


**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>	<b>MC</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>19/09/2025</b>	<b>Manager:</b>	<b>LH</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>24/9/25</b>
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<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2025/0550			 <p>Ribble Valley Borough Council <a href="http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk">www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	28/08/2025	<b>Site Notice:</b>	28/08/2025	
<b>Officer:</b>	MC			
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>				<b>APPROVAL</b>

<b>Development Description:</b>	Proposed construction of two holiday cottages with associated parking and amenity areas. Alterations to existing vehicular access (retrospective).
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	Land to the North of Beech House Alston Lane Longridge PR3 3BN

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
Longridge Town Council encourage RVBC to consider neighbour privacy concerns.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
<b>Health and Safety Executive:</b>	Do Not Advise Against
<b>LCC Highways:</b>	Lancashire County Council acting as the Local Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site subject to condition relating to the provision of parking prior to use/occupation, the installation of a dropped kerb as part of a Section 171 agreement and the provision of cycle storage prior the first use/occupation.
<b>RVBC Environmental Health Officer:</b>	<p>The Environmental Health Officer has raised some concerns that there may be excessive noise from time to time and suggests that a 1.5m imperforate fence would be more appropriate than the 1.5m post and rail fence. They note a condition to restrict the hours of use for the outdoor area would not be enforceable.</p> <p>Other conditions are suggested which include control of site preparation and construction phase noise/dust/fumes/vibration and the restriction of construction noise/deliveries.</p>

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
<p>The Local Authority received one representation raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- roof height should be lowered</li> <li>- mature trees have been cut down and not replaced</li> <li>- concerns regarding lack of privacy</li> </ul> <p>(neighbour notification letter to Boot Farm Barn was undeliverable and returned to the LPA).</p>	

<b>RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:</b>
<b>Ribble Valley Core Strategy:</b>

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy  
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development  
Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy

Policy DMG1: General Considerations  
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations  
Policy DME2: Landscape & Townscape Protection  
Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**Relevant Planning History:**

**3/2024/1039**

Variation of condition 2 on planning permission 3/2020/0498 for proposed construction of three holiday cottages with associated parking and amenity areas.

Refused

**3/2023/0122**

Proposed roof height adjustment and associated rooflights

Withdrawn

**3/2023/0257**

Proposed construction of three holiday cottages with associated parking and amenity areas (variation of condition 2 (plans) of planning permission 3/2020/0498)

Refused

**3/2022/0444**

Discharge of conditions 3 (walling and roofing materials), 8 (external lighting) and 15 (landscaping details) from planning permission 3/2020/0498

Approved

**3/2022/1133**

Non-material amendment of planning application 3/2020/0498. Proposed change to eaves height to add extra space to attic

Refused

**3/2020/0498**

Proposed construction of three holiday cottages with associated parking and amenity areas

Approved subject to legal agreement

**(Opposite piece of land and revoked by S106 agreement 3/2019/0153)**

Proposed demolition of stables and construction of four holiday cottages with associated parking and amenity areas.

Granted with Conditions

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The site is located towards the end of Alston Lane on the West side in an area of land designated as Open Countryside and within approx. 75 metres of the River Ribble. It is a parcel of land located to the north of a small group of dwellings. There is an existing vehicular access that has been created from Alston Lane and it should be noted that the application site sits on higher land than the road at Alston Lane.

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

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

The development is for the retrospective erection of a building for 2 no. holiday cottages with associated parking and amenity areas, as well as alterations to the existing vehicular access.

It should be noted that planning permission has been previously granted for a similar building to accommodate 3 no. holiday cottages but with an alternative parking arrangement and a different size building to that which has been approved.

It should be noted that planning permission had also been refused for a Section 73 application (planning ref: 3/2024/1039) which included an increase in the number of bedrooms, including bedrooms of the second floor.

Following discussions at pre-application stage, the number of bedrooms has been reduced and some of the first and second floor windows have been removed, as well as the removal of some to the rear roof slopes and the 1.5 storey forward outriggers, in an attempt to reduce the visual prominence of the building.

**Principle of Development:**

As previously stated, planning permission has already been granted for 3 no. holiday cottages under planning ref: 3/2020/0498. The approved scheme included 2x 1 no. bedroom units and 1x 5 no. bedroom unit over two floors. The current scheme has 2x 2 no. bedroom unit and 1x 5 no. bedroom unit and as such, the number of occupants remains the same.

Key Statement EC3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy relates specifically to the visitor economy stating that proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged.

As with the approved scheme, it is considered that the proposed development would contribute to the tourism economy and accords with the general intentions of Key Statement EC3.

The application site is located in the Open Countryside. Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy is also of relevance and makes provision for development outside of the Borough's defined settlement areas on the basis of the development in question meeting at least one of the following considerations:

- 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.*

In addition, Policy DMB3 relates specifically to recreation and tourism development. Tourism and visitor attractions are generally supported 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.

Whilst the proposal would be detached from any settlement it would be physically well-related to an existing group of residential properties that includes Rothholme, Beech House and Riverside Barn. As such it is considered that the proposed buildings would form part of an identifiable group as previously assessed. The proposed holiday cottages would be remote from services and facilities with the nearest settlement, Grimsargh, around 4.5km away. It is likely that future occupiers of the holiday cottages would be reliant on the private motor vehicle to access services. However, the nature of tourism accommodation means that they are often located in quiet and tranquil locations where occupants can enjoy the scenic beauty of an area.

The acceptability of the design/scale/layout of the site/building shall be assessed later in this report.

In addition, an assessment must be made as to whether the proposal is still considered to be a small-scale tourism use appropriate to a rural area as allowed under Criterion 4 of the above Policy. The building that has been erected is larger than that of which was approved and in terms of size and scale alone, may not necessarily be considered small-scale. Nonetheless, planning permission has been granted for 3 no. holiday cottages at the site for up to 14 occupants and the as-built scheme is for the same number of occupants within the buildings, with the largest holiday let, not increasing the number of bedrooms which would prohibit large groups of occupants.

Given that the overall scale of the use of the building would not significantly differ from the originally approved scheme, the proposal is considered to constitute a small-scale tourism use, appropriate to a rural area. The alterations to the design of the scheme shall be assessed later in this report.

#### **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that, 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 Longridge Neighbourhood Plan also states that proposals should:

*“Have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity for existing and future resident” or*

*“Do not contribute to, or suffer from, adverse impacts arising from noise”.*

The development has increased the roof height from the approved scheme by approximately 1.3 metres. However, due to the orientation of the building in relation to the adjacent neighbouring properties at Beech House and Roth-Holm, this would not likely result in any significant, detrimental overshadowing or loss of light.

Turning to overlooking, it is noted that the second-floor side facing windows and front/rear rooflights to the main roof ridge have also been removed from the scheme. As such, whilst concerns have been raised regarding

trees being cut down to the rear of the site, due to the separation distances, it is not considered that the development would result in any adverse overlooking to the occupiers of nearby neighbouring properties.

With regards to noise impact, the scheme as shown on the proposed floorplans is not considered to be materially different in terms of the occupant numbers and would not result in any significant increase in the number of large groups being able to stay at the properties. The Environmental Health Officer has raised some concerns that occasionally there may be some noise issues from groups staying at the properties. However, the Council cannot control the restriction of occupants using the outside amenity areas. When comparing the proposed site plan for the approved scheme and the proposed site plan as submitted, the external amenity areas are not closer to the neighbouring properties as the approved scheme.

As such, whilst the Environmental Health Officer as suggested that the 1.5m post and rail fence is amended to an imperforate fence to reduce noise pollution, it is not considered that this would be reasonable given there are no significant changes in terms of the number of occupants or location of outside amenity spaces when compared to the approved scheme (3/2020/0498).

### **Visual Amenity/Design:**

Paragraph 135 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'*.

Policy DMG1 also states that all development must:

- 1. be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the cobe/english heritage building on context toolkit.*
- 2. 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 materials.*
- 3. consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. 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.*
- 4. use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy dme5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*
- 5. the code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.*

In addition, 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 DME2 also states that:

*"Development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape or landscape features"*.

Policy LNNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan states that:

*"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 changes have resulted in the provision of second floor within the main building which has increased the roof height by approximately 1.3 metres from the approved scheme. In addition, habitable accommodation has been introduced a first floor level within the northern and southern 'wings'.

When the Planning Officer visited the site for the pre-application, it was noted that a number of rooflights had also been introduced to the roof slopes, as well as first floor windows to the front elevation 'wings' and second floor windows to the side walls of the main part of the building.

Whilst the application form states that the scheme is retrospective, the proposed works to infill the second floor windows on the side gables and the first floor windows on the front gables as outlined on the proposed elevations and remove the rooflights have not yet been undertaken.

Nonetheless, whilst the increase in roof height has resulted in a more visually prominent building within the Open Countryside, it is considered that the amendments proposed would help to reduce the overall visual prominence of the building, by infilling and removing the windows and rooflights as shown on the proposed elevations, which currently draw attention to the roof area and upper floors of the building.

Concerns were also raised with regards to the vehicular access which had been altered and the parking areas moved to the front of the site, immediately behind the front boundary fencing. These spaces were previously set further within the site with a soft landscaping buffer and it was considered that the introduction of the car parking spaces to the immediate site frontage added to the harmful urbanising impact within the open countryside.

When the Planning Officer visited the site again for the pre-application meeting, it was noted that the parking spaces sit at a higher level than the roadside and would be screened by existing vegetation. In addition, the applicant has now shown additional planting to the north of parking space '02' as labelled on the proposed site plan which would also help to reduce the urbanising impact.

Subject to a condition that the development is implemented in accordance with a landscaping scheme, the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

As such, on balance, subject to the amendments being implemented within a suitable timeframe and secured by way of planning condition, the scheme is considered to result in no significant visual harm when compared to the approved scheme, in accordance with Policy DMG1, DMG2 and DME2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.

#### **Highways/Parking:**

The location of the parking spaces and turning area have been amended when compared to the approved scheme. However the level of parking would remain the same, which includes 7 no. vehicular parking spaces.

The Local Highway Authority note the access has been amended, however having discussed with the Highway Officer, they consider that as the new vehicular access works have been undertaken without the approval of the Highway Authority, the works need to be undertaken as part of a Section 171 agreement of the Highways Act 1980. It is considered that this could be added as an informative to any grant of planning condition,

The level of parking is considered acceptable to the Local Highway Authority however they recommend a condition be added to ensure the development is not occupied until the car parking and turning areas as shown on the approved plan(s) have been provided in full and available for use and kept available for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles at all time. They also recommend a condition to ensure cycle storage is provided and kept available for use. It should be noted that cycle storage is already shown on the approved plans and therefore its installation could be secured by way of planning condition.

As such, the proposal accords with Policy DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

#### **Other matters:**

The site is adjacent to a high-pressure gas pipe, however the Health and Safety Executive do not advise against the grant of planning permission.

With regards to Biodiversity Net-Gain, the development is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it is retrospective.

The applicant has provided a roof analysis which demonstrates that the building would not be suitable to house bats as there are no points of ingress. Notwithstanding this, an informative should be added to any grant of permission to advise the applicant of what to do in the event of a bat being found.

The site is located within Flood Zone 3. The previous application submitted a Flood Risk Assessment which demonstrated that the risk of flooding to the development is low and that the development would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. However, the Flood Map for Planning has since been updated and the application is now located outside of the flood zone and would not be at risk of flooding.

In addition, a condition was added so that surface and foul water drained separately and the approved proposed site plan showed that surface water drainage would be connected to existing surface water drainage system to Beech House and then discharged into stream to the east of the site. No information has been submitted on the updated site plan to demonstrate how surface water would be discharged, however this could be dealt with by way of planning condition.

**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 approval subject to conditions.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	That planning consent be granted.
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