

Report Title	<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</b>
Meeting	<b>BARROWFORD AND WESTERN PARISHES COMMITTEE</b>
Meeting Date	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025</b>
Report Author	<b>NEIL WATSON</b>
Directorate	<b>PLACE</b>
Lead Executive Member(s)	<b>COUNCILLOR L. WHIPP</b>
Wards Affected	<b>BARROWFORD AND PENDLESIDE</b>
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	<b>PUBLIC</b>
Appendices (if any)	<b>NONE</b>

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To determine the attached planning application.

## **Barrowford and Western Parishes September 2025**

**Application Ref:** 25/0449/PIP

**Proposal:** Permission in Principle: Erection of up to 2 no. dwellings.

**At** Land to The North East Of Ing Farm, Colne Road, Barrowford, Lancashire

**On behalf of:** Mr and Mrs P Leeds

**Date Registered:** 08.07.2025

**Expiry Date:** 12.08.2025

**Case Officer:** Neil Watson

### **Site Description and Proposal**

The application site comprises part of a grassed field to the north-east of Ing Farm, a detached bungalow fronting Colne Road. The site lies between Ing Farm and Ing Farm Barn, and occupies an edge-of-settlement position, beyond the defined settlement boundary of Colne. It is designated as Green Belt and open countryside in the Pendle Local Plan.

To the south-east, the site is bounded by Wanless Water and faces Grenfell Gardens, a modern residential development comprising two- and three-storey housing and apartments. To the north-east lies Barrowford Reservoir, an open waterbody within the wider rural setting.

The application seeks Permission in Principle (PiP) for the erection of up to two dwellings. Under the PiP regime, the scope of assessment is strictly limited to three matters: location, land use, and amount. All technical and design matters, including access, layout, and appearance, fall to be considered at the Technical Details Consent (TDC) stage.

### **Relevant Planning History**

No relevant planning history.

### **Consultee Response**

#### **Highways**

The Highway Authority raises no objection to the principle of development for up to two dwellings. Key points include:

- A new access would be required onto Colne Road, secured through a Section 278 agreement.
- Visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m in both directions would be required to meet highway safety standards for a 40mph road.
- Further details, including access design, surface water drainage, and EV charging, would need to be addressed at the Technical Details stage.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) would be required due to known speeding issues in the area.

**Parish Council:** This site falls within the Greenbelt which has its own policy and strict rules on development within the Greenbelt. The Greenbelt between Barrowford and Colne has a primary function of stopping urban sprawl and ribbon development merging towns of Colne & Barrowford

and protecting the setting and openness of the Canal Corridor and Barrowford Locks a Grade II listed structures. The development of the former college site outside the Greenbelt on the Colne boundary created a housing estate abutting this land separated only by the boundary between Barrowford and Colne Wanless Beck. The proposed development will create two dwellings between the existing first dwellings within Barrowford, Ing Farm and Barn and the new development outside the Greenbelt in Colne and will completely remove the separation between Colne and Barrowford at this crucial Gateway into Barrowford and the Canal Corridor. If Development in Principle is permitted at this site overriding the Greenbelt policy it would significantly diminish the purpose of the Greenbelt and marginalise its role and function on other sites adjacent to this. The prospect of setting a precedent of the use of Planning in Principle to circumvent Greenbelt Policy could have wider implications to in the Borough as a whole. Ribband Development within the Greenbelt could be created with no redress to the core principles of the Greenbelt.

### **United Utilities**

No objection in principle. Surface water must be managed sustainably, with priority given to infiltration or discharge to a watercourse. Any future layout must avoid conflict with existing underground assets.

### **Environment Health:**

No objection. Recommends submission of a Construction Method Statement (CMS) at TDC stage to address noise, vibration, dust, working hours, and contingency for unexpected contamination.

**Environmental Agency:** No answer.

### **Public Response**

Letters were sent to nearby residents and over three objections have been received. The material concerns raised include:

- **Residential amenity:** Potential loss of privacy, light, and outlook; disruption from construction activities.
- **Character and design:** Concern over potential two-storey dwellings being out of keeping with adjacent bungalows.
- **Ecology and biodiversity:** Presence of bats, owls, deer, and kingfishers; potential impact on habitats along Wanless Water.
- **Trees and landscape:** Uncertainty about existing tree protection; concern over vegetation loss near the watercourse.
- **Highways:** Objections regarding safety, access arrangements, and increased traffic on Colne Road.
- **Consultation:** Alleged gaps in neighbour notification; requests for re-consultation and extended comment period.

### **Relevant Planning Policy**

The determination of a Permission in Principle needs to be considered set against the development plan.

## Development Plan

Pendle Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy Policy SDP1 takes a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Policy ENV1 seeks to ensure a particularly high design standard that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area and its setting. It states that the impact of new developments on the natural environment, including biodiversity, should be kept to a minimum.

Policy ENV2 identifies the need to protect and enhance the heritage and character of the Borough and quality of life for its residents by encouraging high standards of quality and design in new development. It states that siting and design should be in scale and harmony with its surroundings.

Policy LIV1 indicates that until a part 2 Local Plan is adopted sustainable sites adjacent to a settlement that make a positive contribution to the supply of housing land will be supported.

## National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”)

**11.** Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For **plan-making** this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas), unless:
  - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area<sup>7</sup>; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date<sup>8</sup>, granting permission unless:
  - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance<sup>7</sup> provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination

**110.** The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

**115.** In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable

access to the site can be achieved for all users; c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code<sup>48</sup>; and d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

**154.** Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
  - i. mineral extraction;
  - ii. engineering operations;
  - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
  - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
  - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
  - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

**155.** The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed ;
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to [paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework] <sup>57</sup>; and
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

**156.** Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed on land released from the Green Belt through plan preparation or review <sup>58</sup>, or on sites in the Green Belt subject to a planning application <sup>59</sup>, the following contributions (‘Golden Rules’) should be made:

- a. affordable housing which reflects either: (i) development plan policies produced in accordance with paragraphs 67-68 of this Framework; or (ii) until such policies are in place, the policy set out in paragraph 157 below;
- b. necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and

c. the provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. New residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces.

**157.** Before development plan policies for affordable housing are updated in line with paragraphs 67-68 of this Framework, the affordable housing contribution required to satisfy the Golden Rules is 15 percentage points above the highest existing affordable housing requirement which would otherwise apply to the development, subject to a cap of 50% <sup>60</sup>. In the absence of a pre-existing requirement for affordable housing, a 50% affordable housing contribution should apply by default. The use of site-specific viability assessment for land within or released from the Green Belt should be subject to the approach set out in national planning practice guidance on viability.

**158.** A development which complies with the Golden Rules should be given significant weight in favour of the grant of permission.

The Glossary to the NPPF defines grey belt as:

For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

## **Officer Comments**

### **Principle of Development**

The application is made to establish the principle of development on the site. Issues such as traffic impact, loss of privacy, flooding etc are not matters relating to the principle of the development and would be for the technical details part of the process should Permission in Principle be granted.

The application seeks Permission in Principle for the erection of up to 2 dwellings on a site of less than 1 hectare. The key considerations at this stage are:

- Suitability of the Site for Residential Development:
- Appropriateness of Residential Use in principle in this location
- Whether the development is acceptable in the green belt as a matter of principle.

Pendle currently does not have a 5-year housing land supply, as noted in the most recent housing land supply assessment. This will be considered as part of the planning balance later in the report.

### **Development Plan**

The site is situated predominantly outside of the settlement boundary for Colne and Barrowford. The settlement boundary for Colne lies in close proximity to the east. There is housing immediately to the south and east. It lies in In principle it therefore complies with the thrust of policy LIV1.

Policy LIV 1 indicates that sustainable sites outside of the settlement can come forward for housing where they positively contribute to the supply of housing. The PIP does not deal with all aspects of what would normally be considered for an application such as design and access arrangements. These matters therefore cannot be considered at this in principle stage. The site lies next to a main road with a bus route immediately adjacent. There are also a range of services Colne and Barrowford which are in reasonable proximity to the site. In principle therefore the development is in a sustainable location for the purposes of LIV1.

The assessment of housing land supply for Pendle and whether it has a five year housing land supply is set against the new national housing targets which for Pendle is 334 units per annum. At present Pendle cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land. The PIP should therefore be assessed against paragraph 11 of the Framework that indicates permission should be granted for developments unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. This is referred to by the courts as the tilted balance.

There are exceptions to the application of the tilted balance where the application of policies that protect areas of assets of particular importance would provide a strong reason for refusing. These policies are specified in the Framework and include green belt and designated heritage assets.

### **Landscape Impact**

The site sits below the height of the adjacent highways and is framed by a hedge. It sits with housing on the south and east sides with a belt of trees to north and east. The land can be seen from approaches from the south along Colne Road. Whilst visible the land is not overtly prominent and with some landscaping a suitable scheme may be possible to devise. That would be a matter for the technical details stage but there is no overall landscape impact that would justify refusing the principle of development.

### **Impact on the Green Belt**

The site is located within the Green Belt. The NPPF presumes against inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances exist.

The NPPF is clear that inappropriate development is inherently harmful to the openness of Green Belt and should not be approved unless very special circumstances exist to outweigh this harm. The first issue is to establish whether any of the exceptions in the Framework apply to this development which is for new housing.

As detailed in the policy section above Para 154 sets out exceptions that are not harmful to green belt land. None of these are applicable to housing as applied to this scheme.

Other than paragraph 155, there are no other potential categories as set out in the Framework under which the development may be considered as not being inappropriate.

Paragraph 155 sets out other circumstances where development in the green belt may not be inappropriate development. Paragraph 155 relates to a recently established new national policy relating to development on grey belt land. No assessment of areas of grey belt land have been undertaken so the decision here needs to consider whether the land is grey belt. The agent has provided an assessment indicating that in their view the land is grey belt.

### **Grey Belt Land**

The revised NPPF defines 'grey belt land' as Green Belt land comprising previously developed land or land that does not strongly contribute to Green Belt purposes (a), (b), or (d), as set out in paragraph 143 of the Framework.

Paragraph 155 allows for potential development on grey belt land, provided it meets criteria such as not undermining remaining Green Belt purposes, demonstrating unmet need, being sustainably located, and adhering to the 'golden rules.' The applicant asserts this site's grey belt status to justify its development.

Pendle has not undertaken a grey belt assessment but is commissioning work on this currently. There is however a green belt study that has been adopted by the Council that looks into the characteristics of parcels of the green belt. The study is part of the documents at examination and there have been no objections to the method of assessing land parcels within it. The study can therefore help to assess whether the land is or is not grey belt. The role the site plays in terms of criteria a, b or d needs to be considered.

The glossary makes it clear that grey belt land does not include land in the green belt that strongly contributes to any one of the criteria a, b or c.

Criteria a, b and d are:

- (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;

The Pendle Green Belt Assessment ("the GBA") identifies the land as part of Parcel PO27. That Parcel consist of a wider area than the PIP site and this wider area runs to the west towards the town of Barrowford.

The conclusions of the adopted greenbelt study were that the wider parcel has the following impacts set against criteria a, b and d

A	=	Major
B	=	Major
D	=	Not applicable

#### **Criteria (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas**

The GBA assesses the whole of the parcel of land as a major contributor to purpose a. The site is a small part of the overall parcel and is at the eastern end of it. The land to the east has been developed for new housing. The site, alongside the wider parcel, does paly a strong role in preventing the sprawl of Colne which is already seen in the development of housing to the east. The findings of the adopted Green Belt study are still sound and reinforce this assessment for the individual site.

#### **Criteria (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;**

Parcel PO27 as a whole plays a major part in preventing the towns of Colne and Barrowford merging. As a whole it strongly contributes to criteria b.

The applicant however does not relate to the whole of parcel PO27. The basic premise put forward by the applicant is that this smaller site in itself does not play a major role in preventing the towns merging. I disagree with this. There is clear pressure, as can be demonstrated by other proposals, to develop on green belt land between the two towns. This site, if developed, would contribute to the two towns merging. Whilst I accept that this is a smaller section of land than the whole of PO27 the relatively small overall size of PO27 adds robustness to the conclusions of the study that fond the parcel itself plays a Major role in preventing the towns from merging

#### **Criteria (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;**

The towns are not classed as historic and the site plays no role in this criteria.



## Overall Impact on the Green Belt

The land is not grey belt. As such the exception in paragraph 155 would not apply and the development of this land would be inappropriate development.

## Other Comments

Comments have been received from the public relating to issues such as highway safety, privacy etc as outlined in the neighbour comments section. These are matters that would be for consideration at the technical details stage.

## Planning Balance

Pendle is in a situation where it cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land. The “tilted balance” under paragraph 11 of the NPPF must therefore be applied. The site is in a sustainable location and will provide housing that is needed in the Borough. It would not have unactable landscape impacts and other than the impact on the green belt there are no other known unacceptable impacts.

Th protection of the green belt is however a significant issue. On its own inappropriate development in the green belt would harm its openness and the NPPF reiterates that the Government places great importance on green belt and has an aim to keep it open and to prevent urban sprawl.

This form of inappropriate development will harm the green belt. The other benefits would not outweigh the harm which would be significant and is clearly demonstrable

## **Recommendation: Refuse Permission in Principle**

The development would represent inappropriate development in the green belt. Housing on the land would significantly and demonstrably harm the green belt contrary to Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Application Ref:** 25/0449/PIP

**Proposal:** Permission in Principle: Erection of up to 2 no. dwellings.

**At** Land to The North East Of Ing Farm, Colne Road, Barrowford, Lancashire  
**On behalf of:** Mr and Mrs P Leeds

## LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning Applications

**NW/MP**

**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025**