



Whittingham Parish Council

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17th March 2025

06/2025/0182 outline planning application for up to 95 dwellings on land to the east of the former Swainson House Farm, Goosnargh Lane.

SITE HISTORY

A previous application for 87 homes **06/2019/0772** was submitted at a time when the LPA did not have a 5-year supply, however, by the time the application was determined, the 5-year supply had been restored and the application was **refused**.

A further application **06/2020/0923** was also **refused**.

An appeal was lodged against the refusal of **06/2019/0772**. The **appeal was dismissed** on the 3rd Feb 2022 (ref 3258898) and the decision forms the basis of the Parish Council's objections to the current application **06/2025/0182**.

ABSENCE OF A 5 YEAR SUPPLY

The Parish Council notes that the application has been submitted purely and simply on the basis that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has acknowledged that it does not **currently** have a 5-year housing supply (*Design & Access Statement para 5.2*).

However, the Design and Access Statement omits to mention that the LPA also states that it is pertinent to note the Council have reviewed relevant data and is confident that a 5-year supply will be demonstrated in April 2025 (*Planning Committee report - 06/2024/0966 refers*).

Consequently, whilst it is acknowledged that the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" otherwise known as the 'tilted balance,' **may** apply at submission, it is unlikely to be a consideration when the application is determined.

The Design and Access Statement also refers to the current Labour Government's manifesto pledge to build 1.5 million new homes (*Design & Access Statement para 5.4*)

However, the Parish Council submits that planning applications should be determined against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that where a 5-year supply cannot be demonstrated, the presumption in favour of **sustainable** development should be applied.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

When considered against the NPPF, the Parish Council is of the opinion that development in this location is **not sustainable** because

- Whittingham is a rural area with limited access to schools and employment opportunities. There are few shops and amenities in the Parish and residents will **need to travel** to do a monthly shop, access healthcare and other essential services
- The journey time to Preston by public transport is around 50 minutes - taking into account traffic conditions - which means **public transport is not suitable for commuting purposes**. Residents will be reliant on private car which **increases the environmental footprint and is not a sustainable form of transport**.

- Utility Services are adequate for the present population; however, this will not be the case if new developments connect to the existing infrastructure which will need investment and improvements.

Supplementing a temporary dip in the 5-year supply by building homes in an unsustainable location **does not outweigh the demonstrable harm of losing rural villages** and as such the application should be **refused**.

As stated above the Parish Council does not consider the site to be sustainable however, the NPPF continues, the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied

- a) when there is a significant shortfall in the 5-year supply and
- b) when it is clear that the Adopted Local Plan Policies are out of date.

a) does not apply because the LPA has stated that it is confident that the Supply will be restored in April 2025.

Furthermore, if the application has been submitted with the sole intention of assisting the LPA in restoring the 5-year supply, it has to be questioned, why an outline application has been submitted as the applicant may delay the Reserve Matters application by up to 3 years. The Parish Council is of the belief that the applicant is simply applying for permission, to exploit the current temporary dip in the 5-year supply.

With regards to **b)** this objection seeks to demonstrate that the Adopted Local Policies have already been examined in relation to the site, and the Planning Inspector dismissed the appeal on the basis that **the Adopted Local Plan Policies were not out of date.** (paras 96 -98) Should the application be determined once the 5 year supply is restored, the Parish Council submits that the appeal decision has significant weight when determining the application.

CENTRAL LANCASHIRE CORE STRATEGY

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development is assessed in a planned and sustainable way.

The site is located within the open countryside and according to **Core Strategy Policy 1** growth should be located in (a) the Preston / South Ribble Urban Area; (b) Key Service Centres; (c) Strategic Sites; (d) Urban Local Service Centres; (e) Rural Local Service Centres; and **(f)** "other places", being smaller villages, substantially built-up frontages and Major Developed Sites.

Development of this site is not included in the current Central Lancashire Core Strategy – **or the emerging Central Lancashire Core Plan** - which indicates that **Goosnargh is not an area which has been identified for planned and sustainable growth.**

The Appeal Decision also states that as development is proposed to the south of the village at the former Whittingham Hospital, this site no longer represents an outlier to Goosnargh but rather **a significant element of and an extension to the village** (para 48)

The submitted application falls under (f) "other places" *where development should typically be **small scale** and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need.*

Given that Goosnargh has not been identified as an area for growth; the development of 95 houses is not small scale and local need can be met by the Whittingham hospital site, the proposal is contrary to Policy 1(f) of the Core Strategy and should be refused.

ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN

The site is located in the Open Countryside and is covered by Policy EN1 of the Adopted Local Plan which states development (*other than that permissible under **Policies HS4 Rural Exception Affordable Housing and HS5 Rural Workers Dwellings in the Open Countryside***) is limited to (a) that needed for purposes of agriculture or forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area including uses which diversify the rural economy; (b) the re-use or re-habitation of existing buildings; and (c) infilling within groups of buildings in smaller rural settlements.

It is important to note that land adjacent to Holmefell **06/2016/1039** was approved as a rural exception site and the 40 homes to the west of this site **06/2019/0773** were approved because they were on previously developed brownfield land. **There are no exceptional circumstances in respect of this application.**

The proposal is in the open countryside, is not needed for the purposes of agriculture, it does not involve the re-use of existing buildings and it is not an infill site. Whittingham Parish Council concludes the proposal is contrary to Policy EN1 of the Local Plan and should be refused.

HIGHWAYS

The Parish Council was extremely concerned and disappointed to note that LCC Highways raised no objections to the previous applications referred to above.

The site is accessed from Langley Lane to the west and Church Lane to east – both of which are small rural / estate roads. LCC have consulted on the addition of double yellow lines on Goosnargh Lane to assist with congestion and they are fully aware of the traffic feedback from residents during a consultation to expand Goosnargh Oliverson's school.

In light of the above, the Parish Council believes that the application will conflict with highway safety and is contrary to Policy ST2 of the Adopted Local Plan. Consequently, it is disappointing to note that although LCC have commented on the access and sustainable transport, they have **said nothing about the increase in traffic** or the serious accident that occurred on Langley Lane. The Planning Officer is urged to request that **LCC Highways expand their comments to take into account local traffic concerns.**

IF the City Council is minded to approve the application because the tilted balance is engaged, the Parish Council requires the following conditions

LANDSCAPE

Para 57 of the Appeal decision acknowledges that the proposal would replace an agricultural field with development that would inevitably change its character. Consequently, **the Parish Council requests a condition requiring the developer conserve and enhance the existing trees and hedgerows.** This view is supported by the Landscape consultation reply.

FLOODING

Building on green fields has the potential to alter existing watercourses and increase surface water drainage which leads to flooding. Often developers increase the height of low-lying areas so that surface water can be directed to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Experiences in NW Preston indicate this may increase the risk of flooding to existing properties. It is acknowledged that the developer will be required to submit a drainage strategy by condition, however, **the Parish Council wishes to be consulted and involved in that process from the outset.**

For the above reasons Whittingham Parish Council **strongly opposes** this application.

Yours Sincerely

Julie Buttle

Mrs Julie Buttle
Clerk to Whittingham Parish Council