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PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RESPECT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT OF TWELVE HOLIDAY LODGES

AT

**PENDLE VIEW, PRIMROSE LANE, MELLOR,
BB2 7EQ**

Prepared by: Colin Sharpe DipTP MRTPI
Our Client: Mrs L Monk
Our Ref: Monk/924/2694/CS
Date: September 2019



Chartered Surveyors ■■■ Planning & Development ■■■ Land Agents
Valuers ■■■ Property Agency ■■■ Property Management



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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 Gary Hoerty Associates has been instructed by Mrs Louise Monk to submit a planning application on her behalf for a development of twelve holiday lodges at Pendle View, Primrose Lane, Mellor, BB2 7EQ.
- 1.2 Mrs Monk lives at The Farmhouse, Cunliffe Moss Farm, Saccary Lane, Mellor, which is only about five minutes' drive away from the site of the proposed development that is also within her ownership. Our client is aware of the attraction of the Ribble Valley as a tourist destination and that this has resulted in numerous recent planning permissions that have been granted by the Council for new developments of various types of self-catering accommodation, including caravans, lodges, chalets, yurts and shepherds' huts. She considers, and we agree, that her land is an ideal location for the establishment of a development of holiday lodges, hence the submission of this application.
- 1.3 We set out in this Planning Statement the recent planning history of the property, a description of the application site, a description of the proposed development, details of the relevant planning policies against which the development will be assessed and provide the planning case for the approval of the proposed development including reference to a number of similar developments that have been approved by the Council.
- 1.4 We have also submitted an Ecological Appraisal and an Arboricultural Constraints Appraisal, both of which were taken into consideration in the formulation of the application. We request that the contents of this Planning Statement, the Ecological Appraisal and the Arboricultural Constraints Appraisal are all fully considered by the Council in its determination of the application.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 A planning applications search on the Council website has revealed the following applications; all of which were submitted by previous owners of the property:
 1. 3/1994/0449 – Proposed timber stable block. The application was approved on 16 August 1994, the stable block was erected and is still present on the site. The stable block will be retained and is unaffected by this current planning application.
 2. 3/1999/0083 – Proposed conservatory extension to the dwelling. The application was approved on 30 March 1999, but this permission is of little relevance to this current planning application.
 3. 3/1999/0666 – Proposed 40m. by 20m. outdoor riding arena. The application was approved on 22 October 1999, the arena was formed and is still present at the site. The arena is to be retained and is unaffected by this current planning application.

4. 3/2007/0112 – Proposed single storey rear extension. The application was approved on 27 March 2007, but this permission is of little relevance to this current planning application.
5. 3/2017/0410 – Proposed extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling. The application was approved on 15 June 2017 and, although the development has not yet been commenced, the permission will remain extant until 15 June 2020. It is the applicant's intention to either implement the permission or apply for a new planning permission for a different scheme of extensions and alterations to the dwelling

2.2 Overall, the planning applications referred to above are of no particular relevance to this current application, and we confirm that there does not appear to be any previous planning applications relating to the parcel of land to the south of the dwelling upon which the proposed holiday lodges would be sited.

3. THE APPLICATION SITE

3.1 The dwelling known as Pendle View is located on the south side of Primrose Lane in an area of open countryside approximately 800m to the north east of the settlement of Mellor. The site of the proposed holiday lodge development, as outlined in red on the plans submitted with the Planning Application, comprises a small part of the front curtilage of the dwelling in order to provide access into the main part of the site which is an un-used piece of land that is not suitable for agricultural use, and which is also in the applicant's ownership. The total site, including the access track, parking area and the field upon which the lodges are to be sited has an area of approximately 0.78 hectares.

3.2 With respect to the Council's adopted Core Strategy, the site is within Open Countryside, but is not within either the Green Belt or the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB).

3.3 With regards to the immediate locality, there is another dwelling to the north west of Pendle View, close to the existing vehicular access of Pendle View onto Primrose Lane. This nearest neighbouring property is separated from the site of the proposed lodges by the dwelling, Pendle View. There are other dwellings on Primrose Lane to the west and south west of the site, but these are approximately 100m and 90m, respectively, away from the site of the proposed lodges.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The proposed development comprises the siting of twelve detached holiday lodges, a lodge to be used as a site office/reception area, an access road leading to a parking area and the office/reception area, and pedestrian footpaths between the parking area and the individual lodges.

- 4.2 The access road, parking area and all the lodges have been sited so as to retain as many of the existing trees as possible, as it is the intention to create a ‘natural’ environment for the enjoyment of visitors, whilst also preserving the appearance of the locality. It will be noted through an examination of the submitted site layout plan, in conjunction with the submitted Arboricultural Constraints Appraisal, that no trees of any merit will be adversely affected by the proposal.
- 4.3 As shown on the submitted plans, the lodges are all 8m x 4m with a red timber exterior. There will be two different designs, known as “Pembroke” and “Bothy” for which we have submitted the manufacturer’s details and specifications. It is not yet finalised how many of each unit there would be, but as they are identical in size and external materials, we do not consider that this should present the Council with any issues in its determination of the application. However, if the Council does require more detail with respect to which units will be on which plots, please let us know and we will seek to address this during the processing of the application.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. 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 2019) and the relevant policies of the Council’s Adopted Core Strategy.
- 5.2 We set out below extracts from the relevant documents to facilitate the assessment of the application proposal against the principal appropriate policies and guidance.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019)

- 5.3 The NPPF 2019 is the main national planning policy guidance influencing planning decision making in England. It states that the main purpose of the planning system in the country is the achievement of sustainable development; and that, for decision taking this means that proposals that accord with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay.
- 5.4 Section 6 of NPPF relates to “Building a strong, competitive economy” and paragraphs 83 and 84 are particularly relevant to this application as they relate to “Supporting a prosperous rural economy”
- 5.5 Paragraph 83 states:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) *the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) *the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) *sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d) *the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.*

5.6 The approval of this application will support the establishment of a new rural tourist accommodation business on former agricultural land which is not suitable for any profitable agricultural use. Putting agricultural land to appropriate alternative uses is clearly supported by NPPF.

5.7 Paragraph 84 states:

“Planning policies and decisions 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 development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.”

5.8 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.

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

5.9 We comment below on the Key Statements and Policies within the Adopted Core Strategy that we consider to be relevant to the determination of this application.

Key Statement DS2: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.

5.10 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 proposed holiday lodges 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

- 5.11 Key Statement EN2 states that the landscape character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB) will be protected conserved and enhanced; and 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 the requirements of the Key Statement as applicable to a site that is not within AONB by providing high quality holiday lodges with appropriate external materials in an appropriate and sympathetic location. In view of its location adjoining the existing dwelling, we consider that the proposed development will not, therefore, appear either isolated or incongruous within the local landscape.

Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development

- 5.12 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*”. As the application site is not part of a working farm, the proposal does not actually represent farm diversification, but the proposed holiday chalets will provide extra custom for local businesses thereby strengthening the rural and village economies.

Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy

- 5.13 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. This proposal will strengthen the visitor economy by providing increased custom for local businesses, including public houses, restaurants, shops and tourist attractions, not only in the countryside and the nearby villages of Mellor and Mellor Brook, but also the larger village of Whalley and the towns of Clitheroe and Longridge.

Policy DMG1: General Considerations

5.14. 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 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.

5.15 For reasons previously stated, we consider the proposed lodges to be sympathetic to the existing landscape with regards to their design and external building materials. With regards to the matter of intensity/density/layout we consider that the siting of just 12 lodges on the site of 0.78 hectare represents a low intensity and density of development. Care has also been taken in finalizing the precise position of the 12 units, the route of the access road and the location of the car park and site office/reception to ensure that the vast majority of existing trees are retained. Many of these trees, particularly on the piece of land where the lodges are to be sited, are immature specimens that will mature over time thereby assisting in the aim of the development being assimilated into the natural environment. As a result of this density and layout, the proposal will not impact negatively on the landscape character of the area. With regards to existing amenities, the only residential property that might be affected to any significant degree by the proposal is the applicant's own dwelling, Pendle View.

5.16 The site is located on Primrose Lane, that runs off Saccary Lane which, in turn, links the A59 to the north with Mellor Lane to the south. As the A59 is the principal road in the Borough, the site is therefore ideally located for access to the M6 and the wider motorway network as well as to all the towns villages and countryside attractions of Ribble Valley. Furthermore, we consider that the

limited additional traffic generated by the proposed 12 units would not have any material effects upon Primrose Lane, Saccary Lane or the wider local highway network.

- 5.17 With regards to parking provision, a parking area for 14 cars will be provided next to the proposed site office/reception. We consider this to be an appropriate level of parking provision.
- 5.18 Overall, in our opinion, the development undoubtedly complies with the relevant requirements of Policy DMG1.

Policy DMG 2: Strategic Considerations

- 5.19 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 that the development (1) should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area; (2) should be for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area; and (3) should be for a small scale use appropriate to a local area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.
- 5.20 As a proposal for a development of only 12 relatively small units of holiday accommodation, the development is small scale and there is no requirement under the Council's policies for the applicant to show a need/demand for the proposed units. However, as evidenced by the popularity and success of similar developments in the locality, we do consider there to be a demand for this type of holiday accommodation (indeed all types of holiday accommodation) from visitors seeking to enjoy the natural beauty and visitor attractions of the Ribble Valley.
- 5.21 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

- 5.22 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. As previously stated, care has been taken in the formulation of the proposal to work with the existing trees and hedgerows and to retain them as positive aspects of the proposal. The general low density of the proposal is such

that the proposed units have all been sited such that the majority of trees and hedges within the site will be retained and would not be harmed by the proposed development.

- 5.23 In our opinion, through the retention and appropriate protection of existing trees and hedges, the proposal would therefore not cause any harm to any existing important landscape features.

Policy DME 3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation

- 5.24 This policy states that development proposals that are likely to adversely affect any of the following will not be granted planning permission.

1. Wildlife Species protected by Law
2. SSSI'S
3. Priority habitats or species identified in the Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan.
4. Local nature reserves.
5. County Biological Heritage Sites.
6. Special areas of conservation (SACS).
7. Special protected areas (SPAS).
8. Any acknowledged nature conservation value of sites or species.

- 5.25 The Ecological Appraisal Report (reference 5892 dated 30 August 2019) submitted with the application contained the following conclusions:

1. Ecological surveys, site appraisals and impact assessments were carried out with respect to land comprising open ground at Pendle View, Mellor upon which it is proposed that holiday lodges/pods will be constructed.
2. Bats, brown hare and nesting birds are known to occur in the local area, hedgehogs and reptiles are known to occur in the local area, there was however no conclusive evidence of any specifically protected species regularly occurring on the site or the surrounding areas which would be negatively affected by site development following the mitigation proposed.
3. A low number of old Swallow and Wren nests were found within the stables.
4. The vegetation to be cleared has a low ecological significance in the local area; trees within the site boundary should be retained.
5. The protection of trees on the site boundary and landscaping will promote structural diversity in both the canopy and at ground level and will encourage a wider variety of wildlife to use the site than already occurs.

6. Contractors will be observant for protected species and all nesting birds. Should any species be found during construction, all site works should cease, and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.
7. There are no statutory or non-statutory sites which are connected to the site such that site development would directly affect the dispersal of species between them or directly impact upon their integrity.
8. The habitats on site do not represent or are linked to those found in any of the statutory or non-statutory sites locally.
9. There are no statutory or non-statutory sites which are connected to the site such that site development would indirectly affect the dispersal of species between them or indirectly impact upon their integrity
10. Strands of Himalayan Balsam were present over much of the site especially along the ditch/brook to the east of the site. No other invasive weed species were recorded on site. The Ecological Consultants have therefore provided a letter (dated 02 September 2019) which gives advice, that is specific to this site, on the methods of treatment/removal of this invasive species. That letter has been submitted as a Supporting Document with tis planning application.

Therefore, subject to the treatment/removal of Himalayan Balsam in accordance with the advice the Ecological Consultant's letter and compliance with the mitigation measures recommended in Section 7 of the Ecological Appraisal Report, we consider that the proposed development would not contravene any of the requirements of Policy DME3.

Policy DMB 1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy

- 5.26 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 the relevant policies and policy DMB1 clearly supports the proposed development.

Policy DMB 3: Recreation and Tourism Development

- 5.27 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 two existing dwellings and a stable building. 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.

- 5.28 The proposed development will support the development of tourism in the Ribble Valley by providing 12 high quality holiday lodges 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. OTHER SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT IN THE BOROUGH

- 6.1 There are numerous caravan sites throughout the Ribble Valley that are long established, and for which planning permissions were originally granted against a planning policy background that differs from the adopted Core Strategy and NPPF against which this current application falls to be considered. Those caravan sites, however, have established the acceptability of this type of tourist accommodation development in the Borough. Planning permissions have also been granted more recently for extensions to established caravan sites, some of which permissions have related to the siting of timber lodges rather than traditional static caravans. The Council's Planning Officer's will be well aware of the established caravan sites that have been extended in recent years following the Council's approval of the appropriate planning applications. We do not therefore consider it necessary to cite any specific examples in this Statement.

- 6.2 However, the fact that such applications were submitted is evidence that there is a continued and growing demand for this type of holiday accommodation in Ribble Valley; and the fact that they were approved is evidence that the Council considers such proposals to be acceptable in planning policy terms.

- 6.3 In addition to the continued popularity of larger static caravans/cabins, there has, in recent years, been increased popularity and demand for smaller self-catering 'glamping' type units of tourist accommodation such as yurts, camping pods and shepherds' huts.

- 6.4 With regards to numerous recent planning applications, the Council has accepted that this type of self-catering holiday accommodation is appropriate for the countryside areas of the Borough and benefits existing local businesses such as public houses, restaurants, shops and tourist attractions etc. and the rural local economy in general. Five examples of permissions for this type of development are as follows:

1) 3/2017/0105 – Four yurts at The Red Pump, Bashall Eaves – Approved 20/03/2017

2) 3/2017/1024 – Five shepherds' huts at The Red Pump, Bashall Eaves – Approved 19/01/2018

3) 3/2017/0103 – Eight camping pods at Moorgate Farm, Dinckley – Approved 26/06/2017.

4) 3/2019/0477 – Six additional camping pods at Moorgate Farm, Dinckley – Approved 02/08/2019

5) 3/2017/0957 – Five camping pods and an area for tents and a facilities building at Foxfields Farm, Whalley Road, Hurst Green – Approved 13/12/2017.

6.5 Whilst appreciating that each application must be considered on its own merits, we consider that this current proposal is similar to the permissions referred to above, both in respect of the principle of the proposal and also with regards to the detailed matters of design, appearance, visual impact etc., such that the relevant policies are satisfied and permission should therefore be granted. As we were the agents for each of those applications, we are also able to confirm that the developments that have already been implemented have high occupancy rates thereby proving the demand for this type of development in Ribble Valley.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The proposed development comprises the siting of 12 detached relatively small holiday lodges, a site office reception, and a car park. The design of the lodges incorporates materials that are sympathetic to the rural location. In particular, they will be clad in wood, which is a natural material appropriate to the location.

7.2 The application site is situated in an area designated as Open Countryside and is not in within either the Forest of Bowland AONB or the Green Belt.

7.3 The intention of the proposal is to site the lodges in an unobtrusive manner by making best use of the topography of the land and the natural screening provided by existing trees and hedges that are to be retained. If the Council considers it necessary for additional landscaping to be provided, we request that they advise us of this requirement, and we will seek to address it either during the consideration of the application or through our agreement to a condition requiring the submission, approval and implementation of a landscaping scheme at a later date.

7.4 We consider that we have demonstrated in this Planning Statement and the separate Ecological Appraisal and Arboricultural Constraints Appraisal that the proposal represents sustainable development that is in compliance with NPPF and the relevant Policies of the Council's adopted Core Strategy. Therefore, in order to comply with paragraph 11 of NPPF and Core Strategy Key Statement DS2 we consider that permission should be granted without delay subject to any reasonable conditions that the Council considers to be necessary.

- 7.5 If, however, the Council requires any amendments to the proposal, and/or the submission of any additional information in order for permission to be granted, we would ask that you give us the opportunity to address the same (in accordance with NPPF paragraph 187) prior to the determination of the application.

Signed..........Date..........

Colin Sharpe Dip. TP MRTPI