

**Item 4a**                    **12/00619/FUL**

**Case Officer**            **Helen Lowe**

**Ward**                      **Chorley North West**

**Proposal**                 **Erection of 1no. residential dwelling.**

**Location**                **Sunnyside 4 Common Bank Lane Chorley LancashirePR7**  
**1NR**

**Applicant**                **Mr J Waddilove**

**Consultation expiry: 1 August 2012**

**Application expiry: 17 August 2012**

### **Proposal**

1. This application proposes the erection of a single dwelling to the rear of 4 Common Bank Lane Chorley. The land on which the dwelling is to be erected has been recently used as an allotment area for the occupants of no. 4 Common Bank Lane. Other land that forms part of the application site forms the rear garden of no. 4.
2. The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Chorley. To the rear (north) of the application site lies the Chorley Sewage Treatment works and to the south Common Bank Industrial Estate. The Industrial Estate is well screened by mature trees. The application property is one of a group of five dwellings located on Common Bank Lane, the adjacent property to the west having only been recently constructed (application reference 08/00863/FUL). Land to the east is undeveloped fields, with a number of mature trees immediately adjacent to the site.

### **Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that this application is granted conditional full planning approval.

### **Main Issues**

4. The main issues for consideration in respect of this planning application are:
  - Principle of the development
  - Impact on the neighbours
  - Design
  - Trees and Landscape
  - Traffic and Transport

### **Representations**

5. No letters of objection have been received
6. No letters of support have been received

### **Consultations**

7. Lancashire County Council (Highways) raise no highway objection but would however request a suitably worded condition to be included as part of any grant of permission requiring the removal of the existing car port and parking spaces prior to the first occupation of the new property.
8. Chorley's Planning Policy Local Plan Review Policy HS6 is relevant to this application and criterion (f) requires applicants for residential development on previously undeveloped sites within settlements to demonstrate that there are no suitable allocated or previously developed sites available in the settlement before developing such sites. The applicant has not

undertaken this exercise, therefore this proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy HS6 (f). This approach is consistent with the NPPF, one of the core planning principles of which is to 'encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value.'

Core Strategy Policy 4: Housing Delivery also sets a brownfield target of at least 70% of all new housing.

9. This proposal is also contrary to the Council's Interim Policy on Private Residential Garden Development. This aims to prevent garden development in the Borough and was adopted in October 2010.
10. Chorley's Waste & Contaminated Land Officer Due to the proposed sensitive end-use (residential housing with garden) and the proximity of the development site to land that is potentially affected by contamination (sewage works), the development hereby permitted shall not commence until the applicant has submitted to and had approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a report to identify any potential sources of contamination on the site and where appropriate, necessary remediation measures.
11. Parks and Opens Spaces Manager There would be no justification for a request for a financial contribution towards the provision of public open space in the area.

### **Applicants Case**

12. The applicant's agent has prepared a planning statement in support of the planning application. They make the following comments:
  - Chorley's Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD confirms that there is still a significant requirement for additional dwellings to meet the borough's identified housing needs to 2026 and that part of this housing requirement is to be met from windfall housing development. The application proposals would not therefore result in the housing requirement for the Borough being materially exceeded;
  - The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD confirms that there is insufficient previously development land to meet the Borough's housing needs by virtue of it allocating greenfield land for housing development. It is not considered necessary to demonstrate that there are no suitable allocated or previously developed sites available in Chorley Town itself, especially for a scheme which comprises a single dwelling;
  - The only potential conflict with the Local Plan is that whilst there is a insufficient previously developed land within the Borough to meet its development needs, no evidence has been submitted with this application to demonstrate that there are no suitable allocated or previously developed sites available in Chorley Town itself, as required by Policy HS6(f). This requirement is not however consistent with the NPPF which is required for pre 2004 policies to be given any weight.
  - Whilst the NPPF seeks to encourage the effective re-use of previously developed land it does not preclude greenfield development. Moreover it does not require it to be demonstrated that there are no previously undeveloped sites within a settlement for a greenfield site to be granted planning permission. The key consideration is whether the development is sustainable. The requirement of policy HS6(f) would actually run contrary to this main objective of promoting sustainable development as it is considerably more onerous in a settlement such as Chorley town.
  - Policy HS3 of the draft Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD contains a provision that on previously undeveloped sites residential development will only be permitted if the applicant can demonstrate that there are no suitable allocated or previously developed sites available for residential development in the settlement, this requirement is at odds with the NPPF and as the document is also at a relatively early stage of production and there are outstanding objections to the policy, no weight can be given to this requirement.
  - The proposal conflicts with Policy HS4 of the draft Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD as this restricts residential development within private residential gardens to agricultural workers dwellings, replacement dwellings and building conversions. However, this policy applies a degree of restraint which is entirely at odds with the NPPF. The NPPF does not support an effective moratorium on the development of gardens and if that had been its intention then it would have been clearly stated. In

stead the clear objective of the NPPF is to allow development in sustainable locations and to make effective use of land and existing infrastructure. Given that gardens comprise a significant proportion of urban land they can provide a most appropriate source of land to meet these requirements and there is no suggestion in the NPPF that garden and cannot contribute to meeting these objectives in principle.

- It is acknowledged that the Interim Policy 'Private Residential Garden Development and the draft Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD preclude the development of gardens but little weight, if any at all can be given to these policy documents. In this regard the Interim Policy is an informal document which has no parent policy in the Development Plan, whilst the Site Allocations DPD is in draft form and there are unresolved objections to the relevant Policy. Recent SoS appeal decisions such as at Homeland and Deans Farm in Bishop's Cleeve, Gloucestershire (ref. APP/G1630/A/11/2146206 and APP/G1630/A/11/2148635) confirm that little weight is to be given to emerging LDF documents which have yet to progress past the examination stage.

## **Assessment**

### Principle of the development

13. The land on which the proposed dwelling is to be located is described as 'allotment' in the application and that it has been used for the growing of fruit and vegetables. In supporting information submitted with the application however, no argument is made that the application site should not be considered to form part of the domestic curtilage of the property and discussion on the Council's policies with regard to development on private residential gardens rests on the weight that should be attached to these policies, not that it is not applicable due to the land not being part of the private garden.
14. It appears from various aerial photographs that there have recently been glasshouses on the application site. In an application for a house extension submitted in 2006 (ref. 06/00785/FUL) the case officer describes the land as garden.
15. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the site is considered to be previously undeveloped land (greenfield). Even if the land were considered to fall outside of the residential curtilage of the application property the land would still be considered to be previously undeveloped.
16. Chorley Council has prepared a Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) as part of preparing the Local Development Framework. This has recently been out to public consultation, but an examination in public has not yet taken place. The emerging DPD contains a policy on Private Residential Garden Development (ref. HS4).
17. As the site is located within the settlement boundary the council's Interim Planning Policy on Private Residential Garden Development is relevant albeit superseded by Policy HS4. The policy states that:  
Within the boundaries of settlements applications for development within private residential gardens on sites not allocated in saved Local Plan Policy HS1 will only be permitted for:
  - Agricultural workers dwellings/dependents where there is a proven need and where they need to be located in a specific location.
  - Appropriately designed and located replacement dwellings where there is no more than one for one replacement.
  - The conversion and extension of buildings, provided they are not allocated for, currently used for, or their last use was for, employment uses and the conversion would have significant urban regeneration benefits.
18. The erection of the dwelling as proposed does not fall within any of the appropriate forms of development in private residential gardens as defined in both the Interim and emerging policies. However, the applicant has put forward a number of reasons as to why they consider that the interim policy should not apply (see paragraph 12)
19. With regard to the Council's policies on private residential garden development, it is

acknowledged that only limited weight can be attached to both the interim policy and the emerging Site Allocations and Development Management DPD. The interim policy and subsequent Policy HS4 has been adopted in order to address growing concerns regarding the impact of such developments across the Borough, such as compromised privacy, reduced garden size, impact on daylight and sun light traffic generation and changes to the character of the surrounding area.

20. The NPPF also states that the local planning authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens. The NPPF states that planning decisions should respond to local character and history and add to the quality of the area. The purpose of restricting garden development in the Borough is to ensure that the amenity and character of the local area is maintained and enhanced.
21. It should also be noted that Chorley's housing commitment can in the short term currently be met from sources other than Greenfield sites. The 2010 Central Lancashire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment indicates that Chorley has a 5 year deliverable housing supply, so there is no need to release such sites for housing development. Land with potential for housing is also identified for the 6-10 year and 11-15 year periods. The May 2012 Five Year Housing Supply 5.5 Statement for Chorley also updates this position. This indicates a 5.89 year deliverable housing supply for the period April 2012-March 2012. Therefore there is a five year supply with an additional buffer of 5% as required by the NPPF in Chorley. This site is located within Chorley Town as defined within the Core Strategy which will be the focus for growth within Chorley.
22. Therefore, the Borough's future housing requirements can be met from existing housing allocations, previously developed sites and safeguarded land, which are Greenfield land.
23. Policy HS6 (f) of the Local Plan Review also requires any application for residential development on garden or previously undeveloped land, irrespective of size, to include details which demonstrate to the Council that there are no suitable allocated or previously developed sites which are available in the settlement of Chorley, as defined in the Local Plan Review, that could accommodate the dwellings being proposed. The applicant has failed to submit any such assessment with the application and as such fails to comply with policy HS6. It is not accepted that this policy does not accord with the NPPF, as the NPPF seeks to encourage the re-use of previously developed land and therefore weight can be attached to this policy. However, the presumption in favour of sustainable development that underlies the NPPF should be accorded considerable weight, nor does the NPPF preclude the development of previously undeveloped land.
24. Additionally there have been a number of other applications and appeal decisions recently in local and wider area that have demonstrated that there are no plots of previously developed land available for the erection of a single dwelling.
25. One of the core principles of the NPPF is that development should be focussed in locations that are sustainable. It is considered that the site is located in a relatively sustainable location with easy access to public transport, amenities such as a supermarket and public house nearby and the means to access other amenities easily. The NPPF also states that development in sustainable locations should be approved without delay.
26. The Council's interim policy and emerging policy on r It is also accepted, particularly given the sustainability credentials of the site, that the release of this small, effectively windfall site, would not prejudice the overall delivery of housing elsewhere in the Borough. Residential garden development recognises that beyond the criteria listed within the policy, garden development may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, subject to material considerations, providing that it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the local area. The impact of the proposal on the character of the area is discussed below in paragraphs 28 and 29.

#### Impact on the neighbours

27. The proposed development would be single storey only, with a number of windows facing the

adjacent property to the north east (no. 3A Common Bank Lane). There is a 1.8-2m hedge along the boundary that would provide a good degree of screening and the proposed dwelling would be a minimum 8m from the boundary with no. 3A. It is not considered that the proposed dwelling would cause any undue harm to the occupants of the adjacent dwelling or the occupants of the existing dwelling. The proposed dwelling would be overlooked by the existing dwelling on the application site, however, the distances meet the Council's interface standards (10m from first floor habitable windows to boundary) and it is considered that the occupants of the new dwelling would have an acceptable level of amenity.

#### Design

28. The design and appearance of the dwelling proposed is considered to be in keeping with the dwelling at no. 4 Common Bank Lane. Although the application site is located in close proximity to the sewage treatment works and Common Bank Lane Industrial Estate, the immediate area has a semi-rural feel. The proposed dwelling would not be infilling a gap between other dwellings, however it would lie between the existing dwelling and the sewage works and in that respect would have a very limited impact upon the openness of the area. It would also be screened to some degree by the existing dwelling on the site.
29. Due to the unusual location of the site adjacent to the sewage works and in close proximity to the industrial estate it is considered that the general character of the area would remain unchanged and the impact on the street scene would be negligible.

#### Trees and Landscape

30. There are a number of mature trees bounding the south west of the application site and an arboricultural report has been submitted with the application. None of these trees are protected by a tree preservation order and are outside of the application site (and ownership of the applicant but are shown as belonging to the same applicant in 2006). The arboricultural report recommends a number of protection measures to protect the trees during the construction of the dwelling, such as protective fencing, hand excavation and no storage of materials. The majority of the development would take place outside of the root protection area. The trees in question make a valuable contribution to the character of the area and their retention is desirable, however it is considered that it has been demonstrated that they can be adequately protected during the course of the works. It is not considered necessary to protect the trees with a tree preservation order.

#### Traffic and Transport

31. No objections are raised by LCC Highways and there is adequate space on the site to accommodate a sufficient level of parking for the existing and proposed dwelling.

#### Overall Conclusion

32. The proposal does not comply with the Council's interim and emerging policies on development in private residential gardens. The applicant has also failed to demonstrate that there are no other suitable previously developed sites. However, members must be mindful of the weight that can be attached to these policies and recent appeal decisions. The application site is located in a sustainable location, Chorley Town Centre, which the Core Strategy identifies as the focus for growth. Due its unique relationship to the nearby sewage works and industrial estate the proposal would have a negligible impact on the character of the area.
33. It is also accepted, particularly given the sustainability credentials of the site, that the release of this small, effectively windfall site, would not prejudice the overall delivery of housing elsewhere in the Borough and would not harm the overall vision of the Core Strategy. The proposal is accordingly recommended for approval.

#### Planning Policies

National Planning Policies:  
NPPF

Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review  
Policies: GN1, GN5, HS4, HS6, HS21, TR4

## Planning History

06/00785/FUL Single storey rear and side extension Approved 6th September 2006

### Recommendation: Permit Full Planning Permission Conditions

1. The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.  
*Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.*
2. The approved plans are:

Plan Ref.	Received On:	Title:
JW-1001	18 June 2012	Existing and proposed site layout
JW-1002	18 June 2012	Proposed plans and elevations
JW-1003	18 June 2012	Location plan

*Reason: To define the permission and in the interests of the proper development of the site.*
3. During the construction period, all trees to be retained shall be protected by 1.2 metre high fencing as specified in paragraph 8.2.2 of British Standard BS5837:2005 at a distance from the tree trunk equivalent to the outermost limit of the branch spread, or at a distance from the tree trunk equal to half the height of the tree (whichever is further from the tree trunk), or as may be first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No construction materials, spoil, rubbish, vehicles or equipment shall be stored or tipped within the area(s) so fenced. All excavations within the area so fenced shall be carried out by hand.  
*Reason: To safeguard the trees to be retained and in accordance with Policy No. EP9 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*
4. No development shall take place until a desktop study and site walkover has been carried out to identify any potential sources of land contamination associated with this development site, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. If the potential contamination is confirmed further studies by the developer to assess the risks and identify and appraise the options for remediation will be required.  
*Reason: To protect the environment and to prevent harm to human health by ensuring that the land is remediated to an appropriate standard and in accordance with the NPPF.*
5. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until full details of the colour, form and texture of all hard ground- surfacing materials (notwithstanding any such detail shown on previously submitted plans and specification) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in conformity with the approved details.  
*Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in the interest of the visual amenity of the area and to prevent an undue increase in surface water runoff in accordance with Policy Nos. GN5 and HS4, of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*
6. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until full details of the colour, form and texture of all hard ground- surfacing materials (notwithstanding any such detail shown on previously submitted plans and specification) have been submitted to

and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in conformity with the approved details.

*Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in the interest of the visual amenity of the area and to prevent an undue increase in surface water runoff and in accordance with Policy Nos. GN5 and HS4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

7. Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, the car parking areas shall be surfaced or paved, drained and marked out all in accordance with the approved plan. The car parking areas shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking of and manoeuvring of vehicles.

*Reason: To ensure adequate on site provision of car parking and manoeuvring areas and in accordance with Policy No. TR4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*

8. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until samples of all external facing materials to the proposed building(s) (notwithstanding any details shown on previously submitted plan(s) and specification) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out using the approved external facing materials.

*Reason: To ensure that the materials used are visually appropriate to the locality and in accordance with Policy Nos. GN5 and HS4 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review.*