

**PLANNING STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY A FULL
PLANNING APPLICATION TO RIBBLE VALLEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

FOR :

**INSTALLATION OF 6 NO. HOLIDAY PODS AND
ACCESS TRACK**

SITE AT :

LAND OFF KNOT LANE, NEWSHOLME, SKIPTON

For : Mr. M.BERRY

OUR REF : BERR/07

As atOctober 2018

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT.

1.1. This report is made to accompany a full planning application for the erection of six no. holiday pods at the application site ('the site'). It sets out the applicant's aims and aspirations for the site and provides the local planning authority with a written justification for the proposals. This report is therefore set out in the following format :

- Section 2 describes the characteristics of the site
- Section 3 describes the proposals.
- Section 4 gives the background to the development. .
- Section 5 assesses the development against planning policy.
- Section 6 considers highway implications
- Section 7 considers the effect on trees.
- Section 8 considers the effect on ecology
- Section 9 provides our concluding remarks

Limitations.

1.3. This statement is produced to provide a written description and justification of the proposals only and is not intended for any other purpose. It should be read in conjunction with the plans and information supplied in the planning application and not read in isolation. No part of this statement should be reproduced or used in any other document or circular without the prior approval of its authors as to the form and content in which it may occur, as the planning references used may not be appropriate for other purposes. The report is intended for the person to whom it is addressed only and no responsibility can be accepted for any third party for its use of a part or the whole of its content.

2. THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

2.1 The site is located approximately 3 kilometres to the north east of Gisburn in the settlement of Newsholme, about 180 metres to the south of the junction with Knot Lane and the A682. The

area is rural in character and the application site forms part of an existing agricultural field.

The site forms part of Hooper Farm, which is located about 1 kilometre to the south east. The intervening and surrounding land is within the ownership of Hooper Farm and the farm land area is as shown on the submitted Location Plan. That area extends to about 200 acres in total and the farm is operated as a dairy and sheep farm. The main buildings are centred around the farmhouse with the remainder of the land laid to pasture.

- 2.2.** The site itself is located to the eastern side of the farm holding where it has frontage onto Knot Lane. The application site is about 1 hectare in area and at this size and location, will not affect the operation of the remainder of the farm, which will continue to operate as a working farm unit. Knot Lane is a country lane that connects the A682 in the north to the A59 in the south and had hedgerows on either side for the most part of its length. The application site has frontage onto Knot Lane of about 200 metres with an available existing access at the northern end. The site itself is laid to grass with boundary trees and hedgerows but does not contain any buildings or features of note.

3.0. THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 3.1.** What is proposed is the installation of 6 no holiday ‘pods’ that are intended to serve the tourism trade for the area. The pods themselves are bespoke and manufactured by Lune Valley Pods. They are finished in Cedar timber and have lightweight tiled roofs. They are small in size, being only about 8m x 3.25m with a height of 2.77m. They are designed with a rural location in mind with natural materials. They are constructed off site and brought onto site by lorry and lifted in place. As such they constitute ‘caravans as they are mobile chattels that can be removed from site in one operation. As such there is no foundation structure required, the whole being placed on a base on which the pods effectively rest.

- 3.2. Only six pods are proposed and this provides for a very low density of layout on the site with the most part of the site being given over to landscaping. The site layout provides for a central pond, formed by drainage attenuation. An access track with parking spaces for each pod is to be provided with access directly off Knot Lane with an 'in' 'out' arrangement for the access. The only other structures required are those to service the site in the form of a bin store and a container for machinery storage. These are as shown on the submitted plans.



Images of the type of holiday pod proposed

4.0. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. The site is to be provided and managed by Hooper Farm and is to be used to diversify the economic activities of the farm unit. The farm is a traditional dairy and sheep farm with approximately 125 cows and 250 sheep. That farming activity will be continued and these holiday pods will be run by the farm in addition to that existing farming activity. The application site is sufficiently far away from the main farm so as not to disturb the farming activities that currently operate. The holiday pods will provide additional income for the farm and contribute towards its operational management financially. As such, the scheme represents a diversification of the traditional farming activities into a new income stream for Hooper Farm that will enable the farm to continue with its more traditional farming work.

5.0. ASSESSMENT AGAINST PLANNING POLICY

5.1. The Planning Policy Position

The Ribble Valley Core Strategy (CS) was adopted in December 2014 and comprises the development plan for the area. Key Statement EC3 states that proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourist facilities associated with existing attractions.

The proposals are for a holiday use and therefore the applicable policies to be applied in the development plan are principally policy DMB3 which relates to recreation and tourism development. This is permissive of development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the Borough. This is subject to meeting several criteria which, amongst other things, require the proposals to be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings. Other criterion relate to conflict with other policies of the plan; character of the area; be well related to the existing highway network and not generate traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause problems; be large enough and nature conservation .

5.2. There are other local plan polices that relate to recreation and tourism development in the designated AONB that introduce additional design criteria to be met. However, this site lies to the east of the designated AONB and so is not subject to those additional policies.

5.3. Emerging Development Plan Policy

The Housing and Development Plan Document (DPD) has reached an advanced stage but is not yet adopted. Whilst it can be considered however it still carries little weight in the decision making process. Notwithstanding this, the DPD does not propose any additional policies that change the stance of the adopted CS in supporting rural tourism

Government Guidance

- 5.4** The National Planning Policy Framework at section 3 sets out that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development by, amongst other things, supporting sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefits business in rural areas, communities and visitors and which respect the character of the countryside.
- 5.5.** At subsection 3 of NPPF entitled ‘Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy’ it is stated 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 building.
 - Promote the development and diversification of agriculture 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.
 - Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages such as shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship
- 5.6.** Both adopted planning policy and national planning guidance adopt the position that the

creation of tourism facilities that benefit visitors is to be encouraged. These provisions are subject to provisos that such proposals are sustainable; which is interpreted in local planning policy as locational (being well related to an existing group of buildings) (policy DMB 3) and visual, as in protecting the character of the AONB.. There is also reference to highway considerations. These issues are therefore considered to be the main considerations with these proposals. These are now considered below.

Sustainability of the location

5.7. The site forms part of the existing farming operations at Hooper Farm. This growth and expansion of all types of agricultural and other land based rural business is encouraged by the National Planning Policy Framework at paragraph 83. Paragraph 84 goes on to explain that planning polices and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs may have to be found adjacent to, or beyond, existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It does recognise that such developments should be sensitive to their surroundings and by, amongst other things, where suitable opportunities exist, encouraging sites that are well related to existing settlements. In this case, the parcel of land chosen is the nearest on the farm unit to the Newsholme settlement so that a grouping is formed with the other nearby existing group of buildings so that the site will not appear to be isolated. To diversify the farm business, other parcels of land in the farm ownership would not be so readily related to nearby buildings. There are no other available areas within the farm unit that could be more closely grouped to the existing buildings at Newsholme.

National planning policy recognises that in promoting rural business needs, sites may have to be found in locations that are not well served by public transport. That is the case here with no bus route available at Newsholme. However, the guidance says that in these circumstances, it will be important to ensure that the development is sensitive to its

surroundings; does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable. The only opportunities available to exploit opportunities to make the location more sustainable are any that might be implemented by the developer e.g a travel plan. The issues of the sensitivity of the development to its surroundings and impact on local roads is considered below.

Effect on character of the countryside.

- 5.8.** The application site is within a countryside location. To reflect this, the scheme is deliberately small scale, there being only six holiday units proposed on a 1-hectare site. This allows for substantial landscaping and planting of the site. This in combination with the retention of existing boundary hedgerows, will ensure that the site is not visually prominent but is appropriate to its countryside location.

The landscape is typified by lowland farmland with the surrounding area being typified by undulating fields with hedgerows. Whilst the site adjoins the road, it is not visually prominent in the landscape due to boundary hedging and low level undulations in the field patterns. There are no public footpaths through or near to the site from which there will be public vantage points. The site is therefore relatively well hidden in the wider landscape.

Visually, the holiday pods themselves are not of a large scale, being only 2.77 metres to the ridge and only 8m in length and 3.25 metres in width. They are to be finished in Cedar timber and lightweight roof tiles which aids assimilation of the buildings into the surroundings. The tracks into the site are to be finished with chippings or similar so as not to appear urbanised. These measures together with the timber appearance and small scale nature of the holiday pods, will result in a development wholly appropriate to their rural setting.

6.0. HIGHWAY CONSIDERTAIIONS

The proposed holiday pods will be served making use of an existing access into the site. This will have an 'in' and 'out' arrangement facilitating the ease of entry and exit to and from the site. Thus no major works are required to the existing lane to enable access to the site. Knot Lane is relatively straight at this point affording ample visibility.

Knot Lane leading to the site is a good standard of country road with several agricultural style access points along its length. Give the small number of holiday pods proposed, the traffic generated will be minimal. It is not envisaged therefore that the amount of traffic generated from the proposals will create traffic problems on the surrounding highway network.

7.0. EFFECT ON TREES

A tree survey report accompanies this application. This shows the positioning of the existing trees to be peripheral to the site and so there is no need for tree removal to accommodate the proposed development. The recommendation of the tree survey report will be followed, meaning that the existing trees will be retained as recommended, again helping to assimilate the proposed development into its surroundings.

8.0. EFFECT ON ECOLOGY

An ecological survey accompanies the application. This does not find any ecological restraint to the development of the site. There are no protected ecological sites on or nearby to this site to be affected. However, site enhancements of the pond and additional extensive tree planting areas will act to facilitate ecological opportunities.

9.0. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The applicants run an established agricultural farm and these proposals enable diversification

of the farm unit. This is encouraged by national guidance to support a prosperous rural economy and such proposals are to be viewed positively. Local plan policy is permissive of extending the visitor and tourism offer of the Ribble Valley. The site presents no obvious restraint to the proposed development in terms of designated areas of protection. The site chosen on the farm holding is nearest to the established groups of buildings at Newsholme so as not to appear isolated and the pod design and layout put forward have been carefully considered so as to not unnecessarily detract from the character of the surrounding countryside.