

DESIGN STATEMENT

FOR THE PROPOSED DESIGN CHANGES AT ALSTON HOUSE/LAND TO THE NORTH OF BEECH HOUSE, ALSTON, PRESTON, LANCASHIRE.



Job No. 5335

Version: 1.1 | JULY 2025



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design Statement supports a full planning application relating to two holiday lets constructed on land to the north of Beech House, Alston. Planning permission was originally granted in 2020 under application 3/2020/0498 for the construction of three holiday units. However, during construction, the development diverged from the approved drawings, prompting a subsequent variation of condition application (3/2024/1039), which was refused. This full application incorporates design changes that respond directly to pre-app planning feedback and which are currently being implemented on site.

This document is to be read in conjunction with all other submitted planning documents No:

- 5335 – L01 Location Plan.
- 5335 – BH01A - Proposed Site Plan.
- 5335 – BH02A – Proposed Ground Floor Plan.
- 5335 – BH03A Proposed First Floor Plan.
- 5335 – BH04A Proposed First Floor Plan.
- 5335 – BH05A Proposed Elevations.

Original Approved Drawings (Existing):

The original planning application approved under reference 3/2020/0498 was supported by the following drawings:

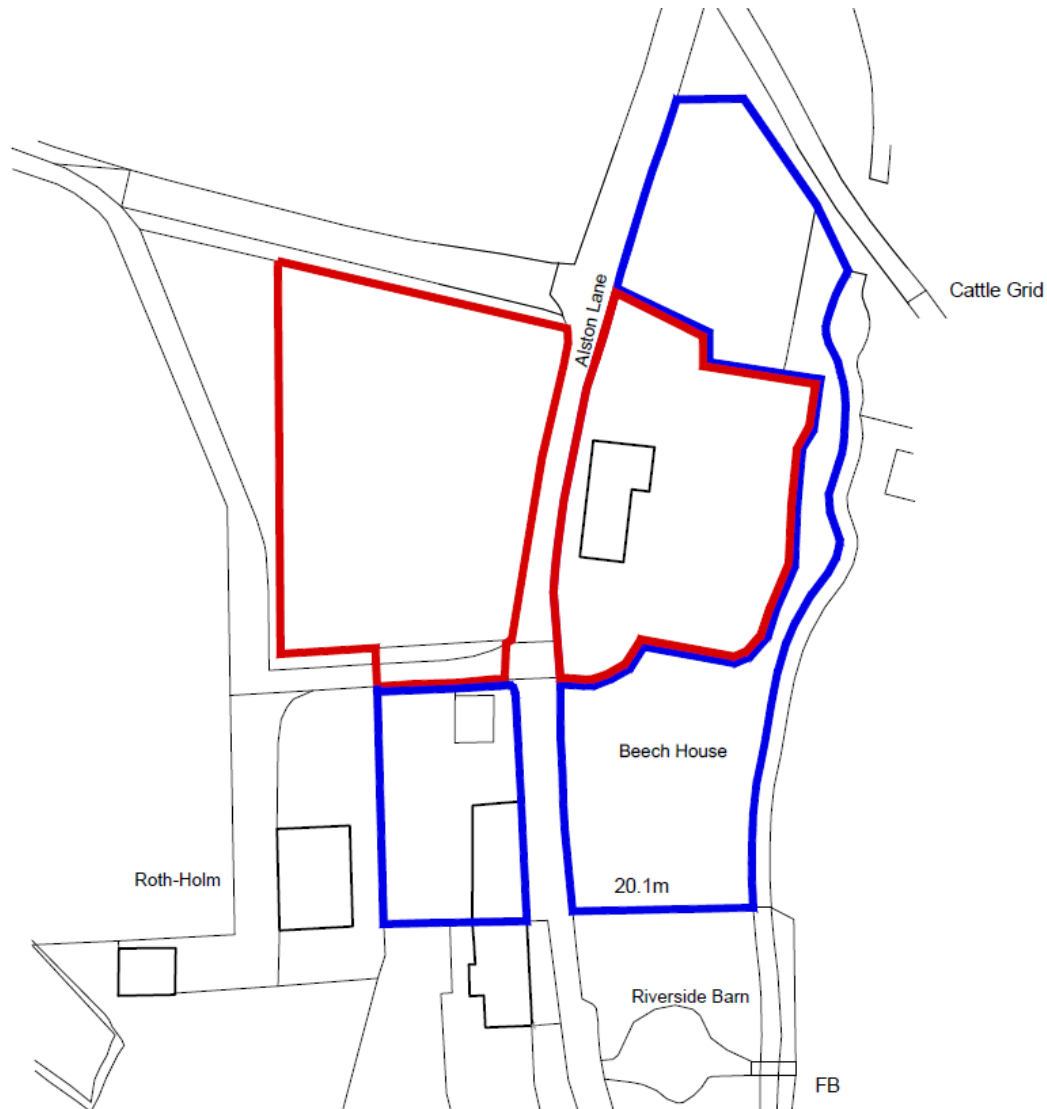
- 5335 - P01B – Ground Floor Plan
- 5335 - P02A – First Floor Plan
- 5335 - P03C – Elevations
- 5335 - P04F – Site Plan

Related Applications:

Full Planning: 3/2020/0498 (Approved).

S73: 3/2024/1039 (Refused).

Pre-App: Ref - RV/2025/ENQ/00047.



PL01: Location Plan (Not to scale).

2.0 PRE-APPLICATION FEEDBACK

Following the refusal of application 3/2024/1039, a pre-application enquiry (ref: RV/2025/ENQ/00047) was submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council. A site meeting was held on 11th June 2025 with Senior Planning Officer Maya Cullen. The Council issued a detailed written response on 27th June 2025. The full comments are quoted below:

“The amended plans are an improvement from the previously submitted pre-application drawings. They include the removal of the 2nd floor windows, removal of all rooflights from the main roof, infilling of first floor windows to the front elevation outriggers and the retention of the internal roof slope rooflights with the addition of one rooflight to the outside roof slope to the lower-level outrigger. In addition, the number and location of external lighting does not significantly differ from the approved scheme.”

The changes to the internal floorspace have reduced the number of bedrooms which is more acceptable for a small-scale holiday let. The reduction in rooflights and removal of windows is more acceptable as this reduces the visual prominence of the building. The level of parking is considered to be acceptable, to include 7 no. spaces for 7 no. bedrooms as per the approved scheme and the additional planting and retention of the hedge along the front boundary are considered an improvement from the previously refused scheme.

Whilst the roof height and pitch would remain the same as the refused scheme, the amendments proposed help lessen the visual impact of the scheme when viewed from the road and from the Public Bridleway.

As the scheme has been amended from 3 no. holiday lets to 2 no., you would now need to re-apply for full planning permission as the description of development would no longer match the approved scheme and therefore could not be assessed under a Section 73 application. In addition, the new application would be seeking to regularise an increase to the building height which falls outside the scope of a Section 73 application. Our validation checklist can be found at Microsoft Word - Validation Checklist APPENDIX 1 UPDATED LOCAL VALIDATION CHECKLIST 5June2025.

As the proposed development would impact on less than 25sqm of on-site habitat, it would likely be exempt from mandatory BNG. Observations on site suggest the roof space would not be suitable habitat for protected species with no obvious gaps for species to enter the building with this being a newly constructed building, therefore negating the need for a protected species survey, however photographic evidence is required to support this consideration.

The above observations have been provided on the basis of the level of information submitted and the comments contained within this response represent officer opinion only, at the time of writing, without prejudice to the final determination of any application submitted. Should you wish to discuss any of these matters further please do not hesitate to contact me."

3.0 DESIGN CHANGES

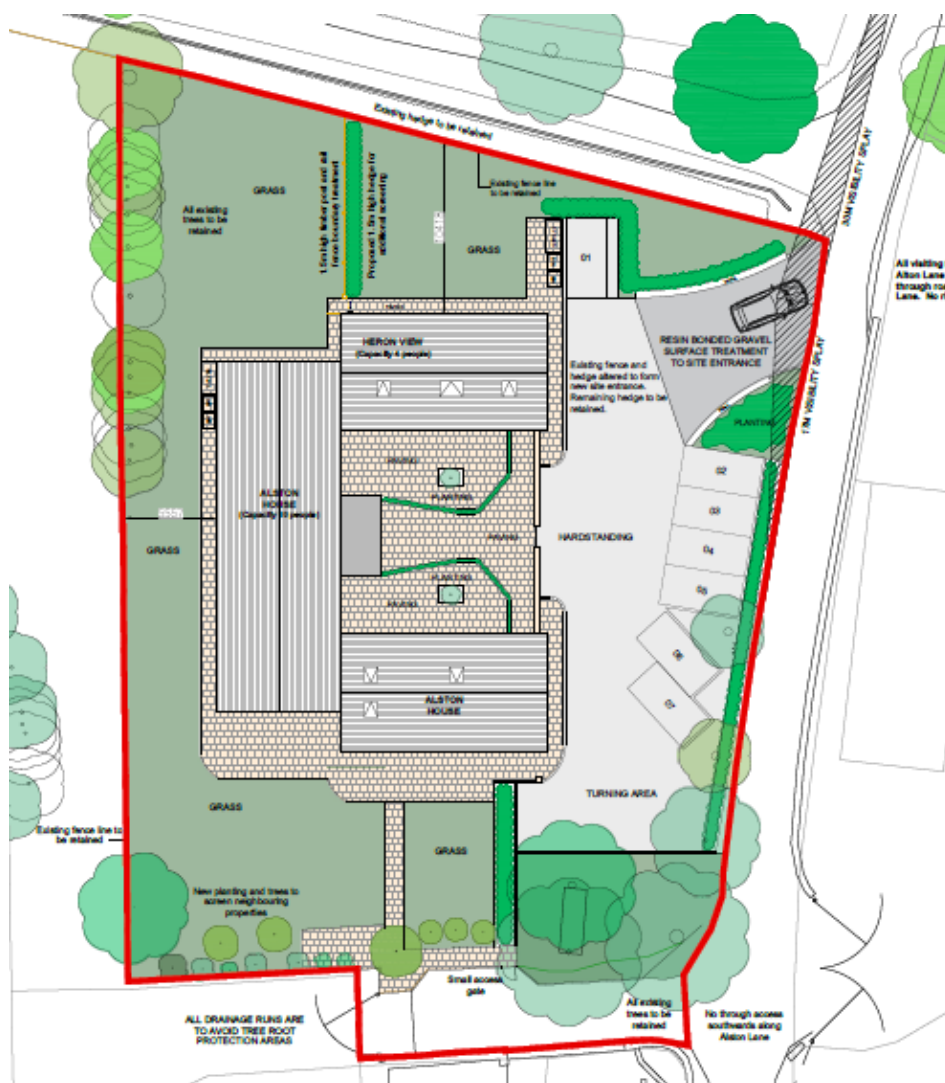
During the construction process, the development diverged from the approved scheme in several key respects:

- The ridge height increased by approximately 1.3 metres.
- A second floor was inserted into the roof space.
- Eleven rooflights were introduced across both the main and secondary roof slopes.
- First-floor windows were added to the front elevations of the 2No. outriggers.
- Internal alterations amalgamated two of the originally approved three units into a single, larger holiday let.

- The car parking layout was revised, removing three dedicated spaces adjacent to the Alston House frontage and replacing them with a landscaped courtyard incorporating paving and planting.

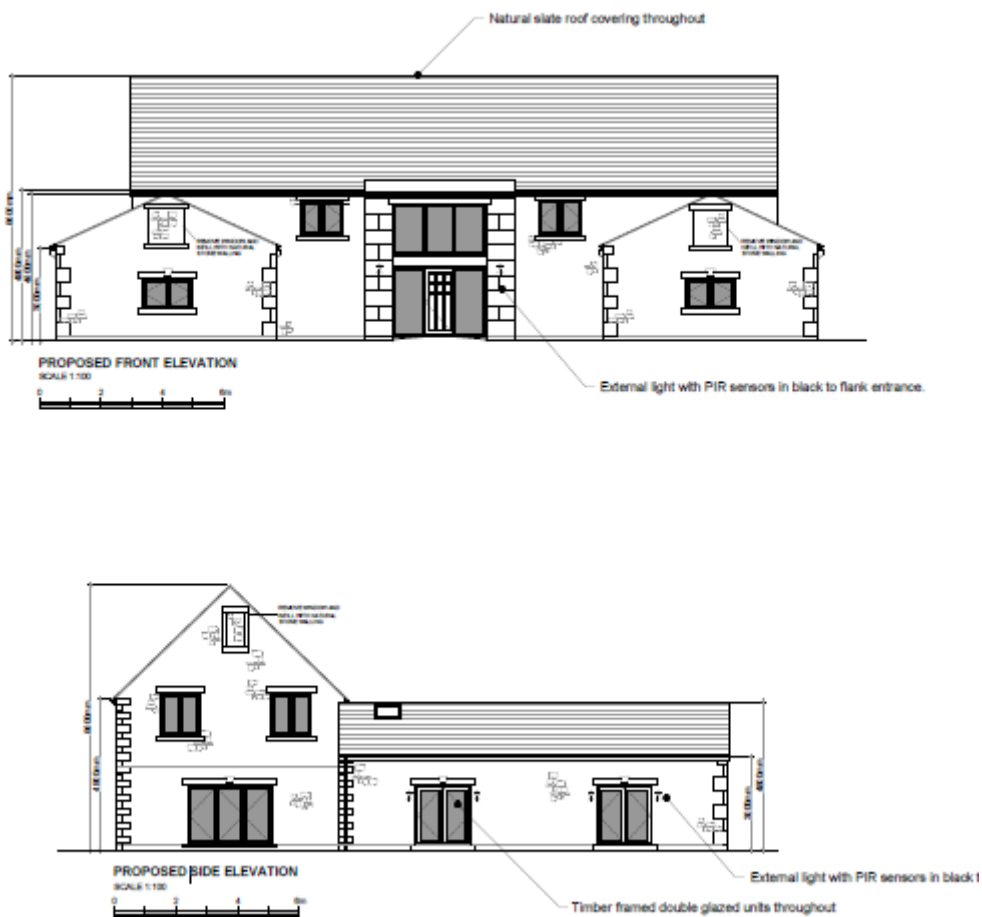
These design amendments were not supported under the previously submitted Section 73 application (ref: 3/2024/1039), which was consequently refused.

In direct response to both the feedback from that refusal and subsequent detailed pre-application advice from the Council, the applicant has made a series of positive and sensitive revisions to the scheme. These changes are now in the process of being implemented on site. Key alterations include the removal of all second-floor windows and rooflights on the main roof slope, reducing the visual prominence of the building from both public and private viewpoints. First-floor windows within the projecting outriggers have also been removed, and only one new rooflight has been introduced—strategically located on the external slope of the lower-level outrigger roof, with retained rooflights positioned discreetly on internal courtyard facing slopes where they are largely concealed from view.



PL02: Proposed Site Plan (Not to scale).

In addition to changes in fenestration, enhancements have been made to the site's landscaping and boundary treatments. The revised scheme includes new planting and the retention and improvement of the existing hedgerow along the front boundary, softening the development's interface with the public realm. The car parking layout has also been revised to provide seven dedicated spaces, aligning with the seven bedrooms now proposed across two holiday units. This represents a significant reduction in unit density and internal capacity compared to the originally approved scheme, supporting the Council's preference for lower-scale tourism development in rural areas.



PL03: Proposed Front and Side Elevations (Not to scale).

4.0 CONCLUSION

This full planning application provides a carefully considered response to previous planning refusals and pre-application feedback. The revised scheme reflects both the concerns of the Council and the applicant's commitment to achieving a sympathetic and policy-compliant holiday development.

The drawings now being implemented on site—referenced as 5335-BH01 to BH05A—address all points raised in the Council's feedback, including massing, fenestration, parking, and landscaping. While the building's ridge height remains as built, this aspect was not objected to in the most recent advice, provided it is balanced by reduced visual intrusion through the removal of excessive rooflights and high-level glazing.

The scheme now proposes two sensitively designed holiday lets, reflecting a lower intensity of use and reduced visual impact. The improvements to boundary treatments, internal configuration, external lighting, and landscape integration further enhance the quality of the site in terms of its contribution to the surrounding rural character.

The applicant has acted in good faith by seeking planning guidance and undertaking corrective work during ongoing site activity. It is therefore submitted that this revised application represents a sustainable and policy-aligned proposal that should be supported by the Local Planning Authority.