

Planning Support Statement

Land adjacent to Rylstone House, Catterall Lane,
Catterall, PR3 0PA

Permission in Principle Application for
the erection of 1 dwelling.

Version: 1

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This planning application has been prepared by JWPC Chartered Town Planners on behalf of our clients, Mr and Mrs Thomas. The application site is located off Catterall Lane and is directly adjacent to the dwellings of Rylstone House and Rustic House. The site is approximately 1,700 sqm.
- 1.2. The application seeks consent for permission in principle for the erection of one dwelling at the site. The permission in principle route separates the matter of principle from the technical detail of the development. This application is for the first stage (permission in principle) and will be followed by a second application for technical details consent, which is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.
- 1.3. The scope of a permission in principle is limited to the consideration of the:
- Location;
 - Land use; and
 - Amount of development.
- 1.4. This Statement will set out how and why the development is acceptable with regard to the above considerations. At technical details stage, it is the Applicant's intention to present plans for a three-bedroom, bungalow-style residential dwelling of approximately 300 sqm which will be sympathetic in terms of siting, design and scale to the other properties along Catterall Lane. The Applicants are a couple in their sixties, one of whom has restricted mobility. They live locally and will occupy the dwelling themselves as they intend to create a home designed to cater for their day-to-day needs. They also intend to incorporate sustainable design features and other ecologically responsible aspects.
- 1.5. The requirements for a valid permission in principle application are set out in Article 5D of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended). The requirements are: a completed application form; a plan which identifies the land to which the application relates, drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of north; and the correct application fee. The above information has been included as part of the application and so it can be considered as valid.

2. Site Characteristics

2.1. The site is a level parcel of land located off Catterall Lane and covers an area of approximately 1,700 sqm. The site forms a gap between the two residential dwellings of Rustic House and Rylstone House. It is an individual parcel of land and has not been used for agricultural or any other economic activity for many years.

2.2. The below aerial image shows the development context of Catterall Lane. The site is approximately 0.77km from the urban boundary of Catterall. Due to its close proximity to the urban area, there are many other residential properties close to the application site. These include:

- Two dwellings immediately adjacent to the site;
- An additional nine dwellings to the south west;
- An additional eight dwellings to the north east; and
- A group of existing and approved developments that lie adjacent to the existing wastewater treatment further north east along Catterall Lane.



2.3. In 2015 a planning appeal¹ allowed the creation of two new dwellings close to the application site, at Rylstone Farm. In paragraphs 13 and 14 of the decision letter the Inspector referred to the location and accessibility, stating:

13. Whilst Catterall Lane does not have any pavements, and only has street lights close to the A6, the road is not unduly narrow, is relatively straight allowing good visibility of pedestrians, and/or cars, and is lightly trafficked. As such, I do not consider the lack of pavements would be a deterrent to walking or cycling along this road.

14. A greater range of services and facilities are available in Garstang which is approximately 4km away. There are regular bus services to Garstang, Preston and Lancaster available from bus stops within walking distance of the site. This means that these facilities can be accessed by means other than the private car.

2.4. As concurred by the planning Inspector, the site is in a good location for accessibility to the services within Catterall and Garstang. Since the appeal decision, the services in Catterall have developed further and now the settlement benefits from nine commercial units, opened in 2019, which include a Co-op convenience store as well as restaurants, takeaways, pubs and bars.

2.5. In addition to the close proximity of Catterall, there is a public right of way from the site that allows access to the settlement of Churchtown around 1.5km to the north of the site on foot. Churchtown offers a primary school, place of worship, café and a public house.

¹ PINS REF APP/U2370/W/15/3078128

3. Planning Policy

Adopted Wyre Local Plan 2011–2031 (Adopted February 2019)

- 3.1. Policy SP1 sets out an overall planning strategy for the Borough which will be one of growth within environmental limits. The policy confirms that the overarching aim is to meet the housing needs of all sections of the community and raise economic performance while minimising net environmental impact. The policy confirms that the Rural Service Centres including Catterall are expected to supply 1,626 dwellings, which is 18.5% of the housing growth for the plan period. The other undefined rural settlements are expected to provide 421 dwellings or 4.8% of the housing growth. Policy SP1 states that in these rural areas individual opportunities which will help diversify the rural economy will be supported where they are appropriate in scale and in accordance with other policies where relevant.
- 3.2. Policy SP2 refers to achieving sustainable development in the Borough and states that all development should contribute positively to the overall physical, social, environmental and economic character of the area in which the development is located. The policy confirms that in order to deliver sustainable communities economic growth should be facilitated in rural areas and housing provision should ensure to meet the needs of all sections of the community.
- 3.3. Policy SP4 aims to protect the countryside and manage development in a way that supports rural communities and the rural economy whilst maintaining its intrinsic character and beauty. Development which adversely impacts on the open and rural character of the countryside will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that the harm to the open and rural character is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm.
- 3.4. Policy CDMP1 and the associated supporting text to the policy refers to environmental protection. It explains that development brings many benefits including providing new housing. The policy states that development will be permitted where in isolation it can be demonstrated that the development is compatible with adjacent existing uses and it would not lead to significant adverse effects on health, amenity, safety and the operation of surrounding uses and for occupants or users of the development itself.

3.5. The Wyre Local Plan places an emphasis on making provision for properties suitable for older people which will contribute towards freeing up family homes for young families and help to meet the needs of an ageing population. Paragraph 7.1.4 in particular states that:

“It [the Local Plan] seeks to ensure delivery of housing which is appropriate or can be made appropriate for older people or people with restricted mobility. The evidence shows an ageing population and thus it is appropriate to ensure that a proportion of new housing is suitable or capable of being made suitable for older persons to enable independent living for longer. Independent living is also important for people with restricted mobility which in turn is important for a cohesive and integrated society.”

3.6. Through Policy HP2, the Local Plan therefore aims to establish a more balanced housing offer to meet the needs of young and older persons.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.7. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. At the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development that should be applied in decision-taking. The current iteration of the Framework continues to place the requirement to achieve sustainable development at the heart of the planning system. This means achieving three ‘overarching objectives’: economic, social and environmental.

3.8. Paragraph 10 confirms that there is a firm presumption in favour of sustainable development. This principle is enshrined within Paragraph 11, which for decision-taking means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay; or
- Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, grant planning permission unless:
 - I. Policies in the Framework for the protection of areas or assets provide clear reason for refusal; or:

- II. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

- 3.9. Where Paragraph 11 d.) 1. refers to policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets, these are defined in Footnote 6 as: habitat sites and/or designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Green Belt, local green space, AONBs, a national park or a defined heritage coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.
- 3.10. Paragraph 12 confirms that although the statutory status of the Development Plan normally takes primacy in the decision-making process. Local Planning Authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date Development Plan *‘if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the Plan should not be followed’*.
- 3.11. Chapter 4 of the Framework relates to decision-making and requires Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions in a *‘positive and creative way’*; it states that decision-makers at every level should seek, where possible, to approve applications for sustainable development.
- 3.12. Paragraph 59 seeks to support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 3.13. Section 5 of the Framework sets out the Government’s objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. It is set out in Paragraph 59 that in order to support this objective, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. Paragraph 68 confirms that small- and medium-sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built out relatively quickly. Part (c) of the paragraph states that LPAs should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

3.14. Paragraph 73 sets out that local planning authorities should identify and annually update a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted policies. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of:

- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
- b) 10% where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan, to account for any fluctuations in the market during that year; or
- c) 20% where there has been significant under-delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply.

3.15. Paragraph 78 refers to rural housing and states that housing should be located where it will enhance and maintain the vitality of rural communities. The paragraph states that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especial where this will support local services.

3.16. Section 13 of the NPPF refers to protecting Green Belt land where it is set out that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. This can be compared with the Wyre Local Plan (2011-2031) description of the countryside area, that it is "the open and rural character of the countryside is intrinsic to the identity of and 'sense of place' in Wyre". Paragraph 143 confirms that new buildings in the Green Belt are inappropriate development which is by definition harmful to the Green Belt. Paragraph 145 sets out development exceptions to this rule, i.e. development that is not inappropriate and therefore not harmful to the Green Belt. One of the exceptions is 'limited infilling in villages'.

Five-Year Housing Land Supply Position

- 3.17. The concept of an Annual Position Statement (APS) was introduced in the National Planning Policy Framework in July 2018 and is a process that local planning authorities should follow if they wish to confirm their five-year housing land supply (5YHLS). Paragraph 73 of the Framework confirms that a 10% buffer should be applied to the housing land supply figure where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate the supply through an annual position statement.
- 3.18. Despite this, it was established in the adoption of the Wyre Local Plan (28 February 2019) that a 20% buffer should be applied to the housing land requirement due to the fact that the housing target had not been met in any year since 2011, as confirmed in paragraph 7.2.7 of the Wyre Local Plan.
- 3.19. However, in July 2019, shortly after the adoption of the Local Plan, Wyre Council submitted an APS which was successful in fixing the 5YHLS position in the district until October 2020, applying a 10% buffer.
- 3.20. A year later, Wyre Council claim to have a 5.9 year supply when calculated using their APS submission which was submitted in July 2020. However, on 27 October 2020 the Council received confirmation from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) that it could no longer confirm its 5YHLS by using an APS. The Inspector's Report concluded that 434 dwellings should be removed from the five-year supply, reducing the overall supply to 3, 121 units against the requirement of 3,157 which equates to a 4.94 year supply when applying a 10% buffer.
- 3.21. In response to the Inspectors report the Council is now using only a 5% buffer. In the APS report, the annual requirement and shortfall since the start of the plan period was not challenged and is therefore 2, 870 dwellings. Adding only a 5% buffer increases the overall requirement to 3,014 dwellings. The Inspector has concluded that the overall supply for Wyre is 3,121 units, just 107 dwellings above the requirement. In terms of years' supply this amounts to just 5.18 years.

- 3.22. The recent history is therefore one of progressive decline in the ability to demonstrate a suitable five-year land supply. The buffer has been reduced from the figure of 20% adopted in para 7.2.7 of the Wyre Local Plan, to 10% in the latest APS (giving a 4.94 year supply) and now to 5% (giving a 5.18 year supply).
- 3.23. This was the position 9 months ago and, unless the historical trend of under supply has been dramatically reversed recently, the current position if tested today would almost certainly reveal a failure to meet the five-year supply target even using a buffer of only 5%.

4. Planning Considerations

- 4.1. The scope of a permission in principle application is limited to the location, land use, and amount of development. This section will explain how the development is acceptable and why permission in principle consent should be granted for the development.

Location

- 4.2. The application site is located close to the urban boundary of Catterall. It is in a good location to provide sustainable access to the services within Catterall, Churchtown and Garstang which has been acknowledged in a previous appeal decision² which stated:

13. Whilst Catterall Lane does not have any pavements, and only has street lights close to the A6, the road is not unduly narrow, is relatively straight allowing good visibility of pedestrians, and/or cars, and is lightly trafficked. As such, I do not consider the lack of pavements would be a deterrent to walking or cycling along this road.

14. A greater range of services and facilities are available in Garstang which is approximately 4km away. There are regular bus services to Garstang, Preston and Lancaster available from bus stops within walking distance of the site. This means that these facilities can be accessed by means other than the private car.

- 4.3. The site is considered a suitable and attractive walking distance from the urban area of Catterall, including to the new commercial park that opened in 2019 which offers nine new units including restaurants and a convenience store.
- 4.4. In addition to the well-connected location of the site, the site represents a small gap between the existing built form along Catterall Lane and the erection of one dwelling in this location is therefore defined as infill development. The Wyre Local Plan is silent on infill development within the countryside area. However, it is well established in national policy (for example section 13 of the NPPF which relates to protecting Green Belt land) that limited infilling should not be considered as inappropriate development and therefore by definition is not harmful.

² PINS REF APP/U2370/W/15/3078128

- 4.5. On the ground it is clear that development on the application site will not cause harm to the openness and rural character of the countryside as it will fit well into the existing development that is surrounding the site. The development is therefore in accordance with Policy SP4 which aims to guard against development which will adversely impact on the open and rural character of the countryside. The proposals are also in accordance with the NPPF when read as whole, which is a material consideration in decision-making.

The Application site lies adjacent to two existing dwellings on Catterall Lane



The erection of 1 dwelling at the site off Catterall Lane will not adversely impact on the open and rural character of the countryside

- 4.6. When taking into account the Inspector's findings in assessing the evidence for the APS submission, the Council can currently demonstrate 5.18 years of housing land supply. The LPA have met the minimum requirement of housing land as set out in Paragraph 73 of the NPPF. However the housing supply figures equate to just 107 dwellings over this minimum requirement. It is clear that the Local Planning Authority do not have a strong surplus of housing land and the erection of one dwelling will help to meet the needs of a local older-aged couple who require a home in this area suitable for their needs. The benefits associated with the delivery of this new home represent a material consideration in the determination of this planning application and this should be balanced against any limited or perceived conflict with the Development Plan, as set out in Paragraph 12 of the NPPF.

- 4.7. The proposals are nevertheless consistent with Local Plan Policies, including Policy SP1 which sets out that the overarching aim of the plan is to meet the housing needs of all sections of the community. In addition, the proposals are in accordance with Policies SP2, SP4, and CDMP1 and therefore the principle of development should be considered as acceptable in this instance.

Land Use and Amount of Development

- 4.8. The site is an independent parcel of land of approximately 1,700 sqm off Catterall Lane. The use of the land as residential development will be sympathetic to the neighbouring uses which are also residential.
- 4.9. The amount of development proposed will be sympathetic in terms of siting and scale to the surrounding development on Catterall Lane.
- 4.10. The principle of development in terms of land use and amount of development is therefore acceptable and in accordance with Policy SP2 which states new development should contribute positively to the character of the area. In addition to this, the proposals are in accordance with Policy CDMP1 which considers environmental protection and states that development will be permitted where in isolation it can be demonstrated that the development is compatible with adjacent existing uses and it would not lead to significant adverse effects on existing or future occupants.



The erection of one dwelling at the site will be sympathetic to the surrounding residential development adjacent to and surrounding the site

5. Summary

- 5.1. This application seeks consent for permission in principle for the erection of one dwelling at the site adjacent to Rylstone House, Catterall Lane, Catterall. The permission in principle route separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. This application forms the first stage (permission in principle) and will be followed by a second application for 'technical details consent' stage when the detailed development proposals are assessed. The scope of permission in principle is limited to Location, Land use, and Amount of Development.
- 5.2. It is clear from recent findings (as set out in the PINS APS report) that from evidence presented 9 months ago, Wyre Council was only able to demonstrate the minimum requirement for housing land as set out in the Framework by a very small margin. The Framework seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and the ability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply should not be seen as a maximum supply. The fact that the planning authority can demonstrate the minimum requirement for housing land does not take away from the presumption in favour of development that lies at the heart of the planning system. Given this, any proposals to provide development to meet the housing needs of the local community should be given great weight in decision-making.
- 5.3. This Planning Statement has set out that the proposed development is acceptable. In particular, the principle of development should be supported due to the sustainable location of the proposed development which is close to the urban boundary of Catterall and the services offered there. The development is in accordance with Policy SP4 as it will not cause an adverse impact on the open and rural character of the countryside due to the infill nature of the development and its position within the context of the other residential properties along Catterall Lane. In addition to this, the proposals are in accordance with Policy CDMP1 which considers environmental protection and states that development will be permitted where in isolation it can be demonstrated that the development is compatible with adjacent existing uses and it would not lead to significant adverse effects on existing or future occupants.



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