

A V Town Planning Ltd

Unit 3, 31-33 Kenyon Road, Lomeshaye, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 5SP
Telephone No.: 01282 691744

Planning Statement

Change of use from a mixed use within Class F1(a) and a Sui Generis use as a Wedding Venue for up to 40 days a year to a Sui Generis use as a Wedding Venue for up to 100 days a year

The Out Barn, Clough Bottom, Rabbit Lane, Bashall Eaves BB7 3NA

October 2024

Alan Kinder – Director

Valerie Kinder – Director

Company No.
078520641

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is made to support and accompany a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the change of use of an existing facility at The Out Barn, Clough Bottom which currently has the benefit of a mixed use consisting of both Class F1(a) and a Sui Generis use as a wedding venue for up to 40 days a year to a Sui Generis use as a Wedding Venue for up to 100 days a year.
- 1.2 This statement will set out those matters which the applicant considers should be reasonably taken into consideration by the Local Planning Authority in determining the application.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The application relates to a venue known as The Out Barn at Clough Bottom, located to the east of Bashall Eaves, approximately 1.5 miles west of the Waddington village. The site is in an elevated and isolated position but is associated with a larger complex of former agricultural buildings at Clough Bottom. The application site is located within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape (formerly AONB).
- 2.2 Access to the application site is from Cross Lane when travelling from Waddington with a condition attached to planning permission 3/2016/0243 for a one-way system with egress via Rabbit Lane.

3. Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 Relevant planning decisions:

3/2023/0723 – Proposed retention of bin store and car park area, outdoor canopy and bridal suite lodge building – Approved 20 March 2024.

3/2023/0448 – Proposed construction of ten lodges, woodland path and landscaping – Approved 30 August 2024.

3/2020/0645 – Construction of new building for use as holiday accommodation in association with existing wedding venue business – Approved subject to S106 29 July 2021.

3/2018/1067 – Erection of new building to provide eight-bedroom holiday accommodation in connection with existing wedding/training venue business – Approved 18 January 2019.

3/2018/0368 – Application for the variation of condition 3 and 4 from planning permission 3/2016/0243 to vary the hours of operation and to allow 40 weddings per year – Approved 29 June 2018.

3/2017/0367 – Discharge of Condition 7 (one-way system) from planning permission 3/2016/0243 – Approved 7 June 2017

3/2016/0243 – Change of use from Class D1 to a mixed use within Class D1 and D2 to allow D2 use as a wedding venue for up to 40 days per year – Approved 22 July 2016.

4. Planning Policy

4.1 Relevant Policies:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy (CS)

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy

Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN2 – Landscape

Key Statement EN5 – Heritage Assets

Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development

Key Statement EC3 – Visitor Economy

Key Statement DM12 – Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations

Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility

Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodlands

Policy DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets

Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy

Policy DMB3 – Recreation and Tourism Development

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.2 The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014. Key Statement EC3 of the CS states that proposals which contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourist facilities associated with existing attractions.
- 4.3 NPPF section 6 sets out that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development by, amongst other things, supporting sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors and which respect the character of the countryside.
- 4.4 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF sets out that in supporting a prosperous rural economy, planning policies and decision 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, beautiful new buildings;
 - (b) The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural business;.
 - (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. CHANGE OF USE

- 5.1 The fundamental purpose in seeking this change of use from the present mixed use is to allow the facility to change emphasis to become solely a wedding venue limited to the provision of 100 weddings per year and at the same time fully relinquishing the

unrestricted present use as a corporate training facility which could potentially operate for up to 324 days per annum assuming the existing 40 day allocation of weddings was fully committed.

- 5.2 Overall, were the Planning Authority to adopt a positive stance to the proposal then this could, in reality, result in a considerable reduction in the intensification of the activities on site whilst at the same time allowing the wedding venue and its associated facilities to develop to a sustainable level.

6. Background

- 6.1 The Out Barn is a successful wedding venue that has survived and grown despite considerable change caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the rise of zoom/teams for training and on-line learning and the rise in costs caused by the cost-of-living crisis.
- 6.2 The applicant is committed to developing a sustainable wedding/events business and has recently obtained approval for 10 lodges to allow guests to stay overnight, thereby reducing the amount of night time traffic on the local road network. This approach is not dissimilar to the nearby Inn at Whitewell and Browsholme Hall, successful wedding venues that have increased their on-site accommodation.
- 6.3 Supporting this application is a business statement from the owners, that honestly and transparently explains the history of the site since 1995. The start of the wedding business, its growth, the consequences of the pandemic. The increase in numbers of weddings and the plans and approvals to develop the lodge accommodation that relies upon the venue being able to provide 100 weddings/events a year.
- 6.4 The applicant has stated that through organic growth the venue breached its 40 wedding limit in 2019. However, in the following years 2020 and 2021, the number of events was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and the inevitable subsequent postponements and cancellations. In 2022 and 2023 the venue again exceeded its wedding limit as it sought to undo the impact of the pandemic.
- 6.5 The report also acknowledges that the number of training/corporate events has collapsed from its peak of 130/annum. It is worth noting that the number of training/corporate events that can be held each year is not limited. In practice

however, it has become clear that the venue cannot host a corporate day or wedding on the same day. The applicant is suggesting that the number of wedding events is limited to 100.

7. Summary

- 7.1 The applicant has recently obtained approval for 10 lodges (3/2023/0448) and the continued operation of the business at its current level is critical to the delivery of the lodges. Enquiries have already been received for accommodation for May 2025.
- 7.2 The variation application should not be seen as an increase in weddings from 40 to 100 but rather a reduction of unlimited events/annum to 100 events/annum.