

Design and Access Statement & Planning Statement

to support

A planning application for a change of use for part of a field to create a tipi wedding venue for use in the summer months

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

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



This statement has been structured with reference to CABE best practice guidance; Design & Access Statements – how to write read and use them. CABE 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 220 dairy cattle with all replacements being reared on farm so that at any one time there are 400 head of cattle present on the holding.

A proportion of the milk produced is used to make Mrs Dowson's 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.

The farm also operates a visitor centre and café which is open to the public at weekends and through the school holidays. The farm business further diversified with the creation of the Scare Kingdom visitor attraction with Halloween themed events taking place on the farm.

The proposal is to create a small tipi wedding venue which will operate in the summer months only. The proposal will add an additional income stream to this family dairy farming business to ensure that the business is sustainable for the next generation.

2.0 Site details

Hawkshaw Farm is located on Longsight Rd and is to the east of the A59. All the land at the farm is grassland with a mixture of pastures and silage meadows.

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.

Planning consent was granted for the Scare Kingdom attraction in September 2017 allowing the activities to be held on no more than 41 days in any calendar year.

The scheme for the access which was approved by highways when the visitor centre was granted planning has been implemented. 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 recent turbulent times in the dairy industry have led to the family exploring possible options to develop an additional income stream.

3.0 The development

Over the last three years the dairy industry has experienced a very turbulent market with many months of production resulting in trading losses. In the past the farmland has been used to host a marquee wedding and the event was a great success. Further research indicates that there is a growing market for outdoor weddings and so the idea of a venue for tipi weddings was born.

The proposal is to create concrete pads for four interconnected tipis, a toilet facility and a catering facility. The tipis would be erected for the beginning of May each year and dismantled at the end of September. The toilets and the catering unit will be containerised removable units so that the site can be cleared, apart from the concrete pads, through the winter months when there will be no leaves on the trees and hedges. This will minimise the visual impact of the site.

A packaged water treatment plant will be installed for foul water which will discharge into the ditch to the northeast of the site. Calculations based on the maximum number of guests of 150 indicates that there will be a peak load flow of 4500 litres on any one day. The plant will be scaled to process this volume and installed to the relevant British Standards. The size of plant required will require a discharge license from the EA.

The soil cleared to enable the concrete pads to be created will be used to form a 1.5 metre bund to the north east of the field to create a buffer against any noise from the wedding guests. The bund will then be planted with native species of shrubs to create a dense foliar screen to protect the properties further north on Longsight Road by both creating a baffle for any sounds created and by screening the site from view.

The existing car park for the visitor centre will be extended to provide parking for the users of the tipis and a vehicular access track will be created to the south of the tipis to provide access for catering staff and to allow large vehicles on to the site to erect and remove the tipis.

A cottage garden area will be created to the east of the tipis adjacent to the car park. This will enhance the entrance to the site for guests and provide an area for wedding photographs. Finally native species trees will be planted in an arc around the edge of the site to provide screening and to enhance the appearance of the site for users of the tipis. A separate landscaping proposal is included with this application.

Weddings or other events will only take place between May and September with no more than one event per week. It is expected that users will hire the whole venue for a week to enable them to dress the tipis to their liking and to remove everything after their event. All weddings and events will have to finish by midnight to ensure the impact on neighbouring properties is controlled. It is also important to note that this will be strictly enforced as the Dowson Family live on site and they start work on the farm at 5.00 am every day.

The public footpath which runs from the visitor centre car park to Longsight Road will be unaffected by the proposal and the proprietor will ensure there is no disruption to this right of way during the development phase.

The proposal will create employment in this rural area for chefs, kitchen staff, waiting on staff and bar personnel. The job creation could be as many as 20 part time positions.

The average cost for a wedding in the northwest of England is £17,000 and the wedding market in the UK is worth £10 billion per year. In 2017 5% of couples sought an outdoor venue for their big day. (UK wedding report 2017- Bridebook) The growing demand for alternative wedding venues and particularly outdoor locations means that this is the ideal time for a development of this nature.

4.0 Design and Access

Context of Site

Assessment

The subject of this application is the change of use of part of a field to create a wedding tipi venue and to include 4 tipis, a mobile toilet facility and a catering van. The tipis, toilets and catering facility would only be on site from May to September each year and would be used for weddings and other functions.

The existing infrastructure provides good access to the highway network and parking for guests. As the tipis and other structures will be removed in the winter months the only permanent feature will be the concrete bases for the tipis.

Involvement

There has been no involvement with RVBC planning team in this application.

Evaluation

The proposal is a small scale addition to this diversified farm enterprise to secure a sustainable family farming business which can support the next generation of the family.

Design

A concrete base will be created so that the tipis can be erected off the ground to allow use in all weathers. The four tipis will be clad with beige coloured canvas, a natural colour to blend with the surrounding environment.

The toilets and catering facilities will be timber clad mobile units so that they can be removed from the site at the end of September for the whole of the winter. This will reduce the potential visual impact of the proposal as the site will be cleared when there are no leaves on the trees, other than the concrete pads for the tipis.

The area around the tipis will be planted to create a woodland garden and cottage garden where wedding photographs can be taken and for guests to enjoy during the daytime.

All foul water will be treated using a package treatment plant. The venue will cater for up to 150 people so using the standard figures from the EA guidance for this type of

facility the plant will need to have sufficient capacity to treat 30 litres per person so up to 4500 litres on the day of an event. If planning is granted a discharge license will be required for a plant of this size.

Design Principles and Concepts:

Use

The tipis and associated facilities will be used for weddings or other functions through the summer months between 1st May and 30th September. It is proposed that there will be no more than one event per week as the person hiring the venue will need several days access to set out the event and then to remove decorations and personal effects. In practice the tipi will be booked by a single user for a period of 3-7 days for each event.

Amount

It is proposed to create a concrete base for 4 tipis with each one having a diameter of 10 metres when the sides down to the floor. In the process of interlinking the tipis the diameter increases to 13 metres when the sides are raised. The tipis will be interlinked to create different areas for guests eg. A seated dining area, a bar area and an area for dancing. Elevation drawings have been included along with images of tipis in use.

Layout

The tipis will be laid out so that they can be interlinked and they will be sited to the north west of the car parking area. The toilets will be to the north of the tipis and the catering facilities will be to the south west, to the rear of the tipis. (see the enclosed site plan) A package water treatment plant will be installed to the north of the site with a discharge pipe feeding to the existing field ditch. As the discharge will exceed 2 cubic metres per day a discharge permit will be required from the Environment Agency.

Scale

The proposed 4 tipis will accommodate a maximum of 150 guests for a wedding or other function and all the activity will be located in the land parcel to the northwest of the car park.

Landscaping

There is an existing mature hedgerow alongside Longsight Road which is approximately 2.5 metres tall which will screen the site along the north west edge. Further landscaping is proposed as per the enclosed plan. The landscaping will help to minimise visual impact and to deflect noise away from neighbouring properties. The proposed planting will work to baffle the sound from the site, thus reducing the impact.

Appearance

The tipis will be covered with natural beige coloured canvas, a neutral colour which will blend into the landscape. The perimeter of the whole site will be planted with native species broadleaved trees so that the tipis and other structures will be

screened when they are on site from May to September. The containerised toilet block and catering unit will be timber clad to ensure they blend into the surroundings.

In the winter months the tipis, toilet facilities and catering unit will be removed to leave the site clear in the winter months.

Access:

An Accessible Environment

The site is easily accessible by car, public transport and cycle from Longsight Road. The tipis and all facilities will be fully accessible to all users. The parking for the wedding venue will be adjacent to the site.

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 for the visitor attraction 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;*

The 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 development in the open countryside which offers local part time employment. The proposal would meet the growing demand for alternative wedding venues. It would also have a positive benefit for local accommodation providers as it is likely that guests would stay in the area overnight and sometimes for longer periods.

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.

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 further utilises the existing 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)*
- *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. An ecological survey of the site for the proposed development is included with this application.

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.

The creation of a tipi wedding venue will attract visitors to the Ribble valley and will have a beneficial impact on neighbouring restaurants, pubs and accommodation providers.

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 from the A59 using public transport and either on foot and by bicycle. Wedding guests are likely to arrive by car but will spend the whole day at the site and are likely to use local accommodation providers.

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 CABI/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 local wedding venue 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 will be landscaped to ensure it is in keeping with the character of the surrounding 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 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. The site is capable of offering the necessary parking and service areas required for a wedding venue.

Policy DMB5: Footpaths and bridleways

The borough council will seek to ensure the retention, maintenance and improvement of by-ways and un-surfaced/unclassified roads as part of the public rights of way network. In situations where a public right of way will inevitably become less attractive (due to

adjacent/surrounding development), the policy should require compensatory enhancements such that there is a net improvement to the public right of way network. The borough council will, unless suitable mitigation measures are made, protect from the development footpaths which:

- 1. Provide a link between towns/villages and attractive open land;*
- 2. Link with the Ribble way footpath;*
- 3. Are associated to the local nature reserves; and*
- 4. Are heavily used*

The public footpath which skirts around the north of the proposed tipi wedding venue will be protected. It will not be affected by the development and indeed will be improved by the proposed landscaping and planting of native trees and shrubs.

6.0 Determining issues

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

- a) The principle of allowing the change of use of part of the field to create a new tipi wedding venue at Hawkshaw Farm.
- 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 wedding facility with no more than one event per week. The proposal will assist the business to further diversify its activities whilst creating additional employment in this rural area.

7.2 The proposal is a small scale development which will be well landscaped to enhance its appearance and ambiance as a wedding venue. The proposed landscaping will create an area of native trees which will mean the tipis and other structures do not have a detrimental visual impact on the open countryside.

7.3 There will be no more than one event each week to minimise the impact on neighbours. All events will end at midnight which will be strictly enforced.

The soil bund will be planted with dense growing shrubs to deflect noise away from the properties to the north of the site in order to prevent noise nuisance.

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 planning permission for this proposal.

The wedding venue will operate for only six months each year with only one event per week which will amount to no more than 24 events per season.