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PLANNING STATEMENT

**IN RESPECT OF A FULL PLANNING
APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF THREE
DETACHED TWO STOREY HOLIDAY COTTAGES
FOLLOWING THE TOTAL DEMOLITION OF ONE
EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AND THE
PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF ANOTHER
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING ON LAND AT
CUNLIFFE MOSS FARM, SACCARY LANE,
MELLOR, BB1 9DL.**

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Our Client: Mr M Ainsworth
Our Ref: Ain/798/2261/CS
Date: July 2017



Chartered Surveyors ■■■ Planning & Development ■■■ Land Agents
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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 Gary Hoerty Associates has been instructed by Mr Mark Ainsworth to submit a full planning application on his behalf for the erection of three detached two storey holiday cottages following the demolition/partial demolition of existing agricultural buildings on land at Cunliffe Moss Farm, Saccary Lane, Mellor.
- 1.2 In this Planning Statement we will explain the planning history of the application site, we will describe the proposed development and will review the relevant policies and guidance and set out why we believe that the application conforms to national planning guidance and local planning policies and why the application should therefore be looked upon favourably.
- 1.3 We have also submitted with the application a Bat, Barn Owl and Nesting Bird Survey Report in respect of the existing buildings that are to be demolished or partially demolished and we request that the contents of this document is also taken into account in the consideration of the application.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 There are three existing dwellings at Cunliffe Moss Farm including Cunliffe Moss Farmhouse at the western end of the group and Willow Croft at the eastern end. A planning application search on the Council's website has revealed the following applications relating to the farm:

1989/0845 – Proposed first floor bedrooms at Willow Croft – Approved with no conditions.

1999/0542 – Proposed two storey rear extension at Cunliffe Moss Farmhouse – Approved with conditions.

2005/0880 – Proposed conservatory at rear of Cunliffe Moss Farmhouse – Refused.

2009/0714 – Proposed demolition of attached store at Cunliffe Moss Farmhouse and replacement to form additional living and bedroom accommodation – Approved with conditions.

2010/0753 – Proposed demolition and replacement of existing Cunliffe Moss Farmhouse – Approved with conditions.

2011/0510 – Proposed demolition and replacement of existing Cunliffe Moss Farmhouse (revised submission of approved application 2010/0753) – Approved with conditions.

- 2.2 Although they are for a different type of development to this current proposal, the planning permissions referred to above are evidence that the Council has authorised new development at Cunliffe Moss Farm. In particular we would comment that the approved replacement farmhouse (2011/0510) is considerably larger than the dwelling that it replaced, but, in our opinion, its size, design and external materials are entirely appropriate for its setting and locality.

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 There are two existing portal frame agricultural buildings to the south east of Willow Croft in the vicinity of the three proposed holiday cottages. The first is a relatively small building of approximately 9m x 5m. The second is a larger building, the main part of which has approximate dimensions of 19m x 9m with a projection of approximately 4.5m x 4.5m from its north eastern corner. The first part of the proposed development is that the smaller building will be totally demolished and the small projection on the larger building will be demolished.
- 3.2 The second element of the proposal relates to the extension of the existing access track that serves Willow Croft in order to give access to the parking areas for each of the three holiday cottages. The extension to the track will have a tarmac surface to match the existing.
- 3.3 The main aspect of the proposal relates to the construction of the three detached two storey holiday cottages. The proposed unit 1 has a T-shaped footprint and is to be built on the southern part of the application site. Units 2 and 3 both have an approximately square footprint and are to be sited next to each other on the northern part of the site.
- 3.4 All three cottages are to be constructed using the same external materials, namely natural stone with quoins, natural slates, stone window surroundings and grey aluminium window frames.
- 3.5 As previously stated, unit 1 has a T-shaped footprint, but its maximum dimensions are approximately 13.4m x 14.4m (including a balcony) and it will have an eaves height of 5.1m and a maximum height of 6.7m. This unit will contain a lounge/dining/kitchen area, a separate lounge and a bedroom with en-suite facilities on the ground floor; and at first floor level, there will be three further bedrooms (2 with en-suite) a separate bathroom and a lounge with bi-fold door access onto a balcony. The balcony is on the eastern elevation of the building overlooking open fields.
- 3.6 Unit 2 is the eastern of the two units on the northern part of the site. This building has a footprint of 12m x 11.2m. It is designed to have an appearance similar to a traditional agricultural building with a cat-slide roof such that the eaves height of its southern elevation is 2.5m, the eaves height to the north is 5.2m and the ridge height is 7.2m. This unit therefore has more floor space on the ground floor than

the first floor. On the ground floor this comprises a kitchen/dining/lounge area, a snug, a hall, a w.c., a store room and a bedroom with an en-suite shower room that is suitable for use by disabled persons. On the first floor there are three bedrooms, all with en-suite shower rooms.

- 3.7 Unit 3 has a footprint of 10m x 10m with an eaves height of 5.7m and a ridge height of 8.2m. Although of two storey design, this unit has accommodation within the roof space to which light is provided by roof lights. This unit contains a kitchen/lounge/dining area, a snug, a hallway, a w.c. and a utility/store room on the ground floor. At first floor level there are three bedrooms (one with en-suite) and a separate bathroom. Within the roof space there are two further bedrooms and a shower room with a w.c.
- 3.8 Externally, each cottage would have its own sitting-out/garden area and a parking space.

4. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 4.1 The group of buildings at Cunliffe Moss Farm comprises three dwellings and a number of agricultural buildings. The property, Willow Croft, is at the eastern edge of the group of buildings, and its curtilage extends to its north, south and eastern sides. The proposed holiday cottages would be constructed on the eastern part of the curtilage of Willow Croft that contains a number of trees that are to be retained and protected.
- 4.2 The group of buildings is located at the eastern end of an approximately 200m long access track off the eastern side of Showley Road. With a small extension, this access track will also serve the proposed development.
- 4.3 With regards to the wider area, the application site is surrounded on all sides by agricultural fields within which there are scattered dwellings and farmsteads.
- 4.4 With regards to the applicable planning policies, the site is within the open countryside but is not within either the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Green Belt.

5. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to determine planning applications in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. If it is to be approved, a development must satisfy as far as possible guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the relevant policies of the Council's adopted Core Strategy.

5.1.2 Core Strategy Key Statements and Policies which are relevant to this application are therefore:

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN2 - Landscape
Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development
Key Statement EC3 – Visitor Economy
Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection
Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation
Policy DMB 1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
Policy DMB 3 – Recreation and Tourism Development

5.1.3 We set out below extracts from the relevant documents to facilitate the assessment of the application proposal against the principal appropriate policies and guidance.

5.2 National Planning Policy Guidance

5.2.1 The main national planning policy guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2.2 The adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012 means that it is now the main national planning policy guidance influencing planning decision making and replaces a substantial number of documents previously in place. *“The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, it sets out the Government’s requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so.”*

5.2.3 Paragraphs 11 – 16 of the NPPF highlight the presumption in favour of sustainable development confirming that *“planning law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”*. The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making and therefore proposed development that accords with an up to date local plan should be approved, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2.4 Importantly, paragraph 14 of the NPPF states:

*At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.*

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

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*

*For **decision-taking** this means:*

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*

5.2.5 Paragraph 14 clearly spells out the Government's presumption in favour of allowing sustainable development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would be very significant. The approval of this application would allow sustainable development to proceed. The proposed holiday cottages represent a small scale development that will be in keeping with the local area and the materials proposed are also appropriate for the locality.

5.2.6 Paragraph 15 states:

"Policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally."

5.2.7 Paragraph 17 says that one of the core principles of planning is to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. It also says planning should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed; promote mixed use developments; and actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

5.2.8 Section three of the NPPF highlights the Government's commitment to 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' and paragraph 28 states that:

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

- *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; and*
- *promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.*

5.2.9 The approval of this application will support the development of a sustainable rural tourism business which will provide an attractive location for visitors to the Ribble Valley to stay. The NPPF clearly supports sustainable rural tourism and leisure development provided that it respects the character of the countryside, which this development does.

5.3 Council's Core Strategy 2008/2028 – A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version

5.3.1 There are a number of policies within the Adopted Core Strategy that are relevant to the proposal and we comment on these policies below.

Key Statement DS2: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.

- 5.3.2 Key Statement DS2 identifies that the Council when considering development proposals should take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in NPPF. The policy states that where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, 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 NPPF taken as a whole; or specific policies in that framework indicate that development should be restricted. The holiday cottages offer a sustainable form of accommodation and it is anticipated that visitors will explore the area on foot or bike, as well as by car.

Key Statement EN2: Landscape

- 5.3.3 Key statement EN2 identifies that as a principle the Council expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials. We consider that the proposed development adequately addresses all of these principles, providing three high quality holiday cottages using appropriate materials in a sympathetic location, adjoining an existing group of buildings.

Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development

- 5.3.4 Key statement EC1 states “*developments that contribute to farm diversification, strengthening of the wider rural and village economies or that promote town centre vitality and viability will be supported in principle*”. Cunliffe Moss Farm extends to about 50 acres that is still actively farmed by the applicant. The proposal does therefore represent farm diversification; and the proposed holiday cottages will provide extra custom for local businesses thereby strengthening the rural and village economies.

Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy

- 5.3.5 This Key Statement relates specifically to the visitor economy stating that 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. The existing buildings in this case are not capable of conversion, but we consider the total demolition of one building and the partial demolition of another, to facilitate the construction of three holiday cottages to be fully compliant with the intentions of Key Statement EC3 (as this does not restrict the provision of holiday accommodation only to the conversion of existing buildings.)

Policy DMG1: General considerations

5.3.6. This is a general development management policy which states that, in determining planning applications, all development must satisfy a total of 20 criteria relating to the matters of design, access, amenity, environment and infrastructure. We consider only the following criteria to be of particular relevance to the consideration of this application:

- The development must 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.
- The development must 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.
- The development must consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.
- The development must ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.
- The development must not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.
- All development must protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

5.3.7 Without responding to each of the individual bullet pointed criteria set out in Policy DMG1: General Considerations, we set out below a number of general comments as follows:

- We consider that the demolition/partial demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of the proposed holiday cottages represents a development that is sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale and massing.
- The proposed holiday cottages will be served by the existing access from Saccary Lane that serves the existing dwellings and agricultural buildings at Cunliffe Moss Farm which we consider to be more than capable of safely accommodating the relatively small increase in traffic generated by the holiday cottages. Saccary Lane runs between the A59 (the principal road in the Borough) to the north and the other major road of Mellor Lane/Ramsgreave Road to the south. As the site is in such close proximity to these major highways, we consider that the proposal

would have virtually no implications for the local highway network. We also consider there to be appropriate visibility at the junction of the access track with Saccary Lane, such that the access will be safe for the future occupiers of the three proposed holiday cottages.

- As demonstrated in more detail in the separate Bat, Barn Owl and Nesting Bird Survey Report, the proposal would have no adverse ecological implications; and there would also not be any adverse impacts on any public rights of way or any heritage assets.
- Although there are existing dwellings within the group of buildings at Cunliffe Moss Farm, the proposed holiday cottages have been sited to the east of those dwellings such that there will be no overlooking between directly facing windows and the separation distance between existing dwellings and the proposed holiday cottages is such that, in all cases, an acceptable level of amenity will be retained for existing residents whilst also ensuring a satisfactory level of amenity for the future occupiers of the holiday cottages.
- The development would not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area, would not prejudice significant environmental and amenity improvements and would not result in the loss of any important local space, or public or private playing fields.

5.3.8 In our opinion, the development undoubtedly complies with the requirements of Policy DMG1.

Policy DMG 2: Strategic Considerations

5.3.9 Policy DMG2 requires development to be in accordance with the Core Strategy Development Strategy and to support spatial vision and identifies certain forms of development that are acceptable outside of the settlement areas, three of which are as follows:

1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well being of the area.
4. The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.
5. Development is for small scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.

5.3.10 As a proposal for three units of holiday accommodation, the development is small scale and there is no requirement for the applicant to show a need for the proposed units. However, we do consider there to be a need for larger holiday lets such as those proposed in this application. One of the units has 5 bedrooms whilst the other two have 4 bedrooms, both with the added benefit of the fourth bedroom having en-suite facilities and being located on the ground floor making these units suitable for use by disabled persons.

5.3.11 The Policy also states that '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.' For reasons already given in this Statement, we consider that the proposal satisfies those requirements of Policy DMG2.

Policy DME 2: Landscape and Townscape Protection

5.3.12 This policy identifies that development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape features and sets out a list of relevant landscape features of which only "hedgerows and individual trees" is relevant to this application. The proposal involves the construction of buildings on land that is part of the curtilage of Willow Croft, and contains a number of trees. All of the trees are relatively small such that they have small Root Protection Areas (RPA's) based on their Diameters at Breast Height (DBA's). As indicated on submitted Drawing No. Ain/798/2261/04, the buildings have been sited such that they are outside the RPA's of all existing trees. All trees will therefore be retained and protected during development works, so that they will provide some screening for the proposed buildings. In our opinion, the proposal would therefore not cause harm to any important landscape features.

Policy DMB 1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy

5.3.13 Policy DMB1 indicates that the Council will support proposals that are intended to support business growth in the local economy provided such proposals are in conformity with other relevant policies of the local plan. The proposed development is in full conformity with all of the relevant policies and policy DMB1 clearly supports the proposed development.

Policy DMB 3: Recreation and Tourism Development

5.3.14 Policy DMB3 states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough subject to a number of criteria being met. As far as the criteria are concerned the proposed development does not conflict with other policies of the plan. The site immediately adjoins an existing group of buildings. The proposal does not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of

its scale, siting, materials or design. The proposal is particularly well related to the highway network and would not create any adverse traffic problems.

- 5.3.15 The proposed development will support the development of tourism in the Ribble Valley by providing three high quality four and five bedroom holiday cottages, two of which will be particularly suitable for use by disabled persons, and in a highly accessible location, that will be used by visitors for holiday occupation purposes throughout the year when they wish to visit the Ribble Valley.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposal relates to the provision of three high quality units of holiday accommodation appropriately located adjoining an existing group of buildings within a rural but highly sustainable location very close to the A59.
- 6.2 The NPPF and adopted Core Strategy are both supportive of rural tourism and strengthening the visitor economy in the Borough. We believe that these holiday cottages will be popular with visitors due to their easily accessible location and proximity to the many tourist attractions of the Ribble Valley.
- 6.3 As a development of three holiday cottages, the proposal is modest in size, intensity and nature. The nearby villages and towns including Mellor, Whalley and Clitheroe offer a range of services, facilities and amenities which will benefit from increased trade as a result of the development.
- 6.4 Within this Planning Statement we have provided a reasoned justification explaining how the proposed development conforms to the adopted Core Strategy and the NPPF. In order to satisfy the statement at paragraph 14 of NPPF, we therefore consider that permission should be granted without delay subject to any reasonable and necessary conditions.

Signed..........Date.....19/7/17.....
Colin Sharpe DipTP MRTPI
For and on behalf of Gary Hoerty Associates