

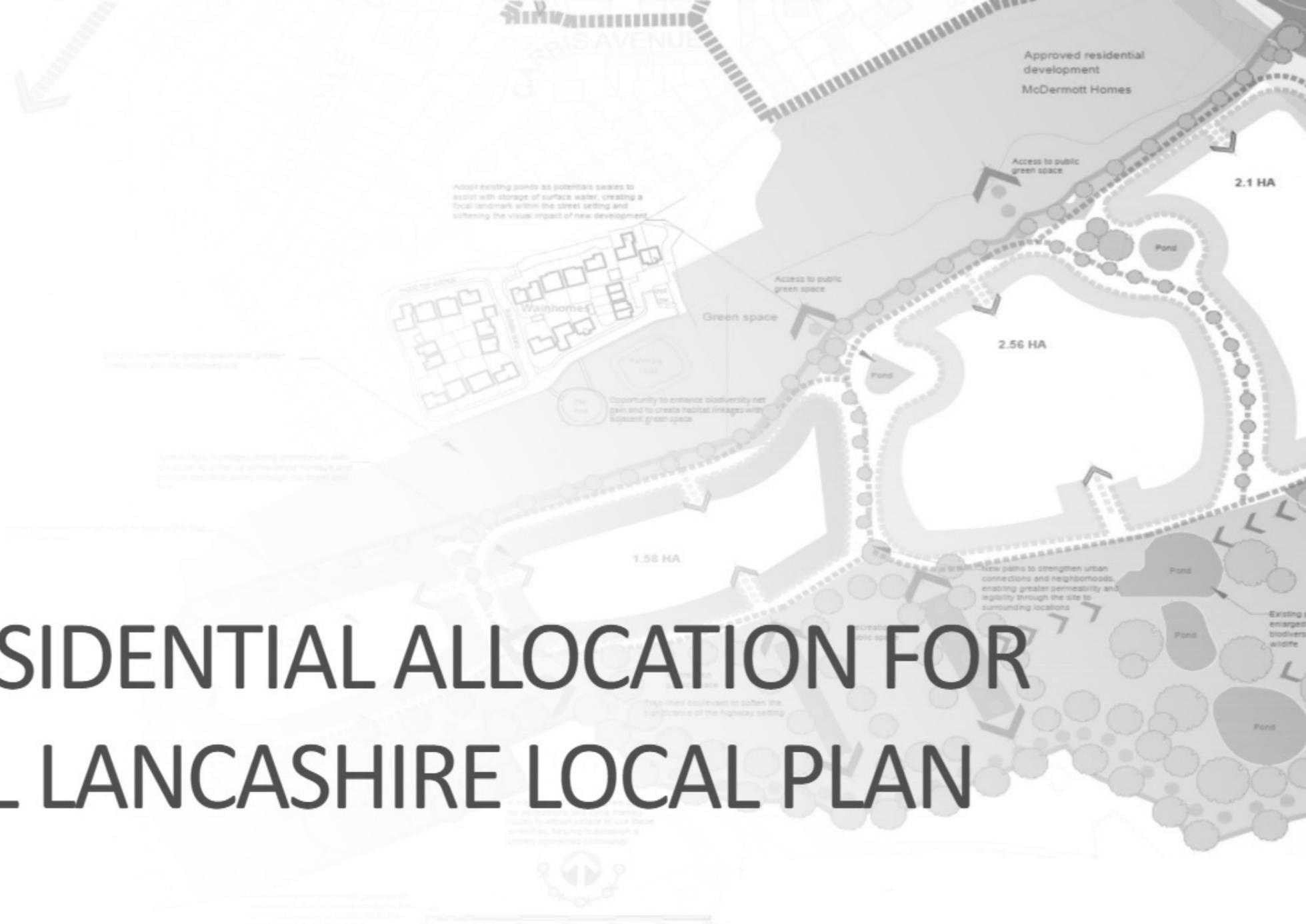


# PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL ALLOCATION FOR NEW CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Updated April 2025

Cassidy+  
Ashton

Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning



# Title: Promotional Document

## Date: Updated April 2025

ISSUED BY:

Cassidy+  
Ashton

Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning



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# 1.0

## PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT



## PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

*The purpose of this Promotional Document is to support the vision of the Central Lancashire Local Plan in providing sustainable development through the introduction of an allocation for residential use, with high-quality open space provision and biodiversity net gain, at the edge of Grimsargh, Preston.*

*In December 2024, the Government issued a revised NPPF which significantly increased the amount of housing required in Central Lancashire. As a result of this, Preston can no longer demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. The new plan should acknowledge this and identify additional land for development.*

*Preston City Council, together with South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council, are currently preparing a Local Plan which seeks to set out a strategy by which new investment can be attracted whilst protecting the unique characteristics of Central Lancashire, to deliver sustainable development. This plan will ultimately supersede the current Development Plan documents. The Publication Version (regulation 19) of the Local Plan is subject to consultation until 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.*

*Cassidy + Ashton Group Ltd. have been instructed by a consortium of landowners to submit the representation site for consideration as a logical, modest, urban extension to Grimsargh village and thereby contributing to meeting the housing needs in the local area. The representation site directly abuts the main built-up settlement. The site is bound predominantly by urban features, with residential development and highways infrastructure to the north, west and south. The Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI lies to the east, separating the site from the wider countryside. As such, the wider countryside role of the site is considered to be reduced by the presence of these features and it is proposed that the site be allocated for future development which will also allow the creation of new wildlife habitat and the protection of the adjacent ecological features.*

*The proposed built development within the Indicative Masterplan would effectively continue the existing building line of the settlement established on Preston Road, to the west of the site, and infill the land northwards to appropriately round off the settlement boundary. The built development, alongside the proposed open space provision characterised by an interconnected network of blue and green infrastructure including a wildlife corridor along the southern boundary, would in turn provide a stronger, defined boundary to prevent the merging of Grimsargh with the neighbouring settlement. Indeed, the function of the residual Area of Separation would remain intact as the proposed residential development does not encroach into the Area of Separation further than the existing development. The purpose of this Promotional Document is to appraise the representation site with respect to its physical characteristics and policy context, which then guides the design evolution towards an indicative masterplan that is representative of the identified constraints and opportunities. The design principles and concepts are also set out to provide a design framework for the future allocation.*

# + SUBJECT SITE

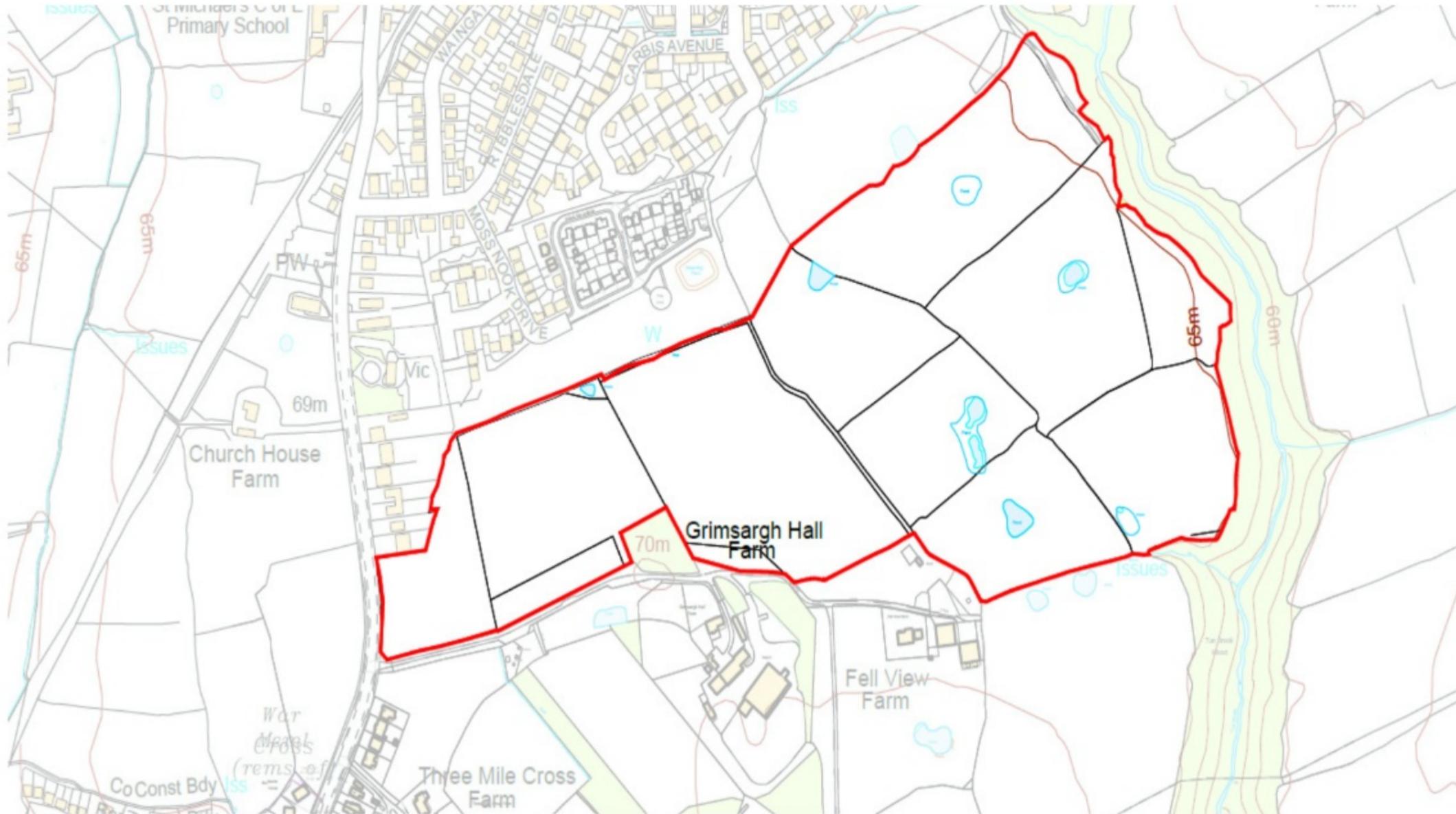


Figure 1. Site Location Plan

# INTRODUCTION

# 2.0

# + INTRODUCTION

Central Lancashire covers the three Lancashire districts of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble. Since 2008, the three respective Councils have worked together to form an overarching spatial planning framework, with the Central Lancashire Core Strategy adopted in 2012 thereafter.

Since 2018, the Councils have been reviewing the Core Strategy and their individual Local Plans with the intention of preparing a Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP), which will provide a framework for strategic and specific future development across the boroughs, to cover the period to 2038.

An initial Issues and Options Consultation Paper was published in November 2019 which set out the Council’s vision for the Plan period and set questions for consultees to support the further preparation of the Plan. The vision for Central Lancashire was initially set out as:

“The residential neighbourhoods of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble will be attractive places to live, reflecting their individual historic and cultural heritage and enhancing their local distinctiveness. Our communities will continue to recognise and welcome the diversity within them, with residents living in high quality and well designed, low carbon housing with a balance of housing types and tenures provided.”

Within the Consultation, the following key issues were raised:

- + The Councils need a better understanding of specific housing needs within Central Lancashire to inform how many homes go where.
- + To focus housing development on brownfield sites first and regenerate places using existing empty homes/buildings and bringing them back into use.
- + New housing sites to be in sustainable locations to discourage a reliance on cars and to be energy efficient/carbon neutral to assist in reducing the impact on climate change.



Figure 2. Central Lancashire Map [Source: CLLP]

Following the outcome of the consultation, the Preferred Options Part One was prepared and subsequently publicised on Monday 19th December 2022, which seeks to outline where development will be focused and how the natural environment will be protected, through emerging planning policies, referred to as 'Policy Directions'.

Policy Direction 1 reflects the vision for the area and seeks to direct development to promote sustainable growth across the Plan Area by ensuring that:

- + Development results in climate friendly and resilient places, ensuring that it supports and does not negatively affect the Councils ambitions towards delivering net zero carbon emissions and addressing the impacts of climate change.
- + The distribution of development addresses needs across the plan area, to ensure that growth is in proportion to size, character and setting of the area, whilst also meeting a known need.
- + Growth is balanced – delivering homes required in line with the employment growth expected in each council area and promoting employment and homes in close proximity to reduce commuting and encourage sustainable patterns of growth.
- + Infrastructure needs are met – considering the level of growth an area can support and infrastructure capacity and improvements required to deliver new growth.
- + Development respects the wider environment ensuring that its impact on people, place and the economy is considered. In protecting and improving the environment and increasing biodiversity.

The emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan (2023-2041) is still within its consultation stages, but when adopted will supersede the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012), Chorley, Preston, and South Ribble Local Plan (Adopted in 2015). The overarching vision for the borough (figure 2) is to:

- + Central Lancashire will be a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest. New development will be sustainable, supporting our ambitions of carbon neutrality and addressing climate change.
- + Growth and regeneration of our city and town centres and delivery of new employment opportunities will continue to strengthen economic prosperity, making Central Lancashire a key economic centre for the North West.
- + A wide range of high-quality sustainable new housing and supporting infrastructure will meet the needs of our diverse communities, delivering vibrant and distinct places. Community wealth building and inclusivity will be at the heart of Central Lancashire's growth.
- + Our heritage assets will be conserved, and our natural environment will be protected and enhanced for its intrinsic value whilst providing opportunities for recreation and leisure. Throughout Central Lancashire, people's health and well-being will be enhanced through the creation of well-designed developments, delivering homes, jobs and prosperity.

There has been a clear emphasis throughout the adopted an emerging plan-making process to not only boost the supply of homes through promoting land to come forward where it is needed, in particular within sustainable locations, and to meet the local housing requirements of different groups of residents, but also to create ecologically and environmentally valuable places.

Cassidy + Ashton Group Ltd. have been instructed by a consortium of landowners to present details of an opportunity for a residential development, with high-quality open space and biodiversity net gain, to meet the demand for additional housing identified in the NPPF and new standard method.

The representation site lies to the east side of Preston Road (the B6243) and abuts the southern boundary of the built-up settlement of Grimsargh. The site extends to approximately 22.75ha of land, designated within the Open Countryside (Policy EN1) and an Area of Separation (Policy EN4), but through a considered assessment, it is contended that the site represents the most sustainable and appropriate location for new development within the settlement and will contribute to meeting the housing needs of the area.

# 3.0

## SITE CONTEXT & CHARACTERISTICS

# + SITE LOCATION

The representation site abuts the southern extent of the built-up village of Grimsargh located approximately 5.7 miles (9km) to the north east of Preston City Centre. Grimsargh is a historically rural village that has experienced expansion within recent years, particularly along the main spinal road (Preston Road – the B6243 formerly known as ‘Long Sight Lane’). The Village first experienced significant expansion from the 1980’s, with residential properties and local services constructed along Long Sight Lane, including a Post Office, Grimsargh Station and the Plough Inn, which formed the main built-up area of the settlement.

Approximately 120m from the southernmost dwelling-house of the settlement, a number of properties were set out in a linear fashion along the eastern side of the main spine road and by 2000, a residential estate to the south west was erected [Figure 3] adjacent to the Red Scar Industrial Estate.



Figure 3. Aerial Image from 2000 [Source: Google Earth]

From the early 2000s, the village continued to expand at a greater rate, particularly to the south and east of Preston Road [Figure 4], with a population of 2,653 residents at the time of the 2011 census, albeit development has largely been restricted eastwards by the Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

As a result of the established building line set by the southernmost dwelling-house on Preston Road, together with the nearby recent residential development, as shown partially built in Figure 5, the Village has a poorly defined southern boundary.



Figure 4. Aerial Image from 2007 [Source: Google Earth]



Figure 5. Aerial Image from 2018 [Source: Google Earth]



Application Reference Number	Description of Development	Determination
06/2013/0533	Outline application for residential development (Class C3 of 4.5 Ha of land for up to 70 no. dwellings with new highway access from Ribblesdale Drive, internal access road, landscaping, and associated infrastructure.	Refused 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2013. Allowed at Appeal 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
06/2014/0752	Erection of 64 no. Dwellings (42 detached houses, 10 semi-detached and 12 apartments) with associated garages, infrastructure, roads, open space, play area and landscaping (reserved matters application pursuant to outline permission 06/2012/0533)	Refused 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2014. Appeal Withdrawn.
06/2014/0929	Erection of 64 no. Dwellings (42 detached houses, 10 semi-detached and 12 apartments) with associated garages, infrastructure, roads, open space, play area and landscaping (reserved matters application pursuant to outline permission 06/2012/0533) (re-submission of planning application 06/2014/0752)	Approved 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2015
06/2016/0258	Outline planning application for residential development of up to 70no. Dwellings with access off Ribblesdale Drive.	Approved 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2016
06/2017/1350	Reserved matters application for 68 no. Dwellings (namely layout, scale, landscaping and appearance) pursuant to outline planning permission 06/2016/0258	Approved 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2018
06/2022/1348	4 no. Dwellings in site off Moss Nook Drive	Approved on 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2023

Figure 8. Table of relevant planning applications

Grimsargh is clearly a favourable location for new development given the number of recent planning permissions for residential development its accessibility to Preston City Centre via the B6243, which hosts a diverse mix of uses including retail, leisure and employment uses, and boasts strong connectivity to the wider nation via Preston Bus Station and Preston Railway Station.

Grimsargh itself is well served by local services and facilities, including the following:

- + Primary Schools
- + Local Convenience Store
- + Newsagent and Post Office
- + Village Hall
- + Public Houses
- + Employment Uses
- + Churches
- + Regular Bus Service
- + Car Dealerships
- + Bridal Shop
- + Podiatrist
- + Dentists
- + Various Restaurants and Drinking Establishments
- + Hair and Beauty Training Space
- + Events Specialists
- + Dog Groomers

The B6243 is a thoroughfare providing access northwards to the nearby town of Longridge, which accommodates services including 2 supermarkets, local convenience stores, independent retail stores, bars and pubs, restaurants, primary schools and high schools.

The representation site is therefore located within what is considered to be one of the most sustainable locations for new development in the Borough with enough supporting services and facilities to accommodate new residential development and introducing families into the existing neighbourhood.

# + SITE DESCRIPTION

The representation site lies immediately to the south of the main conurbation of Grimsargh. The site covers an area of approximately 22.75ha of land, as shown in Figure 1, characterised by large fields defined by well established tree lines.

The land is physically enclosed and separated from the wider rural landscape by the extensive tree coverage bounding the site, particularly to the east with the Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI and as such, the views into and out of the land are restricted, as shown in Figures 8-13. The Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI is characterised as a narrow woodland along the valley of its tributary, the Tun Brook, which can be seen in the distance of Figure 9. Beyond the southern boundary of the site lies a private road, providing access to John Turner Construction Group and a dwellinghouse with associated agricultural uses. The site is bound to the west by Preston Road (the B6243) and a number of large residential plots, with further residential development to the north, as recently approved. The representation site itself has not been the subject of any planning applications. Whilst the representation site is characterised as rural land, the site itself has an urban fringe character, being dominated by the existing residential development to the north and west of the site.



Figure 8. View into Site from Preston Road



Figure 9. View from the North East of Site



Figure 10. View of Existing and Proposed Development Sites



Figure 11. View of Site Access from Preston Road



Figure 12. View of Neighbouring Development Under Construction



Figure 13. View from North of Site

# + ACCESSIBILITY CONTEXT

Given the site's location directly abutting the southern extent of the existing settlement, it is considered that future residents would be in close proximity to a range of sustainable modes of transportation to access local amenities and services, as previously set out.

Regular bus services run along Preston Road, travelling to Longridge along the northern route every 10 minutes and towards Preston City Centre along the southern route every 10 minutes. The nearest bus stops to the representation site are located approximately 200m north and south of the site, along Preston Road.

The local area also boasts an interconnected network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) as shown in Figure 14. A PRoW is sited beyond the northern boundary of the site, leading to the countryside area to the east, albeit this route is temporarily closed whilst building works are undertaken for the new residential development. There are clear opportunities for the development of this representation site to provide links to the established public footpaths within the surrounding area.



Figure 14. Public Rights of Way Map [Source: Lancashire County Council]

# ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The site itself is generally rectangular, largely level and featureless. Whilst the field boundaries are delineated through established trees and hedgerow, there are no trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order. There are various key environmental features throughout the site notwithstanding the woodland and mature trees, including various ponds sited throughout the site. Nonetheless, the majority of the land is currently open field pastureland and there is a clear opportunity to improve the biodiversity value of the site through its redevelopment. A Biological Heritage Site lies to the north east of the representation site.

Whilst the Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI to the east of the site is sited in Flood Zone 3, the representation site lies within Flood Zone 1, [Figure 15] and has only limited surface water flood risk [Figure 16].

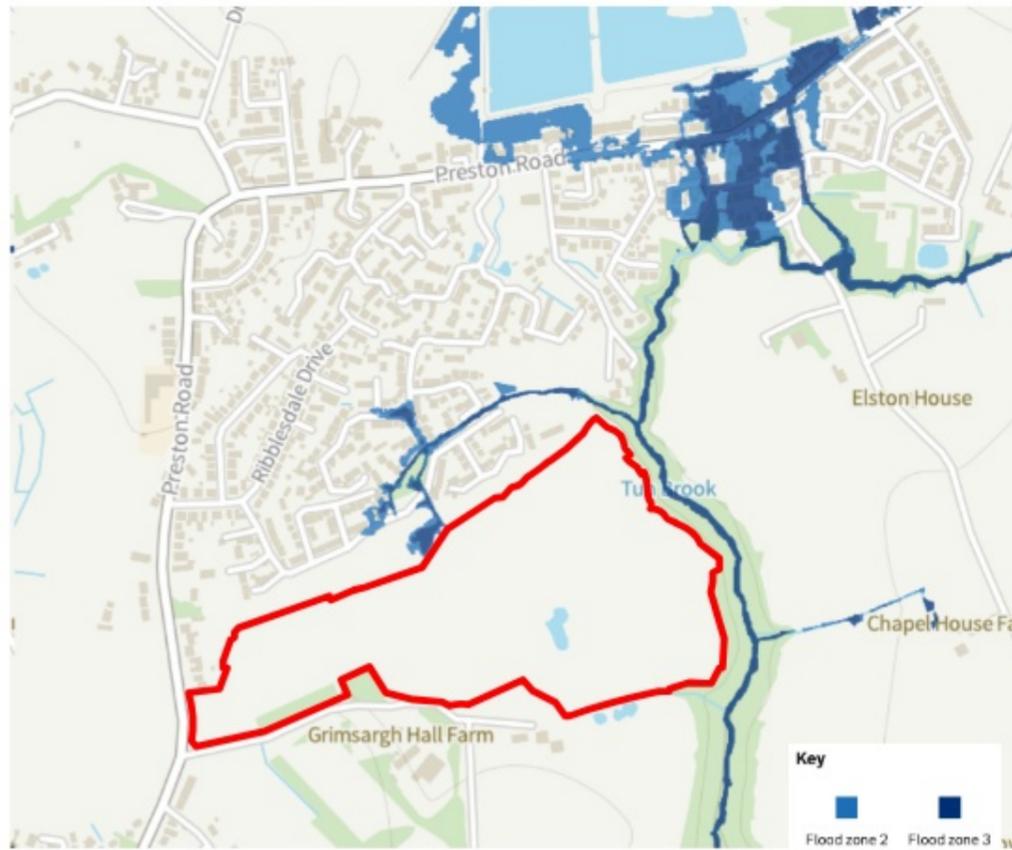


Figure 15. Flood Zone 2+3 [Source: Gov.UK]

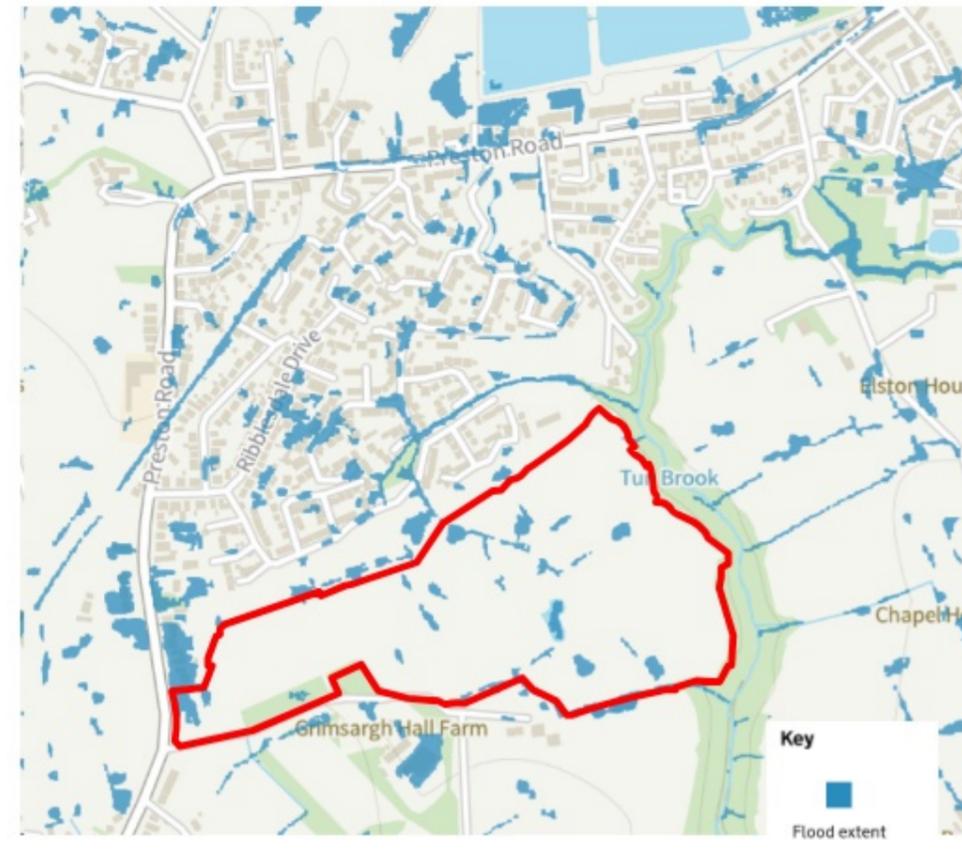


Figure 16. Surface Water Flooding [Source: Gov.UK]

4.0

PLANNING POLICY  
CONTEXT

# THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The statutory Development Plan for Preston comprises the Preston Local Plan 2012-26 Site Allocations & Development Management Policies DPD (adopted 2nd July 2015) and the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted July 2012).

These plans are significantly out-of-date and Preston now acknowledge that due to a lack of a five year housing land supply, they have to engage the tilted balance when considering planning applications for residential development.

Under the current plan, the site lies within an Area of Separation (Policy EN4) and the Open Countryside (Policy EN1).

Comparison with the emerging plan shows a substantial change in the Area of Separation, indicating the policy operates in a fluid manner and is subject to change over time without undermining or weakening its purpose.

Further development can therefore also be accommodated without diminishing the role of the Area of Separation and maintaining its key purpose.

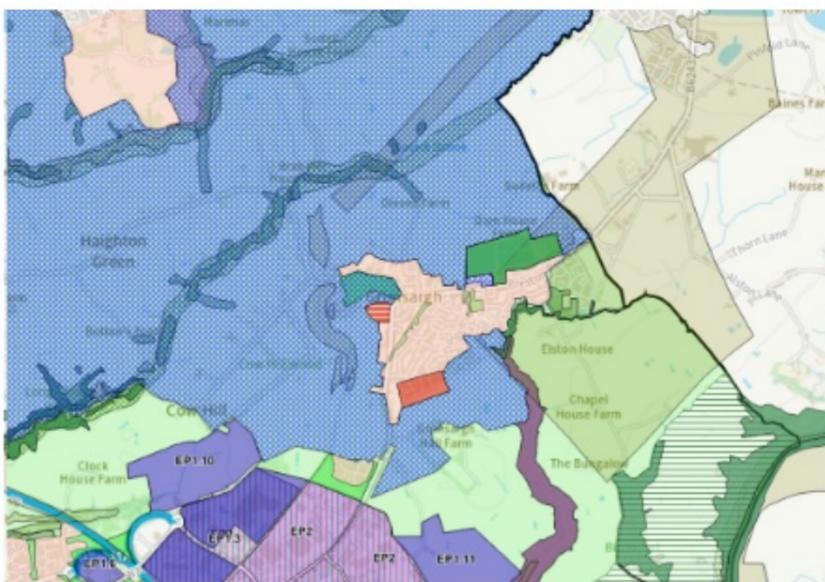


Figure 17. Preston Local Plan Planning Policy Map [Source: Preston Local Council]

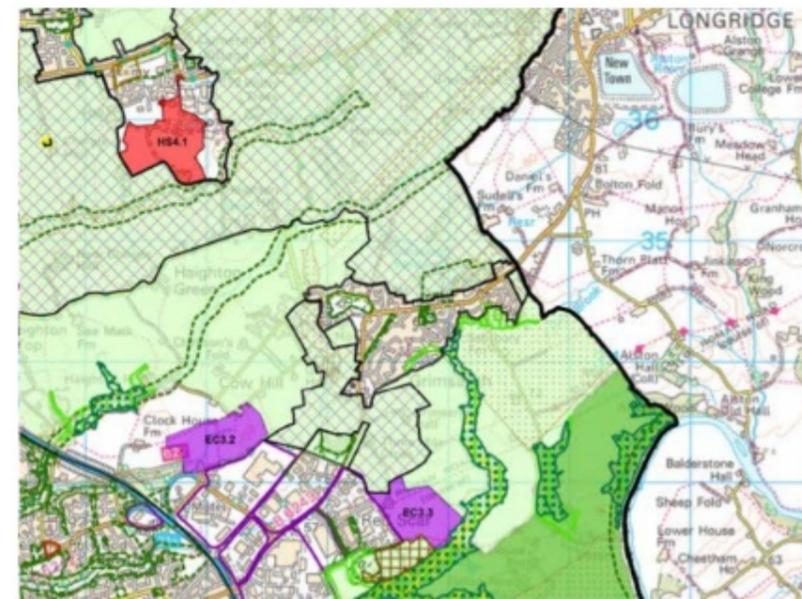


Figure 18. Central Lancashire Local Plan Planning Policy Map [Source: Central Lancashire Council]

# CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Preston City Council, together with South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council, have prepared a new Local Plan which seeks to set out a strategy by which new investment can be attracted whilst protecting the unique characteristics of Central Lancashire, to deliver sustainable development. This plan will ultimately supersede the current Development Plan documents. The publication version has been issued and a Consultation is currently being undertaken until 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Once the consultation period has ended the upcoming submission stage (regulation 22) will be undertaken, presenting the emerging plan to the Planning Inspectorate ahead of the public examination, this is intended to be completed by the end of June 2025. Once the plans have been submitted to the planning inspectorate, the 6-12 months examination in public stage will take place in late summer/early autumn of 2026 with expectation to adopt the Central Lancashire Local Plan by no later than the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2026.

The emerging overarching spatial vision for Central Lancashire is as follows:

*Central Lancashire will be a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest. New development will be sustainable, supporting our ambitions of carbon neutrality and addressing climate change.*

*Growth and regeneration of our city and town centres and delivery of new employment opportunities will continue to strengthen economic prosperity, making Central Lancashire a key economic centre for the North West.*

*A wide range of high-quality sustainable new housing and supporting infrastructure will meet the needs of our diverse communities, delivering vibrant and distinct places. Community wealth building and inclusivity will be at the heart of Central Lancashire's growth.*

*Our heritage assets will be conserved, and our natural environment will be protected and enhanced for its intrinsic value whilst providing opportunities for recreation and leisure. Throughout Central Lancashire, people's health and well-being will be enhanced through the creation of well-designed developments, delivering homes, jobs and prosperity.*

The vision is guided by 11 Strategic Objectives:

**Strategic Objective 1 - Climate Change:** To ensure new development is resilient to and mitigates against the effects of climate change by achieving our goal to be at least carbon neutral. Reducing vulnerability to flooding, promoting sustainable forms of surface water drainage, minimising natural resource and energy use, and incorporating sustainable construction and water efficiency practices.

**Strategic Objective 2 - Sustainable Patterns of Development:** To focus development at sustainable locations accessible by active modes of travel. Making the best use of existing land, infrastructure, facilities, and services wherever possible, and ensuring that any necessary mitigation or improvements to meet future needs are identified, appropriately funded, and brought forward in a coordinated and timely manner.

**Strategic Objective 3 – Sustainable Communities:** To create healthy, vibrant, safe, and sustainable communities with a diverse range of housing to meet future needs. Providing a scale and mix of housing types and sizes and a variety of tenures in a range of locations to meet economic aspirations and local housing needs.

**Strategic Objective 4 - Economic Prosperity:** To provide a range of employment and economic growth opportunities in sustainable locations. Promoting Central Lancashire as the economic centre for Lancashire, protecting and enhancing Preston City Centre's role as Lancashire's key shopping, leisure, tourism, and cultural destination and recognising its strategic importance within the wider Lancashire region and beyond. Prioritising building on the infrastructure improvements within City Deal, delivering enhanced digital connectivity, attracting inward investment, and delivering community wealth building.

**Strategic Objective 5 - Sustainable Transport:** To encourage development in sustainable locations where the layout, and design of new development reduces the need to use a car and enables more walking, cycling, and public transport use. Prioritising active travel and public transport promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) ahead of the private car, especially for shorter journeys, and supports improved accessibility and connectivity.

**Strategic Objective 6 - Place Making:** To protect and enhance the rich diversity of the character and appearance of Central Lancashire's landscape and townscape. Maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place for the many different types of settlements across the area and for new development.

**Strategic Objective 7 - High Quality Development:** To create the highest quality design, which is sustainable, accessible, and safe, and supports active, healthy lifestyles. Promoting built design form that supports inclusive and active communities (objective 11) and a strong sense of place (objective 6) through the relationship of buildings with each other and the spaces around them, and in response to the prevailing character of the area, including scale and density.

**Strategic Objective 8 - Historic Environment:** To conserve, and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets (including those of local significance) and their settings. Conserving and creating enjoyment of the historic environment which will ensure our historic assets are sustained and enhanced, so the valuable contribution they make to the character and special interest of the area and their cultural, artistic, economic, and environmental benefits can be realised.

**Strategic Objective 9 - Natural Environment:** To conserve and enhance the natural environment including designated and un-designated landscapes and biodiversity. Promoting a connected green and blue infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers measurable net biodiversity gains and improves access to nature, parks, and open spaces for all.

**Strategic Objective 10 - Education & Skills:** To build on the existing education, training, and skills attainment at all levels. Supporting the provision of high-quality education facilities and training opportunities offered across the area and vocational and apprenticeship opportunities.

**Strategic Objective 11 - Healthy Lifestyles:** To help ensure that development contributes to the reduction of health inequalities, whilst improving social inclusion and equal opportunities for all. Promoting healthy lifestyles to maximise health and well-being to meet the needs of existing and future communities, including inclusive, active design and access to sport, leisure, recreation, and community facilities.

# + HOUSING NEED

There is a clear overwhelming need in national and local planning policy to boost the supply of homes, by identifying a sufficient amount and variety of land and where it is needed, to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements, as set out within Chapter 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF].

Since the adoption of the new NPPF in December 2024, the government’s concentration on a delivering sufficient supply of homes with targets of 300,000 annually to alleviate growing populations. The vast majority of the annual target for house building is focused on urban areas, but the central government also addressed the need for more rural homes ensuing that there is enough people to support the serviced in small villages and towns (Gov.UK)

Both adopted and emerging planning policy acknowledges not only the need for new homes, in accordance with the Government’s methodology to calculate housing need, but the need for new homes in appropriate, sustainable areas. This methodology has been introduced as ‘The Standard Method’; a revised formula for assessing local housing need which accompanied the new NPPF in 2024.

Based on this revised formula and in conjunction with the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, Preston has produced an ‘Approach to Meeting Housing Need’ report stating the minimum annual local housing need as of 2024, was 944 dwellings across Central Lancashire, with 269 required for Preston. However this figure was initially redistributed based on spatial strategy and to enable existing commitments to come forward now resulting in a total of 1,237 dwellings across Central Lancashire, with 500 residing in Preston. It is important to note that this figure was used as a baseline for the emerging local plan but outlines the processes underpinning housing distribution (the final housing figures can be found on page 25).

As set out in the Central Lancashire Local Plan, Spatial Strategy Policy SS2: Settlement Hierarchy [Figure 19] and Table 1 [Figure 20] sets out the scale and location of development growth and supporting investment across Central Lancashire, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.

The primary focus for growth and investment will be directed to the Preston Main Urban Area (Tier 1) and to South Ribble and Chorley Main Urban Areas (Tier 2), albeit we do not consider that the main urban areas of all three districts can wholly deliver the specific housing requirements for different groups of people, specifically family oriented housing.

Accounting for the calculated housing need required from the redistributed standard method figures and the emerging spatial development and settlement hierarchy polices, there is a clear opportunity within this Local Plan to place a greater emphasis on providing a sufficient amount and variety of land across the area, including modest urban extensions to existing sustainable towns and villages, which would avoid the need to amend Green Belt boundaries when there are no exceptional circumstances to justify doing so.

Grimsargh Village lies within Tier 4 (Local and Rural Centres) of the settlement hierarchy, whereby moderate growth and investment will be directed to meet housing and employment needs.

### Policy SS2: Settlement Hierarchy

The scale and location of development growth and supporting investment across Central Lancashire will reflect the following settlement hierarchy:

- a) The **Preston Urban Area (Tier 1)** will be the primary focus for development growth and investment, the largest amount of new development will be directed here. This will be delivered through a combination of redevelopment and regeneration activity and major new development to meet strategic general housing, employment, and commercial development needs.
- b) **Key Service Centres (Tier 2)**, including the towns of Leyland and Chorley and the South Ribble Urban Area will be the secondary focus for development, complementing the role of the Tier 1 Urban Area. This will be delivered through allocated sites in and adjoining the towns, windfall sites and town centre renewal activity to meet development needs.
- c) **Urban Local Service Centres (Tier 3)** will be a tertiary focus for development and accommodate new development and investment within settlement boundaries. The scale and type of development will be appropriate to the settlement size and reflect its characteristics.
- d) **Rural Local Service Centres (Tier 4)** will accommodate limited new development, appropriate to the settlement size, to help meet local housing and employment needs and help sustain local services and facilities.
- e) **Smaller Rural Villages and Hamlets (Tier 5)** will accommodate more limited new development and investment, other than on the sites identified on the Policies Map.

Settlements identified against each Tier are set out in Table 1 on page 27.

Figure 19. Policy SS2 [Source: Central Lancashire Local Plan]

<b>Tier 4 Rural Local Service Centres</b>	Land within:		
	a) Broughton	d) Grimsargh	g) New Longton
	b) Croston	e) Higher Walton	h) Walmer Bridge
	c) Eccleston	f) Hutton	

Figure 20. Tier 4- Table 1 [Source: Central Lancashire Local Plan]

We contend that Grimsargh in particular is located in one of the most sustainable areas outside of the defined urban areas, boasting a range of local amenities and services, including sustainable transportation with regular bus services operating along Preston Road, to the west of the representation site, which provides access to neighbouring areas including Longridge, and Red Scar Industrial Estate on route towards Preston City Centre. We therefore believe that Grimsargh should be considered as an appropriate location for further growth and investment.

Within the Preferred Options, there is one housing allocation proposed to the north of Grimsargh village (reference PC/HS1.38, referred to as ‘Land east and west of Dixons Lane, Grimsargh’), which lies within the open countryside under Policy EN1 of the Preston Local Plan. It is expected that the site can accommodate 196 new homes within 7.85ha of land. However, the development of the allocated site would appear as an incongruous addition to the settlement boundary and materially impact upon the characteristics and purposes of the open countryside designation.

Alternatively, the representation site would infill the only appropriate remaining area of land within the visual confines of the village, with the capacity to deliver a similar extent of new homes. As such, when considered against the representation site, allocation reference PC/HS1.38 does not sit comfortably within the townscape of the settlement and should not be allocated for development. In preference for the subject site unless there is an identified need for both sites.

It is considered that the proposed representation site has considerable merit in planning terms in providing a sustainable urban extension. It will result in significant benefits to both the immediate area and wider context including the provision of a wide choice of housing and promoting the regeneration of currently underutilised land within Preston.

**Policy HS1 (Strategic Policy): Scale of Housing Growth and Distribution of Housing Requirements**

**Overall Housing Requirement**

1. The housing requirement for Central Lancashire is for 23,652 homes to be delivered in the Local Plan period between 2023 and 2041, an annual average of 1,314 homes.
2. New homes and associated infrastructure will be delivered on a range of site sizes and locations in accordance with the spatial strategy, strategic site allocation policies and other local plan policies.

**Spatial Distribution**

3. The Central Lancashire housing requirement is distributed across the three council areas as follows:
  - a) 6,012 homes in the Chorley Council area (334 dwellings per annum)
  - b) 9,360 homes in the Preston City Council area (520 dwellings per annum)
  - c) 8,280 homes in the South Ribble Borough Council area (460 dwellings per annum)

Figure 21. Policy HS1 [Source: Central Lancashire Local Plan]

# + OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

The Policies Map for the Preston Local Plan 2012-26 identifies the representation site as being located within the open countryside, the relevant policy for which is EN1 of the Preston Local Plan and emerging Policy Direction 4. Policy EN1 seeks to protect the open countryside and its open and rural character by limiting appropriate development in these locations to:

- + That needed for purposes of agriculture or forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area including uses which help to diversify the rural economy
- + The reuse or rehabilitation of existing buildings
- + Infilling within groups of buildings in smaller rural settlements

The Central Lancashire local plan has altered the existing open countryside policy to now read:

*Policy EN17: Development in the Open Countryside*

*1. Development proposals in the Open Countryside, outside the settlement boundaries and Areas of Separation as shown on the Policies Map, will be limited to:*

- a) rural housing exception initiatives, which accord with Policy HS8 Rural Exception Sites; or rural workers dwellings, in accordance with Policy HS9 Rural Workers Dwellings; or*
- b) the replacement, conversion or re-use of an existing building, where it is of a similar size and scale, within the same curtilage and of a design in keeping with the locality or*
- c) agriculture and forestry or the sustainable growth and expansion of an existing business where it can be demonstrated that there is a justified need; or*
- d) local transport infrastructure and other essential infrastructure or development which supports existing or potential utility infrastructure; or*
- e) appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries.*

*2. In all of the above circumstances, development proposals, will only be acceptable where they do not have a harmful effect on the character of the countryside, or the amenities of the surrounding area.*

*3. The replacement of residential caravans or mobile homes, which do not benefit from a permanent planning permission, with permanent buildings will only be acceptable where allowed for under Policy HS9 Rural Workers Dwellings.*

Whilst the application site itself is designated within the Open Countryside, it does not have the character of such. The site is bound on all sides by predominantly urban features; existing residential development and Preston Road (the B6243) to the west, recently approved residential development to the north, a private access road to the south and the Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI to the east which provides a clear distinction between the site and the wider countryside.

The site has countryside characteristics only in so far as it has the appearance of undeveloped land, however it is considered that the site is best described in character and appearance terms as 'semi-urban'. A recent decision made by the Minister of State for Housing and Planning with respect to land at D'Urton Lane [reference: APP/N2345/V/22/3296374] states that countryside areas display a rural character because they are formed of open and rolling agricultural landscape. It is contended that the representation site is enclosed from the surrounding countryside by defined features and therefore does not exhibit the rural characteristics of a countryside area.

Whilst a major residential development scheme does not fall within the scope of the permitted uses under Policy EN1, it is considered that development sites on the edge of existing settlement limits, such as the representation site, are often more appropriate, particularly where it is thought to be the one of the most suitable and sustainable sites in the area that can meet the housing needs of the locality. The proposed residential development therefore represents the logical infilling of a site which is bound on all sides by predominantly urban features and the development of the representation site would not have a discernible effect on the countryside character.

Further, as the views into and out of the site are restricted by the presence of such features, it is not considered that the development of the representation site would have a significant visual impact upon the surrounding countryside area.

# + AREA OF SEPARATION

The representation site also lies within an Area of Separation (Policy EN18 of the Local Plan and Policy 19 of the Core Strategy), which seeks to protect the character and identity of settlements that are only separated by a small area of Open Countryside from a neighbouring settlement. The purpose of the Area of Separation at this location is to prevent the merging of Grimsargh with the neighbouring Red Scar Industrial Estate.

## Policy EN18: Areas of Separation states

1. Areas of Separation will be maintained to protect areas where there is a risk of coalescence.
2. Development proposed within the defined Areas of Separation as shown on the policies map will be permitted provided that it accords with the spatial strategy for growth set out in Policy SS1 Development Patterns, and:
  - a) it would not undermine the physical extent and/or visual separation of settlements; and
  - b) it would not have an urbanising effect detrimental to:
    - i. the character of the open countryside; or
    - ii. the separate identity of the adjoining settlements

It is noted within paragraph 7.116 of the Local plan that the Area of Separation should presence the 'character, identity and distinctiveness of identified settlements by resisting development that would result in a coalescence of two distinct and separate settlements'.

It is noted that neither the policy, nor the justification for the policy, references the specific extent to which the Area of Separation should be maintained, rather that a 'gap' between the settlements should be upheld in order to protect the individuality of both settlements.

The representation site does not make any material contribution to the designation, given that the existing building line of the main settlement, as established along Preston Road, extends beyond the existing built development to the east. The Area of Separation has previously been revised to accommodate previous developments and has been rolled back from the east since its original designation.

The representation site covers approximately 22.75ha of land to the south of the recently approved and partially occupied residential development. Following a contextual analysis and initial Masterplanning exercise, the proposed residential development will continue along the existing building line of the main settlement and infill the land northwards, up to the boundary of the partially recently constructed residential development, which will appropriately round off the built-up area. As such, whilst this representation site would require the deletion of a part of the Area of Separation, as the extent of built development is not proposed further than existing development, it is not considered that the proposed works at the representation site would impact the purpose of the Area of Separation in this location. It is envisaged that the remaining area of land within the consortium of land ownership boundaries can provide a high-quality and creative response to open space provision that will provide an exemplar model for all developments across the borough to create an ecologically sustainable development.

The manner in which the Area of Separation should operate, is demonstrated by the appeal decision for 51no. Dwellings which was granted in 2024 at Garstang Road, Broughton (REF:APP/N2345/W/23/3330709). This is the western end of the same Area of Separation which runs to the subject site. The inspector concluded that the proposed development would not take up a substantial amount of the Area of Separation relative to the size of the area as a whole and would not see the merging of the settlements of Broughton and the Preston Urban Area. As such, they concluded that the effectiveness of the Area of Separation designation and Broughton's identity and distinctiveness would be retained. This, in turn, would also not affect the wider open countryside. The proposed development was considered to add to existing areas of residential development, infilling the 'islands' around the Area of Separation in a manner that was inoffensive to the policy designation and spatially responded well to the existing village boundary and existing developments.

This conclusion is similar to the impact of what is now proposed on the subject site on the edge of Grimsargh which would also not undermine the function or effectiveness of the Area of Separation as it would not reduce the separation of Grimsargh and Preston and therefore retain the purpose of the Area of Separation. Indeed previous revisions to the Areas of Separation acknowledge this.

As such, the Area of Separation could be amended without undermining its role because the designation at this particular location is insignificant to the wider function of the Area of Separation.

The development would therefore not compromise the function of the Area of Separation insofar as protecting the identity and distinctiveness of the settlement. Indeed, we contend that the proposed works would create a more defined boundary to the main built-up area and strengthen the long term of the Area of Separation.

# + SITE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

An analysis of the site's context allows us to identify constraints and opportunities, which will then guide the design evolution of the development at this representation site.

An illustration of the constraints and opportunities of this site are provided in Figures 22 and 23, respectively.

## *Constraints:*

- + The site is classified as Greenfield.
- + The site is allocated within the Open Countryside and Area of Separation under local planning policy
- + The existing access point to the south of the site is a private road to access and existing employment use and private dwellinghouse and therefore cannot be utilised.
- + There are a number of environmental features of value including a network of ponds and mature trees delineating the various field boundaries within the wider site.
- + The Red Scar and Tun Brook SSSI is located to the east of the site boundary
- + There are risks of surface water flooding.

## *Opportunities:*

- + The development would contribute to addressing the identified housing needs in the local area
- + The development would round off the settlement boundary, following the implementation of recent residential development to the north, and extending the established building line of the settlement, providing more of a distinction between the urban area and the area of separation and open countryside
- + The site will be highly accessible and considered to be within a sustainable location
- + The site is in close proximity to local facilities and services
- + The topography of the land is relatively flat and the area is readily available for development with coordination between all land owners
- + There is opportunity for improved pedestrian/cycle linkages to the adjoining urban area and towards the SSSI
- + There is opportunity to enhance and improve the existing environmental value of the site and create a significant biodiversity net gain

5.0

# DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

# CONSTRAINTS PLAN

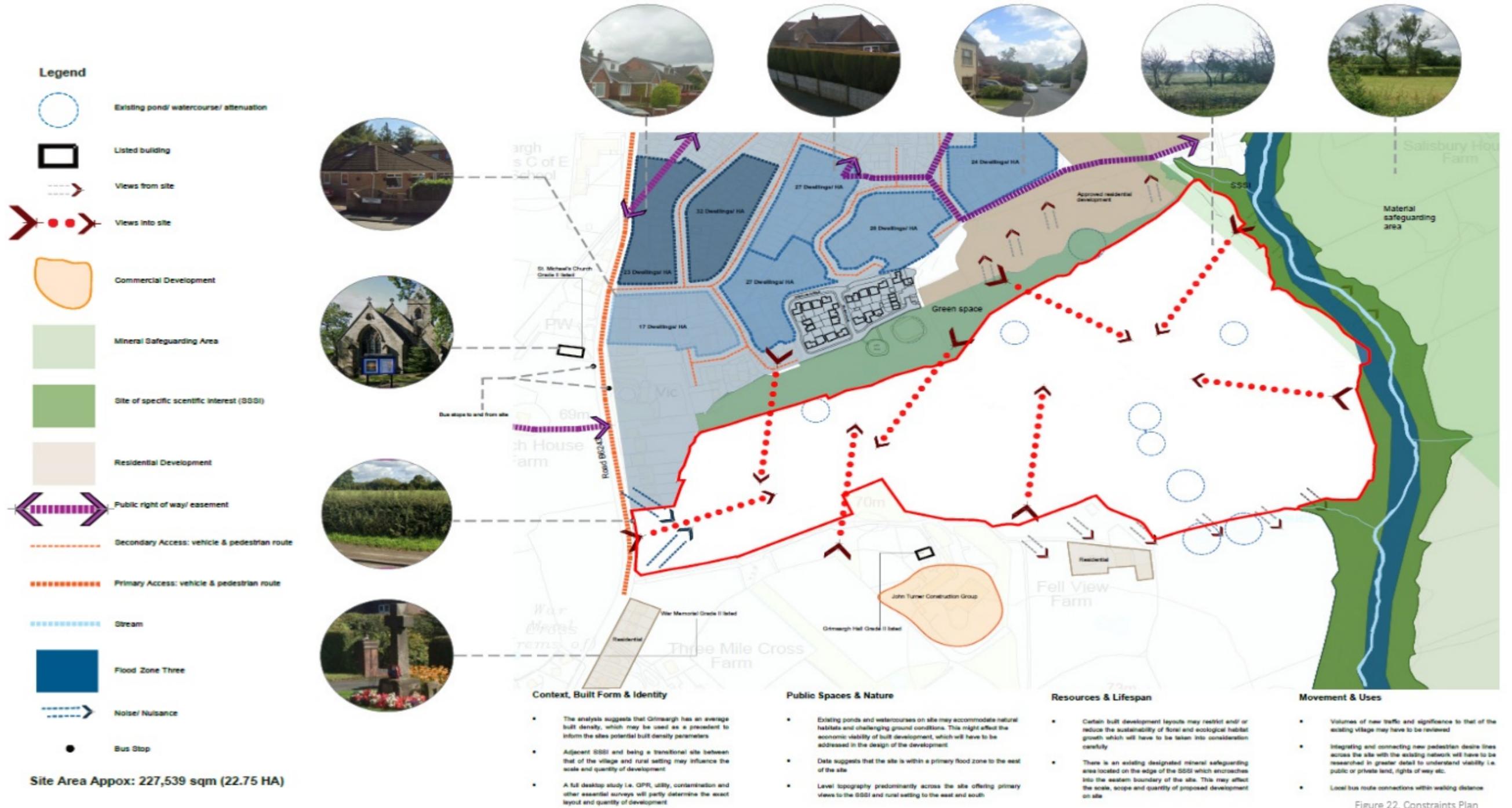


Figure 22. Constraints Plan

# OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

## Legend

-  Proposed Landscape
-  Existing SSSI
-  Site Boundary
-  Residential Boundary
-  Views to & from Site
-  Potential Urban Nodes & Landmarks
-  Primary Route
-  Secondary Route
-  Tertiary Route
-  Pond/ Attenuation
-  Public right of way/ easement
-  Bus Stop



## Context

- The opportunity to design built development that enhances the architectural variety and character of Grimsard's authentic character, through place making
- Celebrating the heritage, culture and history of the local context to positively influence contemporary living and a means of reinforcing the areas value

## Identity

- Creating a new neighbourhood that contributes to sustainable values of social, economic and cultural prosperity for contemporary life (residents and the general public)
- This considers the character and relationship of built form, easily defining public and private external spaces, navigation, street permeability and legibility and use

## Public Spaces & Nature

- Introducing sustainable strategic proposals into the scheme will help strengthen existing ecological habitats, promoting the historical and cultural significance of the SSSI & biodiversity
- Providing the potential to house new social recreational activities for the public
- Having a strong relationship between that of built and external spaces
- To enhance social security and surveillance
- Softening the physical impact of street highways, absorbing street air pollution and emissions

## Resources & Lifespan

- Using existing amenities on site, namely that of ponds and watercourses to assist with the diversity of the site i.e. drainage, biodiversity, ecology and general aesthetic of the environment
- Building design to adopt sustainable methods of construction for use, namely that of passive design, net zero or carbon neutral technologies

## Built Form

- The opportunity to create a better relationship and greater interaction between that of the neighbourhood, development and people
- Achieved through fine grain plot layouts as opposed to the prevailing coarse grain found within existing neighborhoods to the north of the site
- This will provide greater urban permeability, thus, greater interaction between user and environment and a more 'close knit' community
- Greater permeability offers the opportunity to provide more sustainable desire lines through the site, namely that of pedestrian and cycle friendly paths

Figure 23. Opportunities Plan



# DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



The mapping of key features, characteristics and constraints has facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the site. As such, these factors have each been carefully considered, providing a basis for an effective, appropriate masterplanning process.

In order to ensure that only appropriate development is brought forward on the site, the following development objectives and urban design objectives have been created to guide future development, reflecting the objectives of Policy Direction 5 of the Central Lancashire Local Plan Part 1 Preferred Options Document, which relates to large-scale development proposals.

## *Development Objectives:*

- + To make the best use of land, whilst complimenting the surrounding land uses and character of the locality, through a well-conceived residential scheme that will go to meet the needed housing supply in a regional context.
- + To provide a mix of housing types, tenures and values, with affordable housing as an inclusive part of the development, that will provide diversity and choice and satisfy local need.
- + To create a place with a local identity, with well-connected and distinctive neighbourhoods and an attractive and functioning centre and public realm.
- + To create sustainable patterns of development which exploit and improve accessibility to public transport.
- + To provide choices and chances for all to live a healthy life through the provision of a broad range of open space.
- + To provide a model for new development across the borough through the promotion of biodiversity net gain and addressing the impacts of climate change.

## *Urban Design Objectives:*

- + Secure high quality design that follows the principles of sustainable development.
- + Produce a sustainable urban extension that maximises connectivity and linkages with the local area and the wider services and facilities.
- + Produce development that respects the existing setting and landscape character, whilst establishing new development blocks that are guided by design principles that are characteristic of settlement patterns in the wider area.
- + Provide a flexible and adaptable scheme that ensures inclusive access for all end user requirements.
- + Consideration of existing environmental conditions and support local biodiversity, ecological restoration and habitat creation on site.
- + Create an attractive, safe and accessible, and ecologically diverse space for the benefit of the local community, through integrating a network of green and blue spaces and creating a distinctive character with durable landscapes.

Implementation of these objectives would require a joined up approach between land owners, developers and the local authority from an early stage.

INDICATIVE  
MASTERPLAN

6.0

# INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN



The design objectives set out in the preceding chapter are provided to guide the future development of this modest, sustainable, urban extension. The site analysis has informed the design evolution by identifying the land use locations across the site, representative of the identified opportunities and constraints.

The Indicative Masterplan is provided in Figure 24 and sets out the overall aspirations of the site's development. The overall aim of the representation site is to create a complimentary urban extension upon the fringe of the existing settlement.

The representation site has been selected as the most appropriate location to meet local housing need in Grimsargh, by continuing the existing building line of the main settlement, as established along Preston Road. The Indicative Masterplan has sought to set out the proposed residential development to follow this building line and infill the land northwards to appropriately round off the built-up area. The proposed built development will therefore not encroach into the Area of Separation any further than existing.

The residual area within the representation site has been acknowledged as a key opportunity to a flexible and creative approach to open space provision, promoting re-wilding and biodiversity net gain, which would benefit species such as Great Crested Newts, Brown Hares, Skylarks and other species that are in decline. The proposed open space and biodiversity areas would constitute some of the largest such areas proposed in this local plan and provide a long term and defensible boundary to the settlement.

The design and access principles that will provide a framework for the future development of this site are set out below.

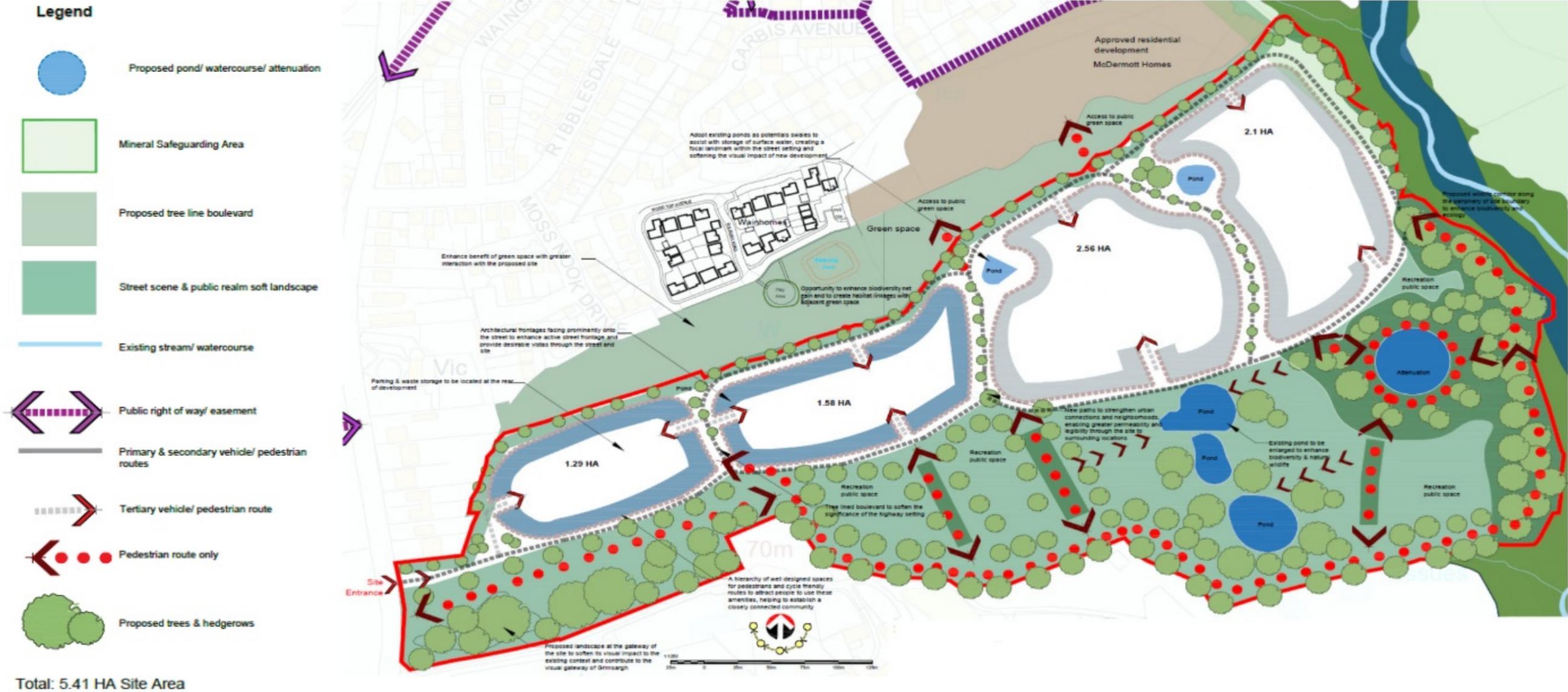


Figure 24. Indicative Masterplan

# URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES



## *Amount and Use:*

The design development process has focused on creating an integrated, sustainable community by considering the average densities of the surrounding residential areas. With regard to the immediately adjacent developments, the average densities range from 17 – 28 dwellings per hectare. Taking this into consideration, it is considered that the site can accommodate 188 dwellings within the four identified development blocks, based upon an average density of 25 dwellings per hectare.

A mix of dwellings will be included, providing a suitable range of sizes, types and tenure of dwelling, to make best and most appropriate use of the site, whilst meeting the identified need for additional and varying types of homes. The final mix will be led by site extent, detailed design and requirements of the local market. Affordable housing in line with planning policy will be able to be provided within the extent of the representation site, subject to viability.

## *Layout:*

The relationship between development blocks, access routes and open space is integral to creating the character of the development. The layout of the site has been formulated with consideration to the relationship of the site to the adjoining urban form, existing natural landscape and highways network. The siting of the proposed residential development follows the existing building line already established off Preston Road. The aim of the development is to create a fully integrated scheme within the built realms of the existing settlement.

## *Scale:*

The height and massing of buildings within the scheme will be carefully considered to ensure the built development remains consistent with the surrounding context. Given the clear local need and desirability for family oriented housing provision, it is considered that predominantly no. 2 storey dwellinghouses will be most appropriate at this site.

### *Appearance:*

Policy Direction 9 of the Central Lancashire Local Plan seeks to create beautiful and distinctive buildings and places with a high-quality standard of design and a suitable degree of variety. The development will be consistent with the principles set out in National Design Guidance and should:

- + Exhibit good architecture and urban design (form, function, and detailing) that is sympathetic to local townscape, context, and landscape, including its character, history, and setting
- + Utilise modern methods of construction and durable and sustainable building materials with a low level of embodied carbon.

It is expected that the future development of this site should seek to reinterpret the existing local vernacular, with a contemporary form to establish a sense of identity for the development. The design should be informed by a creative response to the local context.

### *Access:*

Owing to its location, the site is highly accessible to public transport networks, providing travel to Longridge town centre along the northern route and Preston City Centre along the southern route. The site also benefits from its proximity to a network of safe and attractive travel Public Right of Ways, in which the development will seek to exploit through the provision of pedestrian friendly routes throughout the site.

The Indicative Masterplan identifies a series of paths, nodes and focal points to help people find their way around the site and incorporate views that focus on landscape features. The future development of the site should be designed to meet the key principles as set out in a variety of guidance documents used in the forum of masterplanning and urban design today, the key ones being Manual for Streets (MfS1) (DCLG, 2007) and its companion guide Manual for Streets 2 – Wider Application of the Principles (MfS2) (CIHT, 2010).

MfS1 moves the focus from vehicular movement function which often results in car dominated roads to the 'Place' function of residential streets and advocates a return to more traditional street patterns. The key recommendation in MfS1 is that increased consideration is given to the 'Place' function of streets. MfS2 builds on the advice contained in MfS1, exploring in greater detail how and where its key principles can be applied to busier streets and roads in both urban and rural locations up to, but not including, trunk roads.

*Landscaping:*

The existing trees throughout the site will be encouraged to be maintained where possible, or where their removal is considered necessary it is considered vital to promote the appropriate replacement throughout the site. The Indicative Masterplan promotes structural tree planting along main access corridors and around public spaces, so delivering an attractive movement network. Structural tree planting is an important means of connecting the open space network and defining a sense of place. The identity of the site will be further enhanced through the creation of a village green gateway feature at the entrance of the site, off Preston Road.

The residual land within the representation site is envisaged to accommodate a high-quality and creative response to open space provision, by promoting biodiversity net gain. The layout has taken inspiration from the recently constructed and partly occupied residential development to the immediate north of the site, which is characterised by a linear form of open, green space, incorporating a children's play area for the residents.

The Indicative Masterplan of this representation site has therefore been set out to remain consistent with the character of the surrounding development and provide a soft transition towards the green space to the south of the site. The open space provision will be for the use of future residents within this development.

The proposed development has been designed to retain and enhance the existing blue and green infrastructure across the site, in particular adopting the existing ponds to assist with the storage of surface water, which will also in turn create focal landmarks within the development. The enhancement of the ponds will also enhance the biodiversity value of the site.

The vision for this area of the site is to promote re-wilding and habitat creation. The integration of green and blue infrastructure promotes active, healthy and sustainable communities, and promote 20-minute neighbourhoods in accordance with Policy Direction 10. The Masterplan incorporates a wildlife corridor positioned along the southern boundary of the site, connecting to the adjacent SSSI. The proposed development seeks to provide a significant biodiversity net gain and will boost the environmental value of the site and benefit species including Great Crested Newts, Brown Hares, Skylarks and other species that are in decline.

The representation site is therefore considered a key opportunity to provide an exemplar development that would bring social, economic and environmental benefits to the local and wider area, and therefore provide a framework for future developments across the boroughs to follow.

# CONCLUSION

7.0

*Concluding Remarks :*

It is our belief that these proposals represent an opportunity for the long-term sustainable development of this site. The proposed development at this representation site represents a modest, sustainable urban extension that will make a contribution towards providing appropriate and modern housing for the local population, whilst providing an exemplar model that promotes biodiversity net gain through the provision of high-quality open space for the enjoyment of future generations.

Due to the site being one of few remaining pockets of unconstrained land directly adjacent to the existing settlement of Grimsargh available for development, its sustainable location is appropriate for residential use.

We are committed to working with all parties to deliver this unique urban extension. A full set of representations to the draft document will be made separately.

We would like to thank the Council for their consideration of this matter.

