



Planning, Affordable Housing and Design and Access Statement

Outline planning application for the erection of up to 151 dwellings, community building and open space with associated works (access to be considered and all other matters reserved) – Cardwell Farm, Garstang Road, Barton, Preston, PR3 5DR

for Wainhomes (North West) Ltd

EP ref: 16-344

Project : 16-344
Site address : Cardwell Farm, Garstang
Road, Barton, Preston,
PR3 5DR
Client : Wainhomes (North West)
Ltd
Date : May 2019
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1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This Statement supports our client's outline planning application for a residential development comprising up to 151 dwellings, community building and open space on land at Cardwell Farm, Garstang Road, Barton (access to be considered and all other matters reserved).
- 1.2 Part of the site already benefits from a planning permission for 55 dwellings and that site forms part of this application as the layout has been amended so that a direct access is provided directly off the A6. Concerns were raised by the residents along Woodlands Way during the determination of current planning approval for 55 homes. Whilst those concerns were not a reason against the development, the applicant has nevertheless taken note with this revised proposal taking access directly off the A6. Should this application be approved then it is this development which would be implemented. However, should permission not be granted for this application for any reason then the extant consent would be implemented. Under either scenario a safe and secure access will be achieved. The number of dwellings proposed on that part of the site has been reduced from 55 to 49. The balance of the 151 dwellings (102 dwellings) is on land to the east of the extant consent.
- 1.3 A community building and open space is also proposed. The reason for this is in recognition of the extant planning consents primarily to the west of Barton and the proposed open space and community building provide opportunities for the existing and proposed residents in Barton, but particularly the lower part of the village, to access additional community facilities.
- 1.4 The proposed development is a logical site that relates well to the overall settlement pattern of Barton. The site adjoins the existing residential and commercial development to the east of the A6 Garstang Road. The proposal would integrate with the linear form of built development along Garstang Road. Extant planning approvals for new housing developments along the western side of the A6 will further emphasise the built-up nature of the road frontage.
- 1.5 It has been recognised through the grant of planning permission for new housing developments within Barton over recent years that the settlement is locationally sustainable for major new residential proposals. Barton benefits from local services with bus services along the A6 serving larger settlements to the north and south, such as Preston and Garstang.

- 1.6 The Council accepts that it cannot demonstrate a deliverable 5-year housing land supply in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF. There is an urgent need for the Council to release greenfield sites for new residential development and our client's site is available, suitable and deliverable within the short-term in order to meet unmet and future housing needs.
- 1.7 Notwithstanding the question as to how many years supply of deliverable housing sites can be demonstrated, the Council has persistently under-delivered in terms of new housing and there remains a very substantial unmet affordable housing need across the Borough. The proposed development would comprise sustainable development and would boost housing land supply in accordance with the NPPF regardless of the 5-year supply situation.
- 1.8 We have not identified any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the significant benefits associated with the proposal. This statement demonstrates that the proposed development represents sustainable development for the purposes of the NPPF and that there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission accordingly.

2. The application

- 2.1 This outline planning application seeks planning permission for the erection of up to 151 dwellings on land at Cardwell Farm, Barton, Lancashire (access to be considered and all other matters reserved).
- 2.2 A Transport Statement, prepared by SCP, has been submitted with the planning application and this demonstrates that the proposed development would not undermine the capacity of the local road network or highway safety. Primary access to the site would be via the A6, which is a change from the access from the extant consent off Woodlands Way.
- 2.3 Indicative site layout plans (MCK Architects) are also submitted that illustrates one potential option for how the site could be developed for the quantum of residential development proposed. It indicates a mix of family-sized houses and apartments with active frontages onto the public realm. The submitted illustrative layout drawing shows that the proposed dwellings would predominantly take the form of detached houses, although there would also be some terraced houses and two blocks of apartments in the interests of the overall mix of house types.
- 2.4 The site of a community hall is proposed and would be designed to provide the local community with an indoor facility which will be the focal point for the community and foster

greater community spirit through the provision of sports provision, performances, meetings and rooms for hire for parties and events. The design would be based on the design note by Sport England titled "Village and Community Halls".

- 2.5 An area of public open space, including children's play equipment, would be created on the southern part of the site providing an attractive open space and area of ecological and biodiversity value. The community hall would front onto this open space immediately adjacent to the north boundary and providing good connectivity to the existing village.
- 2.6 53 of the proposed dwellings would be affordable houses, which accords with the 35% on-site provision required by planning policy. This can be secured by the local planning authority via an appropriately worded planning condition.

3. Context

Site location and description

- 3.1 The application site is predominantly located adjacent to the settlement boundaries of Barton, although the frontage of the site is located within the identified built-up area. The site is located approximately 5 miles north of Preston City Centre.
- 3.2 The site comprises six fields approximately 9.5ha in size. They comprise grassland and are enclosed by hedgerow, trees and fencing to the site boundaries. It is presently accessed via a gateway via Cardwell Farm and off the A6.
- 3.3 The site is bounded by the existing residential properties to the east of the A6 Garstang Road. This includes a housing estate known as Woodlands Way to the southern boundary and a large landscape contractors and haulage yard, known as Barton Grange Landscapes, at Cardwell Farm to the northern boundary of the Phase 1 site.
- 3.4 There are a number of services within easy and convenient walking distance of the application site (e.g. Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, St Mary's and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School and Barton Village Hall). Regular and direct bus services are available along the A6, with connections to Preston city centre and smaller settlements such as Broughton, Garstang and Bilsborrow.

Relevant planning history

- 3.5 There is an extant consent (06/2018/0238) on the site for 55 dwellings which was issued on 18th September 2018. That application was a resubmission of Application 06/2016/1207 which had been refused in July 2017 on conflict with the development plan. The resubmission was however approved following the Broughton appeal decisions which clarified that the housing land supply was significantly below 5 years; a position that remains.
- 3.6 The conclusion in the officer report stated:

"This proposal is contrary to CS Policy 1, 13 and 21 and PLP Policy EN1, as discussed above. However, in terms of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as set out at paragraph 14 of the Framework, the proposal would perform an economic role as a result of the employment of construction workers to carry out the various aspects of the development.

Occupation of the development would also bring inhabitants to a location with links by public transport and improved pedestrian and cycle routes to other nearby villages and Preston city centre. It would deliver community infrastructure levy receipts and new homes bonus. The proposal would also make an important contribution to the supply of housing. In relation to the social role, the proposal would provide affordable housing on the site. In terms of the environmental role, the proposed development would result in the loss of existing fields and would introduce built development into what has been identified as open countryside that clearly has value locally. The site is not however of any notable landscape value in terms of its character and appearance and the impact of the proposal is not therefore considered to be significant. Subject to conditions and a S106 obligation, there would be no unacceptable impact on protected species. It would also achieve energy efficiency levels equivalent to level 4 of the former CSH and electric vehicle charging points would be provided.

It is considered that there are no adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme and direct the LPA to refuse the application. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in accordance with the Framework and that planning permission should be granted."

- 3.7 That approval is highly material in that the planning context has not altered to any material degree so the same conclusion should apply.
- 3.8 There have been a number of recent planning applications for residential development within the immediate locality that are relevant to the determination of our client's planning application.

Land off Garstang Road, Barton (north of Station Lane)

- 3.9 An outline planning application was submitted in 2015 to Preston City Council for the residential development of agricultural land directly opposite the application site on the western side of the A6 (LPA ref: 06/2015/0306). The site is located outside of the settlement boundaries and within the open countryside. The submitted scheme was for 72 dwellings with associated works and it was refused planning permission by Preston City Council in July 2015 on the basis of the site being located within the open countryside and not being readily accessible to key services and public transport options, together with the proposal causing harm to the character of the area.
- 3.10 An appeal was subsequently submitted by the applicant and a Public Inquiry took place during June 2016 (PINS ref: APP/N2345/W/15/3130341). The Council conceded during the course of the

Inquiry that it cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing and the Council agreed the following statement with the Appellant:

“In undertaking that planning balance, the shortfall in supply of land for housing is significant....”

- 3.11 Within the context of the above, the Council at the Inquiry confirmed that they were no longer seeking to defend their reasons for refusal. The Council concluded that harm arising from the proposed development did not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits for the purposes of paragraph 14 of the NPPF.
- 3.12 With regard to accessibility, the Inspector noted that there are a range of local services within Barton, including two primary schools, a church, a village hall, post office and shop, a hot food takeaway and public houses and restaurants. Although the Inspector noted that future occupiers would still be reliant on the need to travel of private motor vehicle, he concluded that any conflict with CS Policy 1 and Policy EN1 of the adopted local plan is reduced by virtue of the lack of five year housing land supply. In terms of landscape impact, the Inspector concluded that there would be moderate harm only to the character and appearance of the area. The Inspector noted that views would not be out of context with the setting of Barton, which is a nucleated settlement that already has built development, particularly on the eastern side of the A6.
- 3.13 The Inspector also found that there was no evidence to suggest that the proposed development would undermine highways safety or the local road network, nor that it would not be harmful to flooding.
- 3.14 The Inspector took the same view as the Council and the Appellant in concluding that the provision of additional housing within the area, including a proportion of affordable housing, attracts significant positive weight and outweighs any harm accruing from the location of the site or the moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area.
- 3.15 Reserved matters approval was granted by the Council last year for detailed matters for the erection of 72 dwellings on the site and construction works are progressing.

Land off Garstang Road (Holly House Barn), Barton

- 3.16 An outline planning application was submitted to Wyre Borough Council in June 2016 for the erection of 72 dwellings and a 320sqm retail store (LPA ref: 16/00625/OUTMAJ).
- 3.17 Planning permission was granted in January 2018 and a reserved matters application is currently pending with the local planning authority (LPA ref: 18/00025/REMMAJ).
- 3.18 The Council accepted through the grant of planning permission that Barton is locationally sustainable for major new housing development and there would be an acceptable impact on landscape character and the general character and appearance of the area. The provision of this level of new housing within Barton together with a retail store further emphasises the locational sustainability of Barton.

Station Lane

- 3.19 Outline planning permission (06/2018/0242) was granted by the Council in December 2018 for the erection of up to 45 dwellings with associated works on land off Garstang Road (South of Station Lane), Barton, PR3 5DP.
- 3.20 A reserved matters planning application has recently been submitted to agree the details for the erection of 45 dwellings with associated works. The proposed development incorporates 16 affordable housing units, which equates to 35% on-site affordable housing provision in accordance with the outline planning permission granted.

Land to the rear of 867 Garstang Road (Rostock Dairy), Barton

- 3.21 A full planning application was submitted to Wyre Borough Council in July 2016 for the erection of 26 dwellings (LPA ref: 16/00090/FULMAJ).
- 3.22 This planning application was presented to Planning Committee in March 2017 whereby Members resolved to grant planning permission, subject to a Section 106 legal agreement.
- 3.23 The Council accepted through the resolution to grant planning permission that Barton is locationally sustainable for major new housing development and there would be an acceptable impact on landscape character and the general character and appearance of the area.

Land off Forest Grove, Barton

- 3.24 An outline planning application was submitted in 2012 to Preston City Council for the residential development of agricultural land off Forest Drive, Barton (LPA ref: 06/2012/0823). The site was located outside of the settlement boundaries and within the open countryside. The submitted scheme was for 65 dwellings with associated works and it was refused planning permission by Preston City Council in March 2013 on the basis of five reasons for refusal, including the site being located within the open countryside and not being readily accessible to key services and public transport options, together with the proposal causing harm to the character of the area.
- 3.25 An appeal was subsequently submitted by the applicant and a Public Inquiry took place during June 2013 (PINS ref: APP/N2345/A/13/2192362). The Inspector concluded that the Council could not demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing and that the benefits associated with the proposal would outweigh any harm arising from the development.
- 3.26 With regard to landscape impact, the Inspector concluded that the development would comprise a logical rounding-off of the settlement boundaries. Although the residential development would extend further eastwards than the settlement boundaries, it would not extend further beyond the existing residential development at Forest Grove. In terms of accessibility, the Inspector concluded that the site benefited from moderate accessibility to local services and facilities available within Barton.

Land at Avonhurst, Barton

- 3.27 A full planning application was submitted in 2015 to Wyre Borough Council for housing on land associated with the residential property of Avonhurst, no. 799 Garstang Road (LPA ref: 15/00072/FULMAJ) on the western side of the A6. The submitted scheme was for the erection of 29 dwellings with associated works on land immediately to the north of Shepherd's Farm. It predominantly falls outside of the settlement boundaries and within the open countryside.
- 3.28 This planning application was approved planning permission by Wyre Borough Council in July 2015. The local planning authority found all planning matters to be acceptable including highways impacts and accessibility to key services and public transport options. Paragraph 8.27 of the Council's delegated report addresses the suitability of Barton as a location for new housing development:

"The TA demonstrates that there are a number of bus stops, a village hall, associated playing fields, a primary school, restaurants and public houses are all located within a 1 km catchment of the site; whilst there are a number of further amenities within a 2 km catchment of the site. The nearest convenience shops are located in Broughton and Bilsborrow, between 2 and 3 kilometres away, therefore it is considered that the main food shopping requirements would have to be met in the larger centres of Preston or Garstang and are likely to be by car. There are no GP or dentistry facilities within Barton and there are only very limited employment opportunities within Barton. Residents are, therefore, most likely to have to travel to work. The site is well linked to public transport provision with north / south bound bus stops located within 100 metres of the site access which are served by frequent bus services operating on the A6. The A6 also has a cycle lane along the majority of its length towards Broughton, some 2.5 kilometres away. It is therefore considered that the site comprises a sustainable location."

3.29 This approved scheme is a material planning consideration for the purposes of this planning application.

Summary

3.30 The decisions outlined above firmly establish that Barton is a locationally sustainable settlement for the provision of new residential development, particularly within the context of the urgent need for new housing development across Preston. Planning permission should be granted for new residential development proposals that are sustainable in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Framework.

4. Policy context

National planning policy and guidance

- 4.1 At the heart of the Framework, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. As set out in paragraph 11 of the Framework all housing proposals should be considered in the context of sustainable development.
- 4.2 Paragraph 11 states that for decision-taking the presumption in favour of sustainable development means:
- “c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁷, granting permission unless:*
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁶; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*
- 4.3 Paragraph 73 requires local planning authorities to identify a supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years of housing against their housing requirement.
- 4.4 Footnote 7 states that or applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer, as set out in paragraph 73); or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.
- 4.5 Chapter 2 of the Framework seeks to clarify what is meant by sustainable development. In doing so it states that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are as follows:
- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation;

- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental role – including contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

4.6 Chapter 5 sets out the Government objectives for delivering a sufficient supply of new homes. The guidance states that a key objective is to “significantly boost” the supply of new homes. It is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups and specific housing requirements are addressed and land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

Development plan

4.7 The development plan comprises the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, adopted 2012, and the Preston Local Plan, adopted 2015. The adopted local plan Policies Map shows that the site falls within the designated open countryside and forms part of an Area of Separation.

Central Lancashire Joint Core Strategy (CS)

4.8 The planning policies considered most relevant to the determination of this planning application include the following:

- Policy 1 – Locating Growth
- Policy 2 - Infrastructure
- Policy 3 – Travel
- Policy 4 – Housing Delivery
- Policy 5 – Housing Density
- Policy 6 – Housing Quality
- Policy 7 – Affordable and Special Needs Housing
- Policy 13 – Rural Economy
- Policy 17 – Design of New Buildings
- Policy 21 – Landscape Character Areas

- Policy 22 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy 25 – Community Facilities
- Policy 27 – Sustainable Resources and New Developments
- Policy 29 – Waste Management
- Policy 31 – Agricultural Land

Preston Local Plan

4.9 The planning policies considered most relevant to the determination of this planning application include the following:

- Policy AD1(a) – Development within (or in close proximity to) the Existing Residential Area
- Policy HS1 – Allocation of Housing Sites
- Policy EN1 – Development in the Open Countryside
- Policy EN7 – Land Quality
- Policy EN9 – Design of New Development
- Policy EN10 – Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
- Policy EN11 – Species Protection
- Policy ST2 – General Transport Considerations

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

4.10 The PPG sets out further guidance on the implementation of a positive approach to new development within the rural areas. It notes that a thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends, in part, on retaining local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship. Rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities (paragraph 50-001).

Five-year housing land supply position

4.11 Two recent appeal decisions at sites in Broughton (Sandygate Lane and Keyfold Farm, references 06/2016/0736 and 06/2017/0097) have been received. The decisions confirm that the

Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year deliverable housing land supply. The Inspector concluded that the Council's supply of housing land lies between 3 and 3.5 years and there is therefore a very substantial shortfall.

- 4.12 The Inspector identified that the explicit intention of the National Planning Policy Framework to boost significantly the supply of housing was a powerful material consideration which weighted heavily in favour granting planning permission.
- 4.13 The Council have accepted this position and have, subsequent to these decisions, been granting planning permission for residential developments which do not otherwise accord with the development hierarchy set out in the development plan (i.e. greenfield sites outside of settlement boundaries). This includes the phase 1 development adjacent to the application site.
- 4.14 More recently, the Council has published a Housing Land Position as at March 2019. The Council's position is that it can demonstrate a 3.8 year housing land supply, although the assumptions made by the Council have not been subject to independent examination. It remains the case that there is a very substantial shortfall in terms of a 5-year housing land supply for the purposes of the NPPF and deliverable sites must come forward as a matter of urgency.

Affordable Housing SPD (2012)

- 4.15 This SPD was prepared on behalf of the three local authorities within Central Lancashire and it provides an overview of the design principles that each authority will seek to employ for new development proposals.

Design Guide SPD (2012)

- 4.16 This SPD was prepared on behalf of the three local authorities within Central Lancashire and it sets out the policy requirements for affordable housing as a proportion of new housing developments. It states that housing proposals within rural areas or adjoining villages shall provide 35% on-site affordable housing.

Designated Barton Neighbourhood Area

- 4.17 The City Council granted approval in September 2017 for Neighbourhood Area status for the Barton, Myerscough and Bilsborrow Parish areas.

4.18 We are not aware of any progress being made towards a Draft Barton Neighbourhood Plan and there is no weight to be attached to any emerging neighbourhood plan.

5. Planning Considerations

Principle of development

Policy context

- 5.1 The Proposals Map for the adopted local plan shows that the frontage of the application site is located within the identified settlement boundaries of Barton whilst the vast majority of the site falls within the designated open countryside.
- 5.2 CS Policy 1 seeks to focus growth and investment in strategic locations, key service centres and other main urban areas. It is also permissive of small-scale development comprising infilling and conversion proposals within substantially built up frontages and smaller villages of the Borough. It states that exceptional reasons will be required for larger redevelopment schemes within such areas.
- 5.3 Policy AD1(b) of the adopted local plan states that small-scale development within existing villages, including Barton, will be acceptable subject to certain criteria relating to design, amenity and character and appearance. Policy EN1 of the adopted local plan states that development within the open countryside will be limited to listed criteria that includes infilling within groups of buildings in smaller rural settlements.

Assessment

- 5.4 The proposed development would incorporate land along the A6 frontage and within the identified built-up area settlement boundaries for Barton. The indicative site layout plan shows the erection of a dwelling along the road frontage, which equates to small-scale infill development along a substantially built-up frontage. This element of the scheme would be fully compliant in land use terms with Policies CS Policy 1 and Policy AD1(b) of the adopted local plan.
- 5.5 The remainder of the application site falls outside of the identified settlement boundaries for Barton. Policy CS1 and Policy EP1 of the adopted local plan restrict new development proposals within such locations. However, the rigid application of these policies with full weight would frustrate the ability of the City Council to address the significant shortfall in deliverable housing land across Preston. With due regard for the Supreme Court Richborough Judgment, these policies attract reduced weight in the decision-making process.

- 5.6 The development plan represents the starting point in assessing the merits of the proposed development. However, in this instance Core Strategy Policy 1 and Policy EN1 of the adopted local plan, which restrict the location of new housing, should be considered out-of-date given the acknowledged position that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing and paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is engaged. Paragraph 11(d) makes clear in such circumstances planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Footnote 7 is specific that this includes opportunities for the provision of housing where the LPA cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply.
- 5.7 The site-specific impacts of the proposed development are discussed in more detail below.
- 5.8 Policy 4 of the Central Lancashire Joint Core Strategy (2012) requires the provision of 507 dwellings per annum during the CS period and, that the shortfall accrued before the CS period measured against the RS be made up during the CS period. This was then translated in the Preston Local Plan (2015) to a requirement to provide 7,301 units in the period between 2014 and 2026.
- 5.9 In Preston there is a need to boost housing land supply significantly. The Council has persistently under delivered new housing across the Borough. The Council accepts that it is unable to demonstrate a 5 year deliverable housing land supply. The Inspector for the aforementioned appeals at Sandygate Lane and Keyfold Farm concluded that the Council's supply of housing land lies between 3 and 3.5 years and there is therefore a very substantial shortfall.
- 5.10 The Inspector identified that the explicit intention of the National Planning Policy Framework to boost significantly the supply of housing was a powerful material consideration which weighed heavily in favour granting planning permission. This position remains the same in the updated 2018 Framework.
- 5.11 The release of the site for housing is considered to be consistent with the emphasis of the Framework in boosting housing land supply and supporting positive and sustainable growth. As discussed within this Statement, the proposed development would also help to address Preston's significant affordable housing needs.

The Proposed Community Building and Open Space

Policy Context

5.12 Paragraph 19d of the Framework states that “Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

“c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”

5.13 Paragraph 92(a) states:

“92. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

5.14 Policy 25 (Community Facilities) of the Core Strategy states:

“Ensure that local communities have sufficient community facilities provision by:

(a) Working with public, private and voluntary sector providers to meet demonstrable need;

(b) Encouraging and coordinating new provision at locations that are accessible by all modes of transport;

(c) Resisting the loss of existing facilities by requiring evidence that they are no longer viable or relevant to local needs;

(d) Assessing all development proposals for new housing in terms of their contribution to providing access to a range of core services including education and basic health and care facilities.”

Assessment

5.15 The application proposal also includes the construction of a community building as well as providing on-site public open space and play facilities for use by the existing and future residents of the village. The precise details would be finalised through a subsequent reserved matters application. This outline seeks to establish the principle and the delivery would be

secured through the Section 106 agreement. We would intend to have further discussions with the community on this aspect of the development.

5.16 At this stage it is proposed that the community hall will be designed to provide the local community with an indoor facility which will be the focal point for the community and foster greater community spirit through the provision of sports provision, performances, meetings and rooms for hire for parties and events. The design would be based on the design note by Sport England titled "Village and Community Halls"¹. By way of example, a hall which is 18m x 10m could be provided to accommodate the following range of activities as well as soft ball practice for a number of additional sports.

Sport/play	Other activities
Badminton	Clubs/societies
Short mat bowls	Concerts
Gymnastics	Conferences/meetings
Aerobics/keep fit	Dance/dance classes
Martial arts	Drama/films
Judo	Receptions
Yoga	Private functions
Playgroups	Auctions
Table tennis	Cheese and wine
Five-a-side (softball)	Women's Institute
Short tennis	Guides/scouts
Fencing	Discos

5.17 It is therefore clear that the range of activities that a hall of these dimensions would provide to the local community are extensive and would be located at the village which would create greater community cohesion and reduce the need to travel to access these facilities.

¹ <https://www.sportengland.org/media/32402/Village-and-community-halls.pdf>

Character and appearance

Policy context

- 5.18 CS Policies CS5, CS13 and CS17 and Policy EN9 of the adopted local plan state that development proposals should have regard for the character and appearance of the local area and the sense of local distinctiveness.
- 5.19 CS Policy 21 relates to landscape character areas and states that new development will be required to relate well to existing settlement patterns and be appropriate to the relevant landscape character type.
- 5.20 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should seek to protect and enhance 'valued' landscapes or those subject to formal designations (paragraph 170). The application site is neither a valued landscape nor subject to a formal landscape designation.

Assessment

- 5.21 The NPPF is clear that '*protection*' is a term to be applied to landscape designations and local planning authorities should not seek to protect the open countryside 'for its own sake'. The application site is not the subject of any landscape designations and there is no indication that it is 'valued' for the purposes of the paragraph 170.
- 5.22 The existing site is unremarkable in landscape terms. It is relatively flat and is not subject to any significant tree coverage. There are no public rights of way extending through or adjacent to it.
- 5.23 The proposed development would relate well to the existing settlement boundaries of Barton and the surrounding built form. Although extending further eastwards than the existing housing fronting onto the A6, the proposed development would not extend beyond the mature landscaped eastern boundary. It would be viewed as a logical addition to the village in a similar way to the Forest Grove development.
- 5.24 Views of the proposed development would be 'localised' and framed within the context of the existing built development and A6 highway to the western boundary, the commercial haulage yard and the mature landscaping on the eastern boundary.

- 5.25 The submitted site layout shows that the proposed new houses would present active and positive frontages onto the public realm. The house types would complement the existing surrounding built form in terms of scale, massing, design and appearance.
- 5.26 The proposal would clearly result in visual change from an open site to one that contains residential development. That level of impact applies to all greenfield sites and in this case any landscape impact would be limited. Furthermore, the proposed plans show that the proposal would complement the character and appearance of the surrounding built form and it fully accords with Policies CS5 and 17 and Policy EN9 of the adopted local plan.
- 5.27 It also noted that the character and appearance of the surrounding area is subject to further change. For example, works are ongoing on the implementation of the construction of 72 houses on land directly opposite the application site (LPA ref: 06/2015/0306 and 06/2017/027). A reserved matters application is presently pending with Wyre Borough Council for the erection of 72 dwellings further along the A6 to the north-west of the appeal site (LPA ref: 18/00025/REMMAJ), and there are other extant housing schemes where construction works will soon commence as summarised through the Relevant History Section of this Statement. The pattern of built development to the western side of the A6 pursuant to this approved scheme would be mirror that of the eastern side of the A6 as a result of the proposed development.
- 5.28 Issues relating to landscape impact have been discussed at length for a number of residential developments within the locality. The Council and Planning Inspectorate have concluded for a number of such schemes that developments along the A6, which is characterised by a linear pattern of built development, would not result in significant harm to landscape or the character and appearance of the area.

Highways

Policy context

- 5.29 Policy ST2 of the adopted local plan and CS Policy 3 state that major new development proposals shall provide safe and satisfactory access with an acceptable impact on the local road network and suitable linkages to public transport provision.

Assessment

- 5.30 A Transport Assessment, prepared by SCP, has been submitted with the planning application. It demonstrates that there would no adverse impacts on the local highway network as a result of the proposed development with an imperceptible impact on the road network.
- 5.31 The site is locationally sustainable in terms of access to a range of key services. For example, the site is within easy and convenient walking distance of food and drink premises (e.g. Barton Village Hall, Barton St Lawrence Church of England Primary School and St Mary's and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School. In terms of public transport provision, the site benefits from bus services along the A6 corridor with regular and direct connections to the principal centres of Morecambe, Lancaster, Preston and Garstang and the smaller settlements in-between. The site also benefits from excellent cycling provision with a dedicated cycle lane along the A6 corridor and connections to regional and national cycle networks beyond (e.g. the Preston Guild off-street cycleway).
- 5.32 Due regard should also be had for the planning history of other sites within the area, such as at Avonhurst, Forest Grove and directly opposite the site (see planning history section of this Statement), which establishes that major residential development is appropriate within Barton in terms of accessibility to key services and public transport options.
- 5.33 The proposed development is fully compliant with Policy ST2 of the adopted local plan and CS Policy 3 with respect to the potential impact on highways safety and the road network and the proximity of the site to a range of key services and public transport options.
- 5.34 Concerns were raised by the residents along Woodlands Way during the determination of current planning approval for 55 homes. Whilst those concerns were not a reason against the development, the applicant has nevertheless taken note with this revised proposal with the access directly off the A6. Should this application be approved then it is this development which would be implemented. However should permission not be granted for this application for any reason then the extant consent would be implemented. Under either scenario a safe and secure access will be achieved.
- 5.35 Furthermore, it is important to note that the definition of sustainable development is more than a narrow 'tick-box' exercise with regard to accessibility. This is the particularly the case in rural areas where the NPPF, the PPG and the development plan take a positive approach to new

housing in order to support existing services and thriving rural communities. This can be seen to be accepted at Barton due to the permissions that have been granted over the last few years. Indeed the officer report for the extant consent for 55 dwellings stated:

"The site is on the opposite side of Garstang Road to a development for 72 dwellings which was granted outline planning permission in August 2016, following a successful appeal against the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) refusal of planning permission (ref: 06/2015/0306). In considering that appeal, the Inspector stated that although there is access to a range of facilities and services in Barton, including public transport, the proposed development would cause harm to the Council's sustainable location policy objectives and conflict with Policy 1. It is reasonable to reach the same conclusion in respect of development on this site and it is therefore necessary to assess whether the proposed development would deliver benefits which would outweigh this harm. This will be considered in the 'planning balance' section of this report."

5.36 The same conclusion should apply to this application.

Flooding and Drainage

5.37 CS Policy 29 relates to water management and states that development proposals should have due regard for the implications for flood risk.

Assessment

5.38 A Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Betts Associates, has been submitted with the planning application. This shows that the site is located within an area at low risk of flooding and the report provides a basis for a detailed surface water run-off scheme to be secured at the reserved matters stage.

5.39 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment is consistent with the provisions of CS Policy 29.

Residential amenity

Policy context

5.40 CS Policy 17 and Policy AD1(b) of the adopted local plan state that new development should be compatible with the existing land uses of the surrounding area in terms of the amenity of existing and future occupiers.

Assessment

- 5.41 The layout submitted shows that generous separation distances would be retained between the new houses and existing properties surrounding the application site. It demonstrates that the proposed development would not undermine the residential amenity of the existing residents in the locality in terms of outlook, privacy and light.
- 5.42 The layout also demonstrates that the scheme would provide appropriate levels of amenity for all future occupiers. Each plot would benefit from a generous amount of internal and external amenity space.
- 5.43 The proposed development would not undermine the residential amenity of existing nearby occupiers, and a good standard of amenity would be provided for future occupiers. The proposal is fully compliant with the provisions of development plan in terms of residential amenity.

Affordable housing

Policy context

- 5.44 CS Policy 7 and the Central Lancashire Affordable Housing SPD requires that new housing developments within the rural area deliver of 35% on-site affordable housing.

Assessment

- 5.45 The proposed development would deliver 53 affordable units which accords with CS7. The provision of affordable housing is a significant material consideration which weighs in favour of the proposed development given the very substantial affordable housing needs across the Preston as identified through the Preston Housing Needs and Demand Assessment 2013 (Michael Dyson Associates and Outside Consultants), which concludes that the annual affordable housing need is a very significant 615 dwellings per annum.
- 5.46 This application provides policy compliant provision of affordable housing and as this is an outline application can look to provide a mix of dwelling types at the time of the reserved matters application, which if required could include bungalows etc.

- 5.47 The provision of 53 affordable dwellings would make a significant beneficial contribution to the Borough wide outstanding persistent and severe need. This provision should carry significant weight in the planning balance.

Ecology

Policy context

- 5.48 Policies EN10 and EN11 of the adopted local plan state that the local planning authority will have due regard for the protection and safeguarding of habitat features, wider ecological networks and protected species.

Assessment

- 5.49 An Ecological Appraisal has been prepared by Rachel Hacking Ecology and submitted with this planning application. The appraisal presents the results of an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Great Crested Newts Survey. They conclude that the ecological value of the site does not represent a constraint to development and the proposals are feasible and acceptable in accordance with ecological considerations and relevant planning policy. The indicative masterplan shows the retention of trees, hedgerows and water body within the proposed development and the development at the site will provide an opportunity to secure ecological enhancement for wildlife associated with residential development.
- 5.50 The proposed development is therefore compliant with the provisions of Policies EN10 and EN11 of the adopted local plan in respect of ecology.

Agricultural land

Policy context

- 5.51 CS Policy 31 states that the Council will seek to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) when considering new development proposals.
- 5.52 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.

Assessment

- 5.53 An Agricultural Land Classification Report, prepared by Acorus, has been submitted with this planning application. The site is assessed by Acorus as being predominantly of Agricultural Land Classification 3b (i.e. Moderate Quality) with small areas of Grade 4 are likely to be included, for example the steeper sloping land on the southern margin of the site.
- 5.54 With due regard for the size of the site and its agricultural grading, there would therefore be very limited harm as a result of the potential loss of a farming use on the site, and no conflict with the provisions of CS Policy 31 and the NPPF.

Design considerations

Policy context

- 5.55 CS Policies CS5 and 17 and Policy EN9 of the adopted local plan state that new development should be compatible with or improve their surroundings by virtue of scale, density, height, massing, layout, materials, architectural style and details and means of enclosure.

Appraising the context – site constraints and opportunities

- 5.56 The topography of the site is relatively flat, although there are differences in levels to the site perimeter and it is enclosed by built development on its western boundary. The extant approval has development on its northern and southern boundaries.
- 5.57 The site is partly within and partly at the urban fringe of the settlement boundaries for Barton. There is no overall cohesive characteristic in the surrounding built form. It largely comprises a range of house types and layouts.

Amount and scale

- 5.58 The proposed development would be for up to 151 dwellings. The scale of the new dwellings is likely to be the form of two-storey houses in order to reflect the character and appearance of the surrounding residential development. However we have acknowledged a local aspiration for bungalows and therefore the illustrative layout makes provision for them.
- 5.59 Scale is a reserved matter for detailed consideration as part of a future reserved matters application

Layout

- 5.60 The indicative site layout shows a coherent and legible response to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It confirms that the proposed houses would be set within plots that provide in-curtilage parking and generously sized gardens and the layout would sit comfortably within the overall built form of the area.
- 5.61 Layout is a reserved matter for detailed consideration as part of a future reserved matters application.

Appearance

- 5.62 It is likely that the proposed houses would be constructed with facing brick and tiled roofs to complement the existing properties within the surrounding area.
- 5.63 Appearance is a reserved matter for detailed consideration as part of a future reserved matters application.

Landscaping

- 5.64 A robust and attractive structural illustrative landscaping scheme has been submitted with the planning application and this shows the planting of shrubs and trees in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.
- 5.65 Landscaping is a reserved matter for detailed consideration as part of a future reserved matters application.

Access

- 5.66 The proposed scheme provides well-defined, legible and overlooked routes through the site so that residents can benefit from the local services and public transport options available beyond the application site.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

- 5.67 The indicative layout shows a development that could complement the character and appearance of the surrounding built form with well-designed housing and a robust and attractive landscaping scheme.

Conclusion

5.68 The indicative plans submitted show that the proposal would be compatible with the surrounding area and is compliant with CS Policies CS5, CS13 and CS17 and Policy EN9.

Sustainable development

5.69 The proposed development should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 notes that sustainable development has three roles relating to the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

5.70 With regard to the economic role, the proposed development would result in both direct and indirect benefits that include the creation of construction jobs and additional household spending within the wider economy (e.g. on household goods and services). There will also be a substantial New Homes Bonus and council tax receipts associated with the proposed residential development.

5.71 Turning to the social role, the proposed development would add much-needed quality and quantity to the local housing market. The provision of open market and affordable housing attracts particularly substantial positive weight in the decision-making process given the identified shortfall in housing land provision across Preston and the very substantial affordable housing needs as identified through the Preston Housing Needs and Demand Assessment 2013 (Michael Dyson Associates and Outside Consultants).

5.72 With regard to the environmental role, the site is unremarkable in landscape and agricultural terms. Whereas part of the site is within the identified settlement boundaries, much of the site is located within the designated open countryside. The Council has accepted in other cases that the settlement boundaries are out-of-date and that the release of greenfield sites beyond the existing settlement boundaries is necessary in order to meet unmet and future housing needs. Therefore the loss of a small parcel adjacent to the settlement cannot comprise a significant adverse impact. The proposal would be viewed as a logical extension to the existing settlement boundaries and the site is accessible in terms of local services and public transport options.

5.73 With due regard for the points outlined above, the proposed development comprises sustainable development for the purposes of the NPPF.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material consideration indicates otherwise. An important material consideration is the presumption in favour of sustainable development which is set out within Paragraph 11 of the Framework.
- 6.2 The Council accepts that it cannot demonstrate a deliverable 5 year housing land supply. As such, the housing supply policies within the adopted development plan (including for example policies 1 and 19 of the Core Strategy and EN1 and HS1 of the local plan) are out-of-date, and the tilted balance in paragraph 11 of the Framework is engaged. The weight given to restrictive policies will need to be reduced, irrespective of whether they are caught by paragraph 11, where they prevent a 5 year supply from being met. This will include the weight to given to policies 1 and EN1.
- 6.3 To significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits is a deliberately very high threshold, hence the term 'the tilted balance'. In the case of this application, it would result in a number of significant benefits:
- The delivery of housing to contribute to addressing the 5 year supply shortfall.
 - The delivery of affordable housing to meet significant borough wide levels of identified future and previously unmet needs.
 - Social benefits through the Community Building and open space;
 - Economic benefits associated with the delivery of new housing, including:
 - the creation of jobs in construction and the supply chain;
 - housing economically active people to meet the district's economic aspirations and jobs growth targets;
 - increased household spending in the local area; and,
 - the provision of the New Homes Bonus and increased Council Tax revenues.
- 6.4 Set against this range of significant benefits is conflict with settlement boundary / open countryside policy. Having regard to paragraph 11(d) of the Framework the weight to be given to any such restrictive policies should be significantly reduced to the extent that that they frustrate the achievement of a 5 year supply. This would include any conflict with policies 1 and

EN1. Although such conflict is a material consideration and must be weighed in the balance, it should be given limited weight. However even if such harm was given a greater level of weight, we consider that it would still fall some way short of outweighing the substantial benefits of this proposal.

- 6.5 When assessed against the policies of The Framework taken as a whole, the proposals represent sustainable development, as defined by the Framework and the Local Plan. We have not identified any adverse impacts capable of significantly and demonstrably outweighing the identified benefits.
- 6.6 Therefore in accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and compulsory purchase Act (2004) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, this application should be granted planning permission without delay.