



JUDITH DOUGLAS TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

Full planning application for extension to bakery. The Bakery, Chew Mill Farm, Elker Lane, Billington, Whalley Lancs BB7 9HZ.



## Planning Statement

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Judith Douglas BSc (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI



8 Southfield Drive, West Bradford, Clitheroe,  
Lancashire, BB7 4TU

Telephone: 01200 425051  
Mobile: 07729 302644

Email: judith@jdouglastownplanning.co.uk  
Website: www.jdouglastownplanning.co.uk

## **PLANNING STATEMENT**

### **THE BAKERY CHEW MILL FARM, ELKER LANE, BILLINGTON, WHALLEY BB7 9HZ**

### **FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR EXTENSION TO BAKERY.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared to accompany an application for full planning permission for and extension to the bakery. Lou Lou's is a thriving business and requires additional space to improve the customer facing area of the building and to provide improvements to the working environment to allow this business to continue to thrive and expand.
  
- 1.2 The drawings and information submitted with the application comprise:  
Location Plan 1 to 1250  
129-01 Existing plans and elevations with exiting site plan  
129-02A Proposed plans and elevation with proposed site plan  
Flood Risk Assessment

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 Chew Hill Farm comprises the dwelling Chew Mill Farm, The Bakery within a detached building, stables, and riding arena. The bakery is within a single storey building clad in wood with a corrugated sheet roof. There is a large area of concrete hard standing in front of the building which provides access to the bakery and a collection point for customers as well as access to the riding arena and fields beyond
  
- 2.2 Vehicle access is from Elker Lane. There is an existing car park for 14 vehicles with an additional area closer to the shop for approximately 5 spaces.
  
- 2.3 The site is shown to be within an area designated as open countryside on the Housing and Economic Development, Development Plan Document proposals map sheet 3. It is also within flood zone 2.

### **3 SITE HISTORY**

3.1 3/2017/0728 Change of use of former agricultural building/stable to bakery including external alterations, creation of car park and erection of stables. Approved 18/12/2017.

### **4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 Planning permission is sought for an extension to the bakery to create a larger counter area and provide space to display finished products. It will enable goods which contain ingredients which may cause an allergic reaction can be safely displayed in separate areas. The shop area is also sufficient to allow social distancing between customers and includes a covered area outside.

4.2 The extension measures 6.9m by 6.3m and 6.9 by 8.46 including the canopy. The extension necessitates the repositioning of the existing access to the menage and fields. The extension is to be clad in timber with a corrugated sheet roof to match the existing buildings. The repositioned track will be finished in concrete.

4.3 The Bakery provides bespoke cakes, macaron towers, meringue kisses and roses, wedding favours and mixed treats for events such as weddings and birthdays. Orders are often bespoke, and customers prefer face to face meeting especially for events such as weddings. As this is a bespoke service, customers often travel long distances to place and collect orders. The new counter area will allow the business to provide displays of special items and provide an appropriate and welcoming environment for customers.

4.4 The current covid restrictions has had and impact on business as social gatherings such as wedding have been restricted. Prior to the pandemic the majority of business was pre-ordered with only a few items sold as shop items. Covid has skewed business currently 60% of business is sales from the shop and 40% is pre-ordered. It is anticipated that once restrictions have lifted and larger gatherings such as wedding can take place, the business will return to the pre-pandemic pattern of 70% pre-order items 30% shop sales.

4.5 Moving the counter area out of the bakery will allow the space within the bakery to be used more effectively allowing more space between staff working stations, allergen separation and provision of a dedicated area for packing.

4.6 The bakery only sells items which are produced on the premises. The current shop/customer collection area is ancillary to the business on the site which is limited to a bakery B1 use by

condition 4 on the permission. The intention is that the counter area will be used for display and continue to be ancillary to the bakery only selling items produced on the premisses.

4.7 The bakery is owned jointly by Mr and Mrs Rafferty and their daughter. Their daughter is profoundly disabled with an unstable medical condition which puts constraints on the whole family. Mrs Rafferty originally set up the business working from home baking meringues. This expanded into the current bakery after permission was granted in December 2017. LouLou's Bakery has been very successful and has grown since its inception. Initially the bakery employed 3 full-time and 3 part-time workers equivalent to 4.5 full-time posts. This has now increased to 4 full-time posts including Mrs Rafferty and 6 part time post equivalent to 8 full time posts. In order to accommodate the expansion of the business new floorspace is required. Due to the unique family circumstances a move to commercial premises off site is not possible. Condition 5 limits the operation of the business so that it is linked to the occupation of the dwelling at Chew Mill, Farm.

4.8 The current operating hours 08:00 - 20:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00-17:00 Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays. The bakery currently operates Monday to Saturday morning. Other ancillary activities include bakery classes once every six weeks and birthday parties at weekends when the bakery is not active. The children's birthday parties last for 2 hours. There is one session on Saturday afternoon and two sessions maximum on Sunday. The children's parties are led by a member of staff and the host parent(s). The bakery is not active when parties are held so that all the bakery parking is available for drop off and collection of children.

## 5 PLANNING POLICY AND ASSESSMENT

5.1 The relevant policy document for this application is the adopted Core Strategy the following policies apply:

- Key Statement EC1: Business and employment development-development 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.
- Key Statement DS2-Sustainable Development seeks to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- Key Statement EN2 -Landscape. Development will be expected to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style features and building materials.
- Key Statement DMI2 – transport considerations. New development should be located to minimise the need to travel.

- Policy DMG1: General Considerations – sets out various criteria to be considered in assessing planning applications, including a high standard of building design, proposed development being sympathetic to existing land uses, highway safety and not adversely affecting the amenities of the area.
- Policy DMG2: Strategic considerations-outside defined settlements development must meet listed criteria which includes:<sup>1</sup> The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area: the development is for small scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.
- Policy DMG3: Transport and mobility-the availability of public transport, the relationship of the site to the primary road network, the provision for access by pedestrian and cyclists, and the location of the development in relation to its ability to strengthen existing town and village centres which offer a range of employment opportunities will be taken into account in decision making.
- Policy DME2: Landscape and townscape protection. Development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape or landscape features including:
- Policy DME6: Water management-development will not be permitted where it will lead to flooding
- Policy DMB1: Supporting business growth and the local economy- proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle.

## 6 EVALUATION

### The principle of the development: bakery

6.1 In the 2017 it was stated by the Council that “*Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Policies EC1 & DMB1) seeks to support business growth and the local economy, and whilst these policies generally relate to large scale employment uses, the bakery clearly provides a diversification of the former use of the site, generates an income and employs nine members of staff at the site – which could potentially increase.*” <sup>1</sup> The principle of the development was accepted under the above policies and policy DMG2 as essential to the local economy. The extension to the business premises remains compliant with these policies and is also in accord with policy DMB1 which supports proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy.

6.2 The business has weathered the difficulties arising from the pandemic. Business changed through this period switching towards individual customers seeking a special treat at home

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<sup>1</sup> Delegated Item File Report 3 2917 0728

whilst social events have been restricted. It is expected that business will switch back to catering in the main for special occasions and events.

Impact upon residential amenity

6.2 The business is operated by the owners who live at Chew Mill Farm and condition 5 on the planning permission prevents the business being sold off as a separate business. This effectively ensures that the operation of the business is closely monitored at all times by the applicants. As it was noted in the previous application the nearest neighbouring property is Chew Mill Farmhouse which is located over 80m from the bakery. Traffic associated with the business is limited. It is anticipated that the business will return to the higher value bespoke cakes and items created for special events at 70% of total turnover where collections and deliveries are pre-booked. Only items baked on the premises are sold so that counter service is limited. There is adequate parking available for the expected customer numbers.

6.3 Unusually high numbers of visitors were experience on mother's day this year which due to covid restrictions lead to people 'queueing' in their cars to meet social distancing restrictions. This is highly unusual and unlikely to be repeated as social distancing restrictions lift and eating out restrictions at restaurants ease.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance

6.4 Key Statement EN2 (Landscape) primarily deals aims to protect the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The property is located on land designated as open countryside, Key Statement EN2 states: '*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*'.

6.5 This is reiterated in Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy requires that '*development within the open countryside 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.*'

6.6 Policy DMG1 is used in the determination of planning applications in terms of their general design and appearance. Policy DMG1 also requires development to be of a high standard of design and be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of size, intensity and nature, as well as scale, massing, features and style.

6.7 The proposed extension is modest in scale and will be constructed in materials to match the existing building which itself was a conversion of an existing building. The extension and the repositioning of the track will have minimal impact on the surrounding landscape being within an existing cluster of buildings

#### Highways

6.8 The proposed extension will have a minimal impact on highway safety. Indeed, the more formal counter area will allow customers to collect goods more efficiently as more than one customer can be served at once.

#### Flood Risk

6.19 A Flood Risk Assessment is submitted with the application. The buildings lie within flood zone 2. The report recommends that an evacuation plan for employees is put in place. Suggestions are made for the design of the project to include flood resilience measures. These measures satisfy the requirements of policy DME6.

#### Protected species

6.20 The proposed extension does not affect the roof of the existing building. Therefore, no bat survey is required.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposed extension to the bakery will enable the business to continue to expand and flourish, providing skilled local employment. It will allow the business to put in place safer working practices in response to Covid 19. It provides the opportunity to create a dedicated display area where products can be displayed to potential high value customers and an attractive reception and collection point.

7.2 We have demonstrated that the development will have minimal impact on the landscape. The small-scale nature of this successful business is such that it will have no significant impact on neighbouring residential properties or have any impact on highway safety. The proposals fully accord with the policies of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.