

**PROPOSED ALTERATIONS
AND CHANGE OF USE,
HORROCKSFORD HALL FARM HOUSE
HORROCKSFORD HALL FARM
WEST BRADFORD ROAD CLITHEROE, BB7 4QD**

PLANNING STATEMENT

MAY 2025

**PLANNING
STATEMENT**

FOR

**PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AND CHANGE OF USE
HORROCKSFORD HALL FARM HOUSE
HORROCKSFORD HALL FARM
WEST BRADFORD ROAD
CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE, BB7 4QD**

**W A SPEES, RIBA (RETIRED)
HOOK MANOR
AMBLESTON
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SA62 5QX**

MAY 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement identifies the context and the need for the proposed development. It includes an assessment of how the proposed development accords with the various planning policies. It addresses the location of the proposed development outside the 'town boundary'.

2.0 THE CONTEXT AND THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Ribble Rivers Trust is an environmental charity delivering river and catchment conservation activities across the Ribble Catchment (from the heart of the Yorkshire Dales to the Fylde Coast). Currently the Trust employs 30 people, working across 5 teams; Land Management, River Conservation, People and Learning, Data and Evidence, and Core services. The teams have a range of technical expertise, and space requirements for successful working. The teams work collaboratively to deliver catchment improvement works, acting as conveners, facilitators, professional advisors, project managers and contractors. Currently based within the footprint of the Heidelberg Materials' Ribblesdale Works, recent growth, and continued expected growth, have resulted in the Trust seeking alternative premises, that accommodate the office, storage and operation needs. RRT searched extensively for alternative premises, that meet key criteria including:

Be based within our operational area, preferably central (Clitheroe)

A reception desk/area.

Desk space for 35 employees, and 2 manager office spaces.

Two quiet working zones, for 1-6 employees.

Two meeting rooms, one that can accommodate up to 30 people.

Equipment and materials storage for each operational team's technical and electrical equipment (including agricultural plant and machinery, significant amounts of hand tools for volunteers, PPE, and a host of sensitive environmental monitoring equipment.

Parking for 10+ cars with EV charge points.

Cycle parking.

Suitable toilets for men and women, where the work force is 50:50 Male to female.

A shower room for employees.

A kitchen and canteen area.

After engaging 3 commercial estate agents, no such accommodation could be found.

In addition to the office and storage needs, RRT as a nationally recognised environmental charity, have identified several other areas of work that are priorities.

1) The need for a "Demonstration Site", that can show the successful integration of sustainable (economic and ecological) Farming practices AND conservation. This is to support RRT's work with the farming community, particularly of the Ribble Valley, but also the public.

2) The development of a training and education facility, that would support links to national programmes that RRT is participating in, that will allow for skills and job creation for the environmental and water sectors to boost local rural communities. And, to further the primary and secondary education programme run annually by Ribble Rivers Trust.

In 2021, a discussion with Heidelberg Materials identified the opportunity for RRT to lease Horrocksford Hall Farm, whereby it would be feasible to provide office accommodation, storage, a demonstrator site, and a training facility. After initial concept work, it has been decided to phase this work, with the demonstrator site prioritised, followed by office and storage accommodation, and finally a training and education facility. This is principally due to the feasibility of each phase, whereby each succeeding phase relies on the previous phase to be viable.

The storage accommodation and demonstrator site have been secured with Heidelberg Materials. See Master Plan Drawing No. 1200-MP001.

In the future it is hoped that permission and funding will be secured to convert the Listed Barn into the training and education facility, supporting a sustainable use for a valuable heritage asset ensuring its long-term maintenance and condition. See Master Plan Drawing No. 1200-MP001.

Heidelberg Materials Assessment of the buildings has identified that the location of the farm buildings so close to core operations of the Cement Works renders it infeasible for residential accommodation, as such they would remain vacant and unused, resulting in degradation of a local asset. The long-standing relationship between Heidelberg Materials and Ribble Rivers Trust creates a unique and singular opportunity to utilise the farm buildings, ensuring their long term maintenance and use whilst providing a host of benefits for the local community and environment. Accordingly, the proposed development is a unique opportunity to renovate the buildings and put them into a use which meets the needs and aspirations of the parities and the environmental objectives of the Local Plan, reduction in flood risk to local communities, increase in investment and creation of jobs within the Borough (particularly rural and agricultural linked jobs), and carbon reduction ambitions of the local area.

3.0 PLANNING POLICES

The governing policy document is the Ribble Valley Borough Council's **Core Strategy 2008-2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version**.

The Local Plan is deemed to accord with National and Regional Planning Policies.

Principal Local Plan policies relevant to the proposed development are:

Policy DMG1: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

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 DME4: PROTECTING HERITAGE ASSETS
Policy DME6: WATER MANAGEMENT
Policy DMB2: THE CONVERSION OF BARNs AND OTHER RURAL BUILDINGS FOR
EMPLOYMENT USES

Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMG3, DME 2 and DME6 are addressed in the Design and Access Statement.

Policies DME1 and DME3 are addressed in Tree and Woodland Assessment and BNG Assessments.

Policy DME4 is addressed in the Heritage Impact Statement.

**Policy DMB2: THE CONVERSION OF BARNs AND OTHER RURAL BUILDINGS FOR
EMPLOYMENT USES**

The policy states the following:

10.24 Planning Permission will be granted for employment generating uses in barns and other rural buildings, provided all of the following criteria are met:

1. Proposed use will not cause unacceptable disturbance to neighbours in any way.
2. The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or other rural enterprise.
3. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for major alterations which would adversely affect the character of the building.
4. The impact of the proposal or additional elements likely to be required for the proper operation of the building will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated.
5. The access to the site is of a safe standard or is capable of being improved to a safe standard without harming the appearance of the area.
6. The design of the conversion should be of a high standard and be in keeping with local tradition, particularly in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings.
7. That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or if this is not possible, then any loss is mitigated.

It is deemed appropriate to consider the derelict farmhouse as a rural building. As the proposed use is for offices for a growing organisation, the policy is addressed as follows:

1. Given the location of the building and the lack of neighbours other than Heidelberg Materials, no activity of the proposed use can be envisaged to cause an unacceptable disturbance to neighbours.
2. The building has a genuine history of use agriculture.

3. The building is structurally sound and capable of change use with alterations which are minor and will not adversely affect the character of the building. The external appearance of the building is to be repaired and retained. Internal features are to be retained. (See also the Heritage Impact Statement).
4. The proposed use and the proper operation of the building will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated. In deed the site will be tidied up and much of the agricultural use will be retained.
5. The access to the site will be safe and will not harm the appearance of the area. See Planning Permission 3/2015/0954. The implementation of the permission has commenced and will be completed before any consented change of use is implemented.
6. The alterations and change of use will retain the character of the building in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings. The only changes proposed to external finishes and openings are the colours of external pipework and the replacement of timber windows with UPVC windows to match existing UPVC windows. See Drawing No. 1200-D025.
7. The proposed change of use and alterations will not alter the nature conservation aspects of the existing building. Accordingly, no measures for preservation or mitigation are necessary.

In conclusion the proposed development satisfies policy DMB2.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND THE TOWN BOUNDARY

It has been noted that the preferred location for offices is in Clitheroe town centre. However, the Trust relies on the office accommodation and staff parking for the operational teams being on the same site as the considerable storage of equipment and materials. No suitable town centre location has been identified. The proposed development will enable the offices to be contiguous with storage accommodation and the agricultural land for the 'demonstration site'. The proposed development will not encroach on green belt land. it will renovate and put into use derelict accommodation and grounds adjacent to a heritage assets and protected woods. Accordingly, the proposed development is deemed in keeping with Key Statements EN1, EN2, EN4, EN5 and EC1.