to the building following conversion are

in keeping with the character of the property and the area. The design principles set out in paragraphs 5.13.17 to 5.13.19 will be applied to all applications.

5.14 POLICIES TO HELP SOLVE HOUSING NEEDS

- 5.14.1 This section of the plan refers to housing needs in the Borough. It contains policies aimed at reducing those needs. Affordable housing can be defined as permanent accommodation, both low-cost market and subsidised housing (irrespective of tenure, ownership or financial arrangements) that will be available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market.
- 5.14.2 Housing needs normally come from people who are resident in the Borough. They can arise through people growing older or having reduced mobility. Changes to family circumstances such as marriage, divorce, having children etc can also give rise to needs for different accommodation. Assessments of need must however also take account of people who need to live in a certain area because of work commitments.
- 5.14.3 Indicators of housing need in the Borough can be derived from a number of sources as follows:
- a rural housing needs survey undertaken in 1995 which identified significant levels of need particularly for young persons who were likely to need different accommodation in the following 3 year period;
 - population and household projections which show an increasing population but a decreasing household size. This means more housing will be needed. Also, the numbers of people within the age groups most in need (75+ and the 20-29 age bracket are set to grow);
 - house prices which are amongst the highest in Lancashire, an important factor which leads to many people having to leave the Borough to find affordable accommodation;
 - the Council house waiting list, whilst not being a true indicator of need, reveals that there is a demand for affordable housing. The figures help to show a proportion of those in need and gives some idea about the type of properties needed.

An indication of whether there is an 'affordability gap' in the plan area, and if there is, an idea of its magnitude may be gained by looking at average income levels of those in housing need in the District compared to average house prices in the District. Whilst this can only provide a 'snapshot' of the situation, it is nonetheless a reasonable starting point to provide guidance on the extent of the gap between house prices and household incomes of those in housing need.

5.14.5 POLICY APPLIED TO LARGE DEVELOPMENTS IN MAIN SETTLEMENTS AND ALLOCATED SITES

POLICY H19

The Borough Council will promote the provision of affordable housing throughout the Borough in areas where need is clearly identified. In main settlements identified in Policy G2 and villages referred to in Policy G3 and on allocated sites, this will be achieved by negotiating for the inclusion of a proportion of affordable housing in all new planning consents, including the renewal of lapsed consents, for suitable sites. This includes sites allocated in Policy H1 of the Plan.

In assessing the suitability of sites, the following factors will be taken into account:-

- (a) in settlements with a population of 3,000 or fewer the policy will only be applied to developments of 25 or more dwellings, or to any residential site of 1 or more hectare irrespective of the number of dwellings, and elsewhere to developments of 40 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1.5 hectares or more;
- (b) the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport; and
- (c) whether there will be particular costs associated with development of the site and whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site.

Affordable housing will be expressly for people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market within the following groups:-

- (i) first time buyers currently resident in the Ribble Valley;
- (ii) elderly people resident in the Ribble Valley;
- (iii) those employed or about to be employed within 5 miles of the proposed development but living more than 5 miles from their place of employment who need affordable housing;
- (iv) those who have lived in the Borough for any 5 of the last 10 years, having left to find suitable accommodation elsewhere, and also with close family remaining in the Borough;
- (v) people needing to move to the area to help support and care for a sick, elderly or infirm relative; and
- (vi) other groups that may be considered on the basis of exceptional circumstances.

Information as set out in Policy H21 (ii) will be required in respect of the affordable housing element of applications dealt with under Policy H19. Affordable housing in applications relating to exceptions sites (ie those which would not conform to Policies G2, G3 or G4) will be subject to Policy H21.

- 5 14 6 The Council has undertaken an assessment of housing need which gives a target to be provided of approximately 1400 new dwellings. This is derived from the 1995 housing needs survey. The survey identified a significant number of primary households who anticipate renting from either the Council or other social housing provider. Annual household income levels in this group were typically under £10,000. As regards emerging households intending to move, those seeking owner occupation anticipated affordable house prices significantly lower than those available on the market - half indicated £20,000 - £30,000 as the maximum price. Of those intending to rent 20% had net incomes less than £6,500 per annum and consequently anticipated very low rents. The complete survey gives a clear picture of significant levels of need particularly for affordable housing for young persons with the figures being high in the two main towns of Clitheroe and Longridge although there are pockets of need across the Borough. Housing needs will continue to be addressed in any review of the plan. As such the target for provision is likely to be a minimum figure and future surveys may reveal a higher level of need.

The principle of negotiating for the inclusion of affordable housing on sites is established in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 "Housing" and DOE Circular 13/96 "Planning and Affordable Housing". This is only intended to apply on larger sites which are either allocated or which are within settlements identified in policies G2 and G3 of this plan.

- 5 14.8 The provision of an element of affordable needs housing in a development does not mean that normal planning requirements, as specified in this plan, and in particular in policy G1 will be relaxed.

- 5.14.9 This policy does not set a quota for amounts of affordable needs housing to be provided on sites. This will be a matter for negotiation based on site capacity and the type of site being developed. As regards defining what is meant by 'affordable' actual affordable prices will be dependent upon up to date surveys on local housing needs (including an assessment of income levels) being carried out just prior to, or at the time of a planning application. The Council will seek to secure rental or purchase prices which are 15% lower than market values at the time of development.
- 5.14.10 Planning permission for social needs development will normally only be granted subject to legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is aimed at ensuring the properties stay suitable for affordable housing.
- 5.14.11 This policy will be implemented through the development control process and through negotiations with developers and relevant housing associations.

5.14.12 POLICY APPLIED TO ALL PROPOSALS OUTSIDE SETTLEMENTS, AND ON ALL SITES OTHER THAN INFILL SITES WITHIN VILLAGES BOUNDARIES

POLICY H20

On sites other than infill sites within the village boundaries and on land identified as open countryside planning permission will only be granted for 100% affordable needs housing developments which are intended to meet a proven local need.

Affordable needs housing granted under this policy will be expressly for the following groups of people:

- (a) first time buyers currently resident in the parish or an adjoining parish;
- (b) elderly people currently resident in the parish or an adjoining parish;
- (c) those employed in the parish or an immediately adjoining parish but currently living more than 5 miles from their place of employment;
- (d) those who have lived in the parish for any 5 of the last 10 years having left to find suitable accommodation and also with close family remaining in the village;
- (e) those about to take up employment in the parish;
- (f) people needing to move to the area to help support and care for a sick, elderly or infirm relative.

In addition to those groups of people others may have special circumstances which can be applied. These will be assessed on their individual merits.

Although this policy relaxes the normally restrictive elements of policies G4, this is a reflection of the special needs only. The proposed development must still show a high quality of design and use materials appropriate to the area. In particular the principles of Policy G1 will be strictly applied. Proposals should ideally be an extension to the village, or take on unprotected land within the settlement boundary.

The affordable needs element of any application will be subject to Policy H21 of this plan.

- 5.14.13 This policy allows for exceptions to normally restrictive policies where an identified and proven local need exists. This is in full conformity to Government guidance on the subject of affordable housing in rural areas as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 "Housing".

5.14.14 The policy also reflects the Council's role as an "enabler" rather than a provider of housing. This means that the Council is now more concerned to use its powers and statutory responsibilities to stimulate and assist the provision of affordable housing rather than provide the accommodation directly.

5.14.15 It is likely that schemes will provide between 4 and 10 dwellings. This is because larger proposals would be seen as out of keeping with the nature of the area. Smaller schemes, especially proposals for single dwellings will lead to sporadic development which is unlikely to solve the village or parish need, and be difficult to monitor. However, there may be rare occasions where the provision of a single dwelling would appear to meet the aims of this policy. As a general guide the Council will not normally approve proposals which provide in excess of 65 m² floorspace.

5.14.16 Developments permitted under Policy H20 are allowed because of the special need which exists. It is important that such houses remain in their intended occupancy. This will reduce the pressure for further dwellings in the area and reduce possible abuse of this policy relaxation.

5.14.17 This policy will be implemented via the development control process.

5.14.18 It is also important to assess how the properties will be made "affordable" and how they will be retained as such.

5.14.19 In bringing forward any proposal developers are advised that a statement of support from the parish council regarding the nature, number and location of properties, as well as to the occupancy of them, will be helpful. Indeed the parish council will be the primary sponsors of some schemes.

5.14.20 Planning permission for social needs development will normally only be granted subject to legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is aimed at ensuring the properties stay suitable for affordable housing. The parties who will normally be required to be signatories to such an agreement will include the council and:

- (i) the land owner and any other person/organisation with an interest in the land;
- (ii) the developer/applicant for planning permission;
- (iii) the housing association/charitable trust which would be the long term owner or manager of the housing.

5.14.21 **POLICY H21**

All applications for development promoted to meet local needs housing must be accompanied with the following information:

- (i) **details of who the accommodation will be expected to accommodate. This should include a full survey of the extent of need and include persons who have expressed an interest in the property, and how the cost of the accommodation will be matched to the incomes of these target groups;**
- (ii) **details of the methods by which the accommodation will be sold or let, managed and retained as suitable for its original purpose.**

5.14.22 This policy is needed to show exactly what the requirements for affordable needs housing are in relation to any proposal.

5.14.23 It is also important to assess how the properties will be made "affordable" and how they will be retained as such.

5.14.24 In bringing forward any proposal developers are advised that a statement of support from the parish council regarding the nature, number and location of properties, as well as to the occupancy of them, will be helpful. Indeed the parish council will be the primary sponsors of some schemes.

5.14.25 Planning permission for affordable needs development will only be granted subject to legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is aimed at ensuring the properties stay suitable for affordable housing. The parties who will normally be required to be signatories to such an agreement will include the Council and:

- (i) the land owner and any other person/organisation with an interest in the land;
- (ii) the developer/applicant for planning permission;
- (iii) the housing association/charitable trust which would be the long term owner or manager of the housing.

5.15 GYPSY SITES

POLICY H22

Where there is an identified need proposals for gypsy sites will be approved, subject to the following criteria:

- i) The proposal must not conflict with the other policies of this plan, in particular Policy G1, G5, G6, G7, G8, ENV1 and ENV4.
- ii) Proposals must not adversely affect a SSSI or a site of biological importance.
- iii) The proposal must not have an adverse impact on the character of the environment or the character of the landscape.
- iv) Proposals should involve the reuse of derelict land where possible.
- v) The site should have good access to primary and other main routes.
- vi) The site should be within reasonable proximity to services.
- vii) The development must not involve the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

5.15.2 Government guidance set out in Circular 1/94 stresses that it is important for local plans to contain policies relating to the provision of sites. As a rule it will not be appropriate to make provision for gypsy sites in areas of open land where development is severely restricted ie within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In addition gypsy sites are not regarded as being among those uses of land appropriate to Green Belt land or areas where nature conservation interests would be affected. Sites should also be well related to the pattern of service provision including schools, shops and other community facilities.

5.15.3 In the implementation of this policy the Borough Council will exercise their discretionary powers in relation to providing sites under Section 24 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960.

5.16 REMOVAL OF HOLIDAY LET CONDITIONS

POLICY H23

15.6.1 Proposals seeking the removal of conditions which restrict the occupation of dwellings to tourism/visitor usage will be refused unless the proposal conforms to the

normal development control policies of this local plan. Policies G5, H2 and H15, H16 and H17 will be particularly relevant in any assessment.

- 5.16.2 Proposals for visitor facilities in the rural areas are encouraged since this adds to the economic well-being of the area and can help the preservation of important rural buildings. In addition less facilities are required for visitor use, with smaller areas of curtilage, and in the case of building conversions less need for windows etc.
- 5.16.3 Government guidance has however changed over recent years, this means that some properties tied to such conditions can often be released without setting a precedent for other properties. Any application which would conform to the housing policies set out in this local plan will normally be approved.