

**Ribble Valley  
Borough Council**



# **Core Strategy Topic Paper**

**Discussion on the  
approach to the  
Preferred Option**

**November 2011**



**RibbleValley**  
Local Development Framework

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL PREFERRED OPTION

## 1. WHAT IS THE PREFERRED OPTION?

- 1.1 The preferred Development Strategy option for the Ribble Valley Core Strategy is as follows:

**The majority of new housing development will be concentrated within an identified strategic site located to the south of Clitheroe towards the A59 and the main urban areas of the borough. Strategic employment opportunities will be promoted through the development of the Barrow Enterprise Site as a main location for employment, and the Salmesbury Enterprise Zone.**

**In general, the scale of planned housing growth will be managed to reflect existing population size, the availability of, or the opportunity to provide facilities to serve the development and the extent to which development can be accommodated within the local area.**

**Development that has recognised 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 of the built up area.**

**Through this strategy, development opportunities will be created for social and economic well-being and development for future generations.**

- 1.2 In terms of how this looks from a purely housing numbers breakdown of residential development, the final proposed preferred option is as follows:

<b>CLITHEROE</b>	<b>75 UNITS</b>	<b>4% of remainder</b>
<b>STRATEGIC SITE (STANDEN)</b>	<b>1040 UNITS</b>	<b>54% of remainder</b>
<b>LONGRIDGE</b>	<b>454 UNITS</b>	<b>24% of remainder</b>
<b>WHALLEY</b>	<b>141 UNITS</b>	<b>7% of remainder</b>
<b>OTHER SETTLEMENTS</b>	<b>200 UNITS</b>	<b>11% of remainder</b>

## 2. HOW HAS THE PREFERRED OPTION BEEN FORMULATED?

- 2.1 Work on the LDF evidence base has been on going for a number of years to ensure that subsequent LDF policies are based upon strong and robust evidence. More recently work has been focussing on the Core Strategy, the central document of the LDF.

- 2.2 As part of this work, consultation on issues to be considered in the Core Strategy has been taking place since 2006. Questionnaires were circulated in the borough in both 2006 and 2007 from which it was possible to formulate a draft consultation document under Regulation 25 of the regulations, which was consulted upon between August and October 2010. This draft Core Strategy contained a series of options for the spatial development strategy for the Core Strategy, which will set out the general areas for development over the plan period, from which it will then be possible to determine allocations in a subsequent LDF document (the Housing and Economic Development DPD). Consultation on these options found that further options should be presented for consultation and therefore between June and August 2011, an alternative options document was consulted upon. The outcome of this consultation however resulted in a large amount of useful information being submitted, from which the preferred development strategy option set out in this document has been derived.

### **3. IS THE PREFERRED OPTION ONE OF THOSE PRESENTED AT THE PREVIOUS CONSULTATION STAGES?**

- 3.1 No. The preferred option is effectively a hybrid approach of Option B and Option D that were presented at the alternative options consultation stage.
- 3.2 In terms of option D, which saw a large strategic site being proposed towards the south east of Clitheroe on land referred to as Standen Estates, this option was commonly cited as respondents' preferred option when assessed against the other seven potential options during the consultation. That said, this wasn't without opposition and concerns relating to the size of the site and potential infrastructure issues that could result if the site was to be developed were raised.
- 3.3 The Sustainability Appraisal options report, which assessed each of the eight potential options for their environmental economic and social sustainability highlighted only three 'key weaknesses' for option D which related to the visual impact of such a large site, the potential for additional highway pressure (although it was felt that this could be mitigated through appropriate infrastructure planning and provision at the local level) and finally the uncertainty that results from 50% of the development being spread across the remainder of the borough with no clear indication of how much would go where.
- 3.4 In addressing these concerns, yet still ensuring that the benefits of a strategic site are achievable (in terms of infrastructure delivery), under the preferred option it is proposed that the strategic site is reduced in overall size by up to a third. This would provide for a smaller, yet still strategic site of 30ha for both employment land and residential land. It is considered that a smaller site would also have a positive impact on addressing potential visual impact issues (though detailed work on this would still be needed) and also reduce the impact of potential highway concerns (though again, further detailed work on this would still be required as part of the infrastructure delivery plan and also during the Development Management process). By creating a hybrid approach of

option D and B, the final SA options report concern is also alleviated as it becomes much clearer as to where the remaining development will be located across the rest of the borough, as this report discusses in detail in section 4 onwards.

- 3.5 Following the reduction in scale of the site, the number of units that the site would accommodate has been reduced to 1040 dwellings over a 20-year period. This will result in an average annual provision of 52 units per year for the site. Phasing of the development will need to be considered and this will be done through the Development Management process, working with the landowner.
- 3.6 As stated, option B is proposed in calculating the levels of the remaining development across the borough. As with option D, the Sustainability Appraisal options analysis (which will be published as part of the full SA/SEA report alongside the preferred option report under Regulation 27 of the regulations), found this to be a sustainable approach to development, with only one 'key weakness' being identified, which related to the need for highways investment in Longridge being required to accommodate the level of growth option B would result in. The SA options report also highlighted a requirement for cohesive working with Preston City Council, which is already taking place.
- 3.7 In terms of taking forward the hybrid approach, the option B element would see development distributed primarily according to population distribution, reflecting the calls for an equitable and fair distribution of development raised during the consultation at the Regulation 25 stage of production. This approach places 20% of the required development into the settlements of the borough not classified as a service centre.
- 3.8 In creating the hybrid approach of the two options this 20% distribution has still been applied to the other settlements and the population distribution approach has been applied to the key service centres. The strategic site has also been factored into the revised calculations and, due to its close proximity to the settlement of Clitheroe, has been considered when calculating the distribution of housing number for Clitheroe, albeit still based upon a population distribution model. This approach also significantly reduces the amount of development proposed for Longridge, thus addressing the 'key weakness' raised as part of the SA options analysis.

#### **4. WHAT DOES THIS HYBRID APPROACH LOOK LIKE IN TERMS OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT?**

- 4.1 In illustrating what this preferred option will look like in terms of levels of residential development in each settlement in the borough, it is necessary to incorporate the completions and commitments (planning permissions granted) to date. This information is therefore based upon the most up to date monitoring (1<sup>st</sup> October 2011) and considers where these commitments and completions have taken place.
- 4.2 Under this hybrid approach, the breakdown for the preferred option would be as follows (based upon an annual housing requirement of 161/yr):

CLITHEROE	75 UNITS	4% of remaining requirement
STRATEGIC SITE (STANDEN)	1040 UNITS	54% of remaining requirement
LONGRIDGE	654 UNITS	35% of remaining requirement
WHALLEY	141 UNITS	7% of remaining requirement
OTHER SETTLEMENTS	0 UNITS	0% of remaining requirement

### **HOW ARE THESE FIGURES CALCULATED?**

- 4.3 The overall amount of housing to provide is 3220 units over the 20-year plan period based upon adopted evidence base figures of 161 units/yr. This is subject to change following the outcome of the consultation and consideration by the strategic housing working sub-group of a revised requirement, however overall it is not anticipated that the underlying strategy would significantly be modified at this stage.
- 4.4 On the basis that at least 20 dwellings should be located in the non-key services centres (the 'other settlements') as was the approach set out in option B this equates to 645 units. The remainder is then spread across the key service centres based upon population distribution (still the option B approach) so the breakdown is as follows:

Clitheroe	1493 units	(58% of 3220)
Longridge	772 units	(30% of 3220)
Whalley	309 units	(12% of 3220)
Other settlements	645 units	(20% of 3220)

- 4.5 The percentages set out above are calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \textit{Clitheroe has a population of 14697} \\
 & \quad + \\
 & \textit{Longridge has a population of 7546} \\
 & \quad + \\
 & \textit{Whalley has a population of 2645} \\
 & \\
 & = 24,888 \textit{ (total population of the key service centres)}
 \end{aligned}$$

*The population of each of the 3 larger settlements is then calculated as a percentage of the total population of the 3 larger settlements (the key service centres), which is 24,888.*

$$\textit{So, Clitheroe } \frac{14697 \times 100}{24888} = 58\%$$

$$\textit{Longridge } \frac{7546 \times 100}{24888} = 30\%$$

$$\textit{Whalley } \frac{2645 \times 100}{24888} = 12\%$$

4.6 Completions and commitments as of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 are as follows:

*Clitheroe has had 378 completions and/ or permissions since 2008*  
*Longridge has had 118 completions and/ or permissions since 2008*  
*Whalley has had 168 completions and/ or permissions since 2008*  
*'Other settlements' have had 730 completions and/ or permissions since 2008*

So, the formula for calculating what is still needed in each settlement is as follows:

**Overall settlement requirement – settlement completions and/ or permissions = remaining requirement to provide over rest of plan period.**

4.7 As discussed in section 2, the number of units on the strategic site is 1040. The location of this strategic site in terms of its close proximity to Clitheroe is factored into the calculations for Clitheroe as set out below.

- 1040 units to be provided at the strategic site at Standen  
1493 units required in Clitheroe in total based on population distribution; however this will take account of the strategic site so,  
 $1493 - (378 \text{ completions/commitments} + 1040 \text{ at Standen}) = 75 \text{ units.}$

Therefore 75 units required in Clitheroe (this approach recognises the scale of Standen for the rest of Clitheroe)

- 772 required in Longridge in total based on population distribution – 118 completions/commitments = 654 units in Longridge
- 309 required in Whalley in total based on population distribution – 168 completions/commitments = 141 units in Whalley
- 645 required in the other settlements in total based on population distribution – 730 completions/commitments = -85 (there has therefore been an oversupply of 85 units in villages and subsequently no further units are required)

4.8 The combined total of the units left to provide across the borough (having considered the completions and commitments) is 1910 units to provide by 2028. If annualising the level of development that needs to be provided across the whole borough collectively, this equates to 118 units per year over the remainder of the plan period.

4.9 Therefore as set out in para. 4.2 the breakdown for distribution across the borough is as follows:

CLITHEROE	75 UNITS	4% of remaining requirement
STRATEGIC SITE (STANDEN)	1040 UNITS	54% of remaining requirement
LONGRIDGE	654 UNITS	35% of remaining requirement
WHALLEY	141 UNITS	7% of remaining requirement
OTHER SETTLEMENTS	0 UNITS	0% of remaining requirement

## 5. ISSUES ARISING:

- 5.1 **ISSUE ONE:** Following the calculation of distribution on a purely population distribution and numbers approach set out in section 3, taking into account the completions and commitments across the borough so far, a number of minor issues are raised. The first relates to whether this hybrid approach for the preferred option is in complete accordance with the vision for the Core Strategy. This vision was established in the Regulation 25 Core Strategy consultation document and is as follows:
- 5.2 **The Ribble Valley will be an area with an exceptional environment and quality of life for all, sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres, meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.**
- We will seek to create an area with unrivalled quality of place, respecting the unique natural, social and built heritage of the area.**
- New development to meet the needs of the area for growth, services and quality of life will be managed to ensure the special characteristics of the area are preserved for future generations.**
- 5.3 For the Core Strategy to be considered sound by an independent Inspector during the Examination in Public (EiP) following submission, it is paramount that the preferred strategy option accords with this vision.
- 5.4 One of the issues arising however relates to the level of development proposed in the 'other settlements'. It is evident that the level proposed (20%) has now been achieved (through either completions or planning permission commitments). As a result this approach does not allow for any further development from now (2011) until the end of the plan period (2028). It is considered that this approach does not accord with the vision and is therefore not a sustainable approach. However, the Localism Act 2011 and the emerging National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) discuss the principles of providing local people with the opportunity to influence the way their local areas develop and bring forward development in their locality where they see appropriate. This is facilitated through the process known as neighbourhood planning, which has been introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
- 5.5 **Proposal:** Therefore it is proposed that as part of the preferred option additional development will be allowed which has recognised regeneration benefits, is for identified local needs or satisfies neighbourhood planning

rules where the local community want this to take place (through the neighbourhood planning mechanisms) over the remainder of the plan period. This accords with levels of planned housing provision not being set as maximums and ensures that development for the needs of the local communities can take place.

- 5.6 ISSUE TWO: Another issue arising when the current levels of completions and commitments are applied to the preferred approach for the development strategy relates to Longridge. As this settlement has seen significantly lower levels of development since 2008 than other parts of the Ribble Valley, the smaller number of commitments for the locality results in the planned provision for Longridge appearing to be a lot higher than other areas (654 units), despite this being calculated according to population distribution in the same way. However, although the commitments have not taken place in Longridge itself, there have been some significant developments granted planning permission and being considered in the surrounding area, and due to the nature of the Local Government boundary line, these developments are likely to have an impact upon the service centre of Longridge. It is therefore considered both prudent and appropriate to consider these developments in calculating the levels of residential development to be provided in the Longridge area.
- 5.7 One of the applications that would have the most significant impact (Preston City Council app no 06/2011/0344, anticipated committee decision date December 2011), is for the mixed use development including up to 200 residential units, 929 sqm of office space (Class B1), fitness facility and swimming pool (Class D2) public open space (1.3ha) on land to north of Whittingham Road (comprising of former Ridings Depot and land to the north and west of former depot) and residential apartments with care (Class C2) on land to the south of Whittingham Road and east of Green Nook Lane with accesses to Whittingham Road and associated works (outline application).
- 5.8 The 18.93ha site which this application is located on is also proposed as one of Preston City Council's residential allocations (site ref no. P047) within their 'Site Allocations Plan for Preston' document. Consultation on the preferred options stage of this document is anticipated in early 2012.
- 5.9 Proposal: This development, through either the allocation or planning application, would involve the construction of at least 200 units and as discussed it is held that this would have a clear relationship to Longridge itself. Therefore, it is considered that the Longridge figure should be reduced to 454 units (which, over the remainder of the plan period, equates to just under 27 units a year).
- 5.10 Although it is possible for Ribble Valley as the strategic planning authority to take account of developments which would have an impact upon the borough, it is not possible to simply discount this number of houses from the supply to be found within the borough. Therefore, the 200 units discounted from the Longridge supply figure will now be spread across the borough in accordance with the neighbourhood planning principles as set out above. Although unlikely to come forward at a constant level on an annual basis, if this was to occur this would result in just under 12 units/ year to be spread across the whole borough in locations where the



local community have expressed interest, through the neighbourhood planning process.

## 6. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OPTION – PREFERRED OPTION

6.1 The information in this paper sets out for discussion where the preferred option has come from and considers potential issues and how these will be addressed to ensure a sound approach. It presents a position statement on the direction of travel so far for consideration.

6.2 The preferred Option is as follows:

**The majority of new housing development will be concentrated within an identified strategic site located to the south of Clitheroe towards the A59 and the main urban areas of the borough. Strategic employment opportunities will be promoted through the development of the Barrow Enterprise Site as a main location for employment, and the Salmesbury Enterprise Zone.**

**In general, the scale of planned housing growth will be managed to reflect existing population size, the availability of, or the opportunity to provide facilities to serve the development and the extent to which development can be accommodated within the local area.**

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6.3 In terms of how this looks from purely a housing numbers breakdown of residential development, the final proposed preferred option is as follows:

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- 6.4 Under this preferred option, the 200 units under the other settlements will be considered where there are recognised regeneration benefits, development is for identified local needs or where the development satisfies neighbourhood planning legislation in locations where local communities would like to see further development taking place. Additional development in all of the other locations will also be considered under the same process.
- 6.5 **EMPLOYMENT LAND:** Under the preferred strategy, it will continue to be possible to accommodate the minimum required level of land for economic development (6ha over the remainder of the plan period). It is considered that provision can be included within land at Standen to the south of Clitheroe to generate a mixed development opportunity as well as the opportunity to bring other sites forward to protect choice of locations. The existing site at Barrow Enterprise Park would continue in its role as the borough's principle strategic location for employment. The Government's recent announcement regarding the designation of an Enterprise Zone at Salmesbury, which includes land within both Ribble Valley and South Ribble will offer the potential to support and strengthen the economy. Through specialist investment it will provide an opportunity to develop further the economy of the Ribble Valley through service and supply chain growth and is recognised as a strategic site. Under the neighbourhood planning legislation, it would also be possible to bring forward land for economic development where there are demonstrable regeneration benefits and in locations where local communities would like to see development take place.

## 7. WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

- 7.1 This preferred option will form the basis for the Development Strategy of the Core Strategy. As discussed in section two, numerous rounds of consultation have already taken place on this document, however now that a Development Strategy option has been determined, it will be possible to progress this document further wherein it becomes more apparent as to the level of development that will take place in settlements across the borough from now until the end of the plan period in 2028.
- 7.2 This work on the Development Strategy option will be presented in the publication version of the Core Strategy, also referred to by some as the preferred option report. Consultation on this report will satisfy Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended). Consultation will last for six-weeks and any subsequent changes to the document will be made prior to submission of the Core Strategy (under Regulation 30) to the Secretary of State. It is anticipated that this submission will take place by April 2012. This paper has been prepared to enable members to discuss and agree the emerging direction of travel to inform the process.

### **MONITORING**

- 7.3 At present, the policies in the Districtwide Local Plan are monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). As LDF documents and policies become adopted, the AMR is also the mechanism

for monitoring these. Since the introduction of the Localism Act in November 2011 however the requirement to produce an AMR that monitors against a nationally prescribed set of core output indicators has been removed. Monitoring is still required under the Act, though this can be more locally relevant and ensure that the issues and policies specific to Ribble Valley are given an adequate level of consideration. It is also no longer necessary to submit this monitoring report to the Secretary of State.

- 7.4 As well as the annual monitoring of the plan policies, business and employment land and housing completions and permissions are monitored bi-annually. The housing numbers are then published as part of the Housing Land Availability report.
- 7.5 In monitoring the Core Strategy, as stated, the annual will continue to take place, however in addition it is considered that it will become necessary to monitor the housing permissions and completions on a more regular basis. At a minimum it is felt that this would be needed to take place at least quarterly to set out the position on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month in January, April, July and October. It may also be prudent to undertake employment land monitoring following these same timescales.
- 7.6 Monitoring on a more regular basis ensures that recommendations on planning applications can be made by the Development Management team based upon up to date information. This will ensure that settlements do not significantly exceed their required supply of housing land. This process will also be important as the allocations are worked up based on the preferred option Development Strategy following consultation, and subsequently built out.



## APPENDIX ONE

### WHAT IS CLASSIFIED AS A STRATEGIC SITE?

The definition of a strategic site (such as that proposed in the preferred option at Standen) is set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning.

*PPS12 states that Core strategies may allocate strategic sites for development. These should be those sites considered central to achievement of the strategy. Progress on the core strategy should not be held up by inclusion of non-strategic sites.*

As the Core Strategy is looking at a long timeframe with development up until 2028, it is considered that the investment and involvement with infrastructure providers will require a long lead in. The strategic site has therefore been included as part of the Core Strategy and forms a major part of the preferred option Development Strategy.

It will therefore be necessary to include a submission proposals map at the Regulation 30 stage of the Core Strategy process. PPS12 states that where this is necessary *it may be preferable for the site area to be delineated in outline rather than detailed terms, with site specific criteria set out to allow more precise definition through masterplanning using an area action plan (if required) or through a supplementary planning document (SPD).*

Further thought will be given to how to proceed in these terms following consultation on the preferred Development Strategy option as detailed in this document.

### WHERE WILL THIS 'STANDEN' STRATEGIC SITE BE LOCATED?

As discussed, the Standen strategic site is located to the south east of Clitheroe. The general site area is set out below. These illustrations include the reduction of the site by a third to reflect the reduced level of housing, however the final site area is still subject to determination having regard to the need for structural planting, the approach to density and land uses within the site and the mechanisms for achieving delivery.

# Standen Estates Strategic site: Clitheroe



