

**SITE NAME:** Chapel Lane, Longton

**LPA:** South Ribble Council

**Date:** April 2025

## Case for development

Story Homes controls land at Chapel Lane, Longton. This site is part of the proposed land to be allocated for Housing under Policy H3.3, at 15.19 hectares and a yield of c. 270 dwellings. Story Homes supports the allocation of this site.

Appendix 4 of the Local Plan (page 226) sets out the 'Key Development Considerations' for the site and the SHELAA update (January 2025) considers the overall allocation (in various parcels). The majority of the site, which Story Homes controls, is considered under Site Profile 21.

Overall, Story Homes has no concerns regarding delivery of the site. Story Homes held pre-application discussions with South Ribble Council in October 2024, a request for EIA Screening has been advanced, and the site has been subject to public consultation. Story Homes has also undertaken engagement with key stakeholders to discuss bringing forward a high-quality residential scheme in this location. They intend to submit a planning application in Spring 2025.

Story Homes aims to commence development in winter 2026 with the below contribution towards the overall housing delivery for the parcel which it controls.

Anticipated start date	5-year delivery period					6+ year delivery period						
	Forecast completions*					Forecast completions						
	25/ 26	26/ 27	27/ 28	28/ 29	29/ 30	30 /31	31/ 32	32/ 33	33/ 34	34/ 35	35/ 36	37/ 38
Winter 2026	0	0	40	40	40	22						

\*Completion reporting runs 1 April to 31 March each year

## Wording of Housing Allocations Policies

Notwithstanding the above support for Policy H3.3, Story Homes is concerned around the need for criteria 2 and 3 at the bottom of each of the Site Allocations Tables. The Council has added these two further criteria as conditional points that *must* be addressed.

For ease of reference, we have extracted the relevant text below:

2. For allocations identified by an asterisk (\*), key development considerations for these sites are set out within Appendix 4. Development meeting these considerations will be supported.

3. For allocations identified by a #, a wintering bird survey is required alongside any planning application in accordance with Policy EN7 to provide certainty that the loss of functionally linked land within the site allocation will not adversely affect the integrity of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites.

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Criterion 2 refers the reader to 'Development Considerations' in Appendix 4. Story Homes supports the cross reference to Appendix 4 (subject to specific content comments on Appendix 4 below) but does object to the second sentence "*Development meeting these considerations will be supported*". This qualification statement is not justified for two reasons. Firstly, the Council must be satisfied that all allocations are deliverable or developable at this stage regardless. Secondly, the Appendix 4 schedules are only very broad 'considerations', and not prerequisites to the granting of permission. As such, there is no need to include the second sentence under criterion 2.

Criterion 3 requires a wintering bird survey for allocations marked with a #. This is applied to land at Chapel Lane, Longton. As a matter of principle, a wintering bird survey could be one of many surveys required to support a planning application. We therefore consider that this criterion is deleted, as inclusion in the list of allocations suggest it is a higher priority than other considerations. It duplicates content in the Appendix 4 schedules in any case and is therefore not justified.

### **Development Considerations Chapel Lane, Longton**

The Appendix 4 'Development Considerations' profile for Chapel Lane, Longton is included at page 226 of the Local Plan. Separate to the general commentary around considering ecological impact (row 8 of the Table), row 3 refers to concerns regarding the loss of functionally linked land and a need for a wintering bird survey, to understand impact on the integrity of SPA and Ramsar sites.

#### **Extract: Appendix 4: Chapel Lane**

##### **Designated Sites for Nature Conservation (EN7)**

To provide certainty that the loss of functionally linked land within the site allocation will not adversely affect the integrity of SPA and Ramsar sites, a wintering bird survey is required alongside any planning application in accordance with Policy EN7.

Story Homes does not consider that the inclusion of the above text is justified. The updated SHELAA Site profile 21 (SHELAA ref: 19S110 (19S330x)) considers all constraints on site and concludes that the only constraint could be that relating to surface water (common on mostly every site and addressed adequately in the SHELAA report).

The SHELAA report, does, however, state that HRA and Appropriate Assessment have both been undertaken as part of the overall assessment process. The outcome of those assessments, as set out in the SHELAA summary (extract below), is that only a Construction Environmental Management Plan is required, not a wintering bird survey.

### **Extract from 2024 SHELAA Update for Chapel Lane, Longton**

#### **Sustainability Appraisal Summary**

The only significant negative effect for this site is flood risk, remaining negative effects are uncertain. Other effects are mostly positive or neutral, particularly in housing, transport and social infrastructure.

#### **Habitats Regulations Assessment**

The HRA Screening identified potential adverse effects from the development of all site allocations in relation to noise, vibration and lighting disturbance of functionally linked land (land that plays a vital role in supporting the biodiversity and ecological processes of nearby internationally protected Habitat Sites). An Appropriate Assessment was undertaken to assess these effects in more detail and recommended in order to provide certainty that there would be no adverse effects, a Construction Environmental Management Plan is required for all site allocations to demonstrate the provision of suitable best practice construction measures. In response to this recommendation, this requirement has been added to Policy EN14 and will apply to any future planning applications on all site allocations.

Story Homes therefore considers the Local Plan places an unnecessary weight to an unjustified need for a wintering bird survey in respect of land at Chapel Road, Longton. Policy HS3.3 and Appendix 4 should be updated accordingly. This is a matter that will be addressed via the planning application process and is not central to plan-making in the allocation of the site.

#### **Summary**

Story Homes supports the allocation of land at Chapel Lane, Longton. It is a site which is well advanced in the planning process, backed by a developer and capable of delivery within the first 5 years. Subject to the amendments above, the Local Plan is sound in respect of this allocation.

#### **Supporting Documents**

- Development Framework document prepared by Pegasus