

320110482P

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF BROWN LEAVES COUNTRY HOTEL AND REDEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL USE

Introduction

This statement accompanies the planning application for the demolition of the existing Brown Leaves Hotel and associated outbuildings and the subsequent redevelopment of the site for residential use. It is intended to give a brief background to the proposals and highlight the main issues addressed within the remainder of this application.

Proposal

The current building, a 12 bedroom hotel, has been run successfully by the applicants for more than twenty years. However, as they approach retirement, efforts have been made to dispose of the property as a going concern, but unfortunately to date these have been unsuccessful (a statement outlining the efforts made to market the property accompanies this application). As such, alternative uses for the site have been investigated and a residential scheme is considered most appropriate, taking into account the immediate location as well as local and national planning policy.

The application covers the demolition of the existing building, which as a result of recent case law can now require planning consent. There are also a small number of outbuildings (that are effectively garden sheds), domestic glasshouses and aviaries that will also be demolished. The buildings have been inspected as part of the ecology studies of the site and no evidence has been found of bats, owls or similar protected species. As such they are considered safe for demolition from an ecological perspective and this work will be undertaken in line with appropriate Health and Safety and Building Control requirements.

The development aspect of the application is made in outline, with a view to establishing the principle of residential use on the site. The access position is fixed, however all other matters are to be reserved for future applications. The site has not yet been marketed and this application is made on behalf of the landowner rather than any subsequent purchaser or developer. As such, it is inappropriate for this application to address matters of detail that will be purchaser specific and therefore these are reserved for further applications made by an eventual developer.

The layout provided as part of the application is intended to be indicative and does not fix the quantum or positioning of the dwellings. However, it aims to give an impression of how a development may look and, considering the constraints on developing the site, it is likely

that this type of layout will be relatively closely followed. The possible development shown provides a mix of house types and sizes that will appeal to a cross-section of potential buyers and help sustain a mixed community within Copster Green.

Application

This statement accompanies an Ecological Report, a Tree Assessment, a Statement of Efforts on the Marketing of the Property and a Design and Access Statement. These documents have been provided following advice received from the pre-application consultation undertaken by the applicant with the Local Authority.

The applicant will enter into discussions with the Local Authority with regards Section 106 requirements that may be sought. In particular, the issue of Affordable Housing will be agreed as part of the application process, although initial correspondence as already commenced in advance, although no agreement has been reached as yet.

Summary

The application, for demolition and redevelopment, is founded on sound planning principles and accords well with local and national policy. The reuse of previously developed land is appropriate with regards the requirement for sustainable development, whilst the provision of approximately 18 dwellings, within a village settlement boundary, will help underpin the Borough's housing land supply.

The existing inability of Ribble Valley BC to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, as required by Planning Policy Statement 3, ensures that residential development in appropriate locations should be viewed favourably. In addition, this site can help maintain a mixed community, providing high quality homes for a range of occupiers, but in a setting that appropriately considers and protects the surrounding land uses and the existing features on and around the site.

The land is well situated for vehicular access, whilst also providing excellent public transport links. It fits well within the current residential neighbours and respects the necessary separation distances, maintaining the character and amenity of the village.

22 JUN 2011

**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT FOR THE
ATTENTION OF**

**FOR THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF BROWN LEAVES
COUNTRY HOTEL, COPSTER GREEN AND SUBSEQUENT
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

This statement is provided in support of an Outline Planning Application for the residential development of Brown Leaves Country Hotel, Copster Green.

Introduction

The subject land is approximately 1.56 acres and is situated directly off Longsight Road (A49) in Copster Green. It is currently occupied by the applicant who has owned the site for more than thirty years. Initially the site was used as a horticultural nursery, however in more recent times it has been home to a 12 bedroom hotel and associated grounds.

The site rises slightly from Longsight Road in the form of an elongated rectangle. The western border of the site is formed by a small ditch and established tree line, beyond which some residential ribbon development extends alongside Longsight Road. To the rear (south) lies agricultural land, used predominantly for horse grazing, whilst the eastern boundary is met with the established residential development of Albany Drive. The land fronts onto Longsight Road, the main thoroughfare of Copster Green, whilst it forms the last parcel of land within the village envelope to the western edge of the settlement. As such, this application has been designed with a view to appropriately treating the interface between both the developed and undeveloped land that abut the land, whilst also looking to continue the established built frontage onto the adjacent highway.

The intention of this statement is to support the application for the demolition of the existing hotel and the subsequent redevelopment of the site for residential use. Whilst the application is made in outline, with all matters (with the exception of access) reserved for future applications, indicative layouts and house types have been provided to give insight to the likely level of site coverage and overall quantum of development.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Circular 01/2006 and with regard to the guidance provided in the CABE Publication "Design & Access Statement - how to write, read and use them". As such the statement will focus on the key areas of amount and use, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance, fundamental access and design issues.

Location

The land is situated immediately to the south of Longsight Road within the Copster Green Settlement Boundary. Along with the majority of development within the village, it occupies the higher ground, giving excellent views into the Ribble Valley. Simultaneously, its position near the entrance to the village, in a relatively prominent location, ensures there is a requirement to design the scheme sensitively not only to the surrounding natural landscape but also the adjacent existing built form.

The Ribble Valley is an attractive location, benefitting from excellent countryside combined with good local retail and community facilities, making it a very desirable area for residential development. The proposed scheme will provide a range of house types that will blend well with the existing offer in Copster Green. In addition, there will be an element of Affordable Housing units available at a substantial discount from open market value and these will be made available for suitable local people, or those with close ties to the Ribble Valley. The amounts, types, location and deliverability of these Affordable units will be finalised as part of the S106 Agreement that will accompany this application.

The development therefore will help sustain a mixed community within Copster Green, utilising land within the settlement boundary efficiently and helping to provide a notable amount of housing within the Borough to help meet the required housing delivery targets.

Use

The current site has been run as a small, family run hotel for more than twenty years. The hotel comprises 12 guest bedrooms, with parking to the front and side with gardens to the rear. The building itself is a single storey brick and red tile roof construction, located to the north east corner of the land. To the rear, the predominantly lawned garden is bounded by border planting and hedgerow, whilst the western boundary is dominated by significant, but relatively low value, trees.

Whilst the business has been run successfully by the family for a significant period, the current occupiers (and applicants) are looking to retire and, as such, have placed the property on the market as a going-concern for a period of over two years immediately prior to the preparation of this application. Despite this, interest has been extremely limited and no firm offers have been made. The downturn in the economic outlook has undoubtedly affected the tourism and hotel industry severely, whilst the hotel's appeal to purchasers is also limited because of the size of the operation- it cannot justify in business terms additional employees, but it is too small for a larger brand to take over. In addition, the location would not be attractive to budget operators, who generally seek either greater exposure to the main transport network or proximity to significant employment, residential or retail uses.

Considering the difficulty in selling the property as a going-concern, an exploration of alternative uses for the site was undertaken. As part of this exercise, factors such as the broad location, planning policy, the surrounding land uses and likely demand were taken into consideration and it is apparent that the most appropriate form of development to be

undertaken would be residential. Such a use can continue not only the residential frontage on Longsight Road, but can improve the current interface between Albany Drive and the agricultural fields to the south. At present this treatment is poor, but a considered residential scheme can help to integrate these two areas more effectively.

In planning policy terms the land is situated within the defined Village Boundary of Copster Green. As a village defined in Policy G4 of the Ribble Valley Local Plan, development is initially restricted to "infill" development. Whilst the site can partially be ascribed 'infill' status, as it in effect fills a gap between houses on Longsight Road, the remainder of the site to the rear is less apparently defined.

However, as the proposal is for residential development, Planning Policy Statement 3 must be considered. This guidance states;

*Drawing on information from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and or other relevant evidence, Local Planning Authorities should identify sufficient specific **deliverable** sites to deliver housing in the first five years. To be considered deliverable, sites should, at the point of adoption of the relevant Local Development Document:*

- Be **Available** – the site is available now.*
- Be **Suitable** – the site offers a suitable location for development now and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities.*
- Be **Achievable** – there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site.*

Ribble Valley Borough Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing supply as required by this guidance and therefore the proposal for high quality and land efficient development ought to be considered favourable. Taking the criteria outlined above in turn:

- The land is **available** for development, as the occupiers are also the owners of the incumbent business and are therefore able to vacate the site for development without undue delay.
- The site is **suitable** for residential use as it is previously developed, within the village Settlement boundary, is proximate to housing and is unlikely to be viable for alternative uses.
- The site, with planning permission for residential use, is **achievable**. Whilst the landowner has made the application independently, the Ribble Valley is a very strong residential location and Copster Green is an attractive village with good transport links. There is little doubt that the site would be popular with residential developers and it is therefore expected that housing would be delivered on site shortly after any consent.

It is therefore put forward in this application that the subject site proposals fulfil those criteria and therefore a residential use on the whole site is in line with planning policy.

The adjoining land uses are predominantly residential and as such the proposal fits well in its surroundings. Copster Green has good vehicular transport links to the local service centres of Wilpshire and Ribchester, whilst Clitheroe and Blackburn are also easily accessible, as is J31 of M6 and thus the wider motorway network.

The site is less than 800m Salesbury CE Primary School, as well as the Post Office and the Bonny Inn public house. These local facilities are bolstered by the provision in Wilpshire (c1.5miles) and Whalley (c 3miles) and therefore, considering the village location, the site is comparatively well connected to the nearby centres. In addition to this, the site is served by the bus routes along Longsight Road, which included direct services to Clitheroe, Whalley, Wilpshire and Preston. The six services an hour also include direct access to the railway stations at Wilpshire and Whalley, integrating well with the Ribble Valley Line and providing direct access to Blackburn and Manchester.

The site is within the Settlement Boundary and ideally situated for residential development. The broad location of the Ribble Valley is popular with home buyers, whilst Copster Green benefits from excellent public transport and vehicular connections. Such links ensure that any future residents, regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping, will be able to access the requisite facilities. As such, the site is ideal for residential use.

Amount

The proposal looks to contribute to the mixed, balanced community of Copster Green with the provision of semi or detached dwellings created off a spine road through the heart of the site.

The development is likely to achieve a density of around 30 dwellings per hectare and will contribute an appropriate level of Affordable housing. The size, type and siting of the dwellings will be appropriate in the local context and will attract a range of home buyers to substantiate the diverse existing local community.

Through the Design phase, the Masterplan was progressed with a view to achieving the design principles laid out in Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Local Plan. Key Principles included:

- *Aiming to provide a high standard of building design and landscape quality that creates an attractive development that respects the privacy of existing and future residents.*
- *Providing a development that is sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature.*
- *Use different house types alongside a meandering spine road to encourage a 'village feel', with the development culminating with a fixed line of development, clearly delineating the extent of the development.*
- *Maintain, as far as possible, the buffer strip between on the western border of the site, protecting both the adjacent dwellings but also creating a good interface with the fields adjoining.*
- *Appropriate densities to ensure the highway infrastructure and existing public transport network will be utilised safely and efficiently. In addition, parking provision will be appropriate and suitable for the type of dwellings planned.*

These key principles resulted in the indicative layout that accompanies this application. It shows the potential for the site to accommodate a range of types and styles, including semis, small and larger detached with integral garaging, as well as the possibility of occasional bungalows if required. The indicative mix of units reflects many aspects of the neighbouring dwellings, whilst creating a development that is well aligned to the market demand for the area.

Layout

The site layout looks to continue the established frontage of Copster Green, whilst creating a more informal layout within the development. Focus has been put on blending both formal and informal, to create a sense of place, but also reflect the rural character of the wider area. To this end, properties have been arranged so as to either overlook the valley of the Ribble to the north and the fields to the rear, or orientated so as to benefit from the retained buffer area of landscaping and trees on the western border. The formal area, in the heart of the development, creates not only a focus for the small community, but also enables an appropriate number of units to be served directly from it, thus maximising the efficiency of the land (This larger paved area will also ensure there is sufficient turning room for refuse vehicles and similar so they can enter and exit the site reasonably.)

The positioning of the plots facing Longsight Road ensure the existing street scene is maintained, with small detached units continuing the broken, informal frontage. Parking will be provided to the front of these plots, maintaining an appropriate stand-off distance from the main road. The parking will also be accessed from the development road, rather than directly from Longsight Road, in order to minimise the number of new entrance points created.

Following the road through the body of the development, smaller units are likely to be concentrated, overlooking the retained trees and landscaped area. These smaller units can accommodate the reduced gardens required at this point, particularly as they benefit from the relatively privacy and openness of the views to the front. These units will have parking rather than garaging, to limit the mass of buildings in this area.

The remainder of the development culminates in a formal area, from which a number of properties will be directly accessed. The properties on the eastern boundary have been positioned to maintain appropriate separation distances, as well as looking to retain the openness, where possible, for the existing homes at the culmination of Albany Drive. The plots to the rear of the site then back onto the open land to the rear, creating a formal edge to the extent of development but also providing attractive plots for the benefit of future residents.

The proposed plots 17 and 18 face the rear boundary of the site and will help maximise the developable area of the site, using the land most efficiently. The trees to the rear of these plots have been identified within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment as low quality, with limited value, however they do offer a buffer for the existing units fronting Longsight Road to the development and, as such, the site layout shows many of them to be retained.

The proposed layout also takes into consideration the pedestrian movements within the site. Footpaths along each side of the main access road ensure future residents will be able to safely and easily access Longsight Road and the bus routes located thereon.

As above, the site layout has been developed to ensure the most efficient use of the land, taking into consideration appropriate separation distances from the adjoining dwellings. The development looks to both integrate itself with the existing built form of the village, but also provide an appropriate boundary between the settlement and the adjoining fields. The boundary treatment looks to achieve an open aspect into the site along the western border, but also a secure and definitive start to the village to the southern edge.

Scale

The general approach of the indicative design, and in particular the house types chosen, was to reflect the typical Copster Green street scene and ensure that the development sits well in its surroundings. The site itself is located prominently near the entrance to the village and it is therefore important that the development fits within the existing sense of place, whilst simultaneously looking to add to the current building form.

To the west of the site, the village 'begins' with two pairs of two storey semi-detached properties, before the building scale reduces into the village where one and one half storey bungalows become more prevalent. The aim on the frontage plots was to incrementally reduce the building mass from the relatively substantial semi-detached through to the bungalows. However, it was also important to "break" this frontage to fit with the prevailing dwellings to the east and therefore these are envisaged to be small, two storey detached properties, with parking created from a shared access to the front. As such, the build line into the village will ease from large semis, reducing to small detached, then further to dorma and traditional bungalows.

The build line has been maintained by creating a shared parking area for the two properties fronting Longsight Road, similar to the arrangements currently used by others properties overlooking this thoroughfare.

Copster Green, as a general location, has a variety of differing house types within it and this has been reflected where possible within the scheme. There are four indicative house types shown, including both single and two storey dwellings. The layout, however, is not intended to be prescriptive, but to give an impression of the potential of the site to provide a range of house types.

The location was considered unsuitable for three storey dwellings and, whilst 2.5 storey could be accommodated on the rear boundary, this has been limited to two storey to minimise the overall impact of the scheme. This mix of housing will not only fit well with the existing village, but should also appeal to a broad sector of the market and as such developer interest in the site should be strong.

It is likely that a future developer of the site will want to replace the indicative house types shown with specific dwellings from their own range, however as a general guide with regards parameters for the scale of proposed buildings, below is a list of key measurements that should be taken account of in future reserved matters applications:

Eaves height	5m – 6m (bungalow eaves c 2.5m-3m)
Ridge height	7.7m- 9m (bungalow ridge c5m- 5.5m)
Building widths	7m- 9m (inclusive of integral garage)
Building lengths	9m -11m

Landscaping

The positioning and type of landscaping utilised by a future developer is likely to depend on their house types and orientation and as no developer is presently in place, it would be premature to submit a finalised landscaping detail with this application. It would be envisaged that any planning consent would be conditioned such that an appropriate landscaping scheme is submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development.

However, it is important to highlight some of the principles that may need to be address within such a Landscaping scheme in this document.

As discussed in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment that forms part of this submission, the site has a number of existing tree groups, but none considered to be of high quality or value. However, it will be important to ensure that whilst the species value of these trees is limited, they provide an important function in terms of the screening they provide to the adjoining land uses. Any future landscaping scheme will be required to maintain that function, either through the retention of the existing trees or appropriate replacement.

The other main area identified for new landscaping will be the south western boundary. This location has been left undeveloped to ensure some openness is reflected into the site, but it will be necessary to treat this boundary with some form of structured planting. Significant tree planting could be considered, however the openness of the development of this point should be considered.

It is not envisaged that any significant land forms or earthworks will be required on the site. The natural gradient, from south to north, is consistent with that found to either side of the development and therefore continuity with this is important.

It is envisaged that, where possible, the landscaping to the periphery of the site will be incorporated into private gardens. For example, the south western buffer could be owned by individual plot owners, whilst the buffer planting to the rear of 17 and 18 ought to be included in the relevant titles. However, the buffer planting to the western side of the entrance road is more difficult to incorporate into private plots and therefore may need to include an element of shared liability amongst the development for this area. Such an approach ought to be implementable as all the dwellings will derive a direct benefit from the maintenance of this area as it forms such a prominent feature in the main access to the development.

Similarly, the turning area could be maintained through a similar agreement if is not considered for adoption by the relevant authority.

As recommended in the Ecology Report submitted as part of this application, in order to mitigate the loss of one of the ponds to form the development, a replacement pond of similar size and type will be incorporated into a future landscape scheme. The loss of the other pond on the site is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the ecological value of the land.

Appearance

Whilst this application is in outline, with a view to reserving details such as layout for subsequent reserved matters applications, the general character and appearance of the development will be guided by the principles laid down in this document.

The development is intended to reflect the varied building styles within Copster Green, with an informal setting brought on by the slight meander of the access road. This village appearance is underpinned by the limited mass of the buildings, either being semi-detached or detached, to create space between dwellings and ensure the development created is not overtly urban.

The build line along the spine road is varied, to recreate the broken frontage common with typical village development. Similarly, the deflection in the road alignment ensures that the impact of the development is minimised and much of the housing is not easily visible from the Longsight Road entrance.

Materials have yet to be finalised and are reserved for future detailed applications, however the buildings are likely to be brick construction, with tile roofs. The indicative house types shown in the application are intended to show the likely potential mix of housing on the site, but would be subject to the future developer's specific in-house designs.

The houses shown, 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms, would be expected to appeal to a wide range of the market and as such should underpin the planning aims set out within national policy guidance to create mixed, sustainable developments. The house types, which look to incorporate modern living trends with dining/kitchens, en-suites and a focus on obtaining light rooms wherever possible, will appeal to all age groups, ethnicities and abilities.

It may be possible for the site to accommodate occasional bungalows for Affordable uses, which are generally unusual in modern developments, but will not only help achieve this mixed community but will also tie the development into the existing community by reflecting a common house type found elsewhere in Copster Green.

The property orientation is guided by the development constraints of the site's shape, the access road and the neighbouring land uses. However, wherever possible the development looks to either face the properties onto open aspects or green areas or back onto the countryside or established planting to create private, secluded areas for the units 10 to 18. Units 8 and 9, whilst not enjoying the openness to the front, benefit from a private outlook and relatively large gardens.

Access

The development of the site has been designed so as to maximise accessibility and permeability both for vehicles and pedestrians. It was considered vital that access from Longsight Road, as a busy main road, was as efficient and unencumbered as possible and therefore the limitation of development to one side of the spine road helps ensure that vehicles will not be waiting on the main road for the site road to clear.

The entry point into the site has been positioned, in line with discussions with LCC Highways, to maximise sight lines in both directions on Longsight Road. The site frontage, of approximately 25 metres, is currently relatively open and gives excellent visibility for cars exiting the site. However, the entry into the site, particularly for cars proceeding in a westerly direction, has been limited to ensure vehicles enter the site at an appropriate speed.

The remainder of the site is accessed from the spine road that meanders to naturally limit vehicular speed. In any event, owing to the length of the road, cars will be limited to approximately 15mph and therefore the proposed parking areas for units 3 to 10 will be easily accessible for residents of those units.

The paved area to the rear, which services plots 11 to 18, is likely to be a different surfacing material to the main spine road, ensuring movements on this area are slow. As this area benefits from the passive surveillance of all the units surrounding it, the area may act as a shared surface for pedestrians and vehicles alike.

Units 1 and 2 benefit from a large parking and turning area and, like the other two bedroom properties on the site, have two dedicated parking spaces. This area also ensures the building line along Longsight Road is maintained, whilst also providing the opportunity for some buffer planting and an appropriate set-back distance from the road to minimise its impact on the development.

The site grades evenly from north to south and as such visibility from the vehicular entrances is good. In addition, the natural topography of the site ensures all the properties can be accessed by people with limited mobility. However, towards the main entry to the site, non-slip surfaces may be required on the pedestrian walkways if the gradient of the site is maintained at this point.

All of the properties benefit from pedestrian access to the front. However, there is also direct resident access to all the rear gardens, ensuring that waste and recycling bins can be stored either within the integral garage or away from the front elevations of the properties, before being brought for collection on the front boundaries by the residents. The refuse collection vehicles have sufficient space to enter, turn and exit the site safely and away from parked cars and private curtilages.

The rear plot boundaries will be appropriately fenced, the details of which will be subject to a subsequent application. The majority of the properties will have a shared boundary with an adjoining property and therefore will benefit passively from that inherent security. Plots 12 to 16 will need to be carefully considered in order to balance both the security of the residents and the adjoining open land.

In terms of general accessibility, the site is well located for local and sub-regional bus services on Longsight Road, providing excellent access to the nearby urban centres of Clitheroe, Blackburn and Preston. The smaller facilities available in Wilpshire, Whalley and Langho are equally accessible.

There is good vehicular access to the local urban centres, as well as the main employment locations within the Borough. The adjacent Longsight Road gives good access to the main motorway network and generally the site can be considered to be sustainably located for all types of residents and sits well within the local community as a residential development.

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Brown Leaves Hotel

Statement Justifying the Loss of Potential Employment Land

The purpose of this statement is to assess the proposed redevelopment of the Brown Leaves Hotel site for residential use and the potential impact on the employment land availability within the Ribble Valley.

This statement has been prepared with a view to addressing the requirements set out in Policy EMP11 of the Ribble Valley Local Plan and, in particular, clauses IV) and V) of that policy.

Introduction

Lea, Hough & Co are an established firm of Chartered Surveyors who have operated in the Ribble Valley and adjoining Boroughs for more than twenty five years. Having provided both valuation and development consultancy services for corporate and private commercial clients alike, we are well placed to advise on the suitability of the subject site for employment uses and assess its potential to sustain such a use in the future.

Brown Leaves Hotel

The subject site extends to approximately 1.56 acres within the settlement boundary of Copster Green. The proprietors, who are also the applicants in this instance, have owned the site for more than 30 years and have operated a hotel business there for over two decades. The property, a single storey red brick structure, extends to 12 en-suite guest bedrooms, reception, breakfast/dining room and bar area. There are gardens to the rear and parking to the side and front of the building.

The applicants are now approaching retirement and in preparation have looked to dispose of the site, as a going concern, for two years, however there has been little material interest. As such, the subject application is put forward as an appropriate re-use of the site that accords fully with Policy EMP11.

Planning Context

As the proposal results in the loss of employment land, the application must satisfy the provisions of Policy EMP11 of the Local Plan, which states:

'Proposals for the redevelopment of employment generating sites in the Plan Area will be assessed with regard to the following:

- i) The provisions of Policy G1*
- ii) The compatibility of the proposal with other policies of this plan*
- iii) The environmental benefits to be gained by the community*
- iv) The potential economic and social damage caused by the loss of jobs in the community*
- v) Any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site'*

[Sections i), ii) and iii) will be addressed in the other statements accompanying this application]

Section IV)

The existing business is family owned and is operated predominantly by the proprietors, who are husband and wife. They employ one part-time member of staff from the local community.

Hotel uses, whilst incorporating a significant area of floor space, generate relatively few jobs compared to other employment uses, such as B1 office. The current operation extends to 12 guest bedrooms and therefore does not warrant particularly high levels of staff. In this context, therefore, there are no grounds to suggest that the loss of the existing hotel and the two full time and one part time jobs that are generated by it, would have a noticeable effect on the local economy. Indeed, it is likely that the construction process and subsequent occupation of future dwellings would stimulate and sustain the village to a greater degree than the current business.

The hotel generally caters for both holiday makers and business travellers alike. However, there are a number of factors that demonstrate that the loss of these guests will not have an adverse impact on the local area:

- The hotel does not operate at 100% occupancy throughout the year. Combined with the limited number of bedrooms, the actual number of guests per annum is relatively small.
- There are no local retailers or businesses that are sustained or rely on Brown Leaves hotel guests for custom.

- There are a number of local hotels, B & Bs and guest houses in the Ribble Valley that can provide the accommodation required by these guests and therefore the impact on the local area and tourism will be limited.

As such, it is considered that the impact on the local economy and environment would be negligible. Indeed, the provision of a new residential development, delivering in the region of 18 new homes (some of which would be affordable and available for the local community) would be of greater benefit to the area than the existing concern. Not only would the demolition and construction process have the potential to create jobs in the area, the subsequent new occupiers will benefit local shops and businesses, as well as adding to the local community in a more general sense.

Section V

Prior to investigating other development options, the applicants marketed the property through two established commercial agents:

Knightsbridge- the property was placed on the market on 3rd June 2008 by the agent for one year. The business was positioned on the agent's website, as well as other hotel sale pages, and this was supplemented by a targeted mail campaign. In spite of this, there was only one preliminary enquiry which was not followed up by the interested party.

Preferred Commercial- in order to ensure that the potential market was fully exposed, the applicants registered the property with a new agent, also specialising in business sales, from June 2009 to the end of 2010. They confirmed the valuation of the previous agent and subsequently a similar advertising approach was adopted, but again only one enquiry was received, but this was not pursued further than the initial approach.

There are a number of reasons behind these low levels of interest. Undoubtedly the economic downturn has had a significant effect on business sales generally, with potential purchasers and their funders extremely remaining cautious about committing in such an uncertain climate. In particular, the hotel and leisure sector has been badly affected, as the number of people willing and able to spend money on non-essential items such as hotel stays and holidays has significantly reduced.

The business also has difficulty attracting potential purchasers as it lacks the scale or potential expansion area to attract larger, more high profile, brands. However, it is also beyond the remit of most small hoteliers. The small hotel market is restrained as it requires either very committed owners who are willing to undertake most, if not all, of the day to day running of the hotel themselves, or a hotel and location that offers unique selling features that enable the charging of higher rates that subsequently justify greater levels of staff to assist the proprietors.

The property has been marketed for more than two years, by experienced commercial agents, to continue the use as a successful hotel premises. It is in a prominent location within the popular Ribble Valley, with broad appeal to tourists and business travellers alike. Despite this, however, the business has not attracted significant levels of serious interest. Therefore it should be considered that a continued hotel use on the site has been explored fully, but there is currently no demand.

Considering the outlook for the wider economy, it is in our opinion unlikely that demand will significantly increase in the hotel sector in the short to medium term. The marketing to date has been targeted and sustained, yet has not been able to elicit any real level of serious interest and, as a result, the site should be considered for other, more beneficial, uses.

Other Uses

Whilst the business was predominantly advertised as a going-concern, enquiries were also invited for the opportunities inherent in the building and site for other commercial or employment purposes. Again, there was very limited interest in the site for these uses and it is considered that alternative employment generating formats would not be successful in this location:

- Industrial- the surrounding area is either residential or agricultural. Such a use would therefore not only be at odds with the neighbouring land users and most likely unpopular, it would also be in contravention of local and national planning guidance regarding the location of such uses. It is also considered highly unlikely that there would be any occupational demand for such development in this location, with the site being generally too constrained in terms of size for any meaningful industrial development, with regular industrial access more difficult than other sites on the market.
- Office- the existing building is unsuitable for office conversion, requiring too great a capital cost to realise the amount of space available for it to be financially viable for a developer or occupier. Meanwhile the speculative office development market is stagnant, with effectively no such investment taking place other than in exceptional circumstances or where the development is grant-aided.

Potential occupiers are generally looking for locations closer to the main transport networks and urban centres, or alternative 'special' sites that suit the particular needs of the business. It is unlikely that the site, or the surrounding village, would satisfy either of these requirements.

In addition, office uses also create high levels of traffic at peak times and with limited local potential employees, significant vehicular journeys would be generated. Again, this use would contravene local planning policy and is unlikely to be welcomed by the local community.

- Retail- food retail has been a relatively strong presence through the downturn. However, it is a significant traffic generator and does not fit with local planning policy or aspirations.

The aforementioned marketing process, whilst focussing on the hotel industry, has looked to invite offers from the broader employment market but has also been unsuccessful. Again, it is considered unlikely that demand for such uses will increase in the short to medium term.

Summary

This statement details the extensive marketing that has been undertaken and the resultant lack of demand for employment generating uses on the site. In our opinion it is unlikely that demand will increase for this type of site as commercial developers continue to be restrained by their funders and occupiers have a wide range of products to choose from.

The hotel has been run successfully as a result of the considerable application of the proprietors, but is inherently disadvantaged by its location and size. As such, it is considered that the best future use for the site is for residential redevelopment that will invigorate the local market, provide a range of good quality homes and be in-keeping with the surrounding land uses and in accordance with planning policy.

- retail
- corporate
- leisure
- care
- franchising

Our Ref: ST/KLE/REF14451

When contacting our offices please ask for:
Customer Care Department - 01204 467302

Mr A Fisher & Mrs I Fisher
Strictly Confidential
Brown Leaves Country Hotel
Longsight Road
Copster Green
BLACKBURN
Lancashire
BB1 9EU

23 JUN 2011

FOR THE
ATTENTION OF

5 June 2008

Dear Mr and Mrs Fisher

Re: Sale of Brown Leaves Country Hotel, Ref 14451, Longsight Road, Copster Green, BLACKBURN, Lancashire,

Thank you for your valued sole selling rights instructions in connection with the disposal of the above mentioned Business/Property. Following your meeting with Chris Williams your Business/Property has been registered onto our comprehensive computer matching and mailing system which provides instant email alerts to buyers and has been allocated with the individual reference number REF14451. We would be grateful if you would quote this reference on all correspondence to our office or when contacting our office by telephone. Please find listed below and overleaf a number of important items for your attention and consideration.

Advert Wording

We enclose a draft version of what will appear in the media and on various websites. We would ask you to take a moment to check that the details are correct in every respect.

Sales Particulars

We enclose your draft sales particulars which have been prepared based on your meeting with our Chris Williams, once again we would ask you to check they are correct in every respect.

Should you wish to make any alterations to either of the above, simply email the changes to customercare@knightsbridgeplc.com, fax back to 01204 465999 or call our offices on 01204 467302 and speak to the Customer Care Team.

Websites

Your Business has already been registered on the following sites:

www.knightsbridgeplc.com, www.daltonsbusiness.com, www.businessesforsale.com, www.bizsale.co.uk,
www.rightbiz.co.uk, www.hotelstobuy.co.uk

* Certain websites are managed and maintained by third parties and their lead time for listing your Business can be up to 14 days. Unfortunately, we have no control over this aspect.

Important Website Information

A recent survey of businesses that have gone under offer suggests that businesses with a website generate more interest than a business without one. Many of our potential buyers ask to view a company's website before arranging a viewing. Websites not only can generate additional revenue for your business but a good website can add value and significantly enhance your chances of selling your business. Knightsbridge recently launched a **FREE** website design service for all customers through its sister company Excel Design. That's right, free design, free domain registration & free e-mail address. The only cost you incur is a nominal monthly hosting fee once your website is completed. For more information on this offer, please call 01204 467399 now, quoting REF14451.

Head office: Knightsbridge Business Sales Plc, Knightsbridge House, Folds Point, Folds Road, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL1 2RZ Reg no. 4141555
email: sales@knightsbridgeplc.com www.kbscorporate.com www.knightsbridgeplc.com www.franchise-4-profit.co.uk
North West: 01204 465885 North East: 0191 230 5333 Yorkshire: 0113 250 5050 Midlands: 0121 422 0222 South West: 0117 922 0777 London: 0207 584 5841
South East: 0131 229 8777 Wales: 01876 286655 East Anglia: 01603 424252 Northern Ireland: 02890 244867 fax: 01204 465999

A list of directors is available for inspection at the registered office, Knightsbridge Business Sales plc, is part of the Knightsbridge Group.

- retail
- corporate
- leisure
- care
- franchising



Accounts/Financial Information

As discussed with Chris Williams, it is vital that we have the latest financial information in relation to your Business and its trading activities and with that in mind we would ask you to keep us fully updated with your year end accounts and any monthly and ongoing financial information regarding the Business as it arises.

Changes in Business circumstances

Should any changes arise in relation to your Business/Property which will affect the details we are sending out to prospective purchasers, it is vital that you keep us fully informed. During the sales process do not hesitate at any time to request a copy of your advert wording and sales particulars for further amendments to be made or indeed telephone us to discuss any changes you may require.

Point of Contact

Chris Williams is based in the field and therefore does not have day to day access to your file. The Knightsbridge Customer Care Team is your dedicated resource and is now your point of contact. They will be contacting you and updating you on a regular basis regarding advertising and ongoing interest in your Business/Property.

Advertising, marketing and research are all linked to the Customer Care Team so please make full use of our facilities.

You are encouraged to contact us at any time during the process to ensure that the marketing of the Business is meeting your expectations. When calling our offices for an update simply ask for a member of the Customer Care Team who will be able to deal with you promptly and efficiently.

If at any time you wish to review matters then either contact by using email customer@knightsbridgeplc.com or telephone Customer Care on 01204 467 302.

Should you require a FREE consultation from one of our recommended panel of solicitors & accountants, who offer a full range of services, please email Lorraine Dewhurst, dewhurst@knightsbridgeplc.com

We look forward to working closely with you.

Yours sincerely
PP; KNIGHTSBRIDGE BUSINESS SALES PLC

KARRINA HEYES
Customer Care Manager

"At Knightsbridge our commitment to you is that we guarantee to market your Business until a successful sale has been agreed"

Enc **VAT Receipt**
 Draft Sales Particulars
 Draft Advertisement Wording

Customer Care Direct Line - 01204 467 302

Reg office: Knightsbridge Business Sales Plc, Knightsbridge House, Folds Point, Folds Road, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL1 2RZ Reg no: 4111555
email: sales@knightsbridgeplc.com www.kbscorporate.com www.knightsbridgeplc.com www.franchise-4-profit.co.uk
North West: 01204 465888 North East: 0191 230 5333 Yorkshire: 0113 250 5050 Midlands: 0121 422 0222 South West: 0117 922 0777 London: 0207 564 5641
Scotland: 0131 228 8777 Wales: 01978 266655 East Anglia: 01603 424252 Northern Ireland: 02890 244367 Fax: 01204 465899

A list of directors is available for inspection at the registered office. Knightsbridge Business Sales plc is part of the Knightsbridge Group.

Ref 14451

Reason for Sale

Our clients are now offering the business for sale as they wish to retire.

Asking Price

Offers Invited

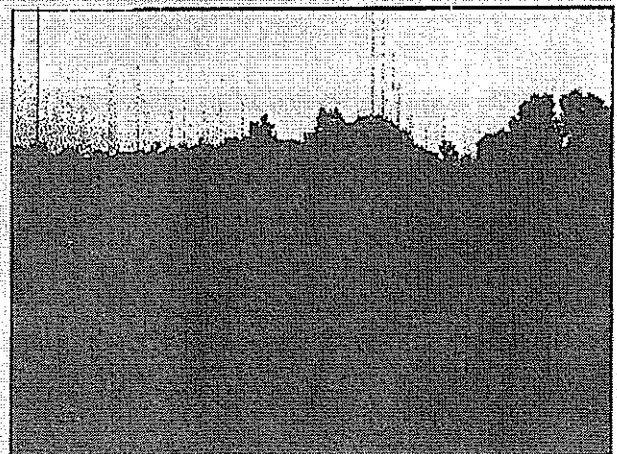
The Next Step

Viewings/Meetings – 01204 467301
viewings@knightsbridgeplc.com (Strictly by appointment through the offices of Knightsbridge Business Sales PLC.)

Customer Care – 01204 467302
customercare@knightsbridgeplc.com

FREE 1 hour consultation with a local solicitor / accountant please email Lorraine Dewhurst
dewhurst@knightsbridgeplc.com

Free Finance Quotation – 01204 467332
finance@knightsbridgeplc.com



Head Office: Knightsbridge Business Sales Plc, Knightsbridge House, Folds Point, Folds Road, Bolton, Gtr MANCHESTER, BL1 2RZ
www.knightsbridgeplc.com

IMPORTANT: None of the above constitute an offer neither should they be relied upon as statements or representations of fact or warranties of any kind. All interested parties must satisfy themselves either by investigation, inspection and/or formal entry before contact with their solicitor. Neither we nor our principals accept any responsibility whatever in respect of these particulars which are simply offered as a general indication to persons who may be interested. ALL NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED THROUGH KNIGHTSBRIDGE BUSINESS SALES PLC.

Your Ref: 1117

Strictly Private and Confidential

Mr Arthur & Mrs Irene Fisher
Brown Leaves Country Hotel
Longsight Road
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB1 9EU

12 June, 2009

Dear Mr & Mrs Fisher,

**Re: Sale of business known as Brown Leaves Country Hotel Longsight Road
Blackburn Lancashire BB1 9EU**

Thank you for choosing Preferred Commercial as your appointed agent.

Your business has been given a unique referencing no **1117**. It would be appreciated if you would always use this number when contacting our offices.

Please find enclosed a copy of the details we have prepared to market your business. Please take time to read them and check their accuracy. If you wish to make any alterations or amendments, please do not hesitate to contact our administration department to make any changes.

If you have not already done so, would you kindly supply us with a copy of your latest accounts, so that we have them on file ready for interested parties.

To conform to the latest government legislation, please forward a photocopy of either your birth certificate or passport in the post paid envelope provided, within the next 7 days.

We thank you once more for entrusting the sale of your business to Preferred Commercial and hope that our efforts will bring about an early sale, achieving the best possible price.

Yours sincerely


Andrew Bennett

ANDREW

SOLE SELLING RIGHTS AGREEMENT, TERMS, CONDITIONS AND DEFINITIONS

IMPORTANT: Set out below are the terms upon which Preferred Commercial will contract with you. These terms set out the liabilities of both parties, which will be incurred, in stated circumstances. This agreement is IMPORTANT and should not be signed until you have read, understood and agreed to the terms

DEFINITIONS OF SOLE SELLING RIGHTS: You will be liable to pay remuneration to us, in addition to any other costs or charges agreed, in each of the following circumstances - if unconditional contracts for the sale of the Business are exchanged in the period during which we have sole selling rights, even if the purchaser was not found by us but by another agent or by any other person including yourself or if unconditional contracts for the sale of the Business are exchanged after the expiry of the period during which we have sole selling rights but to a purchaser who was introduced to you during that period or with whom you or we had negotiations about the Business during that period

- NOTES:
- (a) Preferred Commercial Ltd, hereafter referred to as Preferred Commercial, Co Reg No 6796797
 - (b) Words importing the masculine gender only shall include the feminine gender
 - (c) Words importing the singular number shall include plural
 - (d) Where two or more persons are comprised in the definition of "the vendor" liability shall be joint and several
 - (e) The word "person" shall include a partnership, company, body, club and any other unincorporated association
 - (f) Sole Selling Rights Agreement, hereafter referred to as the agreement

DATE OF COMMENCEMENT

01 06 2004

1 WHO IS THE VENDOR?

The vendor is the proprietor, partner or the person who owns the Business. Where the person signing this agreement does so on behalf of a Limited Company or a Limited Liability Partnership, they warrant that: - They are a Director or Partner of the Company and; They are duly authorized to sign and the Company will honour the terms hereof and; If the Company defaults in paying money due hereunder to Preferred Commercial or shall cease trading or shall go into liquidation or make any arrangements with creditors then the said person signing this agreement shall in consideration for Preferred Commercial entering into this agreement with the company personally make good such default out of his own personal funds all such money as shall be due and payable to Preferred Commercial by the company on demand.

2 WHAT IS THE AGREED INSTRUCTED ASKING PRICE? £ 500,000 SAY

3 HOW MUCH ARE THE AGENCY FEES?

- (i) £ plus Marketing Package
- (ii) 2 1/2 % of the instructed asking price or such figure as the vendor may accept subject to a minimum agency fee of £6,000 (SIX THOUSAND POUNDS) plus marketing package

4 WHEN DO YOUR AGENCY FEES BECOME PAYABLE?

- (i) Upon exchange of unconditional contracts and/or ownership having been transferred to any person during the period of the agreement.
- (ii) Upon exchange of unconditional contracts and/or ownership having been transferred to any person, after the termination of this agreement, providing that the person was introduced to you or was supplied details by Preferred Commercial or had negotiated with you or us, for the purchase during the currency of the agreement.

5 AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR FEES IF THERE IS NO SALE?

- (i) If the vendor terminates the agreement during the period of this agreement at a time when a person whether or not introduced by Preferred Commercial is negotiating for or is expressing an interest in, the purchase or who has agreed terms in principle even if subject to contract, sale of other property or raising loan finance the vendor shall pay the agency fees.
- (ii) If the vendor interferes with the selling efforts of Preferred Commercial or fails to provide trading accounts or in any way acts in a manner to delay or abort negotiations or refuses to sell the business at a price that they have instructed us to accept on their behalf, or closes the business and/or surrenders or assigns the lease, the vendor shall pay the agency fees.
- (iii) The vendor may revoke the agreement at any time within the initial Sole Selling Rights period in which circumstances an amount equal to one half of the agency fees as compensation for loss of opportunity to earn the full agency fees and for work carried out prior to revocation is payable excepting this option may not be exercised when a person is negotiating for the purchase of the Business. If condition 4(ii) later applies, the balance of the agency fees become payable at that stage.
- (iv) If the vendor has agreed to contribute towards the marketing and administration as detailed in the Marketing package of the Agreement and defaults in any way, in the payment of this agreed contribution then it shall be deemed that the vendor is deliberately interfering with the selling efforts of Preferred Commercial and therefore the vendor shall pay the Agency Fees

6. HOW LONG DOES THE AGENCY AGREEMENT LAST AND HOW IS NOTICE OF TERMINATION SERVED?

For an initial period of 52 weeks from the date of commencement and to remain in force thereafter until either party, in writing, receives notice of termination, giving not less than sixty (60) days notice. Termination letters must be sent by Recorded Delivery post only, addressed to Preferred Commercial Ltd at Dylan Harvey Blackburn Business Centre, Davyfield Road, Blackburn, BB1 2QY. Notice by any other means will be neither accepted nor acknowledged. The commencement of the notice period will take effect on the date notice is received, subject to the initial period having expired.

7. WILL PREFERRED COMMERCIAL TRY TO GET THE PURCHASER(S) TO PAY A DEPOSIT?

Preferred Commercial will, and hereby accept the vendors authority to act as stakeholder to retain a deposit to be held in a non-interest-bearing client's account and Preferred Commercial may retain an amount of such deposit equal to or in part payment of the agency fees

8. PREFERRED COMMERCIAL'S OBLIGATIONS

Preferred Commercial will prepare descriptions and assessments of the Business, take photographs of the Business premises (if instructed to do so) and prepare marketing literature. Preferred Commercial will notify all suitable potential purchasers known to them of the availability of the Business for sale. Preferred Commercial will advertise on the Internet and where they consider appropriate in widely circulated journals. Preferred Commercial will arrange for prospective purchasers to view the Business and with your co-operation for relevant information about the Business to be provided to them. Preferred Commercial will liaise with you as to any positive responses received from potential purchasers about your business.

9. MARKETING/ADMINISTRATION PACKAGE

Cost Agreed £ 157,000

Paid £ 157,000

Balance due £

I/We promise to pay the balance due £

On or before the

Signed

FOR SALE BOARD? YES/NO

10 Preferred Commercial reserve the right to charge the vendor interest on ANY unpaid due monies at a rate of 1% per month from the date the monies become due until payment is made

11 I/we hereby provide my/our irrevocable authority to my/our appointed solicitors to provide an undertaking to pay Preferred Commercial any monies that are due to them in accordance with this agreement and as will be detailed to them in any account raised. These monies should be paid upon an exchange of unconditional contracts if requested by Preferred Commercial or immediately upon completion of the sale if acceptable to Preferred Commercial. The monies should be paid without deduction and before payment is made to any other party

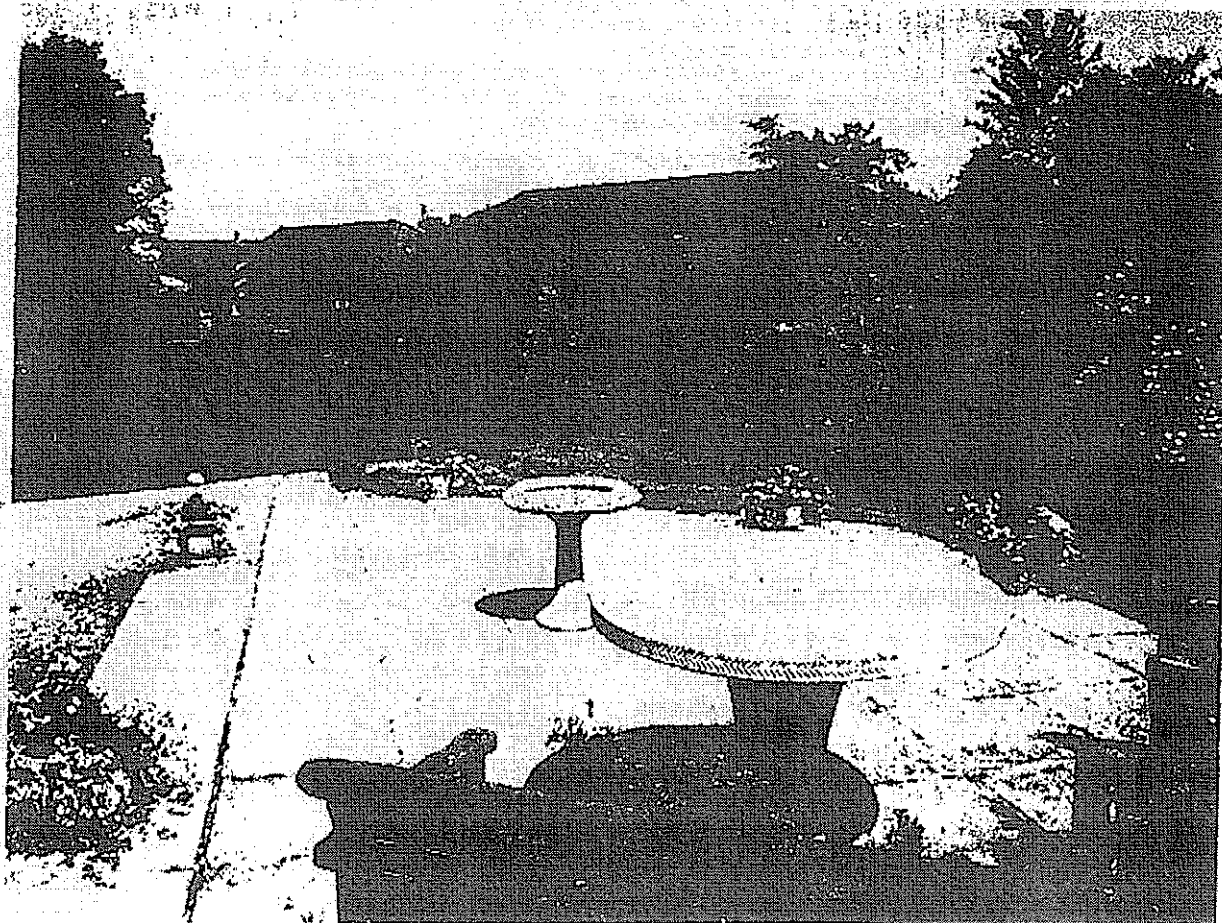
DECLARATION

I/We being the vendor of the Business or the agent of the vendor authorized by the vendor to sign this agreement on the vendors behalf instruct Preferred Commercial to market the Business and grant you SOLE SELLING RIGHTS. I/WE AGREE TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS PRINTED ABOVE WHICH HAVE BEEN READ BY ME, EXPLAINED TO ME, A COPY RECEIVED AND THE CONTENTS OF WHICH I/WE FULLY UNDERSTAND. I/WE AGREE THAT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS DETAILED IN THIS AGREEMENT ARE BINDING FROM THE DATE OF COMMENCEMENT AND THAT NO OTHER REPRESENTATIONS, WHETHER ORAL OR OTHERWISE, HAVE BEEN MADE OR AGREED.

Signed

On behalf of

Date



suite

- Bedroom 9: double en-suite ✕
- Bedroom 10: double en-suite ✕
- Bedroom 11: single en-suite
- Bedroom 12: double en-suite ✕
- Ladies and gents toilets

Private living accommodation briefly comprises:

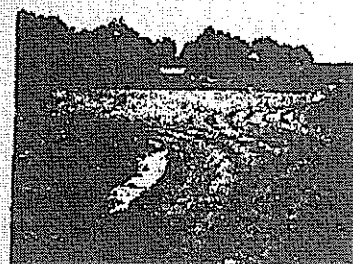
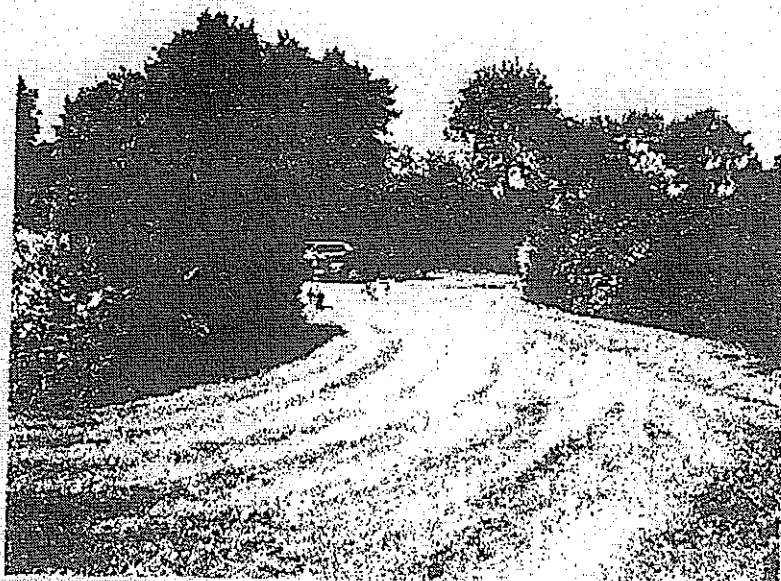
- Self-contained store room
- Lounge
- Two double bedrooms
- Bathroom

External

- Set in 2 acres of grounds giving this business huge flexibility for alternative use or development
- Large car park to side for 30 plus vehicles.

Tenure

Advised freehold



Location

Brown Leaves Country Hotel is situated in a desirable location within the Ribble Valley, in an affluent demographic area. The property is located on the A59 giving easy access to Preston and Blackburn and boasts a delightful countryside setting with stunning views.

Business History

Preferred Commercial is delighted to offer for sale this desirable and much sought after country hotel with the potential to easily convert to a residential care home, in such a sought after and desirable location. The business occupies a substantial plot extending to approximately 2 acres and lies just off the main A59 Preston, Clitheroe, Skipton Road. The business was established in 1933 and has been in our client's hands since 1976. It is only now being placed on the market due to our client's wish to retire. The hotel was substantially extended in 1990 and benefits from being single storey. The premises, in our opinion, would ideally suit conversion to a retirement or nursing home, with huge scope to expand within the grounds, subject to planning. A president has been set with the next door property having several new build properties within its grounds. The business benefits from 12 en-suite bedrooms and private 2 bedroom living accommodation. This offers developers, hoteliers or care home owners huge potential, taking advantage of its excellent and idyllic trading location. Viewing is a must to fully appreciate.

Accommodation Details

Single storey detached property with the majority being built in 1990. Set in 2 acres of level ground in a fantastic setting with excellent access. Briefly comprising:

Ground Floor

- Entrance
- Reception area
- Office
- Lounge bar
- Dining room with double doors to front, 30 covers with scope for more
- Laundry room with boiler and rear exit
- Commercial kitchen with stainless steel air extraction, stainless steel splash backs, stainless steel tables, double sink and hand sink, hot cupboard, fitted wall and base units
- Store room housing refrigerators and freezers
- Staff WC
- Rear exit
- Bedroom 1: double en-suite
- Bedroom 2: double en-suite
- Bedroom 3: double en-suite
- Bedroom 4: double en-suite
- Bedroom 5: twin en-suite ✱
- Bedroom 6: twin en-suite
- Bedroom 7: family room en-suite
- Bedroom 8: family room en- ✱