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PLANNING STATEMENT INCORPORATING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION TO RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

FOR :

**CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO ALLOW
EXTENSION TO LODGE PARK AND THE ERECTION OF AN
ADDITIONAL 29 HOLIDAY LODGES.**

SITE AT :

**RIBBLE VALLEY VIEW, OLD LANGHO ROAD, LANGHO. BB6
8AW.**

For : Ribble Valley View

OUR REF : SIMPS/01c

As atAugust 2019

Alan Kinder – Director

Valerie Kinder – Director

Company No.
078520641

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report is made to accompany a full application for an extension to the existing holiday park, Ribble Valley View, to allow a further 29 holiday lodges to be installed. 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 the effect on residential amenity
- Section 7 considers the effect on trees.
- Section 8 considers the effect on ecology
- Section 9 considers economic impact
- Section 10 provides our concluding remarks

Limitations.

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

The site is located on the west side of Brockhall Village, separated by an area of woodland. The other

nearest settlements are Billington, which is about 2 km to the east and Langho, which is about 1.5 km to the south. The main regional road, the A59 is about 1.1 km to the south at Northcote. To the front of the site is the Black Bull, a public house and restaurant. To the north and west of the site there are open fields. The River Ribble lies about 1.3 km to the north

The site itself is an established holiday lodge site that has 31 lodges already on it, built as a first phase of 19 and then a second phase of 12. The site has access to the side of the Black Bull to the front. The lodges are arranged around a central spine road and have individual parking allocated to them. The lodges are all of the 'timber' log style and have external balcony areas.

The site was established in 2010 and was a diversification of the owner's dairy farm that occupies the land and fields to the immediate west. The site has proved very successful in the holiday market and is well kept and maintained to a very high standard. It is on the back of this success that the current proposals are put forward to further expand the offer and availability of the site.

3. THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

What is proposed is a further 29 lodges as an extension to the existing holiday park and their associated parking, access road and landscaping. The proposed lodges are of the same style and design as those that already exist. Access will be from the existing access to the site but with a new track along the eastern boundary of the site rather than through the existing lodges.

The lodges are to be sited immediately to the east of the existing holiday park, the outer edge being arranged in a 'U' shape with a circular route access road internally. Between the area of the proposed lodges and the existing site, a large swath of open space is left to allow for a public footpath route and the retention of the existing tree groups. This layout arrangement follows the contours of the land and avoids the need for extensive ground remodelling and earthworks.

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4. BACKGROUND

The holiday lodge park was commenced in 2010 and gradually implemented over the next few years as demand and resources allowed to the point that the site is now fully furnished with 31 holiday lodges. The development of the site can be followed by the site's planning history which is as follows :

In 2010 the first phase of the site was approved under application ref : 3/2010/0417. That application was approved for 19 lodges, with a warden unit, reception building and associated works (the 2010 permission)

In 2011 amendments were approved to the 2010 permission to improve the layout of the site under application ref: 3/2011/0848.

Further in 2011 approval was given to the discharge of planning conditions attached to the 2010 permission.

In 2015, a change of use was granted to allow an extension of the holiday park for a further 12 holiday lodges, recreation area and footpath, approved under application ref : 3/2015/0880. An amendment was made to that approval in 2018 to allow for variation of land levels and variations to the approved layout under application ref : 3/2018/0506.

What can be gleaned from this site history is that the owners have invested considerable time and effort in developing a quality holiday lodge park that provides a considerable asset to the holiday offer in this part of Ribble Valley with the associated economic benefits that brings.

5. ASSESSMENT AGAINST PLANNING POLICY

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. In this case, the Council has accepted on the previously approved applications that the site is relatively well located to nearby settlements for accessibility. Other criteria 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. There are other local plan policies 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.

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

The National Planning Policy Framework at section 6 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.

At subsection 6 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 and;
- 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

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decision should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport. 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 issues of the sensitivity of the development to its surroundings is considered below.

Effect on character of the countryside.

The location of the site benefits overall from the proximity of the extensive tree cover immediately to the east that provides direct screening from the east and the Brockhall village direction and a backdrop to the site from other directions so that the site is not seen in isolation without any established setting.

That established setting also includes the existing caravans that also contribute to the established visual setting of the proposals

From the southern direction and along Old Langho Road the site is not seen from the entrance because of the intervening Black Bull pub building and the trees around St Leonard's Church, between which the access to the site passes. Between the site and Old Langhe Road there are established hedgerows and trees which together with the land undulation will not make these proposals prominent in the landscape. There is a public footpath that will run between the existing site and these proposals. However, for the short length affected; ample space is retained around it so that its users will not feel unduly cramped in by the development.

The landscape is typified by lowland farmland with the surrounding area being typified by undulating fields with hedgerows. The site is set back from the road and it is not visually prominent in the landscape due to boundary hedging and low-level undulations in the field patterns. There is one public footpath through or near to the site from which there will be public vantage points but this is catered for in the layout of the proposed development. The site is therefore relatively well hidden in the wider landscape.

Although the Development Plan designation of this areas is open countryside, the countryside here is not designated for protection because of its quality or beauty that needs to be given regard to when assessing the impact of development on the character of the countryside. Given the existing holiday site, the existing adjacent development areas, the public house to the front of the site and the non prominent nature of the location, the development proposed would not be out of keeping in this area.

6. EFFECT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

On the previous application 3/2018/0506, a number of residents' objections were received to that proposal from occupiers at Highwoods Park, located to the north east and part of Brockhall Village. It was concluded that there would be no effect to those occupiers. These proposals are further away from

those residents and have the previously approved lodges between them. There can be no further impact to those residents therefore from this scheme. There are no other nearby residents to be affected.

7. EFFECT ON TREES

There are existing trees to the north east corner of the site between these proposed chalets and those already existing. These are to be retained within an undeveloped area with good distance separation between them and the proposed lodges. There is no adverse effect on the existing trees therefore, which will, in any event, aid the maturity of the site and its attractiveness to users.

8. EFFECT ON ECOLOGY

The application is accompanied by an ecological appraisal. This finds that the site only contains site-local Parish value common habitats with no known protected species on the site. Badgers use part of the site for foraging but there are no setts within 50m. The site is improved grassland and there is no impact on any other habitat. No further surveys are recommended.

9. ECONOMIC IMPACT

The tourism economy is recognised by the Council as being a primary strand of economic development in Ribble Valley. This is borne out by economic impact statistics in the nationally recognised model STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic activity Monitor). In 2017 for Ribble Valley, this showed significant growth in the ‘staying visitor’ market, which was up by 13.3% on the previous year¹. This has been the experience of the site operators here. Bookings area such that additional lodges are needed to meet the demand. The site operates in conjunction with Hoseasons, one of the Country’s leading holiday companies. They take the view that there is an overriding demand

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1. Source – Report to Economic Development Committee RVBC – June 2019.

for more top quality accommodation in this area and therefore support the applicants in these proposals. A letter of support from Hoseasons is attached at document 1.

A tangible economic impact from this site has occurred at the Black Bull, where tourists staying at the site have considerably bolstered customers and business there. A letter from the Black Bull is attached at document 2 that confirms this.

Given such wholehearted support and proven record of the ability of the site owners to provide for the holiday market and the stated recognition by the Council of the importance of the tourism trade to the economy of Ribble Valley, proposals that expand and add to the offer available at this existing holiday site should be supported.

10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This is an extension to an established holiday lodge park and is therefore an existing destination for the holiday accommodation trade. 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 adjoins that already existing so as not to appear isolated and the lodge design and layout put forward have been carefully considered so as to not unnecessarily detract from the character of the surrounding countryside.

DOCUMENT 1.

Alan Kinder – Director

Valerie Kinder – Director

Company No.
07852064

Raglan Road, Lowestoft
Suffolk, NR32 2LW
Phone: 01502 500505
Fax: 01502 514298

25 April 2019

Dear Ian,

RE: Development of Ribble Valley View

Further to our conversations surrounding the further development at Ribble Valley View, I wanted to write to you in support of the plans we have discussed and subsequently formalise the demand for such holidays in the area.

Sector Overview

The domestic lodge sector continues to be buoyant despite the wider economic uncertainty and low consumer confidence we are currently experiencing, and has enjoyed sustained growth over the past ten years. The demand for high specification accommodation in superb locations up and down the country has reached an all-time high and many existing operators are now seeing the benefits of expanding their developments in terms of more units and higher quality standards resulting in better returns on investment; and of course the ability to attract a new, younger and more affluent audience to holidays right here in the UK.

The traditional season of Easter to the end of October is rapidly becoming a thing of the past and it is evident that more quality accommodation is coming into the market suitable for all year round breaks and in particular a huge increase in “holiday snacking” of 2, 3 and 4 night short breaks. This provides a superb boost for local tourism as visitors are now taking holidays at times of the year traditionally not as popular as the main summer school holiday weeks. An important feature of a lodge holiday is the ability to make it ‘weatherproof’, given that the UK can at times be blighted by poor weather conditions, and to have an ‘identity’ – a concept which acts as a unique selling point in a competitive market. The addition of hot tubs to the accommodation is proven to benefit yield across the year. The location you have identified for development arguably offers the best views on the park, by accessing these views and potentially introducing an even higher standard of accommodation you will allow for the development of a high end, “retreat” style development very much in line with current demand.

Regional Context

The North of England has been a popular destination for Hoseasons visitors for many years now. Within our portfolio the North continues to show some of the strongest performance figures in the UK with no signs of slowing down with year on year growth in bookings and rental values comfortably in double digits. The Ribble Valley area and slightly further afield is rightly

considered a honeypot location and we are aware of other developers and investors keen to expand in to the location.

Our data shows that on average a Hoseasons customer will travel up to an average three hours for a short break and up to five hours for longer stays. Given the popularity of the Ribble Valley and the wider area I would have no hesitation in recommending an expansion to the lodge development. By nature, the self-catering sector has significant onward benefits to the wider community. Holiday makers base themselves in the accommodation but will explore the area during their stay; typically a lodge will be empty between 10am and 4pm whilst people visit the region, dining out an average twice during a short break but also using the local supermarkets to stock the kitchen when staying in during the evening.

I hope this outlines the fact that there certainly is an overriding demand for more top quality accommodation in your area. This is most evident and proven in the exemplary trading figures we have enjoyed for the North of England over the years and as such we have the utmost confidence that this location will be a very popular choice with holidaymakers for years to come. We wholeheartedly support your application for the development and look forward to hearing a favorable outcome in the near future. If you would like to talk anything through in further detail my email address is jon.moxon@hoseasons.co.uk and direct line is 01502 502512.

Yours Sincerely

Jon Moxon

Jon Moxon 
Business Development Manager

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hoseasons.co.uk

DOCUMENT 2.

Alan Kinder – Director

Valerie Kinder – Director

Company No.
07852064

The Black Bull Inn
Old Langho Road
Old Langho
BB6 8AW

To whom it may concern

Reference:-Ribble Valley View Lodge Park

1st August 2019

I write with reference to the above Lodge development, and in support of further expansion. I took ownership of the Black Bull Inn during April 2018. The public house has been a failing business for many years, with lack of footfall making it impossible to cover costs. The development of the lodge park has changed that and the businesses fortunes. With a constant flow of tourists enjoying the park, we see regular diners on a daily and weekly basis. This excellent tourist location has allowed the Black Bull to reach its potential and become a stable business.

Further expansion of the park, will allow further expansion within our business, plans are underway to convert the old barn it further dining areas increasing trade and allowing for us to further increase employment in the local area.

I believe Ribble Valley View is a credit to the area and has brought much needed revenue and employment to our community.

Yours sincerely

Mr Jamie Govier
Managing Director
Fortis Business Solutions Global Limited (trading as the Black Bull Inn)

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