



Gary Hoerty Associates

Suite 9
Grindleton Business Centre
The Spinney
Grindleton
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 4DH

Tel: 01200 449700
www.ghaonline.co.uk
email: info@ghaonline.co.uk

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RESPECT OF A FULL PLANNING
APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF AN
COMMERCIAL BUILDING

AT

WOODFIELD FARM, LONGSIGHT ROAD
CLAYTON-LE-DALE, BLACKBURN, BB2 7JA

Prepared by: Paul Fay BSc (Hons)
Applicant: Mr J Wade
Our Ref: Wade/133/2970/PF
Date: May 2021

320210594P



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 Mr J Wade to submit a full planning application on his behalf for the erection of a building to be used for commercial purposes at Woodfield Farm, Longsight Road, Clayton-le-Dale, BB2 7JA. The proposed building will enable a business that already operates from office accommodation at the farm to expand and provide additional employment within the Borough.
- 1.2 We set out in this Planning Statement the recent planning history of the application site and the wider owned property and describe the proposed planning application site and its surroundings and will give details of the proposed new building. We will then consider the application against the relevant policies and guidance and set out why we believe that the application complies with national planning guidance and local planning policies and why the application should therefore be looked upon favourably by the Local Planning Authority.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The group of buildings at Woodfield Farm are located on the northern side of Longsight Road (A59). The site comprises the former farmhouse and attached barn, which have been converted into offices, a small stone built storage building (which is proposed for demolition as part of this application) and a large replacement dwelling to the rear of the site that is used as a holiday cottage. The offices are occupied by The Wade Group, the Energy Centre and Wave. The applicants also own a parcel of land to the east of the group of existing buildings and have secured permission for the erection of a commercial building and yard area, which is to be implemented in the near future. The building that is proposed for demolition is a small storage building. It is stone built under a blue slate roof.
- 2.2 The proposed site is separated from the A59 by an established hedge. There is street lighting and a footpath on the same side of the road as the proposed site. The site and surrounding land are in an area designated as Open Countryside on the Ribble Valley Local Plan. To the west of the site there is a garage and another dwelling and on the other side of the road to this there is the site of a former petrol filling station which received planning permission for commercial development a few years ago and which is currently used as a storage area.
- 2.3 Although the application site is in an area designated as Open Countryside there is quite a lot of other development in the immediate locality and further approved development which is yet to be implemented.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 A search on the Council's web site for planning applications relating to Woodfield Farm revealed the following 6 applications:

3/2005/1071 – this was an application for the erection of a replacement dwelling and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation, and the extension of the residential curtilage to include the former farmyard area. The application was submitted on 14 December 2005 and withdrawn on 30 March 2006.

3/2006/0343 – this was a resubmission application for the erection of a replacement dwelling and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of the residential curtilage to include the former farmyard area. The application was submitted on 24 April 2006 and approved with conditions on 19 June 2006.

3/2006/0688 – this was a full application for the erection of a replacement dwelling to include a basement, and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of the residential curtilage to include former farmyard area. The application was submitted on 1 August 2006 and approved with conditions on 6 October 2006.

3/2013/0442 – this was an application for the proposed change of use of approved garage, store and office accommodation to reinstate original dwelling. The application was submitted on 2 May 2014 and was refused on 15 July 2014 and subsequently dismissed on appeal on 11 February 2015.

3/2014/0101 – this was a retrospective application for the change of use of land from agricultural use to domestic curtilage. The application was submitted on 16 January 2014 and approved with conditions on 20 March 2014.

3/2019/0827 – this was an application for the use of land as a storage compound and construction of building for vehicle servicing area, workshop, tool store, offices and ancillary accommodation to create a depot for a civil engineering company. The application was submitted on 6 September 2019 and approved with conditions on 12 November 2019.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The application is for a general-purpose commercial building the proposed building has dimensions of 18m by 10m with an eaves height of 4.80m and a ridge height of 6.24m. The external materials will comprise walls that are insulated box-profile sheeting, finished in grey, over a concrete block dwarf wall approximately one metre high. The roof will be covered

with insulated box-profile sheeting in grey and have translucent panels over the workshop area. The windows and entrance door will be uPVC frames, finished in grey. The fire doors are to be FD30 fire doors.

- 4.2 The building will be sited to the east of the existing stone office building with a gap between the two buildings. As the proposed building has a roof with a lower pitch than the existing stone building this will ensure the proposed ridge is lower than the adjacent building. The new building will clearly be seen as part of the existing group of buildings and will not be isolated. Approved as yet unbuilt development adjacent to the application site and on the opposite side of the road will expand the existing group of buildings beyond the development proposed in this application.
- 4.3 With regard to the access, the submitted plans show the proposed relocation of a dividing fence and access gate which results in the formation of a parking area and one-way access arrangement. The surface of the new length of road would match the existing road. We consider that this would benefit both highway safety and the amenities of the occupiers of the dwelling to the rear of the site.
- 4.4 The building is required to enable the expansion of Wave, a business that already operates from the site, they provide local broadband solutions in areas where conventional broadband is difficult to access. This business currently employs the owner and two full time employees and is looking to double this in the coming months and they require more office space but also a building to accommodate a vehicle and equipment such as satellite dishes and cabling.

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 is fully supported by sub paragraph (a) of this policy as the development will support the expansion of a business in a rural area through the provision of a well designed new building.

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 We therefore contend that the proposed development is fully compliant with the principal aims and intentions of the NPPF.

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

5.7 The Key Statements and Policies of the adopted Core Strategy that we consider to be relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

Key Statement DS1 – Settlement Strategy
 Key Statement DS2 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
 Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development
 Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
 Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility
 Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands
 Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection
 Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation
 Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
 Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

5.8 We will comment below on each of the Key Statements and Policies in the order that they are listed above stating why, in our opinion, they are satisfied by the proposed development.

5.9 **Key Statement DS1** defines the Council's overall Development Strategy with respect to housing and employment/commercial developments. As a Key Statement (as opposed to a Policy) it simply identifies two locations where strategic employment opportunities will be promoted and states that retail and leisure development will be directed towards the centres of the Borough's three largest settlements. We contend that this relatively minor proposal, relating to an existing business in a rural location, will have no impact on the Council's achievement of its Development Strategy; and we will demonstrate below that the proposal is supported by the more specific relevant and applicable policies.

5.10 **Key Statement DS2** states that, when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework; and will work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible. It also states that applications that accord with the policies of the Local Plan will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. We consider that, for reasons that will be explained in this Statement, the proposal represents sustainable development as defined by NPPF, and fully accords with the relevant policies of the Local Plan such that permission should be granted.

5.11 **Key Statement EC1** generally provides more detail regarding the Council's employment development strategy. Of relevance to this planning application. The first paragraph of this Key Statement states:

“Employment development will be directed towards the main settlement of Clitheroe, Whalley and Longridge as the preferred locations to accommodate employment growth together with land at Barrow Enterprise Site, the Lancashire Enterprise Zone at Samlesbury and locations well-related to the A59 corridor”.

5.12 The application site is on the A59 and is therefore well related to the A59 corridor. We therefore contend that the proposed development would

contribute to the achievement of the stated objectives and should therefore be supported by the Council. The relatively recent approvals of application 3/2019/0827 (land forming part of Woodfield Farm) and 3/2019/0064 (land opposite Woodfield Garage) demonstrate the Council's positive interpretation of this policy with regard to approving development at this particular location on the A59.

- 5.13 **Policy DMG2** deals with the strategic considerations of development and states that:

Development should be in accordance with the core strategy development strategy and should support the spatial vision.

- 5.14 The policy confirms that the bulk of development will be directed to the main settlements and goes on to identify the type of development that will be considered acceptable in the Open Countryside one of which is that development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area. As a consequence of Key Statement EC1 it is clear that the provision of the type of development proposed on the A59 corridor is acceptable and it will support the growth of an existing business to the benefit of the local economy.

- 5.15 **Policy DMG3** specifies a number of matters relating to transport and mobility to which the Council will pay regard when assessing planning proposals. The specified matters are generally more applicable to developments that are larger in scale than the proposal that is the subject of this application. The following, however, are considered to be of some relevance:

1. The availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development.
2. The relationship of the site to the primary route network and strategic road network.
3. The provision made for access to the development by pedestrian, cyclists and those with reduced mobility.
4. All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards.

- 5.16 The site is adjacent to the A59, the principal road in the Borough and is on a number of bus routes. This proximity to the A59, that gives access to the motorway network via Junction 31 of the M6 at Salmesbury, is also highly appropriate and beneficial to the operation of the business that the proposed building will serve. The site is served by private access roads leading from the A59 that are accessible and safe for use by cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed building itself will be accessible to all persons including those with reduced mobility. We have shown parking provision and associated manoeuvring areas on the submitted plans that we

consider to be in accordance with the Council's current standards. If, however, the Council requires any amendments to this aspect of the application (possibly following receipt of the consultation response from the County Highway Authority) in order for permission to be granted, we ask that you give us the opportunity to address the same prior to the determination of the application. Overall, we consider that the application satisfies the requirements of Policy DMG3 insofar as they are relevant to this particular proposed development.

- 5.17 **Policy DME1** relates to the protection of trees and woodland. The proposed building will be sited immediately adjacent to an existing building on land that currently comprises a hardstanding and part of the existing access road. There is a screening hedge between the A59 and the proposed location of the building. There are no trees or hedgerows that would be affected by the proposed building. We do not consider that the proposal would contravene the requirements of this Policy.
- 5.18 **Policy DME2** states that development proposals will be refused if they would significantly harm any of nine specified important landscape or landscape features. The proposed building will not affect any of the stated features such that, in our opinion, the requirements of this Policy would not be contravened by the proposal.
- 5.19 **Policy DME3** relates to site and species protection and conservation with specific reference to eight specified statutory and non-statutory designations. As previously stated, the building is to be sited on land that currently comprises a hard-surfaced access road with no encroachment onto agricultural land. As such, we contend that the proposal would have no detrimental impact upon any flora or fauna and would not contravene the requirements of this Policy.
- 5.20 **Policy DMB1** states that proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle subject to compliance with the Core Strategy and any detailed Policies of the LDF as appropriate. This proposal is concerned with the improvement of an existing established business. The proposal is therefore intended to support the growth of this business and we contend that it will benefit the local economy. We also contend that we have demonstrated in this Statement that the proposal is in accordance with all relevant Policies of the adopted Core Strategy. As such, in our opinion, the proposal therefore satisfies the overriding intentions and requirements of Policy DMB1.
- 5.21 Finally, of relevance to this application, Policy DMB1 states that the expansion of established firms on land outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape; and that there may be occasions where due to the scale of the proposal relocation to an alternative site is preferable. As already stated, the proposed building will maintain the existing source of employment and will also result in an increase in employment at the application site. Compared to the existing

building next to which it will be sited, the proposed building is relatively small in size and is of appropriate design and external materials for the locality. We contend that it will appear as an appropriate addition to the existing group of buildings at Woodfield Farm such that it will be assimilated within the local landscape. We therefore do not consider it necessary for any consideration to be given to relocation to an alternative site.

- 5.22 Overall, we therefore consider the proposal to be fully compliant with the relevant requirements of Policy DMB1
- 5.23 **Policy DMG1** defines the general criteria that proposals must satisfy in order for planning permission to be granted, in respect of which we will comment below using the "headings" within the Policy.
- 5.24 **Design.** The proposed building is of a size and design and will be constructed using appropriate external materials (see paragraph 4.1 above) that are entirely appropriate for its location. It is to be appropriately sited close to an existing traditional building so that it will not appear as an isolated structure that might be harmful to the landscape character of the locality. Furthermore when the recently approved surrounding development is implemented the existing group of buildings will have expanded beyond the building proposed in this application.
- 5.25 **Access.** The proposal utilises the existing access road. Whilst we consider the existing access arrangements to be safe, we consider that the proposed alterations to the internal layout of the site will result in an improvement in the safety of vehicles and pedestrians accessing the different buildings within the group at this farm. We therefore contend that, in accordance with the requirement of the Policy, safe access will be provided which is suitable to accommodate the type of traffic likely to be generated. In our opinion the proposal would not have any detrimental effects upon highway safety.
- 5.26 **Amenity.** The effects of the proposals on the visual amenities of the locality have been previously discussed. The proposed building will not have any effect upon any residential properties except the applicant's own holiday let located to the rear of the site. Even with regard to the applicant's property, the only effect is that the building will be visible from the windows in the side elevation, thereby having an effect on the view from those windows. This would not, of course, represent a sustainable reason for refusal of the application. Due to the separation distance the proposed building would not have any overbearing or overshadowing effects upon the applicant's dwelling. Overall, the proposal would have no detrimental effects upon the amenities of the occupiers of any residential properties.
- 5.27 Overall we consider that the proposal fully satisfies the requirements of Policy DMG1.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 We consider that we have demonstrated in this Planning Statement that the proposal represents sustainable development that is in compliance with the NPPF and the relevant policies of the Council's adopted Core Strategy.
- 6.2 Therefore, overall, we consider the development to be in accordance with the Development Plan. In order to comply with paragraph 11 of NPPF and Core Strategy Key Statement DS2 we accordingly consider that permission should be granted without delay subject to any reasonable conditions that the Council considers to be necessary.
- 6.3 The Core Strategy Key Statement EC1 Business and Employment, supports economic development which is well related to the A59 corridor. The development of the site for employment generating purposes would make an important contribution to the provision of local employment opportunities for the area and would support the aims and objectives of the Council.
- 6.4 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 prior to the determination of the application.

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.....Date

25/05/21

Paul Fay BSc (Hons)
For and on behalf of Gary Hoerty Associates

