

Design and Access Statement

Eaves Hall Eco Lodges,
Moor Lane,
West Bradford



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Note: To assist the understanding of drawings scale bars are provided for reference where possible

1.0 Introduction

This design and access statement is to be read as part of a planning application for a development of 15 self-catering eco-lodges at Eaves Hall, Moor Lane, West Bradford.

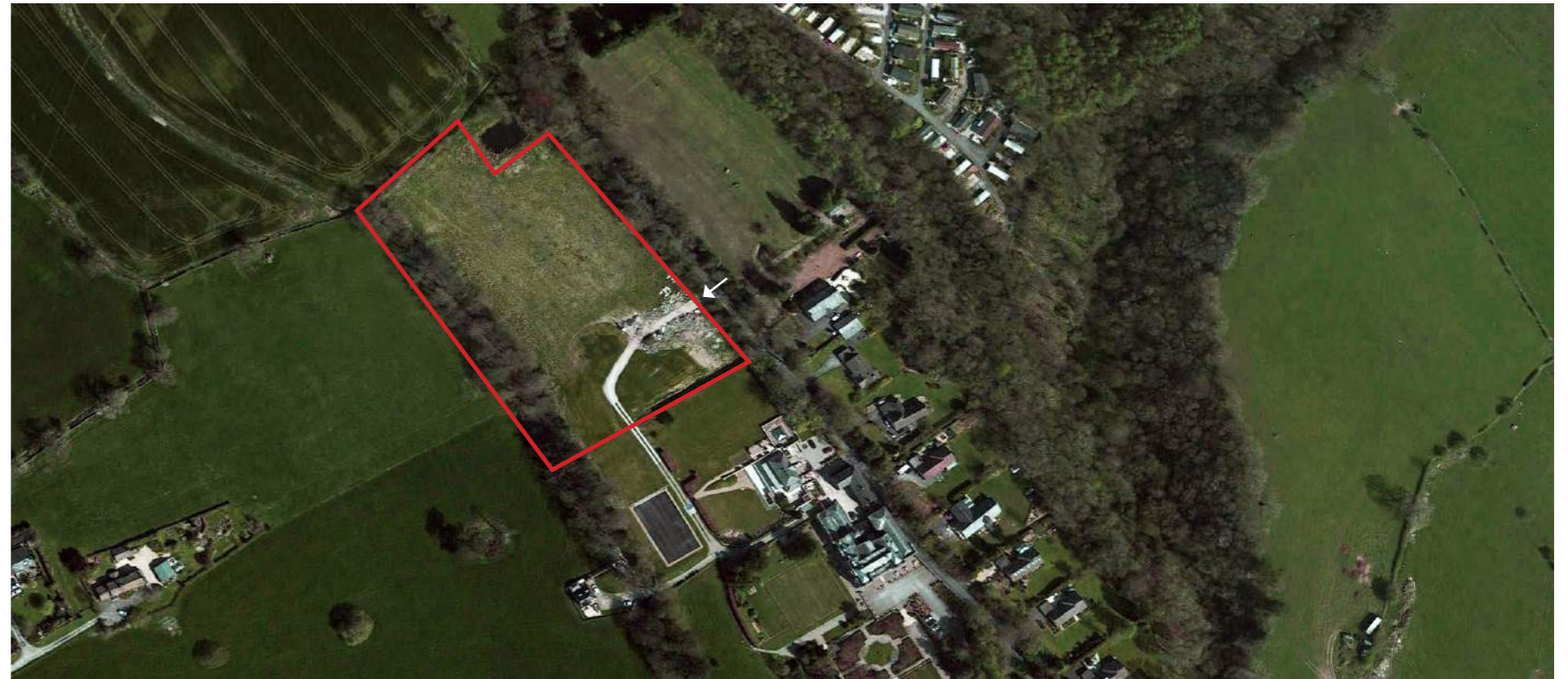
1.1 Existing Site

The site is located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the Eaves Hall estate on a slightly sloped 1.8 ha field 150m from Eaves Hall, 800m from the settlement of West Bradford and 2.5 miles from Clitheroe.

Access is from Moor Lane through a gate at the southeast corner of the site onto a gravel track that loops round towards Eaves Hall.

Within the site to the northeast there is a lodge. On the east and west boundaries here is dense vegetation boundaries screening the site. On the southern boundary with the Hall there is a tall masonry wall covered in vegetation. There are clear views from the top of the site southwards towards Eaves Hall and Pendle Hill beyond.

Further afield there are fields to west, north and east with Rivers Caravan Park beyond. To the south-east of the site, there are dwellings facing the access highway.



location of site and wider context



district wide local plan of West Bradford in the Ribble Valley



view from the south

2.0 Proposal

The proposal is for a small-scale tourism development of 15 self-catering eco-lodges on the site to provide additional accommodation for Eaves Hall. The lodges are to be high-quality accommodation and be respectful of the landscape. Pedestrian access will be via gravel pathways and a car park on the south side will provide 20 parking spaces including two disabled spaces. The eco-lodges will be angled towards the south-east with large expanses of glazing to enjoy views of the landscape of the AONB and Pendle Hill beyond.

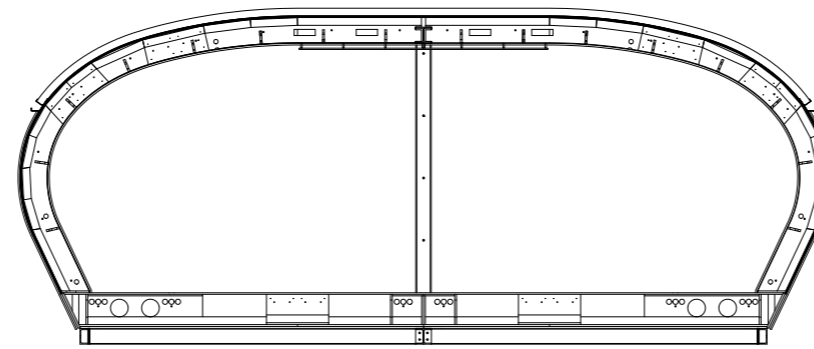
2.1 Camping Lodges

The proposal is for 15 prefabricated cylindrical timber frame eco-lodge pods which tread lightly on the landscape and provide a robust but temporary approach to the site.

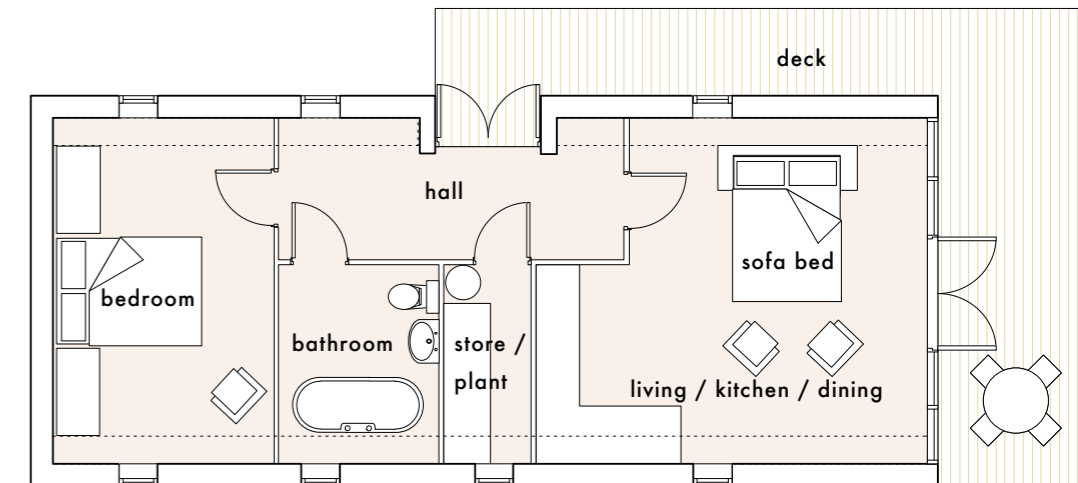
The lodges are sympathetic to the natural forestry landscape of the site in terms of size, intensity and nature and follow a semi-circular layout mimicking natural organic layouts.

Their external finishes will be a careful approach to new structures in the AONB and be a mix of timber cladding or lime render finish and a green sedum roof. The green roof allows the building to blend into the landscape with minimal visual impact on the immediate and wider surrounding amenity. A large window at the end of the pod will be angled to frame views and provide adequate daylight.

The foul water will be treated on site through a sewage treatment septic tank located to the south of the site, using the natural slope of the land. Surface water drainage will be provided by a sustainable drainage system



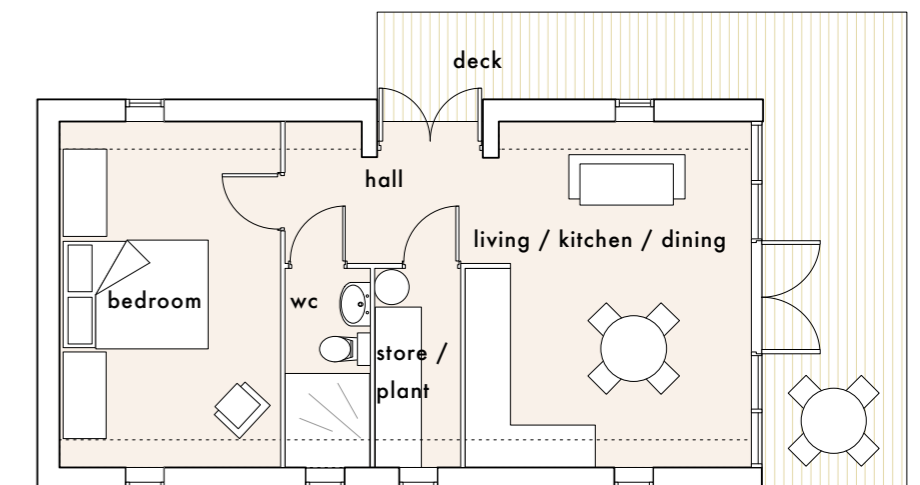
typical eco lodge frame construction



eco lodge floor plan 2 bed option



proposed eco lodge aesthetic



eco lodge floor plan 1 bed option

3.0 Considerations and Strategies

The main consideration in determining this application is the principle of the development; the impact of the development on the character and visual appearance of the surrounding area, its effect on the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers and its effect on highway safety.

To assist with that we have included a business statement that explains the rationale behind the development.

3.1 Business Statement

Eaves Hall serves as a venue for weddings with evening guest numbers ranging from a minimum of 90 guests to occasional 220 guests.

At present, it currently has 30 bedrooms providing 36 beds in total and an additional gatehouse.

The first and largest driver for demand is that there is insufficient capacity within the main Eaves Hall building to provide bedrooms for everyone who wants to stay over on the night of the wedding they are attending.

The guests are currently limited in their occupation to the night of the wedding.

The second most significant driver of demand is for overnight accommodation either before or after the event that the guest is attending. For those travelling from over three hours away the opportunity of more than one night's accommodation would be very attractive. For example, for guests travelling from London to attend a wedding, there is the prospect of a six-hour journey before the event which will necessitate an early start. The same six-hour journey awaits the morning after the event. There is currently no alternative to the one night stay. Due to the increasing success of the Ribble Valley as a nationally renowned wedding destination, this accommodation problem is not restricted to Eaves Hall or the James' Places group.

The proposed eco-lodges would provide the ideal short stay (3, 5 and 7-night packages) accommodation required, i.e. High quality, environmentally friendly, self-contained and yet safe and secure.

The lodges would be serviced and managed by the Eaves Hall management and staff increasing employment opportunities within the business in a variety of different areas such as Operations, Housekeeping, Grounds & Maintenance and Sales & Marketing.

The eco-lodges would allow people who are currently making the journey to visit the Ribble Valley to stay longer and explore, the result of which can only be a huge benefit to the wider local economy such as village coffee shops and tea rooms, country pubs and restaurants, farm shops, galleries, museums and of course the three towns of Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe itself.

The siting of the development is considered to be beneficial for the local economy of West Bradford and beyond will outweigh any immediate minor visual landscape impacts that the scheme may impose. However, these will be minimised by the use of vegetation screening and careful consideration of the design.

3.2 Heritage

Eaves Hall is grade II listed and considerations have been given to the design of the proposed site as to not impose on its grandeur. A heritage statement will be submitted with the planning application.

The location of the site behind the hall ensures that attention will not be directed away from the hall. The site is separate and contemporary in design compared to Eaves Hall and there will be no adverse impact on the building or its setting.



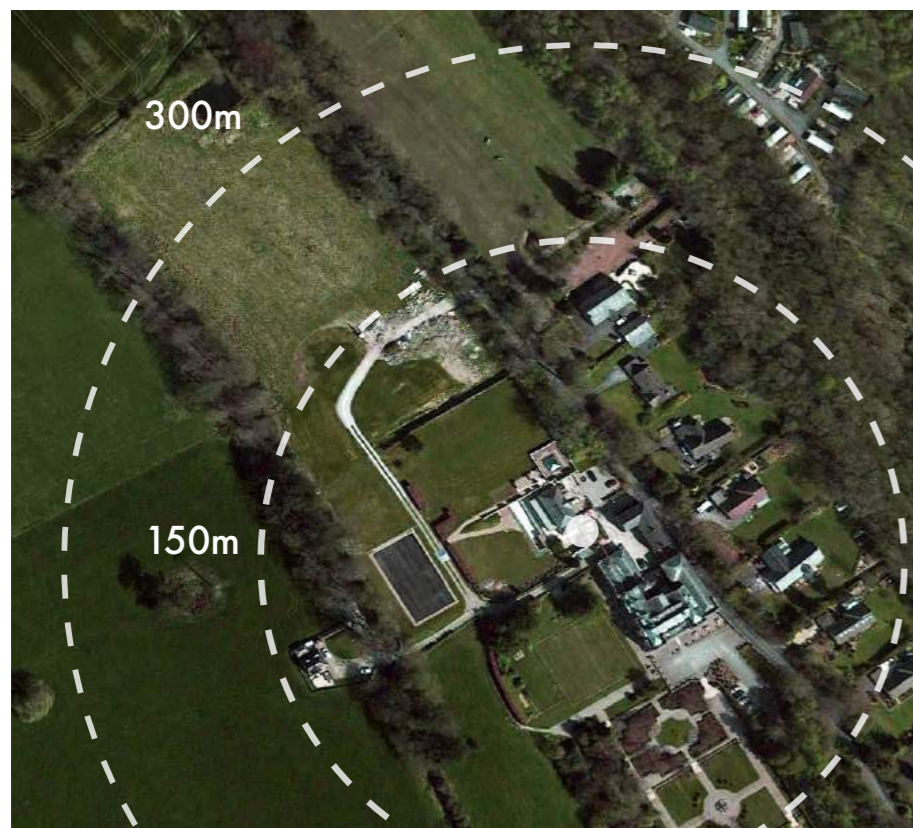
Eaves Hall during an event

3.2 Accessibility & Highways

The location of the site is well sited within the existing road network of the area, Moor lane is located off of Waddington Road and acts as the access road for Eaves hall, residential properties and the Three Rivers Caravan Park beyond. There is adequate visibility on Moor Lane from the access road to the site.

There are regular public transport services from West Bradford to Clitheroe which has further connections to the surrounding areas. Car parking for 20 vehicles will be provided at the south of site for guests on the eco-lodge site and will be shielded by vegetation so as to have a minimal visual impact. There is a network of public footpaths in the area and a locked cycle store and bike washing facility will be accessible to guests on the site.

As the accommodation is provided as extra to the existing accommodation already in place at Eaves Hall it is thought that the addition of 15 eco-lodges will result in no significant increase in the amount of traffic will befall surrounding highways and Moor Lane. The eco-lodges are located a maximum of 300m walk to Eaves Hall and a 'buggy' can be provided for guests who are unable to walk such a distance.



walking distances from Eaves Hall to the proposed site

3.3 Landscaping and Ecology

Full ecology and wildlife surveys have been carried out and submitted with the application and helped to inform the design process.

Existing trees on the site have been avoided to maintain the character of the landscape and existing screening. Additional vegetation screening is proposed to shield views into the site.

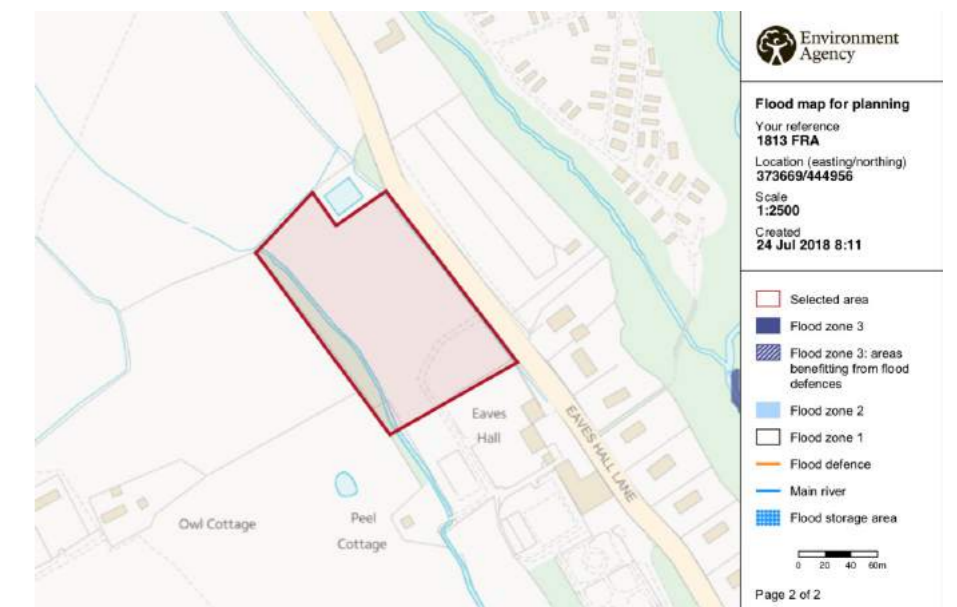
The proposed development is lightweight and prefabricated and is constructed on helical piles which require minimal ground preparation and disruption. The impact on the landscape is small as to be sensitive to the natural wildlife and ecology on site.

The main source of light pollution is to the south of Eaves Hall, in order to reduce additional light pollution the car park has been placed at the south of the site. The site will have minimal lighting so as to minimise the impact on local wildlife, any lighting will be directed away from the hedgerows either side of the site boundary to allow for an undisturbed passage for bats. At dusk, paths will be faintly illuminated, all lights will turn off permanently after 11pm to ensure minimal disturbance to wildlife.

Landscaping will respect the areas environment and surface materials will respect the areas rural appearance. Management of the site is desirable to increase the conservation of the local biodiversity and wildlife on site. External lighting will be kept to a minimum and operate on a timed system.

3.4 Flooding/Drainage

As the application site is over 1ha a flood risk assessment will accompany the application. An initial desktop study shows that the site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1 - an area with a low probability of flooding. The lodge and the brook on the western boundary of the site are not regarded as a risk.



extract from EA Map

3.5 Contamination

No known contamination risks. Gravel pathways and tracks will use PH neutral materials to ensure the protection of the biodiversity of the landscape.

4.0 Planning Policies

Relevant policies are as follows:

- Ribble Valley Core Strategy
- Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
- Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development
- Key Statement EN2 – Landscape
- Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development
- Key Statement EC3 – Visitor Economy
- Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
- Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
- Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility
- Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection
- Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation
- Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
- Policy DMB3 – Recreation and Tourism Development
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.1 Relevant Planning History

There have been no previous applications for the site, applications for similar developments are listed below:

- 3/2017/0103 - Change of use of Agricultural Land to Camping Facility for eight camping pods and associated car park and landscaping (Resubmission of application 3/2016/0833) at land at Moorgate Farm, Kenyon Lane, Langho, BB6 8AN. - Subject to conditions.
- 3/2016/0975 - Change of use of land from agricultural to holiday accommodation including five earth-bunded camping pods, erection of ancillary building and engineering operations to form parking area and drainage pond on land north of Bambers Bungalow, Smalden Lane, Land Ends, Bolton-By-Bowland – approved subject to conditions.

4.2 Planning Assessment

The Ribble Valley Core Strategy Key Statement EC3 relates specifically to the visitor economy stating that proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged. The proposed development would contribute to the tourism economy and accords with the general intentions of Key Statement EC3. Key Statement EC1 'Business and Employment Development states that "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".

Referring to the Core Strategy Key Statement EC3, further development in the area would be encouraged if it strengthens the visitor economy of the Ribble Valley and if it is an improvement to the environment and benefit to the local communities and employment opportunities.

Policy DMB1 (Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy) states that:

"Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle."

As the site is a thriving business it is expected that the proposal will be successful, a business statement is included in this report.

Core Strategy Policy DMG2 requires development outside of defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six considerations one of which is the following:

4. The development is for small-scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.

The proposal is for a small-scale tourism development of a type that is appropriate to a rural area. Whilst there is no definition of 'small-scale' in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, in my view, the proposals for the siting of 15 eco-lodges would be towards the upper limit of what could be considered small-scale in comparison to the Three Rivers caravan park that has several caravans and pitches.

Policy DMB3 relates specifically to recreation and tourism developments in the Borough. Tourism and visitor attractions that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities are generally supported subject to the following criteria being met:

i. The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan;

ii. 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;

iii. The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;

iv. 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;

v. The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscaped areas; and...

vi. 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.

5.0 Visual Impacts and Amenity within AONB

In the AONB the following criteria will apply:

- i. The proposal should display a high standard of design appropriate to the area.
- ii. The site should not introduce built development into an area largely devoid of structures (other than those directly related to agriculture or forestry uses).

Additionally, within the AONB, it is important that the development is not of a large scale and should contribute to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape. The visual impacts of the proposed development will be carefully considered so as to have a minimum impact of noise and light pollution to adjacent neighbours and wider landscape, as well as, the highway implications and the nature conservation issues. The principle of tourism/visitor accommodation is therefore considered to be acceptable in this location.

The site boundaries are currently surrounded by small areas of woodland, therefore, the sight lines into the new development are minimal. However, the approach to structures and landscaping will still be respectful to the AONB following policies aforementioned in DMG1 and also Key Statement EN2 (Landscape) states:

“The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area...As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials”



view from the north of the site