

**LAND TO THE EAST OF COMMON LANE / HARRISON'S FARM,  
ADLINGTON, CHORLEY**

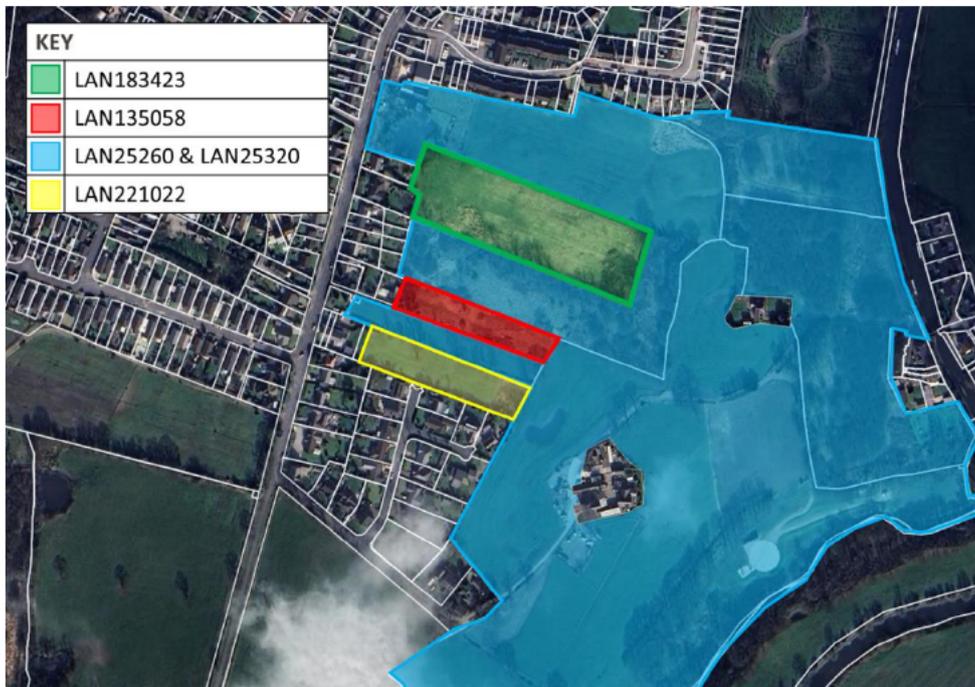
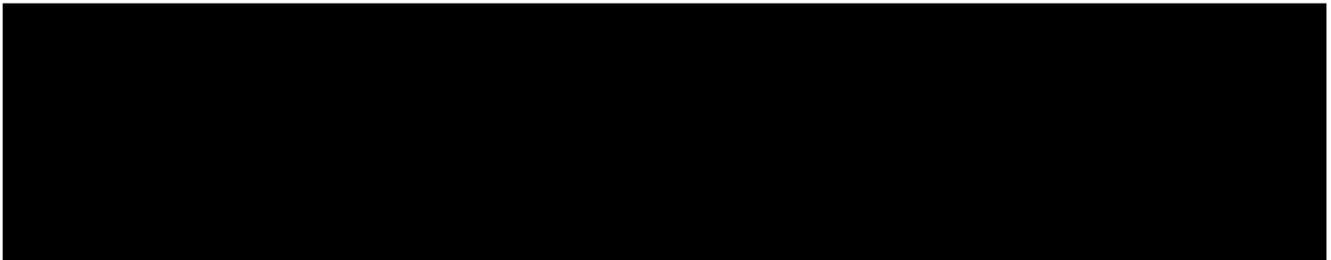
**Planning Appraisal**

**Size – 4.1 acres / 1.65 hectares**



**Ownership**

There are 4 main owners across the site:



## Site Description and Landscape

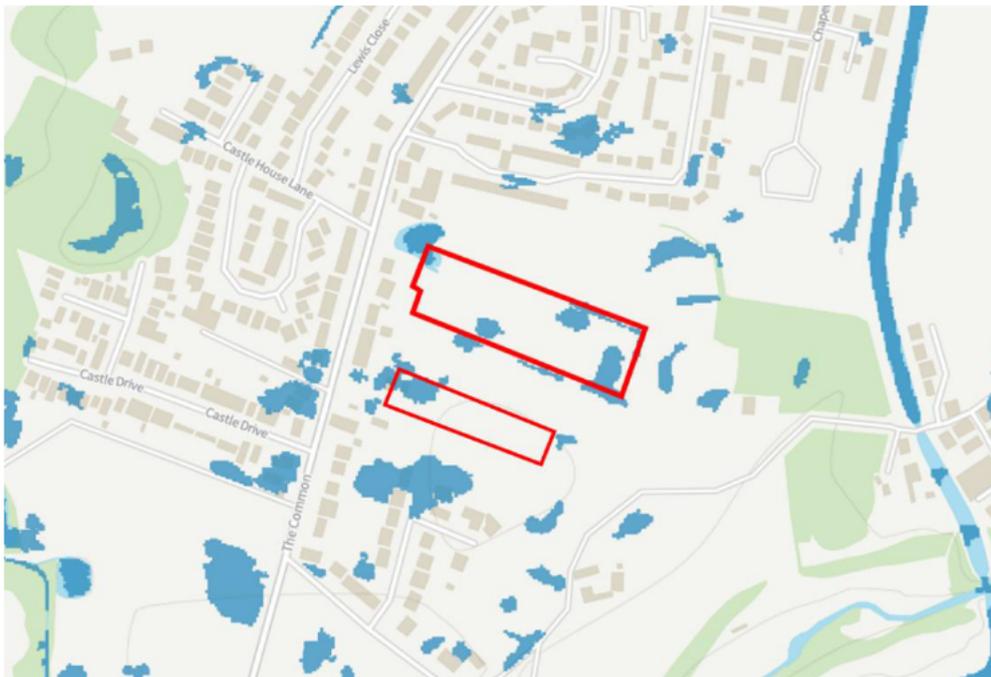
The site consists of two distinct parcels of relatively flat greenfield land, enclosed by a combination of fencing and hedgerows.

To the west, the site adjoins existing residential properties, while its immediate southern, eastern, and northern boundaries are flanked by shrubland.

There are no known Public Rights of Way (PROW) or Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) within the site boundary.

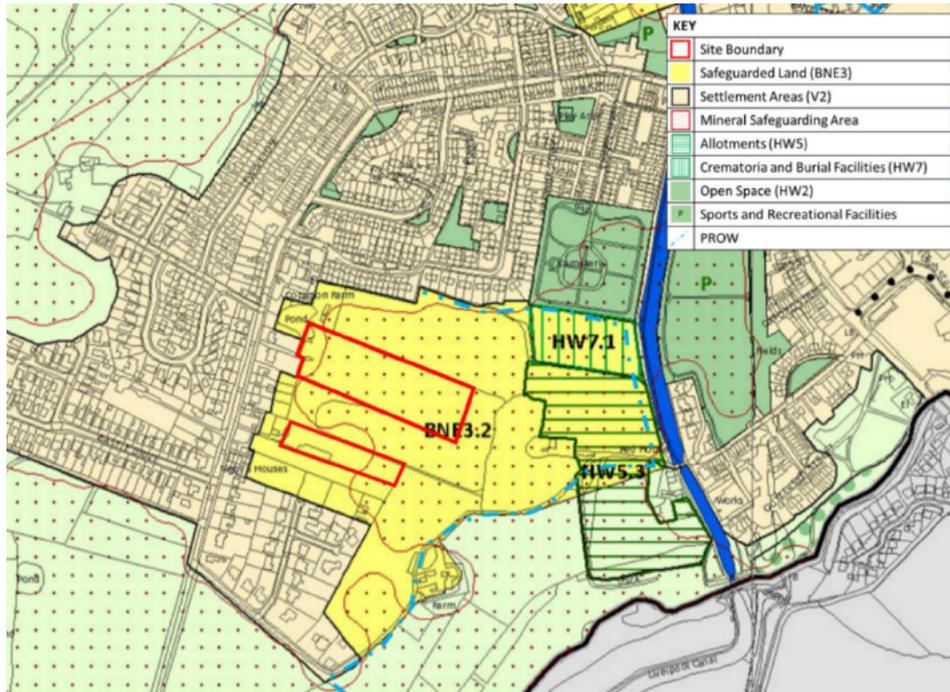
The majority of the site falls within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. According to the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2013), development in such areas is generally not supported unless it can be demonstrated the mineral resource is no longer of value, or has already been extracted; there is an overriding need for the proposed development that outweighs the need to safeguard the mineral resource; extraction of the mineral would result in land stability issues; or the mineral can be satisfactorily extracted in full prior to the development.

The site lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a very low risk of flooding (less than 0.1% annual probability). The below plan shows the areas of the site and surrounding area at risk of surface water flooding (1 in 30).



Under Chorley's current Local Plan, the site is located outside the settlement boundary of Adlington, and forms part of a larger safeguarded allocation (BN3.2), which extends to approximately 28.4 acres. This allocation includes land designated for an allotment and crematorium/burial facility to the east. The proposed allotment is situated adjacent to the planned cemetery extension, with access likely required through this extension. To date, the cemetery has not been extended, and the land designated for allotments remains undeveloped shrubland. Furthermore, there are currently no planning applications submitted for both allocations.

The below plan shows Chorley's adopted policy map.



Under the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, the site now falls within the settlement boundary of Adlington. However, it no longer retains its safeguarded status and is instead allocated entirely for Green Infrastructure (EN5.1/Harrison's Farm). This allocation includes proposals for an extension to Adlington's Cemetery, the development of new allotments, and the creation of a habitat bank to support Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Notably, of the four safeguarded sites identified in Chorley's current Local Plan, the site at Common Lane is the only one that has not been allocated for housing in the upcoming plan.

#### **Adlington Cemetery Expansion:**

The emerging Local Plan recognises that Central Lancashire has a diverse population with a high demand for burials. Between the 2011 and 2012 censuses, Chorley's population increased by 9.9%, with demographic data indicating a rising average age across the borough. Currently, Chorley has only two cemeteries, both nearing capacity. Given the ageing population and continued population growth, there is a clear need to secure short-, medium-, and long-term burial provision within the borough.

#### **Allotments:**

According to Chorley Council's most recent Open Space study, the borough currently provides 0.07 hectares of allotments per 1,000 residents - significantly below the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners' recommended standard of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 residents. Furthermore, the Adlington and Anderton Ward presently lacks any allotment provision. In response, the allotment allocation from Chorley's current Local Plan has been retained within the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan. Given that a 15-minute drive is considered an acceptable catchment area for accessing allotments, the proposed site would serve not only Adlington but also surrounding areas within the Borough.

#### **Habitat Bank for BNG:**

With BNG now a mandatory planning requirement, the Council is considering the site for use as a habitat bank to support local off-site biodiversity units.

The below plan shows The Central Lancashire draft policy map for Adlington 2023-2041 (2025).



In February 2023, Redrow submitted representations during the 'Preferred Options' consultation (Regulation 18), where we contested the exclusion of the site from the Local Plan. This decision was made despite the Chorley Site Assessment profile, published as part of the Part One consultation, indicating that the site is suitable, available and achievable.

Under the emerging Local Plan, Adlington is classified as a Tier 3 settlement (Urban Local Service Centre). These settlements cater to local needs by offering a limited range of facilities and services. They are urban in nature and benefit from good transport connections to nearby towns, particularly Chorley and Leyland.

In accordance with policy HS7 in the emerging Local Plan, a minimum of 30% affordable housing should be provided on site.

In line with Policy HS6 in the emerging Local Plan, all dwellings are required to be built to M4(2) standards, with at least 4% of affordable dwellings required to be built to M4(3) standards.

## **Land Supply**

Chorley's latest Five-Year housing land supply result, measured under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), indicated an annual requirement of 506 dwellings for the period 2024-2029, totalling 2,539 homes. However, Chorley was only able to identify a supply of 1,174 units, representing a deliverable housing supply of just 2.9 years.

Under the Standard Method in the adopted NPPF, the annual requirement has increased from 506 to 564 units, reflecting a 10% rise in demand.

In the Regulation 19 publication of the Central Lancashire Local Plan, a draft housing need of 23,652 homes has been identified across the region for the period 2023-2041, equating to an annual requirement of 1,314 units. Specifically for Chorley, the required target is 6,012 homes or 334 units per year. This is 172 units fewer than the target set out in the adopted Local Plan, and when compared to the new standard method requirement of 564 units per year, represents a required increase of 69%.

However, under the transitional arrangements of the revised NPPF, local plans that have reached regulation 19 stage may proceed to examination under the previous NPPF, provided their draft housing requirement is at least 80% of the updated local housing need. Central Lancashire's draft annual housing requirement is 1,314 dwellings, compared to a revised need of 1,643 dwellings under the new NPPF. This represents approximately 79.98% of the updated figure and therefore falls marginally below the 80% threshold. While it has not yet been confirmed whether the plan will proceed to examination, it is likely that it will, despite narrowly missing the transitional criteria (it will likely be rounded up).

Should Central Lancashire's Local Plan be adopted under the previous NPPF, it is likely that the plan would need to be updated in the near future to align with the new NPPF, particularly with regard to the revised housing need figures and affordable housing. While this update could be addressed initially through the now mandatory annual five-year housing supply statements, a full review of the plan may still be required to ensure compliance with broader policies in the NPPF.

## Green Belt Review

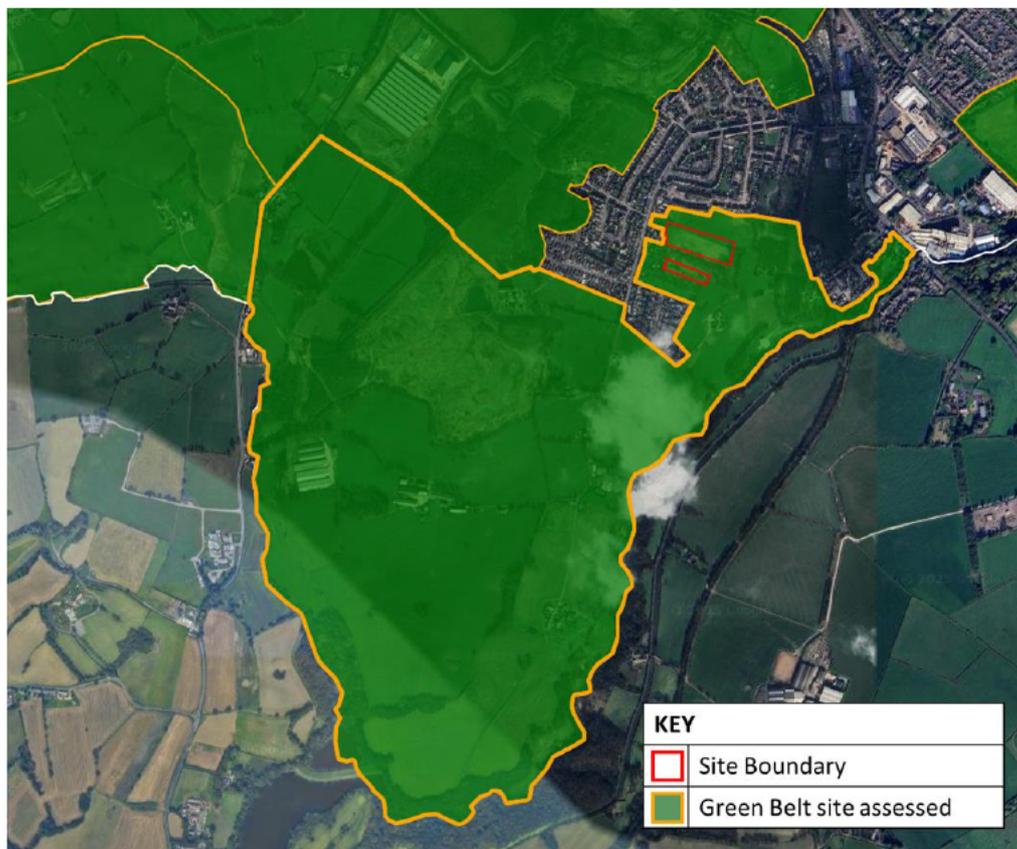
A Green Belt Assessment was undertaken in October 2022 as part of the central Lancashire Local Plan process. The site, forming part of a wider area (ref P32) was reviewed as follows:

Parcel	Location	Purpose 1	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4	Purpose 5	Highest contribution
P32	Chorley Council, southwest of Adlington	Limited / no	Moderate	Significant	Limited / no	Equal	1 Significant

The prevention of town coalescence (purpose 2) and the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment (purpose 3) are likely to be key considerations in evaluating the potential for releasing this land from the Green Belt. However, the former safeguarded area is, to a large extent, physically contained by development, established hedgerows, and the River Douglas to the west, which served as a strong natural boundary.

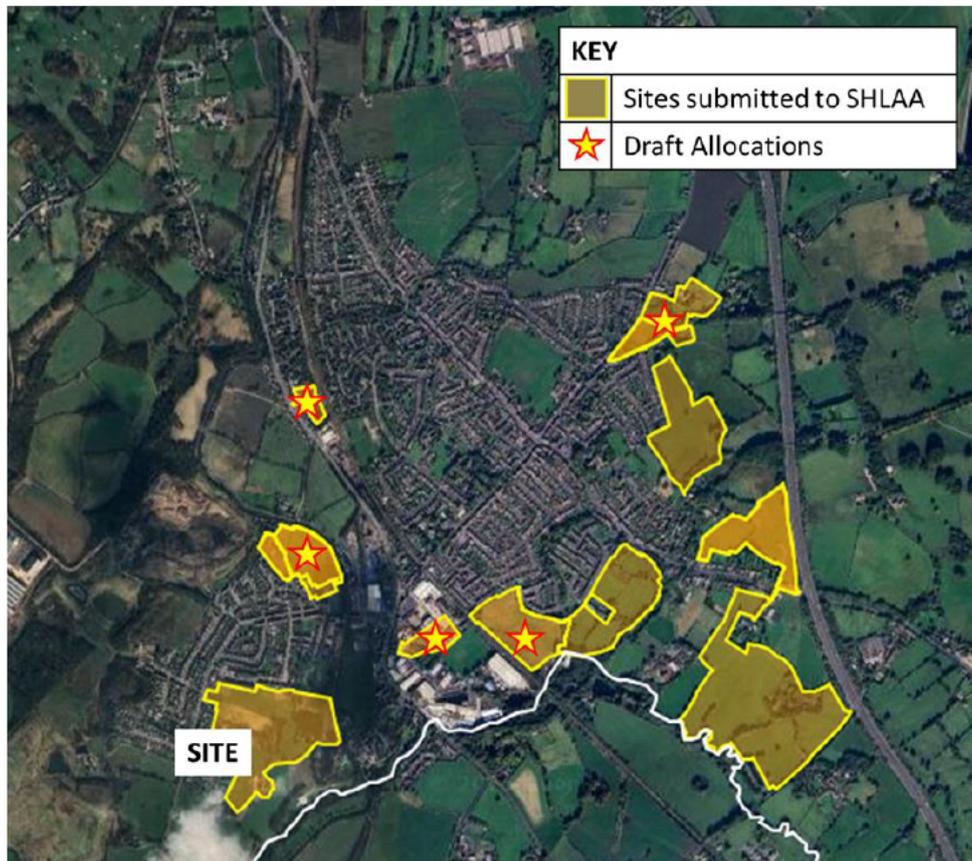
The land to the south, also included within the same assessment parcel, clearly contributes to the Green Belt purposes. However, grouping the previously safeguarded land with this southern portion overlooks the clear distinction that the safeguarded land, when considered independently, does not serve the fundamental purpose of the Green Belt. Instead, it could be more accurately described as 'grey belt', or an infill site.

The below plan shows the entirety of the site assessed in the Green Belt review.



## Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

The plan below shows the sites submitted to the Central Lancashire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in 2019, along with those that were subsequently allocated as draft housing allocations.



Among the remaining unallocated sites, the land to the east of Common Lane emerges as the most logical candidate for development. Unlike the sites, which are predominantly urban extensions, the Common Lane site functions more as an infill opportunity. Notably, all sites received the same Green Belt score in the Green Belt assessment. However, while the others lie entirely within the Green Belt, the Common Lane site is designated as Green Infrastructure, an allocation typically subject to fewer development restrictions than Green Belt land.

Although the site is currently the only proposed Green Infrastructure allocation within Adlington, development should still be considered if it aligns with local policy objectives and demonstrates how it can complement or enhance the sites' green infrastructure value. For instance, excluding the land designated for the cemetery and allotments from any development footprint, while contributing to their delivery and providing pedestrian connections, could be viewed as supporting and enhancing the intended uses.

The primary remaining constraint would be the Council's proposed use of the site for off-site BNG credits. If the Council is determined to pursue BNG on this land—particularly given that they own both the majority of the land and the access, then the parcels currently under Redrow's option would have little to no prospect of being bought forward for development.

## **Conclusion/Way Forward**

Despite the progression of the Central Lancashire Local Plan, the ongoing shortage of housing makes it clear that the Council will need to identify additional land for development. Within Adlington, this particular site appears to have the strongest potential for development, given its previously safeguarded allocation, its location within the settlement boundaries, and its exclusion from the Green Belt.

As the site does not strongly contribute to any Green Belt purposes, it could reasonably be classified as "grey belt" land. Consequently, it should be prioritised for release over designated Green Belt areas.

However, as previously mentioned, the Council remains the primary landowner, meaning the progression of these sites is entirely dependent on their willingness to prioritise development over the proposed off-site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) use.

Sophie Eaton

09/04/2025