| Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice. | | | | | | | | |
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| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | MC | **Date:** | 24/09/2025 | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **24/9/25** |

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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2025/0462 | | | Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk |
| **Date Inspected:** | 28/08/2025 | **Site Notice:** | 28/08/2025 | |
| **Officer:** | MC | | | |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:** | | | | **REFUSAL** |

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| **Development Description:** | Proposed conversion of existing workshop to holiday cottage associated with Beacon Fell View Caravan Park. Proposed works to include creation of first floor and balcony, alterations to roof and insertion of new windows. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Beacon Fell View Caravan Park Higher Road Longridge PR3 2TF |

| **CONSULTATIONS:** | **Parish/Town Council** |
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| **Longridge Town Council:** | No response received. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:** | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
|---|---|
| **LCC Highways:** | No objection subject to a condition that the parking areas as shown on the proposed site plan are made available for use prior to the first occupation of the holiday let. |
| **RVBC Environmental Health Officer:** | No objection subject to conditions relating to the control of site preparation and construction dust/fumes/vibration and the restriction of construction delivery hours. |
| **RVBC Engineers** | Waiting response |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:** | **Additional Representations.** |
| No additional representations received. | |

**RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:**

**Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility
Policy DMH3: Dwellings In The Open Countryside & The AONB
Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth And The Local Economy
Policy DMB3: Recreation And Tourism Development
Policy DMB5: Footpaths And Bridleways

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan

**Relevant Planning History:**

**3/2024/0637**
Proposed improvements and addition of entrance features at two vehicular entrances off Higher Road. Involving new walls, gates, water features, sign boards, pedestrian access to visitor centre, and associated hard and soft landscaping.
*Approved with Conditions*

**3/2021/1251**
Removal of condition 2 of planning permission 3/1989/0820 (a variation of planning permission 3/1978/1424) to bring the holiday occupancy period for this element of the holiday park into line with that granted under reference 3/2018/0588 (no occupancy period).
*Approved with Conditions*

**3/2018/0588**
Variation of layout to allow the siting of 11 twin-unit and 8 single-unit caravans for holiday purposes and new foul sewage pumping station.
*Approved with Conditions*

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The site is occupied by a part stone built/part cladded building workshop and storage building located within the Beacon Fell View Caravan Park, outside of the settlement boundary of Longridge, within the Open Countryside. The Caravan Park is accessed off Higher Road and the site is located on a gradient with the land falling away to the south-east and the site is located approximately 258 metres to the south-west of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

The majority of the surrounding buildings are single storey caravans with a pitched roof single storey building communal building located to the west of the application site.

In addition, there are two Public Footpaths which are located in a circular route around the building and adjacent land.

The site is also located within the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

**Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**

The proposed development is for the conversion of an existing workshop building to a 2 no. bedroom holiday let. The works would also involve the creation of a first floor by raising the roof height by approximately 1.5 metres to the taller part of the building with a total height of approximately 6.49 metres. A balcony would also be created with soft landscaping features. A large, glazed window would be inserted to the front elevation, as well as cladding to the walls, the replacement of the two doors with windows and a new window inserted at ground floor level. To the north-western side elevation two windows would also be inserted at ground and first floor levels.

The land surrounding the building would also be landscaped with parking located to the north-west of the building for 1 no. vehicle, soft landscaping up to the boundary with the road and a bin store located to the south-east of the balcony.

**Principle of Development:**

Policy DMG2 requires development within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six considerations which are listed as follows:

1. *The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area.*
2. *The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.*
3. *The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
4. *The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
5. *The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*
6. *The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation*

The proposed holiday let would be a single unit with 2 no. bedrooms. It would be sited within the complex of an existing holiday park. However, as the proposal would be for a singular holiday-let unit and not considerably add to the size and scale of the existing tourism facility with regards to the quantum of development, the proposal is considered to comply with Criterion 4 of Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

In addition, the change of use to a holiday let would be required to comply with Policy DMB3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which states:

*"Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the borough. This is subject to the following criteria being met:*

*1. The proposal must not conflict with other policies of this plan;*
*2. The proposal must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available;*
*3. The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design;*
*4. The proposals should be well related to the existing highway network. It should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposals should be well related to the public transport network;*
*5. The site should be large enough to accommodate the necessary car parking, service areas and appropriate landscaped areas; and*
*6. The proposal must take into account any nature conservation impacts using suitable survey information and where possible seek to incorporate any important existing associations within the development. Failing this then adequate mitigation will be sought."*

An assessment in relation to the acceptability on visual amenities and also highway impacts shall be made later in this report, however in relation to criterion 2, whilst the building is not located within a defined settlement, it is considered to be well related to an existing group of buildings, being the existing buildings at the holiday park.

In addition, in terms of the sustainability of the site, whilst there would be some vehicle trips generated as a result of the holiday let, there are facilities on site for the holiday makers which would reduce car dependence. Subject to compliance with all other elements of the above Policy, the development for the conversion of the building to a holiday let, would likely be acceptable in principle.

**Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG1 provides specific guidance in relation to amenity and states that all development must:

*'1. not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
*2. provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
*3. have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
*4. consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible'*

Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Plan also states that proposals should have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity for existing and future residents.

The closest residential receptor to the proposed holiday let would be approximately 63 metres to the north of the building and as such, it is not likely that the proposed development would result in any adverse harm to the amenity of the occupiers of residential properties by way of loss of light, overshadowing or overbearing impact.

The caravans located to the south of the building do not have north facing windows which would be directly overlooked by the proposed balcony. Nonetheless, the Councils records indicate that these buildings are not in residential use and as such, the loss of privacy would not weight against the proposal in this case.

The side facing windows could be fitted with obscure glazing to prevent any harmful overlooking as the large windows to the front elevation would also serve these rooms.

As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Plan.

**Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**

Paragraph 135 (C) of the NPPF states:

*'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting'.*

Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states:

*'All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building material…particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.'*

Policy DMG2 also states that:

*'Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.'*

*Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan states:*

*'All new development proposals will only be supported when they are of good design that responds positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the surroundings'.*
The proposed conversion of the building, including extensions and alterations would be visible from the public realm as the building would be located adjacent to a public footpath. The size, siting and design of the proposed holiday let is considered to be a prominent addition within the area when compared to the

existing building and the adjacent surrounding buildings and built environment which mostly comprise of single storey buildings with pitched roofs and static caravans. The scale of the building would be particularly pronounced on the front elevation and the mono-pitched roof with an eaves height of over 6 metres is considered to be excessive and would out of keeping with the scale and roof height of buildings within the immediate vicinity. It is considered that the fenestration pattern would result in a large facade of stone and cladded wall visible from the front elevation which due to the height increase, would result in a prominent structure within the surrounding area. Whilst not details of the materials or colour of the windows have been provided, this could have been secured by way of planning condition had permission been granted.

As such, the proposal is considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the open countryside, contrary to Policy DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Plan.

**Highways and Parking:**

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG3 states that:

*'all development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards'.*

In addition, Policy DMG1 states that all development must:

*'1. consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
*2. ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated'.*

The Local Highway Authority have been consulted on the application and they consider the exiting access onto Higher Road to be suitable. They note that the proposal would provide 1 no. parking space for the holiday cottage which is also considered to be acceptable and they raise no objections subject to a condition being attached to any grant of permission to ensure the car parking area as shown on drawing ref: GA3572-PSP -01D is brought into use prior to the first occupation of the holiday let and remains in use for the parking/manoeuvring of vehicles.

Subject to the above condition, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies DMG3 and DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

**Landscape/Ecology:**

Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that development proposals that are likely to adversely affect Wildlife Species Protected by law will not be granted planning permission.

*Exceptions will only be made where it can clearly be demonstrated that the benefits of a development at a site outweigh both the local and the wider impacts. Planning conditions or agreements will be used to secure protection or, in the case of any exceptional development as defined above, to mitigate any harm, unless arrangements can be made through planning conditions or agreements to secure their protection.*

The applicant has submitted an ecology report which concludes that the building is being used by breeding birds and any conversion should take place outside of the breeding season and 3x traditional nest boxes with 28-32mm entry holes should be located in trees to the rear of the building and secured by planning condition.

With regards to bats, whilst the report states that the works can go ahead without an EPS licence as only low levels of activity were recorded on the follow up surveys in May 2025, the report states that "it is concluded that the proposed works will impact on local bat populations". This is ambiguous and suggests that the

proposed development would have an impact on the protected species and in the absence of a conclusive report, there is insufficient information for the Local Planning Authority to fully assess the impact on bats.

With regards to Biodiversity Net-Gain, the application form states that the site is over 25sqm but there is no on-site habitat. When the Planning Officer visited the site, it was noted that there was small part of the site which contained grass and shrubbery. The area of the site adjacent to the south-western elevation as indicated in brown on the existing site plan constituted plants and vegetation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed scheme includes additional soft landscaping, insufficient information has been submitted within the application to demonstrate that the development would impact on less than 25sqm of on-site habitat, given that the Planning Officer's site visit noted habitat present adjacent to the building which was not noted within the submitted application form. As such, there is insufficient information submitted within the application to assess the pre-biodiversity value of the site.

The building is sited within close proximity to a tree located to the north-west of the building. Whilst the increase in roof height could potentially impact on the roots of the tree, as the ground adjacent to the site is already compacted by way of hardstanding and that the footprint of the building would not be encroaching any further towards the tree, it is unlikely to be impacted by the development. In addition, this tree is not protected by way of Tree Preservation Order and could be removed by the landowner.

**Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for refusal.

| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning consent be refused for the following reason: |
|---|---|
| **01:** | The proposal due to its size, scale and design would result in a visually prominent structure that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Open Countryside, contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNDP3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. |
| **02:** | There is insufficient information submitted within the application to determine the presence of bats within the site. In the absence of this information, the proposal fails to fully assess the impact on protected wildlife species, contrary to Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. |
| **03:** | There is insufficient information submitted within the application to confirm that the development is 'de minimis' and exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain under Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations and the application therefore lacks sufficient information to determine the biodiversity pre-development value of the onsite habitat. |