

### **3. GENERAL POLICIES**

#### **3.1 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

3.1.1 An important function of the Local Plan will be to provide a detailed basis for development control decisions. This will be of benefit to all concerned in the development process, from builders through to people who may wish to object to certain developments. Government guidance stresses that the Council should be positive in its determination of planning applications. Consent should only be refused where there are clearly defined reasons for it to be withheld. The criteria which the Council will apply in determining all planning applications are set out in Policy G1.

##### **3.1.2 POLICY G1**

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

**In determining planning applications the following criteria will be applied:**

- (a) Development should be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature.
- (b) The likely scale and type of traffic generation will be assessed in relationship to the highway infrastructure and the proposed and existing public transport network. This will include safety, operational efficiency, amenity and environmental considerations.
- (c) Developments should make adequate arrangements for car parking (see Policy T7).
- (d) A safe access should be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.
- (e) The density, layout and relationship between buildings is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.
- (f) Developments should provide adequate arrangements for servicing and public utilities.
- (g) Developments should provide adequate daylighting and privacy.
- (h) Materials used should be sympathetic to the character of the area.
- (i) Developments should not result in the loss of important open space including public and private playing fields.
- (j) Developments should not damage SSSI's, County Heritage Sites, Local Nature Reserves or other sites of nature conservation importance.
- (k) Development should not require culverting, artificial channelling or destruction of a watercourse. Wherever possible watercourses should be maintained within a reasonable corridor of native vegetation.
- (l) Developments should be economic in the use of land, water and aggregates and should not prejudice future development which would provide significant environmental and amenity improvements.

- (m) **Where it is the intention to rely upon a private water supply, developments should provide an adequate means of water supply, which will not derogate existing users.**

**In certain cases additional factors may be taken into account.**

- 3.1.3 This policy is important in order to safeguard the amenities of the Borough and also of those properties adjacent to proposed developments. The various criteria will not be of equal importance in all cases. The Borough Council will also weigh the economic benefits arising from the development against the environmental impact when making decisions. There should be adequate arrangements for sewerage and the disposal of effluent waste. In addition, other factors may be taken into account in specific cases; these will be covered in the following sections of this plan.
- 3.1.4 In respect of part (i) of this policy the Borough Council will have regard to the following in assessing the importance of open space:
- (a) the level of provision and standard of public open space in the area;
  - (b) playing fields, whether owned publicly or privately are of special significance;
  - (c) the need to protect school playing fields to meet future needs is important.
- 3.1.5 In many cases the fact that access is available to an area of open land is just as important as the size and nature of the space provided. In other cases the physical existence of open space can be an important factor in the landscape or townscape of an area. This is not dependent on the availability of public access.
- 3.1.6 Developments should not adversely affect open breaks which contribute to the identity of the plan area or, open land which is visually dominant in the plan area.
- 3.1.7 This policy will be implemented through the development control process.

## **3.2 SETTLEMENT STRATEGY**

- 3.2.1 The settlement strategy in this plan follows the broad guidelines laid down by the Lancashire Structure Plan (1991 - 2006) "Greening the Red Rose County".
- 3.2.2 This defines six policies that would apply to towns and villages in the Ribble Valley. These are:
- Main urban areas where the majority of development will be concentrated. This includes Wilpshire in the Ribble Valley because of its physical linkage with the Blackburn urban area.
  - Settlements suitable for appropriate consolidation and expansion. This policy includes Clitheroe;
  - Settlements suitable for development by way of development within or rounding-off of their built-up area. This includes Belington and Longridge;
  - Settlements suitable for development including the development or redevelopment of land wholly within the built-up area. This includes Mellor Brook and Read/Simonstone;
  - Rural settlements where small-scale developments such as infill or building conversions will normally be permitted. The villages to be included in this definition are:
    - i) outside green belts and thus not subject to green belt restrictions on development;

- ii) physically separate from areas of urban development and therefore justify separate treatment;
- iii) not identified elsewhere in the settlement strategy;
- iv) those which contain at least 20 dwellings and a shop or public house or place of worship or school or community hall, i.e. they are of a size, form and function which justifies treatment as a settlement.

These villages are shown on the proposals map:

- land outside settlements where restrictions on development apply.

3.2.3 In preparing this plan settlements described as hamlets (i.e. all those not included in the above categories) have not been identified on the proposals map, and have not been given development boundaries. This is because they are not considered large enough (or considered to have significant facilities) to allow for growth. Policies that would relate to open countryside will also apply to these hamlets.

3.2.4 In interpreting the structure plan policy at a detailed local level there are some clear difficulties. For example, Wilpshire is classed as part of a main urban area, and as such development should be concentrated into it. Wilpshire is however tightly surrounded by green belt, the boundaries of which should not be changed; as such development opportunities are limited.

### 3.2.5 POLICY G2

Within the plan area developments will be mainly directed towards land within the main settlement boundaries. These are defined on the proposals map. The following **scale of development will be approved**:

- i) Wilpshire - development of sites within the settlement boundary and outside the green belt;
- ii) Clitheroe - consolidation and expansion of development and rounding off development. In all cases this must be on sites wholly within the settlement boundary and must be appropriate to the town's size and form;
- iii) Billington, Longridge and Whalley - development wholly within the **built part of the settlement or the rounding-off of the built-up area**.

3.2.6 Wilpshire, Clitheroe, Billington, Longridge and Whalley will be described as the main settlements elsewhere in this plan. This policy recognises the need to define the main settlements of the Borough, and to designate those sites which are appropriate for large-scale development. In drawing the main settlement boundaries the following criteria have been applied:

Main settlement boundaries will:

- include all properties physically linked to the main part of the settlement;
- include necessary land-use allocations;

short term;

- where appropriate the boundary will follow the lines of residential curtilage;
- include sites which are so damaged by visual intrusion as to be unworthy of designation in the open countryside beyond.

3.2.7 In applying this policy the following terms and definitions are important:

- *Consolidation of development* - this refers to locating new development so that it adjoins the main built-up area of a settlement and, where appropriate, both the main part of the settlement and an area of sporadic or isolated development. Proposals on sites covering open land in excess of one hectare will not be considered appropriate.
- *Expansion* - this is limited growth of a settlement. For the purposes of this plan, it must be development which is in scale and keeping with the existing town. Expansion during the plan period will be planned growth taking place on sites identified in this plan or through the implementation of on-going commitments such as the Pendle Road housing site in Clitheroe.
- *Rounding-off development* - this refers to development which is essentially part of rather than an extension to the built-up part of the settlement. It can be defined as the development of land within the settlement boundary (which is not covered by any protective designation) where at least two thirds of the perimeter is already built-up with consolidated development. Such sites will normally be relatively small and should not involve the development of visually important "green wedges". Proposals on sites covering open land in excess of one hectare will not normally be considered appropriate.

3.2.8 Over recent years development wholly within settlements and rounding-off development has provided a number of opportunities for house building. Opportunities often arise on derelict land, through the closure of commercial premises and on sites where unfit buildings have to be cleared. In many cases the development has made a significant environmental improvement.

3.2.9 It is assumed that sites will continue to come available throughout the plan period, and that these will make a contribution towards the Borough's overall housing land supply. This will help to protect less suitable greenfield sites on the edge of main settlements from development pressures.

3.2.10 It should be noted that this policy does not permit the development of essential open spaces or land which is in recreational use.

### 3.2.11 **POLICY G3**

Within the villages of **Mellor Brook, Read** and Simonstone, as defined on the proposals map, planning permission will be granted for:

- (a) The development and redevelopment of land wholly within **the settlement boundary, not defined as essential** open space (it should be noted that the Borough Council will negotiate to secure an element of affordable housing on large sites, see Policy H19).

3.2.13 It should be stressed that any development considered acceptable must lie within the settlement boundaries as shown on the proposals map. In addition land defined as essential open space is protected by Policy G6.

#### 3.2.14 **POLICY G4**

**Within the villages of:**

<b>Barrow</b>	<b>Holden</b>	<b>Sabden</b>
<b>Bolton-by-Bowland</b>	<b>Hurst Green</b>	<b>Sawley</b>
<b>Copster Green</b>	<b>Lang ho</b>	<b>Slaidburn</b>
<b>Chatburn</b>	Mellor	<b>Tosside</b>
<b>Chipping</b>	<b>Newton</b>	<b>Waddington</b>
<b>Downham</b>	<b>Osbaldeston</b>	<b>West Bradford</b>
<b>Dunsop Bridge</b>	<b>Pendleton</b>	<b>Wiswell</b>
<b>Gisburn</b>	Ribchester	<b>Worston</b>
<b>Grindleton</b>	<b>Rimington</b>	

**as defined on the proposals map, planning permission will be granted for proposals falling within the following categories:**

- a) The development of sites allocated in this plan.**
- b) The use of infill sites not defined as essential open spaces.**
- c) The rehabilitation and re-use of rural buildings (subject to Policies H15, H16, H17, EMP9 and RT3).**
- d) Proposals which contribute to the solution of a particular local housing, social, community or employment problem. In the case of housing development proposals will be expected to conform to Policy H20.**

3.2.15 It is important to define which villages can accommodate small-scale development and to establish exactly what will be considered acceptable. The policy recognises the need to protect the individual character of each village. It also prevents unnecessary expansion into the countryside. In this respect the village boundaries have been drawn on the following basis:

- i) All properties physically linked to the main (built) part of the settlement are included;
- ii) All undeveloped areas of existing planning consents are included;
- iii) They include residential curtilages;
- iv) Boundaries do not include properties separated from the main body of the settlement by areas of open land not forming a residential curtilage;
- v) In most cases single depth development (ribbon development) along roads leading out of settlements has been excluded, unless the area is physically well related to the settlement.

3.2.16 For the purpose of this policy infill development is defined as:

"the filling of small gaps within small groups of houses

where: i) the site is not designated as essential

open space;

ii) proposals which would not lead to ribbon development or a fragmented pattern of development;

#### 3.2.17 **POLICY G5**

**Outside the main settlement boundaries and the village boundaries planning consent** will only be granted for small-scale developments which are:

i) **essential to the local economy or the social well being of the area; or**

ii) **needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry; or**

iii) **sites developed for local needs housing (subject to Policy H20 of this plan); or**

iv) **small scale tourism developments and small scale recreational developments appropriate to a rural area subject to Policy RTI; or**

v) **other small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area which conform to the policies of this plan.**

3.2.18 This policy recognises the need to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. In doing so, it must be accepted that the countryside is a working area and a source of many Ribble Valley residents' livelihoods. As such it is subject to change and to development pressures. If properly managed, these can be accommodated without harming the basic character of the area.

3.2.19 Where issues of agricultural justification are raised by development proposals the Borough Council will gain appropriate specialist advice.

3.2.20 The settlement strategy of the plan will be implemented through the development control process.

#### 3.2.21 **ESSENTIAL OPEN**

##### **SPACES** POLICY G6

**Development will not be permitted on land which is designated as essential open space on the Proposals Map unless it does not compromise the visual quality and value of general openness or the recreational value of the site or unless warranted by overriding material considerations in the public interest.**

3.2.22 These sites have significant amenity value either visually or through their recreational use. It is important that they are protected from unnecessary development in order to preserve the characteristics of the plan area.

- 3.2.23 In identifying specific sites the Council used a list of criteria which consisted of an evaluation of the visual quality of the site; an assessment of the contribution the site makes to the townscape of the area or enhancement of the setting of important buildings and its importance as an area of recreational open space.
- 3.2.24 Recreational open space would include areas such as parks, play areas, playing fields, sports pitches and informal open spaces. In certain instances some areas have been identified as public recreational land and are shown on the Proposals Map. In designating such areas regard has been taken to the size; accessibility for public use the level of facilities provided on the site, the location and the topography.
- 3.2.25 Many areas designated have existing buildings and uses within them such as schools, churches etc. Development which is necessary for the continued efficient operation of such uses should not be prohibited unless it is detrimental to the openness or attractiveness of the site. In addition, other sites such as playing fields can have their usefulness enhanced by small-scale developments such as changing rooms etc. Proposals of this nature should also be considered acceptable subject to detailed siting and design.
- 3.2.26 Any proposal will also be considered having regard to Policy RT10.

### **3.3 FLOOD PROTECTION**

#### **3.3.1 POLICY G7**

**All development proposals will be expected to:**

- i) Protect flood plains.**
- ii) Protect areas at risk from flooding as indicated on the proposals map.**
- iii) Allow necessary access to watercourses for maintenance.**
- iv) Prevent an unacceptable change to surface water run-off.**
- v) Protect the continuity and integrity of existing fluvial defences.**

- 3.3.2 The National Rivers Authority is aware of a number of potential flooding areas in the Borough mainly connected with the River Ribble corridor. The National Rivers Authority will be consulted on all applications to assess the implications of development. Towns and villages which may be affected by flooding include:

Billington  
Bolton by Bowland  
Chatburn (Chapel Laith)  
Downham  
East of Clitheroe around Taylor Street  
The Ribble corridor around Ribchester  
The Ribble corridor around Sawley  
Waddington  
Whalley around the River Calder  
West Bradford  
Worston

- 3.3.3 The National Rivers Authority has prepared a draft Catchment Management Plan (November 1995) for the Ribble Catchment. This plan is intended to bring together the management of all water-based interests within the Ribble Catchment including the Borough of Ribble Valley. This will produce a framework for advising on planning applications on such issues as water supply and sewerage infrastructure, waste disposal, protection of flood plains and conserving the aquatic environment. The Council will have regard to this plan when considering development proposals which may affect the water environment.

### 3.4 **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

3.4.1 The Borough Council has a general aim to develop the concept of sustainable development with an emphasis on improving the quality of life in the Borough. The planning system faces two apparently conflicting forces. On the one hand are demands for growth and development. On the other hand are growing demands for better environmental quality. Although the planning system has always been promoted as a means of balancing these conflicting demands it is apparent that it has not always been able to take account of all relevant factors. There are, however, certain land use factors which can be guided and controlled through this plan.

#### 3.4.2 **POLICY G8**

**In its consideration of all development proposals the Council will take full account of the need to:**

- (a) remove and reclaim contaminated land plus derelict and disused sites, which cause clear environmental damage, for uses in accordance with the provisions of this plan;
- (b) minimise air, surface water, ground water, light and ground pollution;
- (c) prevent the intrusion of noise into residential areas or areas used for recreation;
- (d) discourage the production of waste;**
- (e) implement improvements to areas of poor environment;

**encourage the use of both materials from renewable** sources and energy conservation concepts in the design of new buildings and the improvement or conversion of existing buildings. To achieve a sustainable pattern of development by both conserving resources and reducing the emission of greenhouse gasses through exhaust emissions;

...  
protect all valuable natural history and architectural features, traditional landscape features, sites of archaeological value and wildlife habitats;

- (h) the need to protect people from the effects of hazardous installations.  
promote development within existing developed areas at locations which are highly accessible by means other than the private car;

- (i)  
locate major generators of travel demand in existing centres which are highly accessible by means other than the private car;

- (k) strengthen existing town and village centres which offer a range of everyday **community shopping and employment opportunities** by protecting and enhancing their viability and vitality;

...  
locate major developments in areas which maintain and improve choice for people to walk, cycle or catch public transport rather than drive between homes and facilities which they need to visit regularly;

- (m) limit parking provision for developments and other on or off street parking provision to discourage reliance on the car for work and other journeys where there are effective alternatives.



- 3.4.3 It is the intention of the Borough Council to take environmental matters into account when determining development proposals. This is in order to protect the special qualities of the plan area. Environmental matters relating to transport are covered by Policy T1.
- 3.4.4 It is important to ensure that development causes no unnecessary or unjustifiable damage to the natural or built environment in order to maintain the Ribble Valley as an attractive place to live in and visit. Surface water and ground water resources will be protected by ensuring that:
- a) there is adequate infrastructure and capacity on the existing sewerage system;
  - b) suitable storage facilities for oil and chemicals exist;
  - c) satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of foul sewage, trade effluent and contaminated surface water exist.
- 3.4.5 Certain sites and pipelines are designated as notifiable installations by virtue of the quantities of hazardous substances stored or used. The siting of such installations will be subject to planning controls and keeping these separated from housing and other land uses with which such installations might be incompatible is important from the safety viewpoint. To this end, the planning authority will seek the advice of the Health and Safety Executive on the suitability of proposed development in relation to the risks that the notified installation might pose to the surrounding population.
- 3.4.6 The area covered by this local plan already contains a number of installations handling notifiable substances, including high-pressure natural gas transmission pipelines. Whilst they are subject to stringent controls under existing health and safety legislation, it is considered prudent to control the kinds of development permitted in the vicinity of these installations. For this reason the planning authority have been advised by the Health and Safety Executive of consultation distances and the planning authority will take account of the advice it receives from the Health and Safety Executive about risks to the proposed development from the notifiable installation. Notifiable installations are listed in appendix 1.
- 3.4.7 Parts of this policy will overlap with other policies in this plan; however, the policy remains valid, as a statement of the council's environmental objective.
- 3.4.8 This policy will be implemented through the development control process.

### 3.5 **LAPSED PERMISSIONS**

#### 3.5.1 **POLICY G9**

**The Borough Council will refuse to renew planning permissions which lapse in unsuitable locations or which do not conform to the policies of this plan.**

- 3.5.2 As was mentioned in the introduction to the plan, there are a number of existing permissions in the Borough. These have been taken into account in drawing up the plan policies. Where these consents are in inappropriate locations, or where they conflict with national or county guidance they will not be renewed.

### 3.6 **LEGAL AGREEMENTS**

#### 3.6.1 **POLICY G10**

**The local planning authority will seek to enter into agreed planning obligations to secure the acceptability of proposals when a condition on a planning permission would not be practical. Planning obligations will be sought by negotiation and agreement with developers in the following circumstances:**

- (i) **where a proposal needs particular infrastructure;**
- (ii) **to control the occupancy of dwellings;**
- (iii) **to control the use/occupancy of tourist accommodation;**
- (iv) **to secure the provision of open space in major developments;**
- (v) **where a proportion of a site, or a whole site, is to be developed for social needs housing to control the occupancy and continuing affordability of that housing;**
- (vi) **to control the products sold at outlets where a general retail use would not be acceptable;**
- (vii) **to replace essential facilities lost as a result of the implementation of an otherwise acceptable proposal;**
- (viii) **to control the environment of a site in advance of the implementation of a proposal.**

3.6.2 Planning obligations are made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Borough Council will seek to enter into such agreements to ensure that development proposals are acceptable. It should be noted that the above list is not exhaustive and other circumstances may apply where agreements are sought.

3.6.3 Planning obligations can take two forms. They may be a formal agreement between the council and a developer, or an applicant can make a unilateral obligation if they see fit or if agreement cannot be reached.

3.6.4 It is the practice of the Borough Council to seek to negotiate a commuted sum to cover the initial maintenance costs of public open space created. The maintenance of the site will then be undertaken by the Borough Council.

### 3.7 **CRIME**

#### **PREVENTION** 3.7.1

#### **POLICY G11**

**In its consideration of development proposals the Borough Council will take full account of the need to design, layout and landscape development in a manner which makes crime more difficult to commit, increases the risk of detection and provides people with a more secure environment.**

3.7.2 Once a development has been completed, the main opportunity to incorporate crime prevention measures will have been lost. Where there is potential to reduce crime this should feature in discussions authorities have with developers and their designers at the outset of the design process.

3.7.3 Principles to be incorporated into designs may include the deterrent effects of good design, layout and lighting.

3.8.2 Such facilities serve an important social function. The Council recognises the importance of meeting the needs of religious groups for places of worship. Providing no demonstrable harm arises to the amenities of the area or nearby residents consent will normally be granted.