

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Louis Roederer Room, Northcote, Northcote Lane,
Langho, Lancashire, BB6 8BE

Erection of single storey extension to facilitate enlargement of function room with associated patio areas.

Job No: 25/L/024

Client: Northcote

Version: 1.0

Prepared by: [REDACTED]

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Appendix I – Planning History

1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by JWPC Chartered to support a full planning application for the construction of an extension to the Louis Roderer Room at Northcote Hotel, Langho. The intention of this would be not to increase capacity of the function room but to enable better use of the room by both the hotel and its guests. It would improve the ability of the room to hold wedding services, offer more lounge space, and the accommodation for entertainment to small events.

1.2 This application follows a previous application (application 3/2018/0795) submitted by the current applicant Craig Bancroft, Managing Director of Northcote to Ribble Valley Borough Council and approved in 2018. However, construction was not started within timeframe required of the planning permission and it has now lapsed. This application is identical to that 2018 application.

1.3 The Louis Roderer room currently covers an area of 68 sqm, and is described as a bespoke dining suite that can accommodate up to 60 seated delegates. They offer lunch and dinner sittings and corporate and private event dining, provided by the Michelin star team. This offers an exclusive and private experience to guests who can also enjoy the separate entrance and terrace. The proposal aims to enhance these features by offering a slighter larger area, allowing more comfort and space for occupants and to allow more efficient service to guests.

Given that this is a repeat of a previously approved proposal, the decision and information provided previously is a material consideration. For example, the Local Highway Authority understood the rationale for the proposal and made no objection to the application. It was approved under Delegate Powers in November 2018.

1.4 This application is supported by the following:

- Existing / Proposed Plans and Elevations (CSM+ Architects)
- Application Forms and Certificates
- Planning, Design and Access Statement (JWPC Ltd)

- 1.5 In light of the Local Planning Authority's duty under Paragraph 38 of the Framework it is requested that the agents are contacted in the first instance if any further information or dialogue is required to enable a positive determination. Officers are invited to visit the site by appointment via JWPC Ltd so that they can better understand the context in which this application is being presented.

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 Northcote is a long established luxury hotel and Michelin star restaurant in the heart of the Ribble Valley with an enviable reputation. In addition to its coveted Michelin star, it also a member of Pride of Britain and Relais & Chateaux. It was named the AA Hotel of the Year for England 2016-17. It has won the AA Inspector's Choice Small Hotel Award 2022, it boasts a four-red-AA-star hotel award, four rosette award for culinary excellence and an AA breakfast award.
- 2.2 In addition to this, in September 2022, Northcote was proud to be recognised by the AA with an Outstanding Contribution Award for its annual Obsession food festival, which has now ran for 25 years. It is described as a 'gourmet festival' which takes place over 2 weeks and which attracts many world class chefs to Northcote and the Ribble Valley to deliver Michelin quality food to guests. It has also raised many thousands of pounds for charitable causes.
- 2.3 Notwithstanding its success in the catering and hotel industry, Northcote performs an important role in the local community in and around Langho and the Ribble Valley. It currently employs 82 members of staff and has for many years sought to utilise local contractors where possible. This also extends to using local fresh produce suppliers, investing in the local economy and environment.
- 2.4 Northcote is an historic late 19th century former grand residence previously owned by local merchants until 1979 when it was acquired by Mr Sitar as a four bedroom hotel with a 50 seat restaurant. In 1983 John Wolstenholme purchased the property with a vision to bring fine dining within a country house hotel to the Ribble Valley. Northcote has evolved from that time, achieving its first Michelin star award in 1996 and retaining it ever since.
- 2.5 The building has naturally been subject to a number of extensions and alterations in the past three decades. A summary of the Planning History of the site can be found at **Appendix 1** of this document.

- 2.6 Notable past planning applications include the approved application 3/2018/0795 *“Proposed extension to provide additional function room, with associated patio areas.”* which was approved on 2nd November 2018 subject to 4 no. planning conditions.
- 2.7 The only significant change to planning history since then is approved application 3/2023/0452 *“Proposed construction of single storey pavilion restaurant. Change of use of grazing land to hotel grounds and to facilitate new vehicular access, parking and landscaping.”* This proposed a largely self-contained new pavilion restaurant to be serviced in part from the existing Northcote kitchens but offering a completely new and exclusive restaurant experience. It will have its own guest parking and servicing area.
- 2.8 As well as this, over the years the owners have worked with Ribble Valley Borough Council to secure extension and alternations to the premises, not least the garden lodge building which was constructed in the late 2010’s and which added 8 rooms to the hotel. Smaller extensions to enlarge the back of house facilities and kitchens have also been constructed. Over time additional parking to the southern side of the house has been developed to cater for the increased numbers of staff. The grounds of the manor house are well established and well kept, with car parking screened with trees and planting wherever possible.



Fig 1: Existing South-west facing elevation of Northcote

- 2.9 The application site is situated on the south-west facing elevation - towards Northcote Rd. There is currently an existing porch which provides exclusive access to the Louis Roderer Room and associated private dining spaces. The Louis Roderer Room actually consists of two interlinked private dining rooms with a separate bar/reception area that overlooks a private courtyard.
- 2.10 The area over which the extension would be built is currently part of the patio space with seating and canopy overhead. It is known as the Champagne Courtyard and is a part of the package offering the use of the Louis Roderer Room function space, meaning the proposal would not result in the loss of any wider amenity to occupants of the hotel. Indeed, the

courtyard is located in a prominent location close to the entrance and car parking spaces and as a result is not fully utilised by patrons.



Fig 2: Existing patio area, looking south

- 2.11 The manor house itself is a fine two and three storey country house constructed in red brick under slate roofs with dressed stone window and door surrounds and quoins. Timbered gables and chimney stacks lend a sense of verticality to its appearance. The applicant wishes

to match the proposed extension material to the existing material of the manor to create a cohesive but subservient addition to the host building.

2.12 The application site lies just north of the A59 (Longsight Road) close to the Langho roundabout. It is a short walk to the north of Langho village and its railway station. The site lies around 7km to the south west of Clitheroe and around 16km from Preston. To the north lies Brockhall Village; a small gated community developed in the 1990's following the closure of the former Brockhall hospital in 1992. Northcote is an important community asset to the circa 400 dwellings and their families within Brockhall Village.

3. Application Proposal

- 3.1 This full planning application seeks to provide a single storey extension to the south-west facing elevation of Northcote. It will provide 74.2m² (Gross Internal Area) of additional floorspace to the Louis Roederer Room as a multi-functional event space. This will not increase the number of covers at the restaurant but rather, provide additional space to hold functions of up to circa 60 guests (seated) or 80 standing.
- 3.2 The extension is identical to that previously approved by Planning Application 3/2018/0795 in 2018.
- 3.3 The extension has been designed in a manner to complement the existing building and create a coherent addition that retains the same architectural language of the current house. It will be constructed in matching red brick with dressed stone quoins to the southern corner and a new entrance door and canopy on the southern return elevation. This will offer a clearer sense of arrival and improve this part of the site's legibility for both staff and visitors. The door and canopy will reflect the design of the existing access to the LRR.
- 3.4 The roof will be pitched with a flat roof section behind. It will be covered in matching slate for the pitched elements and a sealed surface (details to be finalised) for the flat part.
- 3.5 Internally, the provision of this additional room will require 2 windows and a door to be blocked but circulation through the building will be retained as it is at present.
- 3.6 Externally, the area to the south-west of the extension will be retained and continued to be used as a small paved patio area. No additional car parking requirement will be generated by this development and thus no more additional spaces are provided.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 In accord with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the National Planning Policy Framework, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the 'Development Plan' comprises of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted December 2014) and the Housing and Economic Development DPD (October 2019).
- 4.2 Such 'considerations' include, but are not limited to, the National Planning Policy Framework, the planning history of a site and technical matters such as highway safety and ecology.

Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008-2028

- 4.3 The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and provides a framework for development in the Borough until 2028. The document is split into sections, with the first section providing a strategic vision and following this a delivery strategy is set out.
- 4.4 Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy sets out a settlement hierarchy for the district, with the majority of development being located in the principle settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley.
- 4.5 Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change seeks to ensure that all developments meet an appropriate recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so.
- 4.6 Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development builds upon Key Statement DS1 by focussing employment development towards the main settlements but also includes 'locations well related to the A59 corridor'. It also confirms that:

'The expansion of existing businesses will, wherever appropriate, be considered favourably.'

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- 4.8 Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy seeks to encourage proposals that will contribute to the visitor economy of Ribble Valley. Such proposals can include the creation of new visitor accommodation and tourism facilities, where they are associated with existing attractions. The associated text to the policy states that the Council recognises the rising expectations of visitors to the Borough (in terms of quality and service) and this applies to attractions, retail business and cafes/restaurants.
- 4.9 Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations aims to minimise the need to travel by locating development on accessible sites
- 4.10 Policy DMG1: General Considerations sets out some general considerations for assessing planning applications including Design, Access, Amenity, Environment and Infrastructure. In terms of design matters, it requires schemes to be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses; consider the relationship between buildings; encourage sustainable building techniques and energy efficiency in developments.
- 4.11 Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations states that any development in Open Countryside will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area in which it is located.
- 4.12 Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy sets out the Council's support for businesses and the local economy. Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported. It allows for the expansion of 'established firms' on land outside settlements provided that it is essential to maintaining the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape.
- 4.13 Policy DMB3: Recreation and Tourism Development is supportive of recreation and tourism development. Proposals should relate well to existing groups of buildings and should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the area. They should relate well to the existing highway network; provide adequate parking and servicing; and consider nature conservation impacts.

- 4.14 The Proposals Map for the Local Plan identifies the site as falling within the Open Countryside and not within Green Belt or the Forest of Bowland AONB. There are no site specific policies relating to the site or remain 'saved' from the previous Districtwide Local Plan (1998).

Housing and Economic Development DPD (adopted October 2019)

- 4.15 This Development Plan Document builds upon the Core Strategy by allocating a number of housing, retail and employment sites, which were incorporated into the Local Plan Proposals Map. None of the allocations impact upon the application site or the proposal.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

- 4.16 The most up-to-date iteration of the Framework (December 2024) sets out national planning policies and is confirmed as a material consideration in planning decisions. The Framework defines the purpose of the planning system as being to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives, namely: an economic, a social and an environmental objective.
- 4.17 At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision-taking means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay.
- 4.18 Paragraph 39 of the Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and confirms that decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.19 Paragraph 85 places significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity whilst Paragraph 88 seeks to support a prosperous rural economy. This includes through the provision of sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

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- 4.20 Section 12: Achieving Well-Designed Places states at Paragraph 131 that 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.
- 4.21 Paragraph 187 requires that decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils. They should also recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, biodiversity. Paragraph 189 requires that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscapes and the scenic beauty of National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which it is confirmed have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1 This Statement has sought to describe the application site, the application proposal and the planning policy context against which the application should be considered. This chapter will assess how the proposal is compliant with the Development Plan and set out other material planning considerations that should be taken into account when reaching a decision.

Principle of Development

- 5.2 The Development Plan for the area seeks to direct the majority of new development to the three mains towns and then what are known as ‘Tier 1 settlements’ and this is consistent with the general thrust of sustainable development that runs through the NPPF. However, not all development – especially where it is related to an existing business or use – can or should be located in such settlements.
- 5.3 Provision for this is made within Key Statement EC1 of the Core Strategy which recognises that within the local context, it is also important to foster economic development along the A59 corridor which bisects the Borough in a roughly north-east/south-west direction. The application site lies immediately to the north of the A59, within walking distance of the village of Langho which itself is a Tier 1 settlement. From a locational point of view, expansion of an existing business in this area is entirely policy compliant. Policy DMB1 mirrors this approach, irrespective of location, where expansion is essential to maintaining the viability of a business and subject to appropriate landscape impacts.
- 5.4 The Local Plan also recognises the importance of the tourism and leisure industry within Ribble Valley. The Local Plan acknowledges that the expectations of both residents and visitors are increasing in terms of quality and service. Policy EC3 seeks to strengthen the visitor economy through supporting development where (inter alia) it is associated with existing attractions. Northcote has for many years, attracted visitors to the Ribble Valley from across the UK and beyond, enticed by the exceptional accommodation and Michelin starred restaurant. This proposal builds upon that success – albeit in a modest way compared to previously approved developments.

- 5.5 This approach is built on through the 'development management' Policy DMB3. The proposal complies with the 6 criteria within the policy. The extension is 'physically well-related' to the main building as a small extension. It conserves the visual amenity and character of the locality through its traditional design and would have no impact on highway safety or parking.
- 5.6 Overall there is both policy support and written support in the Local Plan through its vision statement and the objectives to *'Improve competitiveness and productivity of local businesses...'* and *'Co-ordinate, innovate and diversity sustainable tourism...'*

Design

- 5.7 The extension would be positioned on the south western elevation and thus a relatively prominent location. However, following previous extensions, the main part of the current proposal seeks to fill an existing recess, created by the existing 'corner' single storey extension that accommodates back of house/toilet facilities. The extension would not project beyond this. The set back from the main elevation of the house ensures that the extension retains an appropriate scale and massing.
- 5.8 The lean-to, pitched roof design is common to other additions to the house and would remain below the first floor windows. Its impact would be further softened by the presence of mature trees along this boundary of the site.

Access

- 5.9 Northcote benefits from two car parks which are separately dedicated to staff/deliveries etc and for patrons. A total of 69 car parking spaces are provided across the site. Thanks to the management of the staff parking in particular, Northcote is capable of accommodating the parking requirements of both staff and patrons without any incidences of cars parking outside the site, on Northcote Road or elsewhere.
- 5.10 The nature of the space proposed will not give rise to additional car parking requirements as Northcote does not intend to add any additional covers to the restaurant as a result of this development. It will allow for a greater variety of functions to take place at the venue, often over lunchtime service or afternoons when the main restaurant is less busy.

5.11 In response to the 2018 planning application for the same development, the local highway authority commented in a response to consultation that it had no objection to the proposal.

6. Summary

- 6.1 This Statement has sought to set out the details of the application proposal, the geographical context within which it sits, the policies within the Development Plan that apply to the development and has assessed the proposal against these. It has also set out what are important material planning considerations including the planning history of the site.
- 6.2 This application is unusual in that it seeks permission for precisely the same development that was approved over 6 years ago but never implemented. However, following further review by Northcote, they now intend to revisit that proposal and hence a further planning application is submitted herein.
- 6.3 The proposal continues to be compliant with the Development Plan – given that the Ribble Valley Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and whilst the Housing and Economic Development DPD was not adopted until 2019, there are no relevant policies within that document against which this proposal should be considered. Moreover, whilst NPPF has been revised several times since then, the core principles of promoting sustainable development and encouraging the appropriate extension and development of existing businesses in rural locations has not changed. Indeed, the only significant material consideration that has changed since 2018 is the approval of Application 3/2018/0795 in November of that year.
- 6.4 The Delegated Report for that application concluded as follows:
- ‘For the reasons outlined above the principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in this location and the proposal would share an acceptable relationship with surrounding land uses in terms of its impact and visual appearance. It is therefore considered that the economic benefits of the proposal outweigh any limited harm and the application is recommended for approval accordingly’.*
- 6.5 This proposal seeks to reinforce Northcote’s position as an exceptional, nationally significant leisure destination, showcasing local produce and the exceptional skills of local staff. As such, the proposal should be fully endorsed by the local planning authority. In light of the above, the application falls to be considered under the terms of Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning Act and should therefore be approved.

Appendix 1: Planning History

Ref. no	Proposal	Decision	Date of decision
3/2023/0452	Proposed construction of single storey pavilion restaurant. Change of use of grazing land to hotel grounds and to facilitate new vehicular access, parking and landscaping.	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	09/02/2024
3/2018/0795	Proposed extension to provide function room, with associated patio areas.	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	02/11/2018
3/2014/0154	Proposed construction of a new bedroom lodge building with guest bedrooms and access track and car parking	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	14/04/2014
3/2012/0332	Application for the renewal of planning permission 3/2009/0133P for proposed development to improve the hotel and restaurant facilities including bay window extension to private lounge, increase number bedrooms with a new bedroom block, new spa building and site landscaping and parking.	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	31/05/2012
3/2009/0133	Proposed development to improve hotel and restaurant facilities, increase number of bedrooms with new bedroom block, new spa building and site landscaping and parking.	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	22/05/2009
3/2006/0462	Proposed extension to bedroom block and dining room. (Re-submission)	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	05/07/2006
3/2000/0756	Extension to provide staff accommodation and facilities with catering kitchens and stores	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	07/03/2001
3/1996/0716	Extensions to rear and conservatory	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	06/03/1997
3/1992/0179	Bedroom, kitchen, restaurant and lounge extensions	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS	28/05/1992



Thank you.

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