

Hawkshaw Farm

320170323P

**Design and Access Statement & Planning Statement
for**

**A retrospective planning application for the change of use
of an agricultural storage building, the retention of a
temporary storage container building and consent to
operate the Scare Kingdom Visitor Attraction.**

at
**Hawkshaw Farm
Longsight Road
Clayton Le Dale
Blackburn
BB2 7JA**

Prepared by
Mary Miller
Rural Futures (North West) Ltd
78a Main St
Warton
Camforth
LA5 9PG



This statement has been structured with reference to CABI best practice guidance; Design & Access Statements – how to write read and use them. CABI 2006.

Design & Access Statement and Planning Statement

Contents	Page
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 The Site Details	3
3.0 The development	4
4.0 Design & Access	7
5.0 Planning Policy Framework	9
6.0 The determining Issues	13
7.0 Assessment of the determining issues	13
8.0 Conclusion	13

1.0 Introduction

Hawkshaw Farm is a 135 acre dairy farm owned and occupied by Mr & Mrs Dowson and their family. In addition to the farm at home there is an additional 250 acres of rented land which is farmed as part of the business. The business comprises 200 dairy cattle with all replacements being reared on farm so that at any one time there are 350 head of cattle present on the holding.

A proportion of the milk produced is used to make Mrs Dowsons award winning ice creams with currently over 50 different flavours available. Ice cream making began on the farm in 2001 and has continued to grow on an annual basis. Currently the farm and ice cream making enterprise employ 7 FTE staff.

Following the introduction of a maize maze in 2007 events were extended into the evening around Halloween. Visitors made their way around the maze in the dark and came across witches and ghosts along the way. This was the first foray into the themed Halloween events which are now so popular at Hawkshaw Farm. The Scare Kingdom events have been a feature for several years with new staging and themes each year.

Since 2014 one of the agricultural storage buildings has been fitted out as an old mansion house with many large fixtures and fittings to create the rooms. In the past the sets have been removed from the agricultural buildings after Halloween but over time the sets have become much more intricate and detailed, taking a large team of people many weeks to erect and decorate.

In December 2015 temporary planning was granted for the use to continue until December 2016 to allow monitoring of events, in particular for any noise nuisance which may impact upon neighbours. (Application – 3/2014/1092) To the knowledge of the applicants there have been no complaints to the Council Environmental Health team regarding noise and action has been taken to reduce noise levels and to ensure there is no impact on neighbouring properties.

This retrospective application is for the continued use of parts of Hawkshaw Farm to be used on a seasonal basis to operate the Scare Kingdom visitor attraction. The consent includes a permanent change of use of the agricultural building to a small scale tourism use to enable the internal fixtures to be left in situ. Planning is also sought to retain a temporary container building to be used as part of the Scare Kingdom attraction.

2.0 Site details

Hawkshaw Farm is located on Longsight Rd and is to the east of the A59. The majority of the 135 acres farm is grassland which is a mixture of permanent pasture and silage meadows, with a small area of maize being grown each year.

There is a large range of traditional and modern farm buildings providing cattle housing, silage clamps, general storage and manure storage.

The visitor centre was granted permission for the café building and toilet block in 2007. The additional associated animal shelters and other small structures were granted planning consent in 2015.

The scheme for the access which was approved by highways when the visitor centre was granted planning was implemented before work commenced. The work was completed to standards above those approved with the working amendments being agreed with a highways engineer during a number of site visits. Unfortunately this wasn't logged in a paper application but it can be seen that the widening works and improvements have been made thus ensuring a safe access for visitors and farm traffic alike.

The agricultural building which is the subject of this application was erected in 2014 as notified to the council – Application no. 3/2013/0117N. It is a steel frame portal building clad with juniper green box profile sheets on all sides and with a cement fibre sheet roof.

3.0 The development

Following the success of the Halloween themed maize maze events the Dowson Family were encouraged to explore the possibility of further themed events. The horror events, now operated under the heading of Scare Kingdom have increased in popularity with customers expecting more thrills and scares each year.

The early events were held mainly out in the open starting with the maize maze, leading into a range of temporary structures erected especially each year. The sets have become more intricate and complicated to build each year in order to surpass the previous year's show and are now all located indoors.

The visits to Scare Kingdom last around one and a half hours when groups are escorted from one set to another each with different props and with a range of actors performing mini horror movies in each location. When fully booked there could be up to five groups on site at any one time booking in and moving through the parts of the attraction.

Since Halloween 2014 the tour has evolved so that the event is now staged inside various buildings at the farm. This helps in the management of the visitors booked onto events and also helps to contain the noise generated by the performances. Each season over forty actors take part every evening along with many more staff behind the scenes. Most of the sets are removed from the farm buildings once the season has ended.

This planning application includes a change of use of the agricultural storage building and the container building to be retained as permanent parts of the Scare Kingdom tourist attraction. Whilst the performances are seasonal the sets take hundreds of hours of work to develop and the Scare Kingdom operators would like to retain the sets on a permanent basis. The decorations within the sets are updated each year to reflect the theme but the physical structures remain intact. The large

Hawkshaw Farm

agricultural building has been named Manormortis and is the main attraction within the tour.

The Halloween performances took place over 35 nights in 2016 with last entry times ranging from 9.30 pm to 11pm, later entry times were only on Friday nights or immediately around the date of Halloween. The tour for 2016 had a revised layout meaning that the activities and scenes were all indoors, reducing the likelihood of visitors screaming or being noisy outdoors. The volume of any sound effects within the buildings was also reduced to eliminate any disturbance at neighbouring properties.

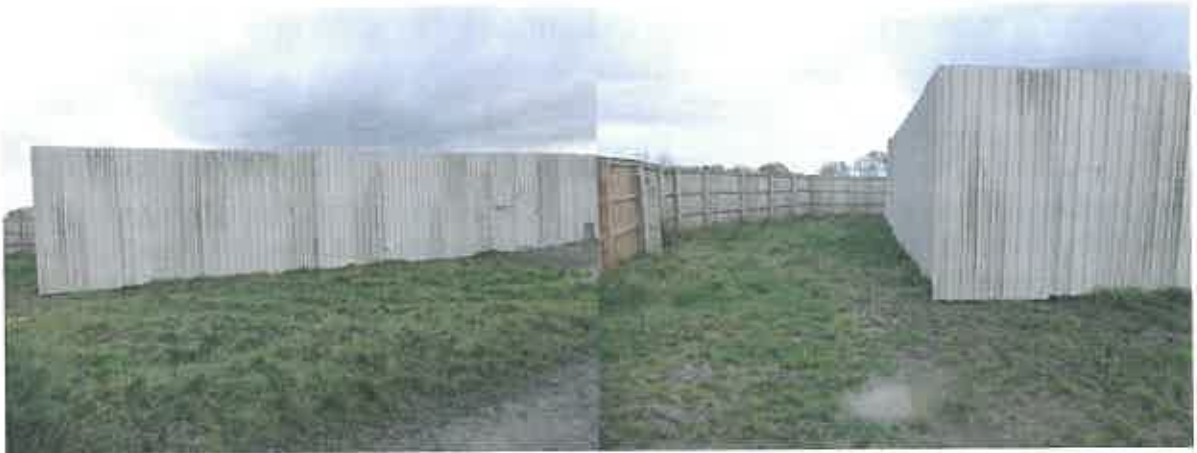
When the previous planning application was submitted (Application - 3/2014/1092) concerns were raised about the potential for noise from the site to have a negative impact on residential properties located to the south east of the farm. Noise monitoring was carried out by an independent specialist and by RVBC Environmental Health Team. At the time there was no identified problems and action has been taken on events since then to eliminate any potential noise nuisance.

In order to prevent any potential noise carrying to the nearby residences a belt of native species trees has been planted alongside Tottering Brook as proposed in the previous application. Once established the trees will offer some noise amelioration and also reduce the visual impact of the all the buildings at Hawkshaw Farm. This will be in addition to the existing trees and mature hedgerows on the field boundaries between the farm and the residential properties.

Whilst planning consent is to retain the buildings as a permanent facility there are only a limited number of days in the year when there is a market for this type of horror activity. It is also very time consuming and requires a lot of input from family members with all visitors parking close to the farmhouse and requiring constant supervision. Last year there were a total of 35 events with some 13,500 visitors.

Scare Kingdom has a beneficial effect on a number of other local businesses as many visitors dine in local restaurants and pubs either before or after their tour. There have also been visitors from further afield who have stayed overnight in the area.

Hawkshaw Farm



The storage containers are clad with box profile steel sheets which are light grey in colour



The agricultural building which is the subject of this change of use application

4.0 Design and Access

Context of Site

Assessment

The subject of this application is the change of use of an agricultural storage building and a container building to a permanent use to support the Scare Kingdom visitor enterprise at Hawkshaw Farm.

Involvement

The previous application – 3/2014/1092, was granted temporary consent for one year until December 2016 to enable the site to be monitored for noise nuisance.

Evaluation

The agricultural storage building was erected in 2013 and the container building has been used for Scare Kingdom and for general storage in recent years. The containers are of a temporary nature at present and have been moved within the farm site as required.

Design

The agricultural building is a steel framed building with juniper green box profile steel sheets for cladding and a grey cement fibre roof. The containers are sited in a block with light grey box profile steel sheets erected around them to form a screen.

Design Principles and Concepts:

Use

Both of the above described structures have been fitted out to create horror themed rooms and spaces to form part of the Scare Kingdom Attraction. The spaces are created with timber frames and wooden sheeting to create a range of different sets in which the actors perform and interact with visitors.

Amount

The agricultural storage building is 30.7m x 18.3m and the storage containers measure 18.4m x 12.3m. The size of both buildings will be unchanged.

Layout

The agricultural storage building is located in the parcel of land to the east of the farm buildings adjacent to Tottering Brook. The storage containers are sited against the farm track to the south of the farm visitor centre. See the site plan.

Scale

The application is for retrospective planning to operate the Scare Kingdom visitor attraction at Hawkshaw Farm and for the change of use of two buildings to permanent parts of the attraction.

Landscaping

A belt of native species trees has been planted adjacent to Tottering Brook to ameliorate any potential noise nuisance and to provide screening for the site.

Appearance

The main building is clad with juniper green box profile steel sheets and has a cement fibre roof so that it is in keeping with the large range of farm buildings immediately to the west.

The storage containers have an outer cladding of light grey box profile steel sheets. These could be painted green if it is felt that this will reduce the visual impact.

Access:

An Accessible Environment

The site is easily accessible from Longsight Road and via a number of internal farm tracks. All buildings which are open to the visitors are fully accessible.

Vehicular and Transport Links

The site has good vehicular access and public transport can be accessed from Longsight Road

Access and Movement Patterns

There is good access and adequate turning space for vehicles within the site. The original planning consent contained access improvements onto the A59, Longsight Road and these have been carried out to a higher specification than required.

There is adequate space for car parking and turning space for coaches visiting the site.

Emergency Services Access

There is good access for the emergency services and this will not be altered by the proposal.

5.0 Planning Policy Framework

Central Government provides policy advice in the National Policy Planning Framework.

In this instance the local planning policy which is relevant to the site comes in the form of the Core Strategy 2008-2028 A Local Plan for the Ribble Valley

5.1 National Policy

National planning Policy Framework

3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy

28 planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create new jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans:

- *support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- *promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- *support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres;*

This project is a further diversification of this family managed dairy farm.

5.2 Local Policies

Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley

Key statement DS1: Development Strategy

The majority of new housing development will be:

- *concentrated within an identified strategic site located to the south of Clitheroe towards the A59; and*
- *the principal settlements of:*
 - *Clitheroe;*
 - *Longridge; and*
 - *Whalley.*

Strategic employment opportunities will be promoted through the development of:

- *the Barrow enterprise site as a main location for employment; and*
- *the Samlesbury enterprise zone.*

New retail and leisure development will be directed toward the centres of:

- *Clitheroe;*
- *Longridge; and*
- *Whalley.*

Villages, which are the more sustainable of the 32 defined settlements:

- *Barrow;*
- *Billington;*
- *Chatburn;*
- *Gisburn;*

- Langho

In the 23 remaining tier 2 village settlements, which are the less sustainable of the 32 defined settlements, development will need to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits. The tier 2 village settlements are:

- Bolton-by-Bowland;
- Brockhall;
- Calderstones;
- Chipping;
- Copster green;
- Downham;
- Dunsop bridge;
- Grindleton

In general the scale of planned housing growth will be managed to reflect existing population size, the availability of, or the opportunity to provide facilities to serve the development and the extent to which development can be accommodated within the local area. Specific allocations will be made through the preparation of a separate allocations DPD.

In allocating development, the council will have regard to the AONB, green belt and similar designations when establishing the scale, extent and form of development to be allocated under this strategy. The relevant constraints are set out as part of the strategic framework included in this plan.

Development that has recognised regeneration benefits, is for identified local needs or satisfies neighbourhood planning legislation, will be considered in all the Borough's settlements, including small-scale development in the smaller settlements that are appropriate for consolidation and expansion or rounding-off of the built up area.

Through this strategy, development opportunities will be created for economic, social and environmental well-being and development for future generations.

This is a small scale tourism development in the open countryside which offers local employment.

Key statement DS2: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

When considering development proposals the council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the national planning policy framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this local plan (and, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- *any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the national planning policy framework taken as a whole; or*
- *specific policies in that framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

This small scale development is located adjacent to the main road and is easily accessible using public transport, on foot, by cycle or by car making the site sustainable. The proposal is to continue to use existing buildings.

Key statement EN3: Sustainable development and climate change

The council will seek to ensure that all development meets an appropriate recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so, in order to address both the causes and consequences of climate change. In particular, all development will be required to demonstrate how it will contribute towards reducing the borough's carbon footprint. The Council will assess applications against the current code of sustainable homes, lifetime homes and buildings for life and Breeam standards, or any subsequent nationally recognised standards.

Proposals for the development of new renewable energy generation facilities, including onshore wind turbine technologies, will be considered. This will require the consideration of many factors including the need to reduce the area's carbon footprint whilst also recognising its exceptional environmental and landscape context.

In adapting to the effects of climate change it is expected that proposals for development will demonstrate how sustainable development principles and sustainable construction methods, such as the use of sustainable drainage systems, will be incorporated. New development in vulnerable areas should ensure that risks can be managed through suitable measures, including through the conservation of biodiversity, improvement of ecological networks and the provision of green infrastructure. All development should optimise energy efficiency by using new technologies and minimising the use of energy through appropriate design, layout, material and landscaping and address any potential issues relating to flood risk.

Ribble Valley Borough Council will liaise with the county council over development within mineral safeguarding areas (MSAs) in both proposing future site allocations and in determining planning applications. This liaison will include consideration of the issue of preventing the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources within MSAs and, where feasible and practicable, the prior extraction of mineral resources.

On larger schemes, planning permission will only be granted for developments on sites that deliver a proportion of renewable or low carbon energy on site based on targets elaborated within the relevant development management policy and also incorporate recycled or reclaimed materials or minimise the use of energy by using energy efficiency solutions and technologies. Where developments fail to achieve any of these, it must be demonstrated why this cannot be achieved.

The site is in a sustainable location adjacent to the A59 and re-uses the existing buildings and infrastructure at Hawkshaw Farm.

Key statement EN4: Biodiversity and geodiversity

The council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity and to avoid the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats and help develop green corridors. Where appropriate, cross-local authority boundary working will continue to take place to achieve this.

Negative impacts on biodiversity through development proposals should be avoided.

Development proposals that adversely affect a site of recognised environmental or ecological importance will only be permitted where a developer can demonstrate that the negative effects of a proposed development can be mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for. It will be the developer's responsibility to identify and agree an acceptable scheme, accompanied by appropriate survey information, before an application is determined. There should, as a principle be a net enhancement of biodiversity.

These sites are as follows:

- *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)*

Hawkshaw Farm

- *Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)*
- *Local Biological Heritage Sites (LBHS)*
- *Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)*
- *Local geodiversity heritage sites*
- *Ancient woodlands*
- *Lancashire biodiversity action plan priority habitats and species*
- *European directive on protected species and habitats - Annexe 1 habitats and Annexe II species*
- *Habitats and species of principal importance in England*

With respect to sites designated through European legislation the authority will be bound by the provisions of the relevant habitats directives and regulations.

For those sites that are not statutorily designated and compensation could be managed through a mechanism such as biodiversity off-setting via conservation credits.

The proposal does not impact on any protected sites

Key statement EC3: Visitor economy

Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities through the conversion of existing buildings or associated with existing attractions. Significant new attractions will be supported, in circumstances where they would deliver overall improvements to the environment and benefits to local communities and employment opportunities.

Scare Kingdom attracts visitors to the Ribble valley and has a beneficial impact on neighbouring restaurants, pubs and accommodation providers. The proposal uses existing buildings at Hawkshaw Farm.

Key statement DMI2: Transport considerations

New development should be located to minimise the need to travel. Also it should incorporate good access by foot and cycle and have convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car.

In general, schemes offering opportunities for more sustainable means of transport and sustainable travel improvements will be supported. Sites for potential future railway stations at Chatburn and Gisburn will be protected from inappropriate development.

Major applications should always be accompanied by a comprehensive travel plan.

Hawkshaw Farm is readily accessible using public transport and either on foot and by bicycle.

Policy DMG1: General considerations

In determining planning applications, all development must:

Design

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building in context toolkit)*
- 2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
- 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*
- 4. Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy DME5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*
- 5. The code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.*

Access

- 1. Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
- 2. Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*
- 3. Consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.*

Amenity

- 1. Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
- 2. Provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
- 3. Have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
- 4. Consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible.*

Environment

- 1. Consider the environmental implications such as SSSIs, county heritage sites, Local Nature reserves, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protected Areas, protected species, green corridors and other sites of nature conservation.*
- 2. With regards to possible effects upon the natural environment, the council propose that the principles of the mitigation hierarchy be followed. This gives sequential preference to the following:
 - 1) enhance the environment*
 - 2) avoid the impact*
 - 3) minimise the impact*
 - 4) restore the damage*
 - 5) compensate for the damage*
 - 6) offset the damage.**
- 3. All development must protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.*
- 4. All new development proposals will be required to take into account the risks arising from former coal mining and, where necessary, incorporate suitable mitigation measures to address them.*
- 5. Achieve efficient land use and the reuse and remediation of previously developed sites where possible. Previously developed sites should always be used instead of Greenfield sites where possible*

Infrastructure

- 1. Not result in the net loss of important open space, including public and private playing fields without a robust assessment that the sites are surplus to need. In assessing this,*

regard must be had to the level of provision and standard of public open space in the area, the importance of playing fields and the need to protect school playing fields to meet future needs. Regard will also be had to the landscape or townscape of an area and the importance the open space has on this.

- 2. Have regard to the availability to key infrastructure with capacity. Where key infrastructure with capacity is not available it may be necessary to phase development to allow infrastructure enhancements to take place.*
- 3. Consider the potential impact on social infrastructure provision.*

The project fits with the above policy as it offers good access and parking, is in a sustainable location and offers a small scale attraction without impacting on the surrounding countryside.

Policy DMG2: Strategic considerations

Development should be in accordance with the Core Strategy Development Strategy and should support the spatial vision.

- 1. Development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement.*

Within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas development must meet at least one of the following considerations:

- 1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well being of the area.*
- 2. The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.*
- 3. The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
- 4. The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
- 5. The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*
- 6. The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.*

Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.

In protecting the designated area of outstanding natural beauty the council will have regard to the economic and social well being of the area. However the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area avoiding where possible habitat fragmentation. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. Development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting. The AONB management plan should be considered and will be used by the council in determining planning applications.

For the purposes of this policy the term settlement is defined in the glossary. Current settlement boundaries will be updated in subsequent DPDs.

The development is in the open countryside and is in keeping with the surrounding buildings and character of the area.

Policy DMG3: Transport and mobility

In making decisions on development proposals the local planning authority will, in addition to assessing proposals within the context of the development strategy, attach considerable weight to the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development -

- 1. The relationship of the site to the primary route network and the strategic road network.*
- 2. The provision made for access to the development by pedestrian, cyclists and those with reduced mobility.*
- 3. Proposals which promote development within existing developed areas or extensions to them at locations which are highly accessible by means other than the private car.*
- 4. Proposals which locate major generators of travel demand in existing centres which are highly accessible by means other than the private car.*
- 5. Proposals which strengthen existing town and village centres which offer a range of everyday community shopping and employment opportunities by protecting and enhancing their vitality and viability.*
- 6. Proposals which locate development in areas which maintain and improve choice for people to walk, cycle or catch public transport rather than drive between homes and facilities which they need to visit regularly.*
- 7. Proposals which limit parking provision for developments and other on or off street Parking provision to discourage reliance on the car for work and other journeys where there are effective alternatives.*

All major proposals should offer opportunities for increased use of, or the improved provision of, bus and rail facilities. All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards.

The council will protect land currently identified on the proposals map from inappropriate development that may be required for the opening of stations at Gisburn and Chatburn. Any planning application relating to these sites will be assessed having regard to the likelihood of the sites being required and the amount of harm that will be caused to the possible implementation of schemes.

The council will resist development that will result in the loss of opportunities to transport freight by rail.

The site is well served by public transport and has good links to the main motorway network via the A59.

Business and economy

Policy DMB11: supporting business growth and the local economy

Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. Development proposals will be determined in accord with the Core Strategy and detailed policies of the LDF as appropriate.

The Borough Council may request the submission of supporting information for farm diversification where appropriate.

The expansion of existing firms within settlements will be permitted on land within or adjacent to their existing sites, provided no significant environmental problems are caused and the extension conforms to the other plan policies of the LDF.

The expansion of established firms on land outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape. There may be occasions where due to the scale of the proposal relocation to an alternative site is preferable.

Proposals for the development, redevelopment or conversion of sites with employment generating potential in the plan area for alternative uses will be assessed with regard to the following criteria:

1. The provisions of policy DMG1, and
2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies of the LDF, and
3. The environmental benefits to be gained by the community, and
4. The economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the Borough, and
5. Any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site must be supported by evidence (such as property agents details including periods of marketing and response) that the property/ business has been marketed for business use for a minimum period of six months or information that demonstrates to the council's satisfaction that the current use is not viable for employment purposes.)

This is a small scale farm diversification project and fits with other policies in the Core Strategy.

Policy DMB2: The conversion of barns and other rural buildings for employment uses
Planning permission will be granted for employment generating uses in barns and other rural buildings, provided all of the following criteria are met:

1. The proposed use will not cause unacceptable disturbance to neighbours in any way.
2. The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or other rural enterprise.
3. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use, without the need for major alterations which would adversely affect the character of the building.
4. The impact of the proposal or additional elements likely to be required for the proper operation of the building will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated.
5. The access to the site is of a safe standard or is capable of being improved to a safe standard without harming the appearance of the area.
6. The design of the conversion should be of a high standard and be in keeping with local tradition, particularly in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings.
7. That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or, if this is not possible, then any loss adequately mitigated.

The conversion of buildings should be of a high standard and in keeping with local tradition. The impact of the development, including the creation of servicing, storage areas and car parking facilities (or other additions) should not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated. The AONB management plan should be considered and will be used by the council in determining planning applications.

Proposals for the conversion of buildings for employment purposes that include residential accommodation will be carefully assessed. The council will require the submission of a business plan in support of the proposal where residential accommodation is required as part of the scheme in locations where the council would otherwise restrict the creation of dwellings. In all cases the proportion of living accommodation to workspace must not exceed a level of 60:40, workspace to living accommodation, and should form an integral part of the layout and design of the conversion. Proposals will be assessed in accordance with national planning guidance.

The proposal is for the retrospective change of use of an agricultural building but there will be no structural changes to the existing buildings

Policy DMB3: Recreation and tourism development

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the borough. This is subject to the following criteria being met:

1. The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan;
2. The proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in

conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available;

3. The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of The plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;

4. The proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network;

5. The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service Areas and appropriate landscaped areas; and

6. The proposal must take into account any nature conservation impacts using suitable Survey information and where possible seek to incorporate any important existing associations within the development. Failing this then adequate mitigation will be sought. In the Forest of Bowland area of outstanding natural beauty the following criteria will Also apply:

1. The proposal should display a high standard of design appropriate to the area.

2. The site should not introduce built development into an area largely devoid of structures (other than those directly related to agriculture or forestry uses).

In the AONB it is important that development is not of a large scale. In the AONB and immediately adjacent areas proposals should contribute to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape. Within the open countryside proposals will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape area and should reflect the local vernacular, scale, style, features and building materials.

This is a small scale tourism development which is well related to other buildings, offers good transport links and will attract visitors to the area.

6.0 Determining issues

It is considered that the determining issues in the case of this application are:-

- a) The principle of allowing the continuation of the Scare Kingdom visitor attraction and the change of use of the two buildings to permanent tourism use to enable the fixtures and fittings to be retained.
- b) The visual impact of the proposal on the open countryside
- c) The impact of the development on the amenity of the local residents

7.0 Assessment of the determining issues

7.1 The principle of the change of use to tourism fits with national and local planning policy. This is a small scale tourism facility with restricted appeal due its close link with Halloween.

7.2 The buildings are built in the style of agricultural buildings and as such have little visual impact as they are well related to the main farm yard and buildings. The colour of the panels around the storage containers may be better if the sheets were painted green. The new planting will also screen the buildings in time.

7.3 Changes to the way Scare Kingdom is operated have eliminated the noise issues which were of concern to local residents.

8.0 Conclusion

After carefully assessing this proposal with regard to all the relevant planning policies and issues it is considered that there will be no obstacles to the granting of retrospective planning permission for this proposal.

The Scare Kingdom attraction operates for a relatively short period of time each year around Halloween and for a limited number of other days throughout the year.