

Application Number: **06/2019/0752**

Proposal: **Outline planning seeking approval for access only for up to 151no. dwellings with associated works (all other matters reserved)**

Site Address: **Land at Cardwell Farm, Garstang Road, Preston, Barton, PR3 5DR**

The proposal is for extensive residential development on land identified as open countryside to the east of Garstang Road. A very small section of the site which borders Garstang Road is within the settlement boundary and then the site extends substantially east into the Open Countryside towards Barton Brook incorporating part of Black Fir Wood which is allocated as existing woodland on the Local Plan.

The NPPF was updated in February 2019 and states a presumption in favour of sustainable development. As with the previous NPPF it states that for decision making this means:

NNPF Para 11:

- 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are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i) The application of policies in this framework that protect areas of assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 73 of the updated NPPF requires Local Authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement as set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old.

Core Strategy Policy 1 seeks to focus growth and investment on well located brownfield sites, identified strategic locations, Key Service Centres and other main urban areas whilst protecting suburban and rural areas. Policy 1(f) talks about 'other places' – smaller villages, substantially built up frontages and major developed sites – where development will be small scale and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need, unless there are exceptional reasons for larger scale redevelopment schemes. The location of this proposal is mainly to the east of Barton settlement boundary, with only a small part of the site being within the boundary. The site however does not constitute small infill therefore does not accord with Core Strategy Policy 1.

The Framework states that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised, with the planning system contributing to and enhancing the natural and local environment. It does not seek to protect all countryside from development, rather it concentrates on the protection of 'valued' and 'distinctive' areas whilst encouraging development on previously developed land.

The site is identified as Open Countryside within the Local Plan and therefore Local Plan policy EN1 applies. This Policy seeks to protect areas of open countryside from unacceptable development which would harm its open and rural character. Policy EN1 limits development to that needed for purposes of agriculture or forestry or other appropriate rural uses, the re-use or re-habitation of existing buildings or infilling within groups of buildings in smaller rural settlements. The proposal is new build, and not infill within groups of buildings in a smaller settlement and is therefore unacceptable against Policy EN1.

Having said all of the above, our published Housing Land Position Paper (March 2019) states we only have a 3.8 year housing land supply. As the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land, in accordance with Paragraph 11, the policies which are most important for determining the application are considered to be out of date. That is not to say that those policies are no longer relevant, given the substance of the policies broadly accords with the Framework, the policies can still be afforded substantial weight in the decision-making process. Nevertheless, the Framework therefore directs that planning permission should be granted unless either Paragraph 11(d)(i) or 11(d)(ii) apply, as outlined above.

I feel that consideration also needs to be given to the surrounding permissions along Garstang Road for residential development and the extent to which other housing estates and recent developments have extended eastwards from Garstang Road.

Two other points to note are:

1. Core Strategy Policy 7 has a requirement for 35% affordable housing onsite which in this scheme would equate to 53 dwellings which the proposal conforms with.
2. The site is partly allocated as Existing Woodland and therefore the more detailed design would have to work around this.

The proposal also includes a community building and public open space and play facilities. I therefore leave it to the planning officer to weigh up the planning balance of the scheme as to whether the benefits outweigh the negatives or whether the intrusion into the open countryside is too severe in this location.