

Temporary planning permission (3.5 Years) for retention of marquee at Stanley House, Mellor – Planning Assessment

Introduction

This application is submitted by Rural Solutions Ltd on behalf of the applicant, Monte Blackburn Ltd (Monte), who seek to extend the temporary planning permission for a Wedding Marquee at Stanley House, Mellor.

Temporary planning permission (reference 3/2021/1285) was granted on 31/01/2022 for:

'Retrospective temporary planning permission (2 years) for a wedding marquee on a site to the west of the main built form of Stanley House.'

The temporary consent expires on 30th June 2024.

The marquee was erected on-site in 2021 to allow the hotel business to remain operational during the upgrading and development of the wider site, which was approved by Ribble Valley Borough Council (ref: 3/2020/1059) in August 2021. The development description for the upgrade works is as follows:

'New development (to replace approved but unbuilt development from 2009 planning consent) including New Spa and Leisure Complex, Banquet Hall, Extensions to Existing Hotel Entrance and Restaurant, New Bedroom Block, Extended Car Park, Amendment of Internal Access Road, Rerouting of Part of Public Right of Way and Enhancement of Existing Section of Right of Way, New Hard and Soft Landscaping and Tree Planting.'

Due to the continued impacts of the post covid recovery period it has not proved possible to deliver the approved developments as quickly as had originally been planned. The applicant is committed to completing the approved upgrade works, however this will not be possible ahead of the expiry of the temporary consent in June 2024. The approved upgrade will be implemented in a staged approach to include the development of the following:

- The bedrooms.
- The communal areas and spa.
- The banqueting centre.

For clarity, the banqueting centre when completed will replace the temporary marquee.

This cover letter/statement includes the following sections:

- Introduction.
- The site.
- Proposed Development.
- Planning Appraisal.
- Summary.
- Conclusions.

A further temporary consent is sought for a 3.5 years until the end of December 2027.

The Site

Stanley House is a Grade II* listed building situated in extensive grounds to the south of the A677, some 3 miles to the north west of Blackburn. The site is located within Mellor Parish and Ward.

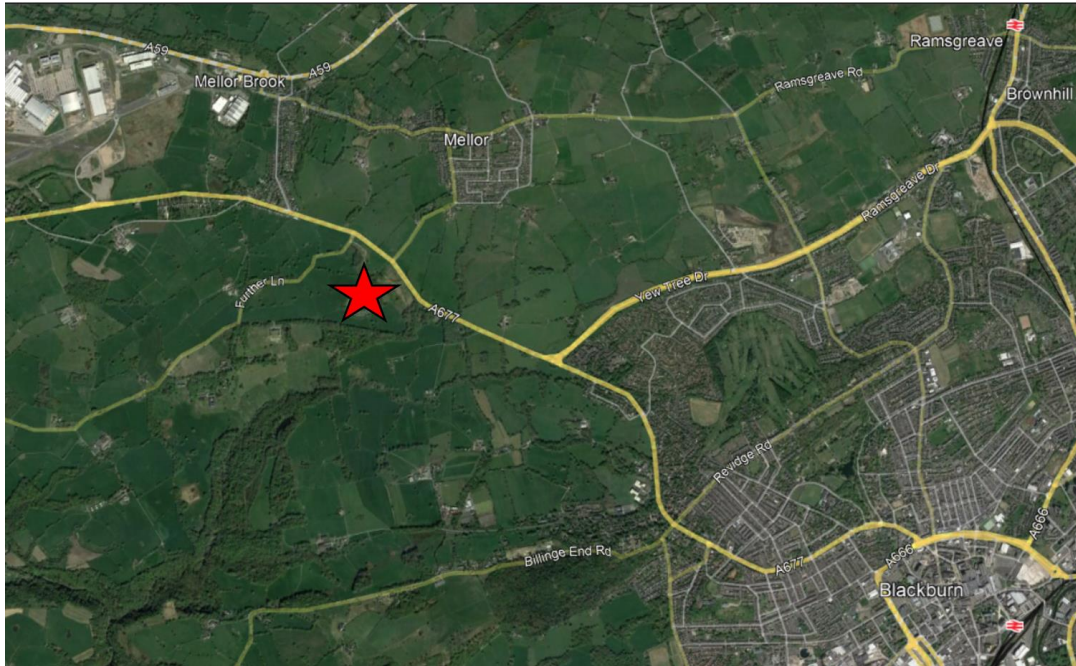


Figure 1: Aerial image showing location Stanley House (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 2: Location of marquee outlined in red (Source: Google Earth)

The site is not the subject of any site-specific designations in terms of landscape, ecology or any other designations.

The site is within Flood Zone 1 (the lowest land classification for flood risk).

The site is within designated Green Belt. Green Belt is a planning rather than environmental designation. It has been fully considered in terms of the previous application on site for a permanent building and also for the retention of a marquee on the site.

A premises licence was issued for the marquee in June 2023. The licencing regime considered environmental health and amenity impacts prior to issuing the licence.

Proposed Development

This planning application seeks a further temporary planning permission (3.5 years) for the retention of the wedding marquee on a site to the west of the main built form of Stanley House.

The development consists of two high-quality marquee structures that take the form of orangeries. The main marquee structure measures 40m x 20m with a maximum height of 6.5m. The adjacent marquee structure measure 65m x 10m with a height of 4.2m.

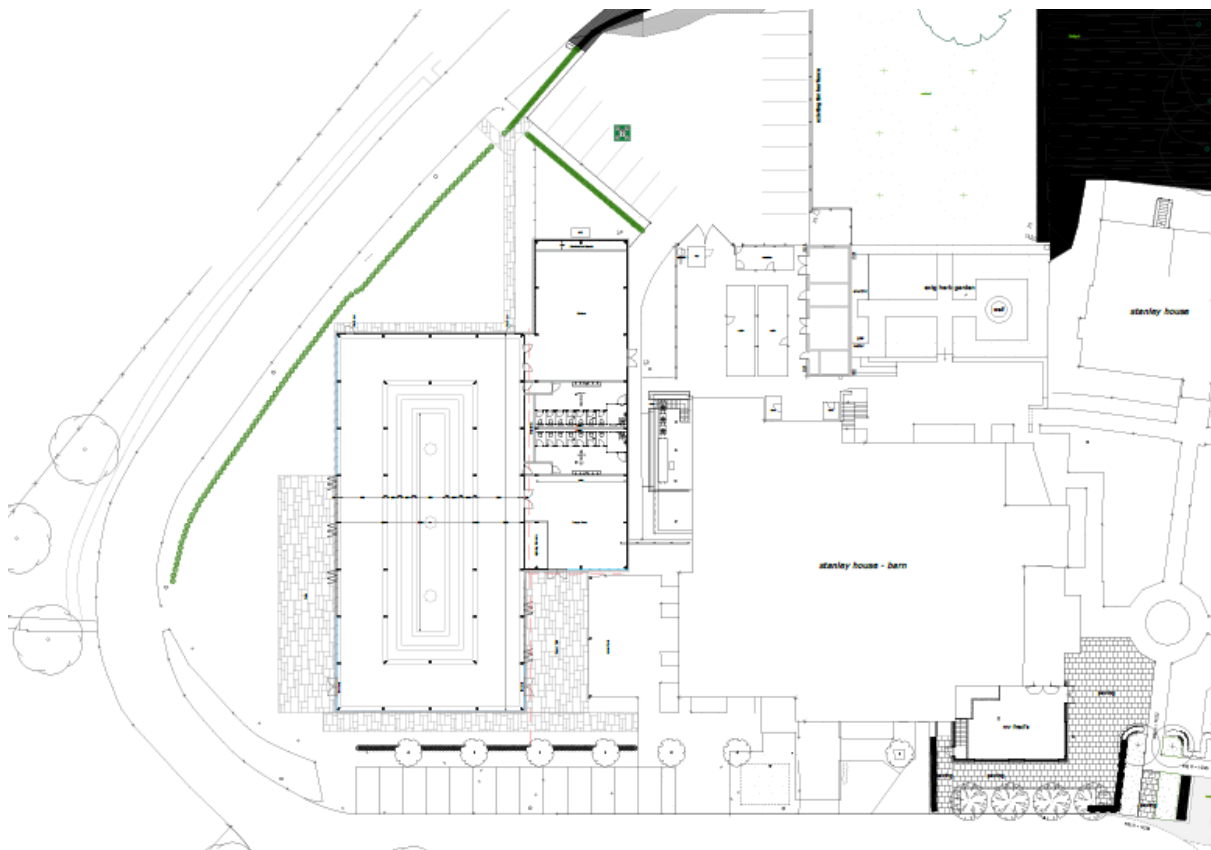


Figure 3: Aerial image showing location of marquee in relation to Stanley House (proposed planting shown in green)

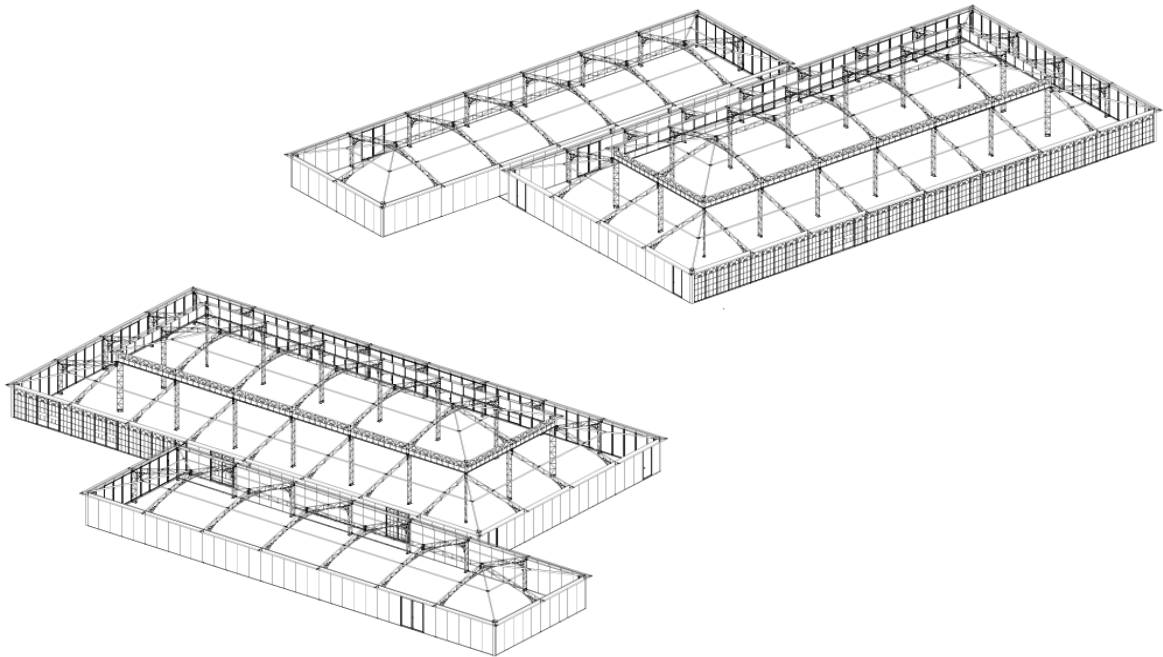


Figure 4: 3-D image of marquee structures

The marquee is built using steel and glass in the style of an orangery. The quality of the marquee structures is clearly evident in the image below:



Figure 5: View of the Marquee from the west

The application also includes the decking area located to the west of the marquee building as shown on the plan and photos below:



Figure 5: Decking

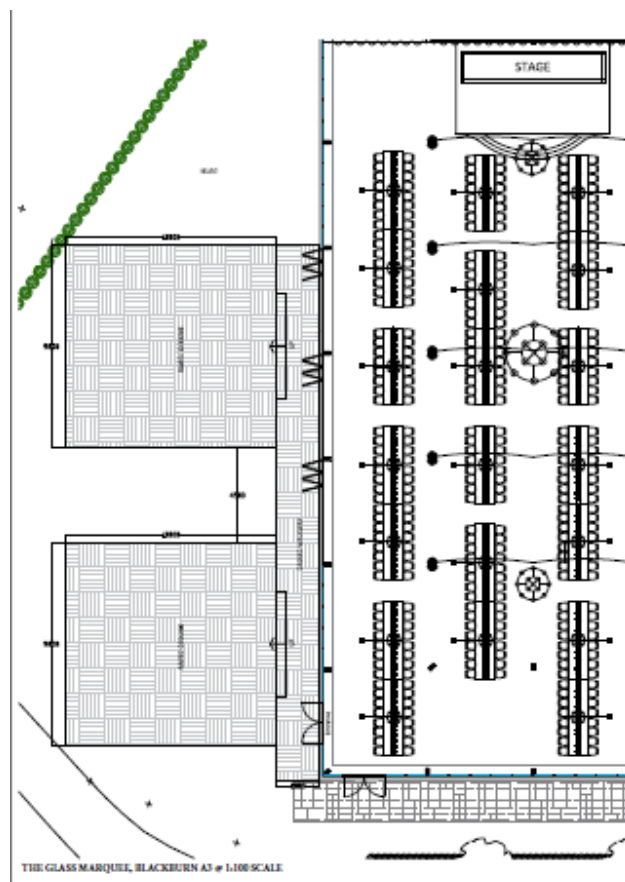


Figure 6: Decking Plan.

Planning Appraisal

This section of the cover letter will assess the proposed development in respect of summarising relevant planning policy and identifying the key matters for consideration with the scheme arising from such policies and how the proposed scheme responds to these requirements. This appraisal includes the following:

- Review of local planning policy.
- Review of National Planning Policy.
- Summary.

Local Planning Policy

The development plan is made up of the adopted policies of the Core Strategy (2008-2028) A Local Plan for Ribble Valley, and Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (2008-2028).

The following objectives and key statements from the Core Strategy are of principal relevance.

Local Plan Policy	Comment
KEY STATEMENT EN1: GREEN BELT	<p><i>“The overall extent of the Green Belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of the designation.”</i></p> <p>The proposed development seeks to extend the temporary planning permission for a marquee that will allow the business to keep operating whilst the approved extension to the business is completed.</p> <p>The site is adjacent to the existing group of buildings at Stanley House and is enclosed by planting to ensure that the development will not compromise the openness of the Green Belt.</p> <p>The policy wording relates to the ‘overall extent’ of the Green Belt. ‘Overall’ suggests a degree of flexibility in strategic terms and the Green Belt will not be negatively impacted to any notable degree.</p> <p>Furthermore, the temporary structure will be removed from the site in its entirety upon completion of the ongoing building work at Stanley House. The marquee is no larger than the approved building on-site which will eventually replace the marquee.</p>

<p>KEY STATEMENT EN5: HERITAGE ASSETS</p>	<p>The policy states that: <i>“Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.”</i></p> <p>The marquee would be a temporary structure for a period of three and half years, following which the structure would be removed from the site ensuring no long term harm to the listed building at Stanley House. The marquee is constructed of high-quality materials to complement the high-quality of the existing development at Stanley House.</p> <p>No heritage concerns were raised in relation to the previous temporary marquee application.</p> <p>The marquee is required to allow the business operation at Stanley House to continue as the approved extensions to the property are carried out. This will result in significant economic and social benefits to the site and the wider area that would outweigh any short-term harm.</p>
<p>KEY STATEMENT EC1: BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT</p>	<p>The policy states: <i>“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.”</i></p> <p>Stanley House is well related to the A59 corridor and its continued and enhanced operation is clearly complementary to the nearby Lancashire Enterprise Zone.</p> <p><i>“In considering the development of land for economic development and in determining where this land will be located, priority will be given to the use of appropriate Brownfield sites to deliver employment-generating uses including a preference for the re-use of existing employment sites before alternatives are considered.”</i></p> <p>Stanley House and its immediate setting where development will take place can be considered a brownfield site.</p>
<p>KEY STATEMENT EC3: VISITOR ECONOMY</p>	<p><i>“Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities through the conversion of existing buildings or associated with existing attractions. Significant new attractions will be supported, in circumstances</i></p>

	<p><i>where they would deliver overall improvements to the environment and benefits to local communities and employment opportunities.”</i></p> <p>The development accords with this policy statement as the development will allow Stanley House, and established tourism facility, to remain operational during the construction of the approved development. This will allow the business to continue to meet the demand for weddings and protecting employment at the site to the benefit of the visitor economy. Each event held in the marquee supports approximately 50 local jobs, and in addition the business supports numerous local suppliers.</p> <p>Following approved development has been completed the marquee shall be removed from the site in its entirety.</p>
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Table 1: Planning Policy Assessment

For the reasons set out above, the proposed development can be considered to be in conformity with the development plan for the area.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy is included in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Relevant sections of the Framework are appraised below in specific sub-sections:

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The presumption in favour of sustainable development, incorporated at Paragraph 11 of the Framework, states that where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, consent should be granted for sustainable development proposals unless:

Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

In approving the planning application for the wider upgrade and development of the hotel (ref: 3/2020/1059), the council has acknowledged that this is considered to be a sustainable location for economic development.

Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

Section 6 of the NPPF states that “planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”

The temporary retention of the marquee will allow Stanley House to remain operational during the construction of the approved development, allowing the business to continue operate and protecting employment at the site to the benefit of the district economy. The site currently employs approximately 50 staff for each event, as well as using numerous local suppliers.

Good Design

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that *“the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”*

The marquee is constructed of high-quality materials to complement the high-quality of the existing development at Stanley House. The marquee would be a temporary structure required for a further period of three and a half years, following which the structure would be removed from the site.

Protecting the Green Belt

The NPPF (Paragraph 138) states that *“the government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.”*

The site is adjacent to the existing group of buildings at Stanley House and is enclosed by new planting to ensure that the development will not compromise the openness of the Green Belt.

The proposed development seeks an extension to a temporary planning permission for a marquee that will allow the business to keep operating whilst the approved extension to the business is completed. Furthermore, if the structure will be removed from the site in its entirety upon completion of the ongoing building work at Stanley House.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF.

With regard to ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment,’ the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset’s significance provided.

The NPPF requires that an understanding of a heritage asset’s significance must form the basis of determining applications.

Paragraphs 194 and 195 state:

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum, the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to

submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. (emphasis added)

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

When determining applications relating to any heritage asset, NPPF Paragraph 197 requires that local authorities take account of:

- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Regarding the significance of heritage assets and the acceptability of change to them, Paragraphs 199 and 200 now state:

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) Grade II listed buildings, or Grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, Grade I and II* listed buildings, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

The approved planning application to redevelop and extend Stanley House was supported by a Heritage Statement and was assessed by Ribble Valley Council and Historic England. In approving this scheme, the council confirmed that public benefits of the proposed extension would outweigh any harm to the listed building.

In approving the application for the retention of the marquee it was recognised that whilst Stanley House is a Grade II* listed building, the marquee would be a temporary structure following which it would be removed from the site, ensuring no long-term harm to the listed building at Stanley House.

The marquee is constructed of high-quality materials to complement the high-quality of the existing development at Stanley House.

Summary

The above analysis demonstrates that the proposal represents a well-designed temporary structure, in keeping with its landscape setting and providing significant economic benefit to the existing and established business at Stanley House. The proposed development is considered to be acceptable development within the Green Belt and would comply with both the provisions of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies.

Conclusions

This planning application seeks an extension to the temporary planning permission for the retention of a wedding marquee at Stanley House, Mellor for a further three and half years.

The marquee in question has been erected on-site to allow the business to remain operational during the construction of the approved development.

Due to the continued impacts of the post covid recovery period it has not proved possible to deliver the approved developments as quickly as had originally been planned. The applicant has determined that it would not be feasible to deliver all of the different approved developments (spa, bedroom block, banqueting) simultaneously, as this would present operational challenges in terms of balancing construction work alongside events. For this reason, the range of approved developments will be carefully sequenced to ensure the business can continue to host functions alongside the significant investment in infrastructure. The continued retention of the temporary marquee will allow the business to remain open whilst the approved scheme is built out, safeguarding employment through the construction process.

The marquee structure is located immediately adjacent to the existing built form at Stanley House and is bounded by tree planting to the west which provides a defensible boundary and provides screening to the west. As such the structure will not impact the openness of the Green Belt, as recognised in the previous consent.

It is proposed that the temporary structure will be removed immediately from the site once the building work on the approved hotel upgrades and development has been completed.

With reference to planning policy and other material considerations, there are no significant and demonstrable adverse impacts that would arise from the proposed development and a further temporary planning permission should therefore be granted.

We look forward to working positively with the council on this application through to a positive decision to allow the applicant to maintain business operations at the site over the coming years.