



RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Our Ref:	RV/2024/ENQ/00082			
Location:	Land south of Longsight Road, Langho			Tel: 01200 425111
Date:	16.12.24			
Proposal:	Residential development of up to 300 homes.			

Pre-Application Enquiry Response

Dear Oliver

I write further to your submission of a request for pre-application advice at land south of Longsight Road, Langho. The enquiry seeks the Council's views on the potential for residential development for up to 300 dwellinghouses.

The site is located to the south of Longsight Road at Langho outside of the defined settlement limits being land designated as Open Countryside.

As such, taking account of the nature of the proposal, the policies that are engaged and relevant to the determination of the proposed development are considered to be as follows:

Relevant Core Strategy Policies:

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN3 - Sustainable Development 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 & Woodland
Policy DME2 – Landscape & Townscape Protection
Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation
Policy DME6 – Water Management
Policy DNH1 – Affordable Housing Criteria
Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in Open Countryside
Policy DMB4 – Open Space Provision
Policy DMB5 – Footpaths and Bridleways

Site Location/Constraints:

The site is bounded by Longsight Road (A59) to the north, Northcote Park residential development and protected woodland to the east; Network Rail railway line to the south and Whitehalgh Lane to the west.

The site lies within open countryside with a number of mature trees and water features within a series of open fields. Public Footpath 6a crosses the site from the Longsight Road (north) to Whalley Road Langho via Langho Railway Station.

The potential impact of this on the local area must be fully assessed and considered.

Principle of Development:

Key Statement DMH1 sets out the overall spatial and locational aspirations for general (including residential) development within the Borough. It directs new housing towards the Strategic site at Standen as well as the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. In addition, DMH1 focuses development towards the Tier 1 Villages which are the most sustainable. DMH1 goes on to state that development that has regeneration benefits, is for identified local needs or satisfies neighbourhood planning legislation will be considered in all the borough's settlements, including small-scale development in the smaller settlements that are appropriate for consolidation and expansion or rounding off the built-up area.

Langho is a Tier 1 Village however the site lies outside of the settlement boundary within Open Countryside. Therefore Policy DMG2 is engaged. In order to be supported development must meet one of the following criteria:

1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area;
2. The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture;
3. The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such;
4. The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area;
5. The development is for small scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated;
6. The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.

Policy DMH3 reinforces the policy position that residential development within the open countryside should be restricted to only that which meets a number of explicit criterion.

Based on the scheme presented the development fails to meet any of the above criteria in either DMG2 or DMH3.

Policy DMG3 states the LPA will attach considerable weight to the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development. This is reinforced by the NPPF which requires development to be sustainable.

Notwithstanding the location of the site on the A59, a proposal for 300 housing units outside of the settlement of Langho would create a substantial housing estate which would be dependent upon existing infrastructure within a relatively modest settlement (approximate population 3,400 in the 2021 Census including Billington). There are potential implications for capacity with medical practitioners such as Doctors and Dentists in the area. Contributions towards school places are likely to be requested by Lancashire County Council.

An application would need to demonstrate that the site has (or would have) good access and connectivity by foot and cycle to existing local amenities and services as well as public transport connections.

Public Footpath 3-6-FP6a crosses the site from Longsight Road into the settlement of Langho with the train station located at the southeast corner of the site. There is currently an hourly train service from Langho that serves Manchester Victoria/Salford/Bolton/Blackburn and Clitheroe.

Part of the proposal seeks to provide additional car parking facilities at Langho to assist in accommodating residents who seek travel by public transport to Clitheroe, Blackburn and Manchester.

There have been concerns raised regarding the current travel provision by rail to and from Manchester with frequent services being cancelled and/or rail replacement services being provided causing disruption to travel patterns and uncertainty for commuters relying on these services for both work and leisure purposes.

Visual Amenity:

Policy DMG2 states that within the Open Countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.

An LVIA would assist with the LPA's assessment of the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development in this setting. The site is prominent from a number of public vantage points and makes a positive contribution to the open and rural character of the area. It is considered that 300 homes in this location would be a significant development at odds with the surrounding open countryside location and existing low density housing development adjacent to the site.

Design and Appearance:

No details of design and appearance have been submitted, however during the meeting we discussed scale, densities, public open space, linkages, sensitive development edges and the possibility of a design code being agreed at a later stage.

Policy DMG1 sets out the design requirements in this respect.

In determining planning applications, all development must:

DESIGN

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building in context toolkit).*
- 2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
- 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*
- 4. Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy DME5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*
- 5. the code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.*

ACCESS

- 1. Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
- 2. Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*

3. *Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*
4. *Consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.*

Residential Amenity:

The nearest residential properties are located on Northcote Park to the east which abuts the site to the east. There are also single storey style properties to the south on the far side of the railway line which need to be taken into consideration in terms of layout and scale.

The impact of the proposed scale of the buildings and any changes required to land levels cannot be fully assessed as insufficient details of these have been provided at this stage. Any potential impacts therefore would need to be submitted and considered as part of any application.

Given the close proximity of the development to the train line, a noise assessment would be required to determine that future occupiers would not be adversely affected by noise levels. I would also advise early discussions with Network Rail to ascertain their restrictions on proposed development close to their assets.

Ecology/Biodiversity Net Gain/Trees:

Green Nook Wood is a protected woodland sited to the east of the site and provides a buffer to the housing site at Northcote Park and the A59 Longsight Road.

There are also many mature trees and water features within the site which should be retained where possible.

A full phase 1 ecology survey will be required and the proposal will be subject to the BNG legislation. As such the application will need to assess the baseline value of the site in line with the statutory BNG metric and demonstrate a strategy for 10% enhancement.

Please see the following link for further information:

[Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/biodiversity-net-gain)

A full arboricultural tree assessment needs to be undertaken in order to fully assess the impact on existing trees, hedgerows and shrubs and that an appropriate scheme of planting and landscaping can be provided within the site.

Highway Safety:

The proposal intends to provide a new vehicular access from Longsight Road in the form of a controlled junction. Separate advice has been sought from LCC highways but the LPA understanding that there are no fundamental concerns subject to appropriate mitigation being provided.

Longsight Road is a classified A road. Whilst there is vehicular access via Whitehalgh Lane to the western boundary of the site this would only be capable of serving a limited number of properties.

Drainage:

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 with the management of surface water including sustainable drainage systems with water to be attenuation in detention ponds sized for 1 in 100 year plus 30% climate change events before being discharge into the main watercourse.

There is an existing water course which runs through the site and it is understood that the FRA has identified a risk of surface water flooding in areas of the site close to this watercourse and that sections of the proposed internal access road would be within this at risk area.

As such in accordance with the NPPF and the EA guidance the development would need to pass the flood risk sequential test. To pass the sequential test, it would need to be demonstrated that there are no other sites that are suitable or available to accommodate a similar development. Separate dialogue on an appropriate sequential test methodology has been provided by email.

In addition, a full drainage strategy which is in line with the sustainable drainage hierarchy identified in National Planning Guidance should be submitted with the application. Foul and surface water should be drained on separate systems.

Affordable Housing:

A minimum 30% on-site affordable housing will be required, to be secured by s106 agreement. This would need to provide an appropriate tenure split of affordable home ownership and affordable rent which achieves LHA rates and that meets a local need with priority given to people with a Ribble Valley connection. Affordable housing would need to be suitably pepper potted across the site and appear as tenure blind.

Over 55 accommodation in accordance with policy H3 would also need to be secured by s106 agreement.

Conclusion:

For the reasons discussed above the proposal cannot be considered to be an acceptable form of development which accords with national and local planning policy, by virtue of it being an inappropriate form of development in the countryside, and the visual and landscape impact and insufficient infrastructure, accessibility and connectivity for this quantum of development. The scale, design and massing of the proposed development would not be appropriate in this countryside and woodland setting and would result in an incongruous addition of built form and quantum of development which would harm the character and appearance of the area.

In any event, notwithstanding the principle of development not being accepted in this location and any additional information being submitted and found satisfactory there would be an unacceptable impact on landscape and woodland setting.

Submission Requirements:

Please note the Council has a local validation checklist in place; full details of which can be viewed at: <https://www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk/planning-buildings/validation-checklist-planning-applications>

Should you proceed to submission of a formal full application, based on the nature of the proposal/site constraints identified above, it is my opinion that the Local Planning Authority would require the following information to accompany such an application to allow for an accurate assessment:

- Application form and Certificates
- Application Fee
- Location plan 1:1250/1:2500
- Existing and Proposed Site Plan 1:500/1:200
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Phase I Ecological appraisal
- BNG assessment including Metric
- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement

- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Landscape Strategy
- Sustainable Drainage Strategy and Sustainable Drainage Pro-Forma
- Noise assessment

The aforementioned required information may not be exhaustive and is provided on the basis of the level of information submitted. Failure to provide required information is likely to result in an application being made invalid until such information is received.

The above observations have been provided on the basis of the level of information submitted and the comments contained within this response represent officer opinion only, at the time of writing, without prejudice to the final determination of any application submitted.

Yours Sincerely

Kathryn Hughes
Principal Planning Officer