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**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**IN RESPECT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION  
FOR CHANGE OF USE OF  
A RESIDENTIAL ANNEX INTO USE AS A  
HOLIDAY COTTAGE**

**AT**

**Cuttock Clough House Annex, Mill Lane,  
Waddington, Clitheroe, BB7 3JJ**

**Prepared by:** Gary Hoerty BSc MRICS FAAV  
**Our Client:** Mr C Holden and Mrs S Holden  
**Our Ref:** Hol/1060/3198/GH  
**Date:** April 2023



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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 1.1 Gary Hoerty Associates has been instructed by Craig and Sarah Holden to submit a planning application on their behalf for the change of use of a residential annex that they own at Cuttock Clough House into a holiday cottage. Construction of the annex was completed in December 2008 and the transfer of the site of the annex and some adjoining land began in [REDACTED] it was at the time their intention to reside in the annex for the long term, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] As a consequence, the annex is currently unoccupied most of the time apart from the occasions when Craig and Sarah return to the UK for long/extended holidays.
- 1.2 The applicants would like to make some beneficial use of the annex rather than having it stand empty and making use of the annex as a holiday cottage seemed to be the sensible solution and one which would fit in with their own use of the property. We were instructed to submit a request for pre-application advice to establish the Council's thoughts on the proposed change of use, which we did on 7 September 2022 and we received the Council's response on 15 November 2022. The pre-application advice was that *"the change of use from that of a residential annexe to that of independent holiday accommodation would be in broad alignment with the aims and objectives of Key Statement EC3 and Policy DMB3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy."*
- 1.3 Our clients are 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 for various types of self-catering accommodation, including caravans, lodges, chalets, yurts, shepherds' huts, and new-build cottages. There have also been approvals for several new wedding venues in rural locations which has resulted in increased demand for visitor accommodation, and they are keen to bring their property back into full use and for it to contribute positively to the rural economy.
- 1.4 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.

## **2. THE APPLICATION SITE**

- 2.1 The application site comprises a single storey annex and an area of garden land which is located in a rural area. The annex is situated on the western side of Cuttock Clough House and is located along Mill Lane which is accessed off Slaidburn Road (B6478), there are a number of dwellings along Mill Lane which form a small hamlet with the subject property being located to the eastern side of the hamlet and the property is sited on the northern side of the lane.
- 2.2 With respect to the Council's adopted Core Strategy, the site is within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB).

### **3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises the change of use of an annex which has been largely vacant for over ten years with the exception of its use by the applicants when they return to the UK on vacation from [REDACTED]. There will be one minor change to the external appearance of the building which will be the removal of the garage doors and their replacement with patio doors, with the use of the garage being changed to a lounge.
- 3.2 Access to the holiday cottage will be via the existing access to Cuttock Clough House and parking for two cars and a turning head will be available within the curtilage of the property as shown on the submitted plans.

### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 We set out below the recent planning history in respect of this part of the property.
- 4.2 Planning application 3/2007/0739 was a full application for the extension and alteration of an outbuilding to create granny annex. The application was submitted on 27 July 2007 and refused on 21 September 2007.
- 4.3 Planning application 3/2007/1039 was a full application for the extension and alteration of an outbuilding to create granny annex. Re-submission. The application was submitted on 7 November 2007 and approved with conditions on 21 December 2007.
- 4.4 Planning application 3/3/2008/0825 was an application for extension and alteration to create "granny" annex. The application was submitted on 24 September 2008 and approved with conditions on 19 November 2008.
- 4.5 A request for pre-application advice was submitted to the Council on 7 September 2022 regarding a proposed change of use of the annex into a holiday cottage and a generally positive response was received on 15 November 2022.

### **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 2021) 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 appropriate policies and guidance.

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021)**

- 5.3 The NPPF 2021 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 84 and 85 are particularly relevant to this application as they relate to “Supporting a prosperous rural economy”.

5.5 Paragraph 84 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 this policy as the change of use supports sustainable rural tourism development which will bring in money to the local economy helping to support local shops and public houses.

5.7 Paragraph 85 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 which is a simple change of use application will not result in any adverse impacts on the surroundings or on the local highway network, the building already exists and is under utilised and its use as a holiday cottage will have a positive impact on the local economy.

### **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 the 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 cottage offers 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. The application does not propose the erection of any new buildings and consequently the approval of the application will not have any impact upon the landscape of the AONB.

### **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*”. The proposed development will contribute to the rural and village economy as a consequence of the visitor spend with local businesses and the requirement to clean and maintain the holiday cottage and the proposed holiday cottages.

### **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 Bolton by Bowland and Sawley but also the town of Clitheroe.

### **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. For the most part these policies are only relevant when some form of physical development is proposed which is not the case in respect of this application. The property already exists and therefore the criteria relating to design are not relevant, a safe means of access already exists and there will be no intensification of use compared to the existing lawful use, there will be no impact on the environment or infrastructure.
- 5.15 Overall, in our opinion, the development undoubtedly complies with the relevant requirements of Policy DMG1.

### **Policy DMG 2: Strategic Considerations**

- 5.16 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.

5.17 As the proposed development is the change of use of an annex to a single holiday cottage the development is a small-scale tourism development, particularly when considered against other tourism development that has been considered small scale. We also contend that there is no requirement under the Council's policies for the applicant to show a need/demand for the proposed holiday accommodation. 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.

5.18 The Policy also states:

*In protecting the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the council will have regard to the economic and social well being of the area. However the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area avoiding where possible habitat fragmentation. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. Development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting. the AONB management plan should be considered and will be used by the council in determining planning applications.*

The proposed development proposes the re-use of an existing building and does not propose any new build development it is therefore very clearly supported by this policy.

### **Policy DME 2: Landscape and Townscape Protection**

5.19 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" might have been of any relevance to this application. However, no landscape features will be affected by the proposed development and therefore the proposal does not contravene any of the requirements of Policy DME 2.

### **Policy DME 3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation**

5.20 This policy states that development proposals that are likely to adversely affect any of eight specified species or habitats that are granted special protection will not be granted planning permission. The proposed development is for the change of use of a building and will not impact upon any of the identified species.

### **Policy DMB 1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy**

5.21 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**

- 5.22 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 building to be used as a holiday cottage already exists and therefore the proposal will not undermine the character, quality, or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design. The proposal is well related to the highway network and would not create any adverse traffic problems. The site is large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking and there are no adverse nature conservation impacts arising from the development.
- 5.23 The proposed development will support the development of tourism in the Ribble Valley by providing an additional holiday cottage.

### **6. OTHER SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT IN THE BOROUGH**

- 6.1 In recent years, as a reflection of the attractiveness of the Borough as a tourist destination, the Council has granted planning permission for numerous developments comprising self-catering accommodation ranging from camping pods, through to caravans, chalets, and conversions of existing buildings to new-build holiday cottages. The fact that such applications continue to be 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 continue to be approved is evidence that the Council considers such proposals to be acceptable in planning policy terms. The Council has accepted that self-catering holiday accommodation is appropriate for the countryside areas of the Borough as it benefits existing local businesses such as public houses, restaurants, shops, and tourist attractions etc. and the rural local economy in general.
- 6.2 We consider that previous planning permissions for new-build holiday cottages in the Borough are relevant to the consideration of this application even though this application is only for the change of use of an existing building, the reason why we consider new build to be relevant is that as will be seen from the examples we provide below we are of the firm opinion that if this application were for a new build holiday cottage the policies of the local plan would support this and therefore the simple change of use of an existing building will clearly be acceptable.
- 6.3 We dealt with an application at Brotherton Barn, Bay Gate, Bolton by Bowland, BB7 4PQ which was similar to this application as it proposed the demolition of existing agricultural buildings and the erection of new build holiday cottages, and it was also situated in the AONB. The application number was 3/2008/0104, it was approved with conditions on 18 July 2008.
- 6.4 We dealt with an application at Bow Laithe Farm, Bolton by Bowland Road, Bolton by Bowland, Clitheroe, BB7 4NJ which proposed the demolition of a range of redundant agricultural buildings and the erection of two holiday cottages in the AONB. The application was 3/2021/0495, it was approved with conditions on 5 July 2021.

### **7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The proposed development comprises the change of use of an often vacant residential annex into a single holiday cottage. The annex is situated in an attractive rural location

which will be of interest to holidaymakers visiting the Ribble Valley and it will make use of a building which has largely been vacant for the last ten years. The use is compatible with the surrounding land uses and will not result in any adverse impacts. The development is a small-scale tourism use which is entirely appropriate for a rural area.

- 7.2 We consider that we have demonstrated in this Planning Statement that the proposal represents sustainable development that is in compliance with NPPF and the relevant policies of the Council's adopted Core Strategy. We have also referred to other examples where the principle of replacing existing agricultural buildings with new build holiday cottages has been considered acceptable.
- 7.3 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.

**Gary Hoerty BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV**