DE POL
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS
established 1986

PLANNING STATEMENT

Land Off Vicarage Lane,
Wilpshire, BB1 9HX

PLANNING STATEMENT

Land Off Vicarage Lane, Wilpshire, BB1 9HX

Description:

The erection of up to nine dwellings, and associated infrastructure.

Applicant:

Oak Tree Developments

Date:

September 2026

Planning Statement

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction **1**

Chapter 2: Site Description & Planning History **2**

Chapter 3: Application Proposals **3**

Chapter 4: Legislative & Planning Policy Context **4**

Chapter 5: Planning Assessment **6**

Chapter 6: Conclusion **13**

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. De Pol Associates Ltd are retained to progress a Stage 1 Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the erection of up to nine dwellings on the land east of Vicarage Lane. This PIP application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council as the local planning authority (LPA) and relates to the area shown edged in red on the submitted Location Plan.

1.2. This Planning Statement provides a description of the proposed development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme in the context of relevant planning policies and guidance, and material considerations. It demonstrates that the proposal represents appropriate development in principle.

1.3. This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying application documents as detailed on the submitted application form.

1.4. Applications for a Stage 1 PIP only require the applicant to consider non-technical details of the proposal – the proposed use(s), amount of development, and location.

1.5. For reasons identified in this statement it is considered, that based on planning policy and material considerations the application proposals represent appropriate development and that the applicant's request for permission in principle should be granted.

1.6. If approved, this scheme would provide an appropriately efficient scheme on a parcel of land within the settlement boundary, that is otherwise acceptable in principle.

Chapter 2

Site Description & Planning History

Site Description

2.1. The application site is within the settlement of Wilpshire, located in the northern part of the settlement surrounded by residential development. Only exception to this is the northeast boundary of the site which lies adjacent to a field, bordered by trees and vegetation.

2.2. The application site comprises a section of land wedged between existing residential development. This is shown in the submitted location plan.

2.3. The town of Wilpshire itself is a large village in the southern part of Ribble Valley Borough. The village is north of Blackburn and south of Clitheroe, which are both connected by Whalley Road and the A59 which runs through the centre of the village.

Planning History

2.4. There are no historical applications identified for the development of the site.

Preapplication Advice

2.5. Pre-application advice was sought from Ribble Valley Borough Council. A previous iteration of the scheme proposed 14 dwellings at the site; and provided technical details for consideration. The pre-application response was broadly supportive of residential development at the site but raised concerns about the proposed density of the scheme and some technical details. A detailed response to the content of the consultation will be given in the planning assessment section of this statement.

Chapter 3

Application Proposals

3.1. The proposed development is pursuant to an application for Permission in Principle (PIP Stage 1).

3.2. This only entails permission related to the proposed use, amount of development, and location, for this development proposal. Technical details, relating to access, ecology, design, trees, drainage, etc., are all reserved for the Stage 2 application. This is outlined under PPG Paragraph: 034 Reference ID: 14-034-20140306.

3.3. This proposal would see up to nine Class C3 dwellinghouses constructed on the site, alongside the relevant infrastructures. Whilst the design and appearance of the development is a matter for stage two it is anticipated that the site would be ultimately developed for two storey family housing reflective of the type of development which surrounds the site.

3.4. The site would be accessed from Vicarage Lane, either from the south and or west but this will be detail to be supplied and considered at Stage 2.

Chapter 4

Legislative & Planning Policy Context

Local Development Plan

4.1. Section 38(6) of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)* requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Development Plan of relevance in this instance comprises:

- *Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version* (the Local Plan)—adopted in December of 2014.
- *Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document* (the DPD)—adopted in October of 2019.

4.2. The Local Plan was adopted on the 6th of December 2021 and provides the strategic planning policy and detailed development management policies for the borough. The DPD sets out more detailed policy coverage for matters relating to housing and economy to fully implement the policies of the Core Strategy. The policies are set to run until 2028. These documents form the Development Plan for the borough.

National Planning Policy Framework

4.3. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF or Framework) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Whilst this is not part of the statutory Development Plan, it is a material consideration of significant weight in the overall planning balance. The Revised 2026 Framework establishes that where development plan policies are inconsistent with the Framework, the development plan policies are to be afforded 'very limited weight.'

4.4. The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and proactive way, according to NPPF Decision Making Policy 3.

National Planning Practice Guidance

4.5. In addition to planning policy and legislation, the *National Planning Policy Guidance* (PPG) is an online resource which provides guidance on the interpretation of the NPPF. The content of PPG is referred to in the consideration of the proposal.

4.6. All of the above policy documents are considered in this Statement.

Chapter 5

Planning Assessment

5.1. As established, the application site is within the settlement boundary of Wilpshire and is located between established development to the northwest and east. This assessment will therefore examine matters of principle (location, uses, and amount of development) in the context of the pre-application advice received, the Development Plan and other material considerations, most notably the recently published NPPF.

Principle of Development

5.2. As a Stage 1 PIP application, only matters related to the location, use, and amount of development are material in the determination process, as outlined in the PPG:

> *The scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Issues relevant to these 'in principle' matters should be considered at the permission in principle stage. Other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage. In addition, local authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for permission in principle in the same way they can for applications for planning permission.*
>
> Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615

5.3. Hence, it is these matters that are considered in this planning assessment.

5.4. The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Wilpshire. The revised NPPF outlines how applications within settlements should be determined under Policy S4. The revised Framework establishes that proposed development within settlements should be approved unless there are adverse impacts that outweigh any planning benefits. The policy states the following:

> *Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.*

5.5. Further to this, the policy identifies specific instances in which the adverse impacts may not outweigh the benefits of the proposed development. These are as follows:

> *a. Have a substantial adverse impact in relation to:*
>
> *i. The allocation or safeguarding of land or buildings for particular uses in the development plan, unless there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming 25 forward for the allocated use, or there is evidence that the safeguarding is no longer appropriate; or*
>
> *ii. The application of the policies in this Framework for existing recreational land and facilities (HC7), Local Green Space (HC8), areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity (N6), Protected Landscapes (N4) and development within residential curtilages (L2(1)(d)).*
>
> *b. Involve the whole or partial loss of undeveloped land which is used for a cemetery or burial ground; or for water storage and/or flood risk management (unless suitable compensatory provision is made that does not increase the risk of flooding either on or off-site); or*
>
> *c. Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.*

5.6. In the Local Plan there is no specific designation for the application site, but it is within the settlement boundary of Wilpshire. The Local Plan designates Wilpshire as a Tier 1 settlement. Key Statement DS1 of the Local Plan sets out the development strategy priorities for the borough, and provides the following policy position for identified Tier 1 Villages in the settlement hierarchy:

> *[…] development will be focused towards the Tier 1 Villages, which are the more sustainable of the 32 defined settlements [the list of which includes Wilpshire].*

5.7. Therefore, the proposed development would not have *substantial adverse impact* to any designations within the Development Plan; but it would support the development goals outlined for Wilpshire.

5.8. The site is also not in any use as a cemetery or for water storage. Nor are there any other identified risk of harm associated with the development of the site. The application site has not been identified as having any ecological, scientific, historical, landscape, or amenity value that would preclude residential development on the site. Likewise, there is no identified risk of fluvial or surface water flooding at the site, now or in the future.

5.9. It is therefore the position of National Decision-making Policy that the development of the site is acceptable in planning terms. Given the Development Plan's direction of development to the village, it is considered that there are no adverse impacts that would render the proposed development unacceptable on the whole.

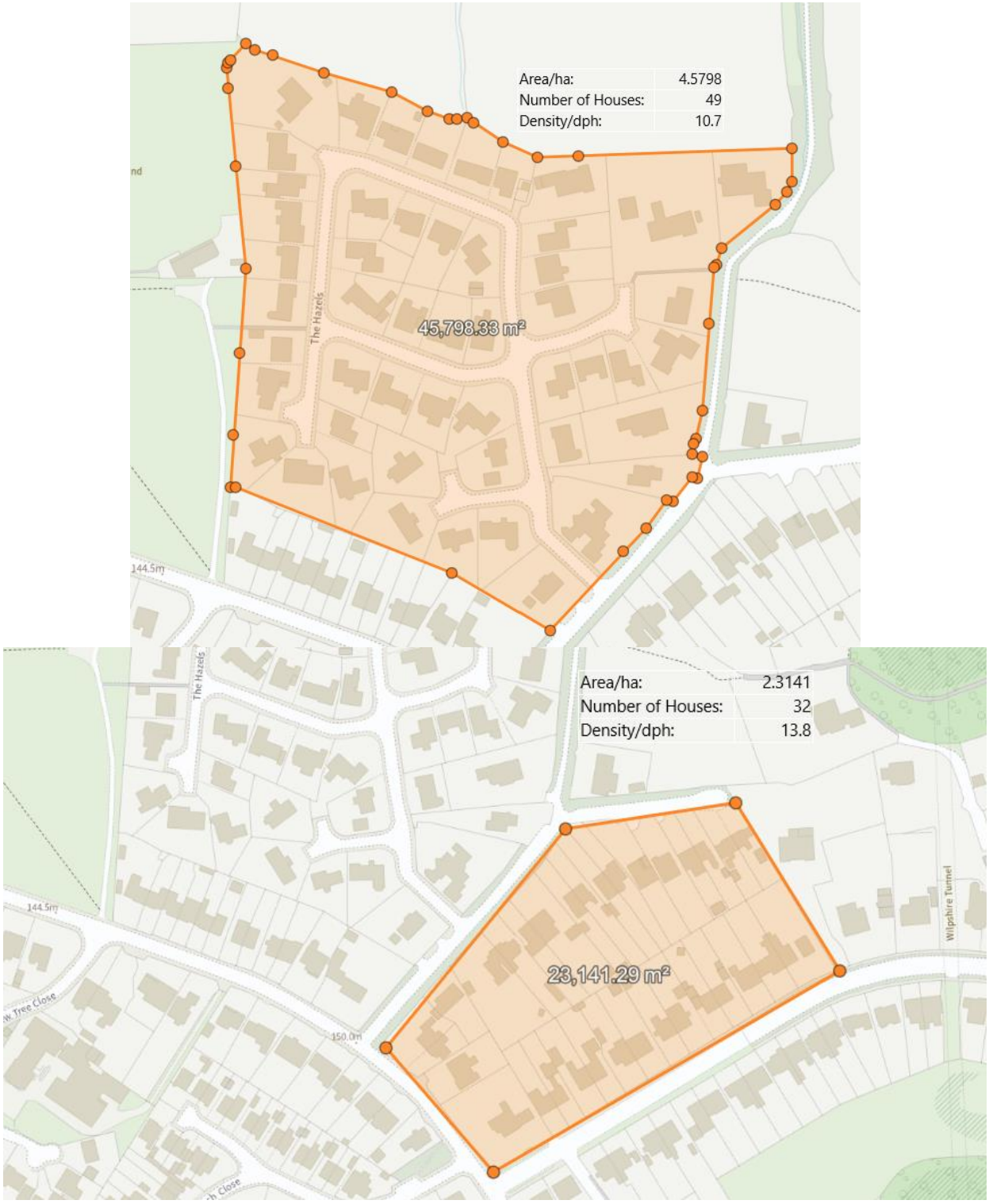
5.10. Notwithstanding this, Local Plan Policy DMG2 is supportive of development within Tier 1 settlements like Wilpshire. The Policy DMG2 reads as follows:

> *Development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement.*

5.11. Given the fact that residential development surrounds well over two third of the site, its development would represent rounding off the developed form of the settlement. As this application only relates to the principle of development, it is considered that the amount of development and the residential character of the scheme would be in keeping with the local surroundings. Figure 1 demonstrates that the two surrounding housing estates are of a lower density than the proposed scheme. As outlined, the applicant intends to erect nine dwellings across the 0.5ha site. This would result in a housing density of, at most, 18dph (dwellings per hectare) balancing an efficient use of land with remining in keeping with the locality.

5.12. The fact that the surrounding scale and land-uses mirror that proposed in this application, and that the form of development would round out the existing settlement, it is accepted that the proposed development, as a matter of principle, accords with the Development Plan.

Figure 1: Surrounding Density



Pre-Application Consultation

5.13. A pre-application submission was made to Ribble Valley Council proposing 14 dwellings at the site. The preapplication advice found that policy was broadly supportive in regard to the location being subject to residential development. The LPA stated:

> *The site is located within the defined settlement of Wilpshire, a Tier 1 settlement. Policy DMG2 and Key statement DS1 set out the spatial and locational aspirations for new residential development within the Borough. As such, in respect of assessing the submitted proposal, Policy DMG2 remains fully engaged. Policy DMG2 is two-fold in its approach to guiding development. The primary part of the policy DMG2(1) is engaged where development proposals are located 'in' principal and Tier 1 settlements with the second part of the policy DMG2(2) being engaged when a proposed development is located 'outside' defined settlement areas or within tier 2 villages, with each part of the policy therefore being engaged in isolation and independent of the other dependant on the locational aspects of a proposal.*
>
> *Given the sites location within the defined settlement limits of Wilpshire (Tier 1), it is the primary part of DMG2 (DMG2(1)) that remains engaged in respect of the application which states that:*
>
> *Development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built-up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement.*
>
> *It is therefore clear that Policy DMG2(1) is broadly supportive of residential development in the proposed location, however this is subject to the proposal aligning with the 'sub-criterion' embodied within the policy which requires that the development should 'consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built-up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement'. As such, it is my view, that where a proposal directly conflicts with the sub-criterion', the general support lended by DMG2(1) should be fully disengaged.*

5.14. Therefore, the pre-application consultation demonstrates that the LPA is in agreement with the conclusion reached earlier in this statement, that the principle of residential development would be acceptable in terms of land use.

5.15. The LPA raised concerns that the pre-application proposal of 14 dwellings would be a too intense form of residential development to be considered consolidation or rounding off of the existing settlement. They explicitly cite the quantum of development as a cause for concern as matter of principle. The LPA stated in the pre-application response as follows:

It is my view that the proposal would represent expansion and to some degree would represent 'rounding-off'. However, taking account of the quantum of development proposed and the inherent density of the proposal, particularly compared to that of surrounding densities and the inherent density and pattern of development of Wilpshire, it is my opinion that the proposal fails to be 'appropriate' or 'in keeping' with the existing settlement. As such I considered that the support afforded by DMG2 should therefore be fully disengaged, particularly given the level of disparity between existing and proposed densities.

As such, it is my opinion that the proposal, when taking account of the cumulative overall density, the quantum of development proposed and its location, would result in an anomalous and discordant pattern and form of development that fails to respond positively to the inherent pattern or density of adjacent development. Further to the above, when considering the comparative densities in isolation, the development is considered to be not only in direct conflict with Policy DMG2, but also Policy DMG1, which requires that development 'be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature' and should 'consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance'.

It is also my view, should a proposal be submitted that has inherent densities more comparable to the density of adjacent development, then the support afforded by Policy DMG2(1), notwithstanding other development management considerations, could therefore be fully reengaged.

5.16. The development proposed by this application is therefore less intensive than that considered in the pre-application submission. The pre-application plans would have resulted in a density of about 21.3dph (dwellings per hectare; whereas this application would result in a density of 13.7dph—a reduction of some 35%. As demonstrated earlier, and in Figure 2, the proposed density of development coheres to the surrounding residential context.

5.17. Beyond the consideration of the land-use and amount of development proposed for the site, the pre-application advice cautioned some of the technical details of the pre-application scheme, particularly related to the layout of the dwellings. Notwithstanding this, these matters are linked to the issue of density—which having been lowered as part of the submitted proposal—would allow for this to be resolved at the TDC stage of the application.

5.18. For the given reason, it is considered that the proposed scheme has fully considered with the advice contained within the council's pre-application response and would be acceptable in this regard. In any event, the scheme would be acceptable under Decision Making Policy S4 of the NPPF, and so any Development Plan policy inconsistent with this aspect of the Framework

would be applied *very limited weight* in determining the application, in accordance with Annex A of the Framework.

Summary of Findings

5.19. This planning assessment demonstrates that the proposed development of up to nine dwellings is acceptable in principle, as the site is located within the settlement boundary of Wilpshire, where residential development is supported by local and national planning policy. The revised scheme responds to pre-application advice by reducing the number of dwellings and achieving a density that better reflects the surrounding area, thereby ensuring the development would appropriately round off the existing settlement and contribute to local housing supply.

5.20. In accordance with Annex A of the NPPF, any Development Plan policies that are inconsistent with the Framework should be afforded very limited weight. The proposal complies with Policy S4's presumption in favour of development within settlements and no substantial adverse impacts have been identified. Therefore, there is strong policy support for granting Permission in Principle.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1. The proposed development of up to nine dwellings on land off Vicarage Lane, Wilpshire, represents an acceptable and sustainable form of development in principle. The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Wilpshire, a Tier 1 settlement where residential growth is supported by the spatial strategy of the Development Plan, and the proposal would provide a logical rounding-off of the existing built form.

6.2. The scheme has positively responded to pre-application advice by reducing the scale of development from 14 dwellings to a maximum of nine dwellings, resulting in a density that is more reflective of the surrounding residential context. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with the objectives of Policy DMG2 and would be appropriate to the character and pattern of development within the settlement.

6.3. Furthermore, the proposal benefits from the support of the revised NPPF, particularly Policy S4 relating to development within settlements. In accordance with Annex A of the Framework, any Development Plan policies that are inconsistent with national policy should be afforded very limited weight. Given that no significant adverse impacts have been identified and the proposal would contribute towards housing delivery, including affordable housing provision, there is a clear policy basis for approval.

6.4. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposed development satisfies the requirements for Permission in Principle and planning permission should therefore be granted.



De Pol Associates Ltd.
Farington House, Stanifield Business Park,
Stanifield Lane, Farington, Leyland, Preston, PR25 4UA
T. 01772 888488
E. mail@depol.co.uk

www.depol.co.uk