


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	13/5/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	15/5/26
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0615			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	25/3/26 & 24/4/26	Site Notice:	25/3/26	
Officer:	BT			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Regularisation of unauthorised change of use of agricultural land to caravan site with five caravan pitches, one changeover pitch, amenities Block, waste and recycling area and chemical toilet disposal point. Proposed construction of three additional caravan pitches within existing site and extension of existing site to accommodate six additional caravan pitches.
Site Address/Location:	Rowan Bank, Skipton Road, Gisburn, BD23 3JT.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Horton Parish Meeting:	Consulted 5/3/26 – no response received.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections.
RVBC Environmental Health:	No objections.
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
None.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
<p>Ribble Valley Core Strategy:</p> <p>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 & Mobility Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy Policy DMB3: Recreation and Tourism Development</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</p> <p>Relevant Planning History:</p> <p>3/2025/0925:</p>

Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use of land as a caravan and camping site with five hardstanding caravan pitches, one hardstanding changeover pitch, ten camping pitches and an elsan and waste disposal area (Refused)

3/2022/0901:

Proposed modern steel framed agricultural building for housing livestock (Approved)

3/2022/0782:

Proposed Agricultural Building for housing livestock (Permission Required)

3/2008/0765:

Lean-to building for the storage of feed, bedding and machinery (Permission Not Required)

3/2001/0398:

Change of house type to include conservatory extension and 2 no. Velux conservation rooflights to new agricultural workers dwelling (Approved)

3/2001/028N:

New farm machinery store (Approved)

3/1999/0173:

Reserved matters application for an agricultural workers dwelling, new access drive, septic tank and soakaway, landscaping and external works (Approved)

3/1997/0106:

Outline application for a farm workers dwelling (Approved)

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to a land parcel sited to the North-west of the property known as Rowan Bank on the Eastern outskirts of Gisburn. Access to the application site is from the A59 Skipton Road with this access also serving the property of Rowan Bank. The land subject to this application roughly comprises a rectangular shaped land parcel which accommodates five hardstanding caravan pitches, one hardstanding changeover pitch, ten camping pitches and a waste disposal area / chemical toilet and WC / showers block. Portal framed agricultural buildings adjoin the North-western extents of the application site with the wider area surrounding the site comprising a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Retrospective planning consent is sought for the regularisation of an unauthorised change of use of agricultural land to a caravan site with five caravan pitches, one changeover pitch and a waste disposal area / chemical toilet block and WC / showers block. Planning consent is also sought for the construction of three additional caravan pitches within the existing site and for the extension of the existing site to accommodate six additional caravan pitches.

Principle of Development:

The proposal site lies within the open countryside within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy requires development outside of defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six exceptions which are 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*

In this instance, the proposal seeks to accommodate a total of fourteen caravan pitches within the application site in addition to the retention of the site's waste disposal area / chemical toilet block and WC / showers block. In this instance, it is not considered that the provision of fourteen caravan pitches would amount to a large scale tourist operation in terms of visitors and activity and the existing buildings proposed for retention are small scale structures which provide basic amenities. Consequently, the proposed development is considered to fall within the threshold of small scale tourism and would therefore be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG2.

Policy DMB3 requires additional criteria to be met with regards to the provision of tourism and visitor facilities as follows:

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,*
- 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.*

As outlined above, criteria point 1 of Policy DMB3 requires proposals for development to be compliant with the other policies of the Core Strategy, with the relevant policies in this instance being Key Statement EC3 and Policies DMG1, DMG2 and DMG3.

Key Statement EC3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states:

'Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities through the conversion of existing buildings or associated with existing attractions.'

Policy DMG1 requires developments to give consideration towards issues of design, access, amenity, environmental factors and infrastructure.

In this instance, the proposal relates to the provision of tourist accommodation that could potentially offer benefits to the visitor economy of the Borough therefore the proposal would be broadly compliant with the aims and objectives of Key Statement EC3. In addition, the proposed development raises no significant concerns in relation issues of design, access, amenity, environmental factors and infrastructure (see additional sections of this report). Furthermore, and as previously conveyed, the proposal is considered to fall within the threshold of a small scale tourism development and would therefore be compliant with the provisions of Policy DMG2. Moreover, whilst there would be some conflict with the provisions of Policy DMG3 from the proposal (see comments further below in relation criteria point 4 of Policy DMB3), it is not considered that this in its own right would be substantive enough to justify refusal of the proposed development given the scale and nature of the development. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be compliant with the requirements of criteria point 1 of Policy DMB1.

With reference to criteria point 2 of Policy DMB3, the caravan pitches and associated development would be located in reasonably close proximity to the residential property of Rowan Bank with agricultural buildings also bordering the North-western extents of the proposal site. As such, the proposed development would be well related to existing built form and as such would satisfy criteria point 2 of Policy DMB3.

Criteria point 3 of Policy DMB3 states that developments should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of their scale, siting, materials or design and in this instance it is considered that the proposal would be compliant with this requirement (this issue is covered in more detail in the 'Visual Amenity/External Appearance' section of this report).

Turning to criteria point 4 of Policy DMB3, the proposal site has direct connectivity to the A59 highway via an access track and as such is considered to be well related to the existing highway network. In addition, the proposal has been subject to review from the Local Highways Authority who have raised no issues with regards to traffic movements associated with the proposed use of the site. There is a notable absence of public transport links and bus routes within the nearby vicinity of the proposal site (analysis shows the nearest public transport links as lying approximately 4 kilometres away to the South-west in Gisburn) therefore the proposal site is not considered to be well related to the Borough's public transport network. As such, visitors to the proposal site would likely be reliant upon the use of private motor vehicles. This matter also falls under Policy DMG3 which seeks to support development proposals which are well related to the primary road network and can be accessed by sustainable transport modes. This is in line with one of the overarching objectives of the NPPF to encourage sustainable development and in turn to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. Notwithstanding this, whilst the likely reliance on private motor vehicles weighs against the development, it is not considered that this in its own right would be substantive enough to justify refusal of the proposed development given the scale and nature of the development. The proposed development therefore raises no measurable concerns with the provisions of criteria point 4 of Policy DMB3 and Policy DMG3.

Turning to criteria point 5 of Policy DMB3, the plans submitted in support of the application show that the proposal site comprises sufficient space to accommodate the necessary vehicular parking arrangements for users of the site and no concerns with regards to parking provisions have been raised in the response from the Local Highways Authority. As such, the proposed development would meet the requirements of criteria point 5.

Having regard to criteria point 6, ecological survey work has been provided in support of the application to assess the impact of the proposed development upon nature conservation interests and in this instance the submitted survey work shows that the proposal would deliver a net gain in biodiversity to the site (see comments below in 'Landscape/Ecology'). The proposal would therefore satisfy criteria point 6 of Policy DMB3.

Taking account of all of the above, the proposal would satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EC3 and Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMG3 and DMB3 and is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to further assessment of additional material planning considerations.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users'.

Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.

In this instance, the application site accommodates a longstanding use (albeit unauthorised) as a caravan site with no documented occurrences of complaints with regards to noise and disturbance associated with the use of the site. In addition, the nearest neighbouring receptor to the proposed development (Shepherds View) lies approximately 100 metres away to the South-west of the application site and in this instance it is not considered that the introduction of nine additional caravan pitches to the site would give rise to levels of noise and disturbance that would be unduly harmful to the site's sole residential receptor. Furthermore, the proposal has been subject to review from the Council's Environmental Health team who have raised no issues with the proposal with respect to potential occurrences of noise and disturbance.

Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents. The proposed development would therefore be compliant with the aims and objectives of Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF and Policy DMG1.

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'.

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows:

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

In this instance, the development of the existing site has resulted in the introduction of hardstanding pitches to the undeveloped agricultural land that was previously in place and the proposed introduction of nine additional caravan pitches and an access track would add further development to the site however the proposal site would not accommodate any permanent structures for habitation therefore the additional development proposed would be limited to ground level alterations. In addition, the existing waste disposal area / chemical toilet block and WC / showers block are modestly sized structures with regards to their height and footprint therefore the retention of these buildings is considered to be acceptable. Furthermore, the entirety of the application site remains screened from public view from the A59 highway and surrounding Public Rights Of Way FP0322016 and FP0322017, as was observed in an additional visit to the site by the case officer. Consequently, the visual impact of retaining and extending the existing site as proposed, including when touring caravans are present on the pitches, would be non-apparent.

Taking account of the above, it is not considered that retention of the existing development and implementation of the proposed development would be harmful to the visual amenities of the area and would therefore satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 135 (C) of the NPPF and Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review by Lancashire County Council Highways who have raised no issues with respect to access, parking provision or general highway safety. On this basis, it is not considered that the proposed development would have any undue impacts upon highway safety as such the proposal satisfies Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy (highways).

Landscape/Ecology:

BNG

A biodiversity net gain assessment has been provided in support of the application. The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment shows that the proposed development would deliver a net gain in biodiversity to the application site in excess of the statutory 10% requirement through on-site enhancements. As such, the proposed development satisfies the statutory requirements with respect to biodiversity net gain.

Other Matters:

Flood Risk

Paragraph 175 of the NPPF states that the sequential test for flood risk should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding. Recently updated flood risk mapping (NaFRA2 - National Flood Risk Assessment 2) identifies the application site as being at risk of flooding from surface water and in this instance the proposed development does not benefit from any of the sequential test exemptions. Notwithstanding this, in applying paragraph 175 a proportionate approach should be taken and where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates clearly that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development (therefore addressing the risks identified e.g. by Environment Agency flood risk mapping), without increasing flood risk elsewhere, then the sequential test need not be applied. In this case, a flood risk assessment has been provided in support of the application which states that the introduction of flood risk mitigation measures would not be warranted on account of the proposal site not being at significant risk from surface water flooding and these findings are corroborated in the updated flood risk mapping which show only limited portions of the application site as having a minimal annual flood risk probability (0.1% or 1 in 1000). Accordingly, the proposed development raises no significant concerns with respect to flood risk and the development is not required to satisfy the flood risk sequential test in this case.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The provision of small scale tourist accommodation at the application site meets with the requirements of Key Statement EC3 and Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMG3 and DMB3 of the Core Strategy thus establishing the principle of development.

In addition, the proposed development would not have any undue impact upon the amenity of any neighbouring residents, nor is it considered that the development proposed would be harmful to the

visual amenities of the immediate or wider area. Furthermore, the proposal raises no concerns with respect to impacts upon highway safety, the ecology of the area or flood risk.

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

RECOMMENDATION:	That planning consent be granted subject to the imposition of conditions.
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