

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

LAND SOUTH OF LONGSIGHT ROAD,
LANGHO

DECEMBER 2025

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') has been prepared jointly by Hallam Land Management ('the Appellant') and Ribble Valley Borough Council ('the Council').
- 1.2 The statement sets out the matters that have been agreed, as well as those that are in dispute between the two parties in respect of the ongoing appeal in relation to the Council's refusal of planning permission.
- 1.3 The statement is structured as follows:
 - i) A description of the site, surrounding area and background to the appeal application
 - ii) The proposed development
 - iii) Relevant planning policy and guidance
 - iv) Areas of agreement
 - v) Areas of disagreement

2. Matters of Fact

Appeal Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The circa 20.01 hectare application site is located directly south of Longsight Road (A59) in the village of Langho, 2.99km south-west of Whalley, 6.8km south-west of Clitheroe, 6.5 km north-east of Blackburn town centre and 16.7km east of Preston city centre.
- 2.2 The site is bound:
- To the north by Longsight Road (A59);
 - To the east by newly built residential site, 'Northcote Park', developed by Pringle Homes accommodating 42 homes (application reference: 3/2018/0844);
 - To the south by Ribble Valley railway line and Langho Railway station bounding the site at the south easternly corner; and
 - To the west by Whitehalgh Lane.
- 2.3 The proposed appeal boundary is set out below in Figure 1.

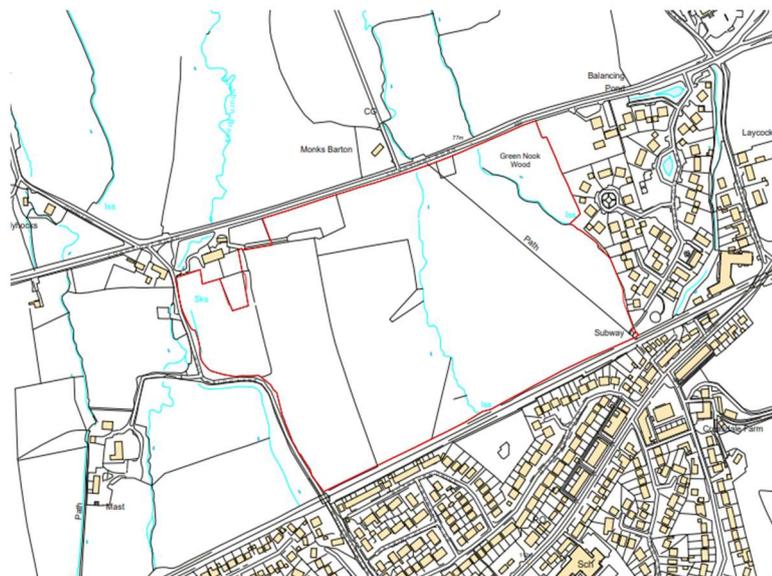


Figure 1: Appeal Site Boundary

- 2.4 The site is currently undeveloped greenfield land partially used for livestock grazing. The topography of the site slopes down from the southern boundary at the railway line (approx. 95m), down towards Longsight Road to the north (approx. 80m). An underground Utilities pipeline runs parallel to the railway line towards the south of the site.
- 2.5 An existing Public Right of Way ('PROW') footpath (3-6-FP 6) runs diagonally across the site, connecting the A59 to Langho station and underneath the railway at Olive Bank, to the main village conurbation. It appears to be primarily used as a PROW.

- 2.6 An existing ditch and brook run north to south through the centre of the site, with an existing culvert towards Longsight Road. The land includes a pocket of woodland, named Green Nook Wood, located in the northeast corner of the site and covering approximately 2.69 acres. There is evidence of trespass within this woodland and some anti-social behaviour. Other mature trees are present on site, particularly surrounding the existing watercourse, and in the south-east corner towards the station.

The Surrounding Built Form

- 2.7 The Borough is largely rural, with a corridor of larger settlements along the A59 corridor. Beyond that the development pattern tends to be more sporadic. Surrounding land uses to the Site comprise agricultural land to the north (beyond the A59, Longsight Road) and west (beyond Whitehalgh Lane and its sporadic development), a recently developed residential estate consisting of 42 homes to the east (planning ref. 3/2018/0844), and the existing Langho village settlement to the south, beyond the railway. The site is approximately 3 miles from the nearest point of the 'Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'¹ ('AONB') at Hurst Green. The term AONB has since been replaced by National Landscapes.
- 2.8 The residential estate to the northeast of the site, otherwise known as 'Northcote Park', was recently developed by Pringle Homes and occupies approximately 5.2 hectares of land. Planning consent for the Northcote Park development was granted in June 2019 under planning application reference 3/2018/0844. The development is now complete, and the homes are occupied. The homes are characterised by detached and semi-detached 4, 5 and 6 bedroom homes. The architectural style reflects both contemporary and traditional design, with homes typically constructed from stone brick or a 'Pebble Dash' design painted white. Whilst plainly associated with Langho, this development has a clear presence on the A59, and exhibits a large scale form of residential design in contrast to other parts of the Village.
- 2.9 More widely, the local vernacular in the Langho village settlement is characterised by a combination of smaller stone and red-brick properties with tiled roofs. The area features a predominantly residential urban form, characterised by a mix of detached and semi-detached bungalows and two-storey houses from the C20th. The site's proximity to Langho village provides further locational advantages, due to the availability of local services, such as a St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary school (circa 230m from site boundary), St Leonards C of E school (circa 857m from site), Langho pharmacy (circa 82m from the site), Langho post office (circa 350m from the site) and SPAR convenience store (circa 650m from site). Other amenities, such as a children's play area, are located within open space south of the site off Bushburn Drive, approximately 20m south from the site boundary.
- 2.10 The site benefits from strong connectivity to the wider region. Longsight Road (A59) bounds the site to the north and is a key arterial road, serving as a connection to surrounding economic centres. The route runs northeast to southwest through the southern part of the borough and is a major connection as well as an "economic corridor". Langho Roundabout, approximately 415m from the site, connects the A59, but also provides access to routes along Whalley Road into Langho Village, or further south to surrounding villages such as Wilpshire or Blackburn town centre.
- 2.11 Langho Railway station is positioned directly to the south-east of the site, providing hourly connections to Clitheroe (east), and Manchester via Preston and Blackburn to the west. Bus routes are accessible from both Longsight Road and Whalley Road. The

¹ The term AONB has since been replaced by the term National Landscapes.

closest bus stop along Longsight Road (approximately 380m) provides regular services such as the 280 to Preston, and 859 to Wilpshire. Bus routes along Whalley Road include the 22 Valley line to Blackburn and Shadsworth.

- 2.12 The existing Public Right of Way ('PRoW') running through the site provides a public footpath and pedestrian underpass from Olive Bank. This section of the PRoW ends at the northern boundary of the site meeting Longsight Road. It then continues north up towards Lower Fold Farm. Other existing PRoW in the site's surroundings run parallel to the west of the site from Whitehalgh Lane. This footpath provides connections south towards Wilpshire. Although there is an existing pedestrian access to the station via a public footpath and pedestrian underpass from Olive Bank, car accessibility and parking at the station is currently constrained, with no dedicated car park serving users of the station.

Planning History

The Site

- 2.13 There are no applications or relevance.

Surrounding Applications

Land off Longsight Road, Langho – Northcote Park

LPA Reference	Description of Development	Status
3/2018/0844	Erection of 42 new homes, landscaping and associated works.	Approved Subject to Legal Agreement (05/06/2019)
3/2015/0010	Application for outline consent for 18 residential homes, including 5 affordable homes and associated access, landscaping and other necessary works.	Approved Subject to Legal Agreement (09/07/2015)
3/2014/0687	Outline Application for up to 132 residential homes and associated access, landscaping and other necessary works.	Refused (14/11/2014)

Land Adjacent to Ferns, Northcote Road Langho – Allocated site

LPA Reference	Description of Development	Status
3/2022/0537	Proposed residential development of 8 detached home houses.	Approved with conditions (28/04/2023)

Land at Petre Wood Close, Langho

LPA Reference	Description of Development	Status
3/2019/0661	31 affordable two and three-bedroom houses and two-bedroom bungalows (for rent and for shared ownership).	Approved with conditions (1st November 2019)

3. The Appeal Application

- 3.1 The OPA submission was submitted via the Planning Portal and received by RVBC on 10th March 2025 and registered by RVBC on 31st March 2025 under reference: 3/2025/0196. The description of development at the time of application was:

“Outline Application: Development of residential homes (Use Class C3), associated access, public rail station car park, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems (all matters reserved except for access to, but not within, the site)”.

- 3.2 This description was amended by the LPA and the application validated and processed on the basis of the following description:

“Outline planning application for up to 300 residential dwellings, associated access, rail station car park, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems (all matters reserved except for access).”

- 3.3 It is proposed that the maximum number of homes determined with the appeal is fixed via planning condition. Parameter plans accompany the application and are proposed to be approved plans to govern specific development constraints and how they inform the future layout of a proposed development which would be subject of reserved matters planning application(s).
- 3.4 Parameter plan **ref 0102 ‘Land Use and Heights’** identifies the developable areas and the maximum building heights within those areas as well as approximately 10.84ha areas which are to be retained for green infrastructure comprising ecological enhancement areas, open space/amenity, proposed car park provision and attenuation ponds.
- 3.5 Parameter plan **ref 0103 ‘Movement and Access’** overlays the internal road, formalised pedestrian and cycle path network as well as proposals to retain the exiting PRow between the train station and Longsight Road.
- 3.6 An illustrative layout has been submitted with the planning application for information only and is not subject of approval at this stage however identifies one possible iteration of how relevant parameters and anticipated design requirements could inform a future layout.
- 3.7 The illustrative layout has evolved using a housing density which has had due regard to surrounding residential development to the east (9 dwellings per hectare ('dph')), with existing housing density in Langho at around 25 dph. This proposed development will have an up-to 31 dph net density; whilst this is in excess of the existing conurbation of Langho, RVBC acknowledge within their 2021 Annual Monitoring Report ('AMR') that their assumed density across all sites within their 2013 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment ('SHMA') was 35dph.
- 3.8 They also acknowledge within the AMR that recent development (as of 2021) was falling significantly short of this target. Therefore, it is important that RVBC demand higher densities on sites coming forward for development. It should be noted that density can be achieved whilst still allowing for significant space for the creation of landscape buffers along the site boundaries, open spaces and biodiversity enhancement.

- 3.9 Amenity space would be provided as a combination of private gardens and communal areas. A significant portion of the public open space and communal areas is located within the south east of the site closest to the access to the village and Langho train station. This will therefore allow the space to form an accessible and usable space for Langho residents to access and use.
- 3.10 The Landscape Strategy Masterplan, prepared by Pegasus, outlines the details of landscaping and open space provision on site. The open space typologies across the site and their purposes have been outlined below.

Open Space Typology	Primary Purpose
Natural and semi-natural green space	<p>These areas have recreational value for walking and informal play but are designed to maximise biodiversity opportunities. This can include copses of woodlands, scrub, meadows and open water / sustainable drainage features.</p> <p>Within the proposals these areas are categorised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The existing Green Nook Wood. - The existing beck. <p>Existing on-site vegetation is high-quality and will define the character of the settlement extension. Green Nook Wood will screen the site to the east.</p> <p>A dedicated BNG area will be positioned on site, to help to ensure a 10% net gain in biodiversity, whilst also enhancing the local ecology by providing habitats and supporting wildlife.</p>
Green Corridors	<p>Significant green corridors will be located across the site, notably around the existing beck running through the centre of the site, along the existing PROW, and along the western boundary. These take on important roles that help integrate the site in its surroundings and will provide important nature corridors and include native trees, shrubs, grass and flower species, that will help soften views of the site from the wider countryside and adjacent housing. The spaces will incorporate existing trees, vegetation, and pedestrian footways. Adjacent housing will overlook the space, providing natural surveillance.</p> <p>The existing beck will be retained and will allow for an integrated sustainable drainage solution throughout the site.</p>
Amenity Green Space	<p>These areas consist of informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing and informal open spaces. Small pocket parks will be incorporated into the green and avenue street structure.</p>
Provision for Children and Young People	<p>Equipped play areas including Locally Equipped Areas for Play and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play. In addition, other informal open spaces around the site will be designed to allow for informal play and exploration. Play can be encouraged through the incorporation of naturalistic features such as logs, boulders and stepping-stones.</p>

- 3.11 With regards future housing, all homes would be designed to meet the nationally described space standards. A mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and tenure would be provided to be determined by local policy requirements and identified need.
- 3.12 Affordable housing is also provided in-line with the requirement of 30% on site delivery (of affordable homes) in developments of 5 homes or more found in Key Statement H3 (Affordable Housing) and Policy DMH1 (Affordable Housing Criteria). The affordable housing mix will be guided through discussions with RVBC's housing team to reflect up-to-date needs in Langho and Ribble Valley more generally.
- 3.13 Key Statement H3 (Affordable Housing) also identifies housing for older people as a priority. Accordingly, the proposal fully complies with the policy requirements for 15% of the units being delivered for older persons, of which 50% are for affordable housing and will be secured via legal agreement.
- 3.14 The proposal includes a new priority-controlled junction on Longsight Road to serve the development. This will be accompanied by an additional pedestrian and cycle access point from Whitehalgh Lane (with detailed permission for this element to be sought at this stage).
- 3.15 The outline proposals incorporate a publicly accessible surface level car park in close proximity to Langho station. Based on the Illustrative Masterplan, this will provide approximately 43 car parking spaces including 5 accessible bays, and parking for bicycles (the minimum number expected to be controlled by condition). Electric vehicle charging will be provided in line with adopted policy requirements at the time of future Reserved Matters submissions [CHECK WHETHER PETER IS PROPOSING AN EXCEEDENCE – EG FOR VISITOR SPACES &/OR ON THE RAILWAY CAR PARK].
- 3.16 Vehicle and cycle parking provision for the residential properties will be provided in line with the parking standards set out at Appendix 5 of the TRDC Development Management Policies Local Development Document. Electric car parking spaces will also be provided in line with applicable standards at the time of Reserved Matters submissions.
- 3.17 Eastwood prepared the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy proposing flood risk mitigation measures including:
- Green Corridors, such as along the existing beck; and
 - Two attenuation basins located towards the northern boundary of the site (leveraging the sloping trajectory) that will also improve biodiversity and act.
- 3.18 Surface water runoff will be managed and directed away from the residential properties and neighbouring development.
- 3.19 The statutory consultation period ran from 31st March 2025 to 21st April 2025. The full list of consultee responses and whether they constitute an objection to development are listed below.

Consultee	Comment	Objection
United Utilities	Drainage details not accepted as would expect to see details of finished floor levels as well as cover and invert levels of all manholes. Request a condition requiring details of surface water and foul water drainage to be submitted.	N
Environment Agency	No constraints identified and therefore screened as low risk. Do not intend to make comments on the proposed scheme.	N
Natural England	Standing advice offered.	N
Electricity Northwest	No response received.	N
Environmental Health	No objection on grounds of air quality, noise/vibration or lighting subject to planning condition.	N
Network Rail	The developer would be required to enter into a basic asset protection agreement with Network Rail to ensure that works do not impact the safe operation, stability, integrity of the railway and its boundary. In addition the developer will be required to submit a risk assessment and method statement to Network Rail and this is a suggested condition. The applicant will be required to provide a suitable trespass fence within the application site which is also a suggested condition. Additional comments provided, and conditions suggested, about construction, drainage, lighting, noise and vibration and trees.	N
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	No objection subject to conditions relating to final surface water sustainable drainage strategy, construction surface water management plan, sustainable drainage system operation and maintenance manual and verification report of constructed sustainable drainage system.	N
LCC Archaeology	No objection	N
Local Education Authority (LCC Education)	No objection. The impact of the development would not result in the loss of places for other development and updated Primary and Secondary School capacity figures by 2030 were provided. No education contribution required at this stage.	N
Northern Rail	Welcomed the proposed car park but requested delivering 3 disabled and 46 standard bays with 20% passive provision for future EV charging requirements (if required). Requested	N

	<p>considering improvements to the subway drainage system, refreshing wayfinding signs and paintwork</p>	
<p>LCC Highways</p>	<p>Traffic Impact - The following junctions 1-4 have been assessed using nationally agreed Junctions 10 software and junction 5 TRANSYT.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site access/A59 Longsight Road Priority junction 2. A59 Longsight Road /A666/C548 Whalley Road - Roundabout 3. A59 Longsight Road /Whitehalgh Lane/Chapel Lane Priority junction 4. A666/Whitehalgh Lane/York Lane - Double mini roundabout 5. A59 Longsight Road/B6245 Ribchester Road - Signalised junction <p>The above junctions are demonstrated to operate within capacity in the future assessed year 2030 without any mitigation required. We do not dispute this.</p> <p>New site access / of site highways works - Formation of new site access and off site highways works to be undertaken with a s278 agreement and subject to a detailed design process and safety audit. This includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New site access on A59 and associated works shown on drawing Hydrock drawings 4094/100/P001 and 4094/100/P002 including new footway/cycleways on the A59, new signalised toucan crossing, reduction in speed limit to 40mph with enhanced gateway features and associated signing/lining. 2. New pedestrian/cycle link on Whitehalgh Lane with reduction of speed limit to 30mph with associated lighting and traffic calming measures. 3. Upgrade of zebra crossing and central pedestrian island on Whalley Road near Olive Bank and the primary school. 4. The upgrade/provision of 4 quality bus stops (2 x Whalley Road A666 and 2 x Longsight Road A59) to support all users to travel to/from site sustainably. <p>Contributions To mitigate the impact of the development on the highway network the following contributions are requested within a Section 106 agreement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel Plan support £18,000. Circa £250 per dwelling to support a modal shift agreed and linked to the Travel Plan SMART targets. 2. Public Transport support £175,000 every year for 5 years = £875,000 	

	<p>Sustainability - Subject to the mitigation measures identified above being implemented we consider that residents have the option to travel sustainably between the site, local facilities and employment centres.</p> <p>Lancashire County Council acting as the Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the impact of the proposed development traffic can be sufficiently mitigated on the surrounding highway network with the details as outlined above.</p>	
GMEU	<p>Greater Manchester Ecology Unit advise that currently there is insufficient Ecology information available to decide the above application.</p> <p>In particular, the following information is lacking –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated habitat survey undertaken at an appropriate time of year. The current habitat assessments provided were carried out in late October, outside of the optimal time of year for undertaking grassland surveys. According to comments made in the Ecological Impact Assessment and the Biodiversity Net Gain Report provided with the application, further botanical surveys are planned in June. • Breeding Bird Surveys; again, these are planned for June 2025 • Great Crested Newt Surveys; these surveys are planned in 2025 <p>The proposal fails to demonstrate that the proposed development would not result in harm to established wildlife habits and therefore fails accord with Key Statement EN4 and Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.</p> <p>In addition, GMEU raise some queries regarding the BNG requirement. Currently the applicant proposes that retained grassland and woodland habitats on the site will be enhanced as a contribution towards the requirement for the development to achieve at least a 10% gain in biodiversity, but it is questionable whether these enhancements could be achieved in practice, given that the habitats will be fragmented and subject to significant public pressure from the development. GMEU advise that the applicants should re-visit these proposals to assess whether the claimed enhancements could realistically be achieved.</p> <p>Even if the enhancements claimed could be delivered, the development will still result in a significant loss in local biodiversity. It is stated that Biodiversity Units could be sourced off-site, but no details of this off-site provision have been provided. Further information regarding off-site habitat creation and enhancement is required to provide an acceptable level of reassurance that the Biodiversity Gain</p>	Y

	<p>Condition, which will apply to the application, will be able to be met.</p> <p>In this respect the authority cannot be certain that the proposal would align with the requirements of Key Statement EN4 which requires a net enhancement in biodiversity of a least 10% and whether this could be accommodated on the site and the mandatory BNG requirement.</p>	
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3.22 The application was presented to Planning and Highways Committee on 22nd June 2025 with 5 reasons for refusal as follows:

1. *The proposed development would result in a large-scale residential development, outside of a defined settlement, which fails to meet any of the exception criteria for allowing development in such location contrary to Key Statements DS1 and H2 and Policies DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.*
2. *The proposed development, by virtue of the quantum of development, would result in a large scale development in a rural location resulting in future users being reliant on a private motor vehicle contrary to Key Statement DM12 and Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework which supports sustainable patterns of development.*
3. *The proposed development, by virtue of its overall scale and footprint, would result in the introduction of an incongruous, unsympathetic, and discordant form of development, particularly when viewed from public vantage points along Longsight Road (A59) approaching the site from both the western and eastern directions, Public Footpath FP0606a which crosses the site and residential properties to the north of Langho village afforded direct views of the site. This would result in adverse, long term and permanent visual and landscape harm. The resultant impact fails to respond positively to the inherent visual and landscape character of the area contrary to Policies DMG1, DMG2, DME1 and DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework including paragraph 135.*
4. *The application fails to carry out appropriate assessments to fully assess the impacts of the development upon habitats within and adjacent to the site including whether appropriate protection and enhancement can be provided for protected species and their habitat. This is contrary to Key Statement EN4 and policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.*
5. *The proposed development would result in the loss of existing habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units, with insufficient details being submitted to demonstrate an appropriate strategy for achieving the statutory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain contrary to Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021).*

3.23 The application was unanimously refused in accordance with the officer's recommendation.

Documents/Plans that the LPA Made Their Decision On

3.24 The following represent the suite of documentation and plans which were the basis upon which the LPA determined the planning application.

Report	Prepared by
Planning Statement (inc. Affordable Housing Statement)	NJL Consulting
Statement of Community Involvement	NJL Consulting
Design and Access Statement including the Design Quality Assessment	Stantec
Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Surveys	FPCR
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Metric and Statement of Intent	FPCR
Air Quality Assessment	Air Quality Consultants
Preliminary Geoenvironmental Investigation	Lithos
Transport Assessment	Hydrock Fore
Framework Travel Plan	Hydrock Fore
Tree Survey	FPCR
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	FPCR
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Pegasus
Noise Impact Assessment including Vibration Assessment	Hoare Lea
Desk Based Archaeological Assessment/ Heritage Assessment	Prospect Archaeology
Agricultural Land Classification	Patrick Stephenson Ltd
Flood Risk Assessment	Eastwood Consulting Engineers
Drainage Assessment	Eastwood Consulting Engineers

Plan	Reference	Purpose
Site Location Plan	333101612_MR_MP_DWG0100	For information
Illustrative Masterplan	333101612_MR_MP_VW0101	For information
Landscape Masterplan	P24-2318_EN_07_A_01	For information
Parameter Plan – Movement and Access	333101612_MR_MP_AI0103	For Approval
Parameter Plan – Land Use and Heights	333101612_MR_MP_AI0102	For Approval
General Arrangement	4094 100-P-001	For Approval
Engineering Layout	4094 100-P-002	For Approval
Proposed Off-site Highway Works on Whitehalgh Lane and Whalley Road	4094 INFO-SK-001	For Approval
Swept Path Analysis	4094 100-P-003	For information

Proposed Amendment to Appeal Application

3.25 Subsequent to the scheme being determined, the Appellant has proposed some very minor modifications to the green infrastructure proposed as follows:

- The existing public footpath that runs through the site would pass through a proposed residential area. The configuration of the hard landscaping of this area, including access road and driveways, has been slightly adjusted to create a wider landscape corridor in order to accommodate the existing footpath alignment.

- The northern boundary of the site would accommodate a tree belt running along its northern boundaries so as to provide a greater degree of physical and visual containment leaving the balancing pond areas in broadly the same locations.
- Increased stand off between proposed development and designated Ancient Woodland

3.26 The changes affect the following informative plans:

Superseded Plan Reference	Updated Plan Reference
P24-2318_EN_07_A – Landscape Masterplan	P24-2318_EN_07_B – Landscape Masterplan
333101612_MR_MP_VW0101 – Illustrative Masterplan	333101612_MR_MP_VW0101 Rev F – Illustrative Masterplan

3.27 The changes do not result in any changes to parameter plans which are proposed to be conditioned should planning permission be granted. The changes do not change the extent of the appeal site, overall maximum number of dwellings proposed or substantially change the outline application.

3.28 There is no prejudicial or procedural unfairness to the Council, consultees or third parties and we invite the Inspector to determine the appeal on this updated basis.

4. Planning Obligations and Suggested Planning Conditions

Planning Obligations

4.1 A S106 Agreement is being drafted between both parties, the agreed HoT's informing the drafting of the agreement are as follows:

Affordable Housing

- Provision of 30% on site provision (inclusive of percentage for affordable older persons housing)

Highways

- Travel Plan - £18,000
- £250 per dwelling contribution to support modal shift and to link to Travel Plan SMART targets
- Bus service contribution of £583.33 per dwelling per annum for 5 years

Suggested Planning Conditions

4.2 A list of suggested planning conditions have been agreed and are contained at **Appendix xx**

5. Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

The Adopted Development Plan

5.1 For the purposes of this appeal the development plan comprises the following documents:

- Core Strategy 2008-2028 (adopted 2014); and
- Housing and Economic Development Plan (adopted 2019)

5.2 The following development plan policies are agreed to be relevant to the issues raised by the Appeal proposals:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy

Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN3: Sustainability and Climate Change

Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Key Statement H1: Housing Provision

Key Statement H2: Housing Balance

Key Statement H3: Affordable Housing

Key Statement DMI1: Planning Obligations

Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations

Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations

Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility

Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection

Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DME6: Water Management

Policy DMH1: Affordable Housing Criteria

Policy DMH3 Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

Policy DMB4: Open Space Provision

Policy DMB5: Footpaths and Bridleways

5.3 It is agreed that proposals do not need to comply with every single policy in the development plan to be considered acceptable overall in planning terms as confirmed by the Courts.

5.4 It is agreed that decisions can depart from an up-to-date development plan if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

5.5 It is agreed that the evidence base underpinning the Core Strategy in respect of housing needs in Ribble Valley is out-of-date.

5 Year Housing Land Position

- 5.6 As of December 2019, the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies of the Core Strategy were 5 years old and have not to date been reviewed.
- 5.7 The housing requirement is therefore now calculated using the Standard Method which increases the annual requirement to 311 dwellings p/a inclusive of a 5 % buffer the annual housing need is 327 dwellings p/a.

Evidence Base Documents

- 5.8 The following evidence base documents are of relevance to the Appeal application:
- Ribble Valley Settlement Audit prepared by RVBC in 2006
 - SHMA prepared by RVBC 2006
 - Ribble Valley Settlement Hierarchy prepared by RVBC December 2008
 - SHLAA prepared by RVBC 2009 and 2013
 - Annual Monitoring Reports
 - Public Transport Position Paper prepared by RBBC November 2021
 - Strategic Housing and Economic Needs prepared by Turley April 2020
 - Affordable Housing Needs Assessment prepared by JG Consulting May 2025
 - Working Draft Settlement Study prepared by RVBC September 2025
 - Working Draft Settlement Profiles prepared by RVBC September 2025

National Planning Policy

- 5.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first introduced in 2012 and was intended to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth. A revised Framework was published in December 2024. It is agreed that the following sections are most relevant to the determination of this appeal:

Section 2: Achieving sustainable development

Section 3 – Plan-making

Section 4 – Decision-making

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable development

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 5.10 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) supports that NPPF with categorised advice in relation to specific matters and subjects.

Emerging Ribble Valley Local Plan

- 5.11 RVBC resolved to prepare a new Local Plan in November 2019. The emerging Local Plan is scheduled to undergo consultation in Spring 2026 on the Preferred Options Draft (Preferred Option) Local Plan consultation (Regulation 18).
- 5.12 The plan is therefore at an early stage of preparation and therefore is not afforded any weight in decision making.

Planning decisions / appeals / relevant case law

- 5.13 Planning decisions/appeals and judgements of relevance to the Appeal proposal in relation to the principle of development, housing land supply and any other technical detail to which evidence is being presented in relation this Appeal. This will include documentation pertaining to decisions within the Borough but also nationally.
- 5.14 A list of the most relevant decisions will be agreed with the Council and included within both the SoCG and listed within Core Documents.

6. Matters Not in Dispute between the Appellant and the Council

Location of Development

- 6.1 The Appeal site is not allocated within the development plan and is located outside of but immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Langho. It is therefore located within the open countryside as defined by policy within the adopted development plan.
- 6.2 Langho is a Tier 1 Village as defined within the adopted development plan. It is a sustainable settlement.
- 6.3 The Appeal site is a sustainable location in respect of access to public transport in relation to both train and bus travel consistent with the Council's own evidence base.
- 6.4 The Appeal site is located close to a variety of services and facilities within Langho and is therefore a sustainable location.

Assessment of Development Plan Policies

- 6.5 The Appeal application was refused planning permission due to the Council's opinion that there are of conflicts with Policies DS1, H2, DMG1, DMG2, DMG3, DMH3, DMI2, DME1, DME2, DME3 and EN4. Some conflicts are in respect of single criteria of a policy only and not with the policy overall.
- 6.6 There are no conflicts with any other policies.
- 6.7 It is agreed that proposals do not need to comply with every single policy in the development plan to be considered acceptable overall in planning terms as confirmed by the Courts.
- 6.8 It is agreed that decisions can depart from an up-to-date development plan if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
- 6.9 It is agreed that the evidence base underpinning the Core Strategy in respect of housing needs in Ribble Valley is out-of-date. The Core Strategy has not been reviewed since adoption as is a requirement set out at para 1.7 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on Spatial Strategy

- 6.10 The Appellant and RVBC agree that the purpose of a spatial strategy as set out within Policy DS1 is to guide development to the most sustainable locations. The policy seeks to direct a majority of development to Clitheroe, Whalley and Longridge.
- 6.11 The policy does not provide a cap for development which can be directed to individual Tier 1 settlements such as Langho.

Development in the Open Countryside

- 6.12 The Appellant and RVBC agree that the proposals are not a type of development deemed permissible in the open countryside by Policy DMG2 and DMH3.

Impact on Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

- 6.13 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- A full Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (Pegasus Group) was submitted with the planning application
- The LVIA included a Landscape Baseline and Effects section. Table 1 on page 33-34 sets out a review of all relevant receptors that are either landscape character and features and the level of effect on these receptors at construction, year 1 and year 15 post development
- The LVIA included a Visual Baseline and Effects section. Table 2 at pages 56-60 of the applicant's LVIA provides a summary of visual effects of the proposed development on relevant receptors at construction, year 1 and year 15 post development. This identified their sensitivity, magnitude of change and level of effect
- The receptors as identified at Appendix 8 of the LVIA are the most relevant to the Appeal application for assessment purposes
- In determining the planning application the Council did not provide its assessment on relevant receptors nor did it dispute the level of effect on receptors within the applicant's LVIA
- In determining the planning application, the Council did not provide its own appraisal as to the effects on landscape features and character.
- The majority of identified and assessed viewpoints would not be subject to a major degree of visual effect
- With regards views from Longsight Road, with the establishment and maturity of the tree belt along the northern boundary, the proposed scheme would not be visible from this highway except fleetingly through as users pass by the proposed site access.
- With regards to public footpath FP0606a within the site, there would be a major adverse visual effect for users of the route.
- The site is not a valued landscape.
- The character of the Site is influenced by both built form and agricultural uses and is framed by housing a rail line and roads. The boundaries of the site are on the whole, framed by a combination of built form and mature vegetation, which provide a sense of visual containment and enclosure associated with the site.
- The proposals would lead to a change to the character of the site itself however the proposals do not lead to wider landscape character changes which is a

'settled agricultural scene' which would continue to prevail with the proposed scheme in place

- The proposed scheme would result in some beneficial effects on landscape elements that currently define the landscape character of the site

Housing Supply

6.14 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- For the purposes of housing need, CS Policy H1 is out-of-date and the Council's housing supply is to be calculated against local housing need using the standard method in accordance with NPPF and NPPG
- The local housing need figure inclusive of a 5% buffer is 327 dwellings per annum
- The PPG² only provides guidance on how to deal with over-supply in the context of offsetting '*any shortfalls against requirements from previous years*'. The PPG is silent on whether the same approach can be undertaken to offset against future housing requirements in the plan period.

Affordable Housing

6.15 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- The SHMA prepared to support the Core Strategy identifies a need for 264 affordable dwellings per annum
- Since the start of the SHMA period in 2008/09 affordable housing completions have averaged 91 net affordable dwellings p/a
- Across the plan period there is therefore a deficit in net affordable housing provision of 2,768 dwellings to date

Older Persons Housing

6.16 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- At the time of determination of the planning application, officers did report the provision nor did it afford any weight to provision of up to 45 dwellings for older persons
- The Core Strategy specifically identifies the priority that is to be given to delivery of older persons housing.
- There has been a lack of supply across the plan period

² Planning Practice Guidance: Housing supply and delivery (Paragraph: 032 Reference ID: 68-032-20190722)

Open Space Provision

6.17 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- The Council's adopted policy does not prescribe specific standards to guide on site provision for individual developments
- The Council did not consider fully assess the proposed open space proposals in the determination of the application and it is not referenced within the Officer's Report;
- The Appellant and PCC agree that the proposed quantum Public Open Space (8.82ha/88,200sq.m) is to be located in areas of the site which would allow all new residents to access the network of spaces providing a high quality recreation and open space offer for their benefit
- The level of provision represents 294sq.m of open space per dwelling on basis of maximum 300 dwellings.
- The maintenance and management of the Public Open Space could be secured through a S106 Obligation

Housing Mix and Delivery

6.18 The application is submitted in outline (exc access) and therefore the finalised mix of housing is an appropriate consideration of a reserved matters application should the Appeal application be allowed.

6.19 Such a mix will be determined in consideration of the latest local housing needs assessment which will inform the most appropriate mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures and proposals can therefore make an important contribution to meeting local needs and offering a flexible and continuous supply of deliverable housing land within the Borough.

Impact on Residential Amenity

6.20 The Appellant and RVBC agree that the proposed development can be accommodated on site without impacts on adjacent properties on south, east and west boundaries of the appeal site. The inter relationship of the final design of a scheme will be considered as part of a reserved matters application.

Highways Safety and Access

6.21 The Appellant and RVBC agree that LCC Highways are the key consultee on these matters. It is agreed from their response that:

- LCC Highways have raised no highways concerns in respect of the proposal and support the accessibility and sustainability of the site and the Appeal proposals subject to requested mitigation – which are agreed with the applicant

- Traffic impact has been assessed with other known commitments and all assessed junctions operate within capacity without requirement for any mitigation
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan requirement can be conditioned

Flood Risk and Drainage

6.22 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- The principles of the proposed drainage strategy are acceptable to the Council and consultees
- The sequential test has been satisfied
- The proposed development accords with Policy DME6

Design and Layout

6.23 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- The application was supported by a comprehensive Design and Access Statement which includes site / local area analysis, consideration of opportunities and constraints and relevant policies/guidance to develop key principles to guide development and an illustrative masterplan
- The Parameter Plans are acceptable and are suitable to be subject of a planning condition
- The DAS and Illustrative Masterplan/Landscape Masterplan identify that a high quality residential development are capable of being developed subject to reserved matters approval(s)

Trees

6.24 The Appellant and RVBC agree that the Arboricultural Assessment (FPCR, February 2025) submitted with the outline planning application is acceptable and there is no objection to the Tree Schedule as contained at Appendix A.

6.25 The proposals accord with Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodland.

Ecology

6.26 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- Additional ecological surveys have been carried out post determination of the planning application
- These surveys have been consulted with GMEU

Biodiversity

6.27 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- The Appeal application demonstrates an overall net gain of **12.15%**, exceeding the statutory requirement
- The proposed strategy appropriately follows the requirements of the mitigation hierarchy and complies fully with trading rules
- The proposals can be subject of a planning condition
- The proposals can be attributed weight in decision making

Air Quality/Noise and Lighting

6.28 The Appellant and RVBC agree that:

- There are no objections to the proposals on grounds of air quality
- With regards noise and disturbance, subject to further detail for approval at the reserved matters stage the proposals are acceptable at the outline stage and there is no requirement for an amendment to any proposed parameter plan
- Lighting strategy is a matter for approval at reserved matters stage

Geoenvironmental conditions

6.29 The Appellant and RVBC agree that subject to further intrusive investigation to be conditioned, the proposal accords with Policy DMG1.

Agricultural land

6.30 The site is not classified as 'best and most versatile' land.

Impact on local services and facilities

6.31 The Appellant and RVBC agree that there are no objections to the Appeal application on the basis of impact of the development and strain on local services and facilities.

6.32 There have been no requests for contribution from either the NHS Lancashire & Cumbria Integrated Care Board or LCC as Education Authority.

Benefits of Scheme

6.33 The Appellant and RVBC agree that significant developmental benefits can be realised by the Appeal application. These include inter alia:

- Up to 210 market dwellings to meet a pressing housing need

- Up to 90 affordable homes on site
- Up to 45 market/affordable over 55s dwellings on site
- Provision of significant areas of high quality publicly accessible open space including amenity space and childrens play space
- Provision of surface level car park to promote rail use
- Off site highways improvements to allow better accessibility and pedestrian movement within and around Langho
- Improvements to promote cycle use
- A financial contribution towards bus service provision and enhancement
- Significant areas of planting, green infrastructure provision and ecological enhancement areas and their future management
- Off-site local habitat enhancement and overall BNG of 12.15%
- Economic benefits and job creation including construction and operational benefits
- Provision of large SUDs attenuation basins
- New Homes Bonus
- Additional local expenditure creation to support local services and economy

6.34 At the time of determining the planning application the Officer's report did consider benefits at para 6.1 citing:

- Housing and affordable housing attracts moderate weight
- Proposed train station car park carries very limited weight

6.35 The car park is identified within the description of development for the outline planning application as well as annotated on Parameter Plan Ref 0102 Land Use and Heights. It is agreed that there is a clear commitment to its delivery subject to an appropriately worded condition.

6.36 Both parties agree to updating their respective views on the full spectrum of benefits that are relevant within the planning balance and for consistency will utilise the following matrix in ascribing weight to be attached to each particular benefit:

Substantial
Significant
Moderate
Limited/Negligible
None

6.37 Both parties agree that there are economic, social and environmental benefits associated with the Appeal application, but disagree with the weight to be attributed to them and whether they outweigh harm which arises as a result of development.

7. Matters in Dispute between the Appellant and the Council

7.1 The matters that remain in dispute between the parties and therefore subject of evidence at the Inquiry are as follows:

Sustainable Development

7.2 The parties do not agree that the proposals represent sustainable development.

Conflict with Adopted Development Plan

7.3 The parties do not agree on the extent to which the Appeal proposals would conflict with the policies most important for their determination.

Scale of Development

7.4 The parties do not agree that the proposals represent an appropriate scale of development. The disagreement being in relation to

- Local landscape harm resultant from the scale of development in this location
- The appropriateness of the scale of development by virtue of the size of Langho as the settlement to which it relates

Harm to Landscape Character and Visual Impact

7.5 The Appellant and RVBC do not agree on the extent of harm to local landscape character or on local or wider viewpoints and the alleged conflict with relevant development plan policies.

Accessibility

7.6 The parties do not agree that there is a policy conflict with Policy DM11, DMG3 or para 117(b) of the NPPF

Housing Supply

7.7 The Appellant and RVBC do not agree that:

- 'oversupply' should be factored into the 5yhls calculation
- The delivery rates of identified sites or assumptions within the housing supply

Benefits of Scheme

7.8 The Appellant and RVBC do not agree on the weight to be attached to specific benefits resulting from the proposed development.

The Planning Balance

7.9 The Appellant and RVBC disagree on:

- The alleged fundamental conflict with development plan policy suggested by RVBC. The Appellant considers that the appeal proposals are in accordance with the adopted development plan as a whole.
- The alleged harm resulting from development
- Whether the appeal site and specific proposals respond positively due to the sustainability of the location and the accrued economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Whether, if it is determined that the appeal proposals do not accord with the development plan as a whole, there are material considerations which outweigh the alleged conflict with the Development Plan.

Signatories

Signed on behalf of the Appellant

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed on behalf of the Council

Name:

Position:

Date:

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