


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	LW	Date:	10/06/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	10/6/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0150			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	15/05/26	Site Notice:	15/05/26	
Officer:	LW			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Proposed demolition of an existing stable block; extension of the existing building to provide purpose-built back-of-house accommodation; treatment rooms and yoga studio; extension of existing office building; creation of outdoor swimming pool and associated landscaping.
Site Address/Location:	Everything Retreat, Pendle View and Pendle View Lodges, Primrose Lane, Mellor, BB2 7EQ.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No comments received with respect to the proposed development.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objection subject to conditions.
RVBC Environmental Health:	No objection subject to conditions.
United Utilities:	Comments provided with respect to drainage, United Utilities' property, assets and infrastructure, and water efficiency in new development.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
<p>Five letters of objection have been received from separate addresses. The concerns raised can be summarised as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway safety; • People walking through adjacent fields – not on public footpaths; • Noise disturbance; • Open to people not staying there, in breach of planning conditions; • Not considered a small-scale tourism development appropriate to a rural area; • Impact on visual amenity – further urbanisation; • Light and smoke pollution; • Loss of local wildlife; • Applicant advertising adjacent residential properties as holiday cottages; • Teepee/ wigwams built on site; • Additional recreational development not required in the area; • Similar planning application previously refused. <p>22 letters of support have also been received. The reasons for supporting the application are summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct and indirect employment opportunities; • Positive impact on nearby local businesses; 	

- Contribution to tourism economy;
- High quality, well managed development;
- The proposal is a thoughtful and appropriate progression of existing development;
- Strengthen ability to attract staying visitors rather than increasing visitor numbers or intensity of use;
- Strategic fit with Lancashire's Tourism Growth Strategy;
- Enhances character of the countryside;
- Small development which is proportionate in size and scale to its surroundings.

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
 Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
 Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
 Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development
 Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy
 Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
 Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
 Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
 Policy DME1: Protecting Trees & Woodland
 Policy DME2: Landscape & Townscape Protection
 Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation
 Policy DME6: Water Management
 Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
 Policy DMB3: Recreation and Tourism Development

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2025/0259: Retention of land in association with holiday lodges and wellbeing centre (Approved).

3/2023/0972: Proposed erection of a second wellbeing building to accommodate three treatment rooms, a shower, WC, reception and outside terrace, pool and the change of use of an existing stable building for use as storage associated with the maintenance of the site (Refused).

3/2023/0311: Proposed erection of a timber storage new building to be used in connection with the Everything Retreat (Refused).

3/2022/0907: Proposed erection of a stone-built building and the change of use of an existing stable building to create a wellbeing centre (Approved).

3/2021/1280: Proposed partial demolition of an existing stable complex and the erection of a new building. Conversion of the retained building to provide a wellbeing centre. Resubmission of 3/2021/0788 (Approved).

3/2021/0788: Proposed partial demolition of an existing stable complex and the erection of a new building. Conversion of the retained building to provide a wellbeing centre (Refused – Appeal Allowed).

3/2020/1061: Proposed erection of a seven-bedroom holiday cottage (Refused).

3/2019/0894: Change of use of agricultural land for the siting of 12 holiday lodges, associated site office/ reception and car parking area (Approved).

3/2017/0410: Proposed alterations and extension of existing property to provide improved family accommodation (Approved).

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site lies approximately 560m to the west of the defined settlement limits of Mellor and is located within designated Open Countryside. Access is taken from Primrose Lane, a narrow rural lane connecting Mellor Lane and Saccary Lane.

The site forms an established tourism and wellbeing destination known as Everything Retreat. Immediately adjacent to the application site is a residential property, Pendle View, which is within the applicant's ownership. To the south, the wider site accommodates a development of 12 holiday lodges, together with a reception building and associated parking permitted under planning permission 3/2019/0894.

The surrounding area is rural in character, comprising a mix of open fields and sporadic residential properties.

Previous planning permissions have established a cluster of wellbeing related buildings on the site which collectively support the operation of the holiday lodges and are subject to conditions restricting their use to guests staying on-site.

Permission was granted on appeal in 2021 (3/2021/0788) for conversion and extension of a building to be used as a wellbeing centre with kitchen, cafe and wine bar, reception and three treatment rooms.

A subsequent permission for retention of an existing stable block for storage and the erection of a separate wellbeing centre incorporating an office/ reception, two treatments rooms and a meeting room was approved in February 2022 under 3/2021/1280.

A slightly larger building was subsequently approved in November 2022 with the proposed new build element now including a kitchen and wine bar with three treatment rooms, a reception and storage area proposed to be located in the converted stables under 3/2022/0907.

In May 2024, permission was refused for the erection of a second wellbeing building comprising three treatment rooms, a shower, WC, reception, and an outside terrace area with associated pool located to the north of the existing buildings. The application also sought consent for the use of the stable building for storage purposes related to the maintenance of the site. The reason for refusal was as below:

'The proposed use, scale and siting of the new wellness building would result in a quantum of development that is not considered proportionate or ancillary to the number of lodges on site, as such it cannot be considered a small-scale tourism development appropriate to a rural area. The new building would likely increase the number of non-staying visitors to the site who would be dependent on private motor vehicle given the site's rural location. Furthermore, it would introduce further built form and urbanisation onto the site to the detriment of visual amenity. For these reasons the proposed development is contrary to Policies DMG1, DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 as well as the National Planning Policy Framework.'

It is understood that the stable building is currently used for back-of-house purposes, including storage and housekeeping, while the existing stone building accommodates a range of guest facilities, including a kitchen, bar, accessible WC, and a flexible space used for dining, meetings and exercise activities, with treatment services currently provided within one of the holiday lodges.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing stable block and the erection of extensions to the existing stone-built building to provide enhanced and purpose-built facilities associated with the established wellbeing and tourism use of the site.

The extension would provide dedicated back-of-house facilities, including a larger kitchen and chef's office, storage and housekeeping areas, a staff room, staff WC, and a plant/ services room. This element would measure approximately 14.4m by 8.9m.

A further element of the extension would provide new guest facilities, including a meeting room of approximately 8.1m by 3.5m, as well as a reception area, two treatment rooms, a disabled WC and a yoga/ exercise studio, cumulatively measuring approximately 15.6m by 7.3m. The existing kitchen area within the stone building would be reconfigured to provide two guest WC facilities.

The proposal also includes the creation of a covered terrace area to the rear of the building, along with an outdoor swimming pool, and associated hard and soft landscaping works.

The proposed facilities are intended to serve and support the existing holiday lodge accommodation on the wider site and are to be used exclusively by guests staying on-site.

The existing reception/ office building to the south of the wellness building is also proposed to be extended in order to provide office space and would measure 6m by 3.9m.

Principle of Development:

The acceptability of a wellbeing use at the site has been established through previous planning permissions, most notably the allowed appeal under ref: APP/T2350/W/22/3290586 and the subsequent grant of planning permission 3/2022/0907. These decisions confirmed that ancillary facilities such as café/ wine bar, treatment rooms, and reception could form an integral component of the existing holiday lodge operations and constitute a small-scale tourism development suitable for a rural location.

Notwithstanding this established position, the current proposal represents a further intensification of built development and associated facilities on the site. It is therefore necessary to reassess the scheme against Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, which requires development in the Open Countryside to meet at least one of six listed considerations, the relevant one in this case being '*small-scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area*'.

In this respect, it is important to highlight the previous refusal under application 3/2023/0972. The scheme proposed under this application was considered unacceptable in principle on the basis that the cumulative scale of ancillary development, when taken alongside existing facilities, would be disproportionate to the number of lodges on site and the requirement of the additional building for Pilates and treatment rooms had not been fully justified. Concerns were also raised that additional facilities could lead to an increase in non-staying visitors, contrary to the intended ancillary nature of the use.

In the current scheme, the quantum of additional floorspace is greater than that proposed under refused application 3/2023/0972, amounting to approximately 200 square metres.

However, in seeking to justify the proposal, the submitted supporting information suggests that the nature and purpose of this additional floorspace is to rationalise and consolidate existing operations by replacing the stable building with purpose-built facilities and providing dedicated spaces for functions that are currently undertaken on site, albeit in an inefficient manner.

At present the existing multi-functional space is required to operate as a dining room, meeting room and yoga studio. This necessitates the frequent removal and rearrangement of furniture between uses, resulting in operational inefficiencies and constraining the effective functioning of the business. In addition, treatment services are currently delivered within one of the holiday lodges, which reduces the availability of guest accommodation and limits the range and consistency of treatments that can be offered, particularly during periods of full occupancy.

The submitted information indicates that the proposed development is intended to enhance the quality and functionality of facilities available to guests of the existing holiday lodges, rather than to increase the overall scale or intensity of the use. The site accommodates a maximum of 24 guests across 12 lodges, and no increase in visitor capacity is proposed. The additional treatment rooms and ancillary spaces would improve the operational efficiency, enhance the overall guest experience, and remove the need for repeated reconfiguration of existing spaces. Furthermore, the provision of dedicated facilities would prevent the temporary loss of guest accommodation currently required to facilitate ancillary wellness activities.

The provision of enhanced back-of-house facilities is also stated to reflect the operational needs of the established business. At present, staff facilities are limited, with the only office located within the reception building to the south of the site, resulting in staff utilising guest areas.

It is understood that the proposal, including the outdoor swimming pool, would continue to operate on a managed, pre-booked basis by guests of the holiday lodges, and it is not intended to open the facilities to the general public, thereby maintaining their ancillary relationship with the primary tourism use. This could be secured by a planning condition.

Taking these factors into account, it is considered that the requirement for the additional floorspace has been sufficiently justified. The proposal would not result in a material intensification of the established small-scale tourism use; rather, it represents an improvement and consolidation of existing facilities. On this basis, and subject to appropriate planning conditions to restrict its use to on-site guests only, the development is considered to comply with the requirements of Policy DMG2.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

The nearest residential property, Pendle View, lies immediately adjacent to the application site. Whilst this property is within the applicant's ownership, it remains a sensitive receptor for the purposes of this assessment. Other nearby residential properties are located along Primrose Lane to the west, including Lower Leaches Farm (approximately 35m away) and Primrose Cottage (approximately 36m away). Further to the east lies High Ridge, whilst Nos. 1-4 The Finches are located approximately 50-80m to the south-west. Mellor House also lies to north at a greater distance.

With respect to noise and disturbance, a Noise Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. This considers noise arising from amplified music, speech and general patron activity, including use of the bar/dining area and external terrace. The assessment demonstrates that predicted noise levels at the nearest residential properties would fall within acceptable thresholds and would not give rise to significant adverse impacts. The Council's Environmental Health Team has also reviewed the findings and raises no objection, subject to the imposition of a condition to control music noise.

In terms of other amenity considerations, including overshadowing, loss of light, overbearing impact, and loss of privacy, the proposed extensions are sited within the context of existing built development and

given the separation distances to neighbouring properties, it is not anticipated that the proposal would result in any material harm in these respects.

Whilst the proposal introduces additional built form and facilities, it is not considered to materially intensify the use of the site, as the development is intended to serve existing guests only, with no increase in overall visitor capacity. Consequently, it is not expected to result in a significant increase in activity levels or associated disturbance when compared to the established baseline, so as to warrant the refusal to grant planning permission for this reason alone.

It is noted that third-party representations have raised concerns regarding light and smoke pollution. These concerns appear to relate primarily to the existing use of the site rather than the development currently proposed and no external lighting is indicated on the submitted plans. Notwithstanding this, a condition can be imposed requiring full details of any external lighting scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation, in order to ensure an appropriate and sensitive design. Furthermore, the proposed development is not considered likely to give rise to any significant smoke emissions and therefore there is no evidence to suggest that it would result in unacceptable impact in this regard.

Overall, subject to appropriate planning conditions, the proposal is considered to provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity for neighbouring occupiers and is compliant with relevant provisions of Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

The application site is situated within a rural landscape; however, its visual sensitivity is moderated by its position set back from public vantage points, with intervening topography and established boundary treatments.

The proposal includes the demolition of the existing stable block, which contributes little to the character or appearance of the site. Its removal is therefore considered to have a negligible effect in visual terms.

The proposed extension would increase the overall built footprint. However, the extension is positioned predominantly to the west of the existing building, contained between the established built form and site boundary. This ensures the development remains well-related to the existing building and avoids encroachment into more visually exposed parts of the site, thereby limiting its prominence.

In terms of scale and massing, the extensions are designed to appear somewhat subservient to the existing building through a stepped roof profile, incorporating a flat roof element towards the northern section of the extension and a pitched roof towards the southern section. The ridge height of the pitched element would also be set slightly below that of the existing structure. This helps to break up the overall mass and reduces the perceived bulk of the development when viewed externally.

The proposed material palette, incorporating timber cladding and areas of green roofing, and installation of solar panels to the south-eastern roof slope introduces a contemporary element that contrasts with the existing stone building. However, these materials are considered appropriate in this particular instance. The use of timber cladding will help soften the visual appearance of the extension when viewed alongside the adjacent trees and vegetation and is reflective of the design approach adopted elsewhere on the site, including the existing timber clad holiday lodges. The proposal would therefore appear sympathetic within its wider setting.

Furthermore, the proposed outdoor swimming pool and associated decking would be relatively modest in scale and would be sited in close association with the existing wellness building. As such, it is not considered to appear unduly prominent or incongruous when viewed in context with the existing built form associated with the site.

The proposed extension to the existing reception/ office is also relatively modest in both size and scale and would utilise the materials consistent with those of the existing structure. Accordingly, no concerns are raised in this regard.

The proposal is also supported by a landscaping scheme, including new tree planting and soft landscaping measures. These enhancements will help assimilate the development into its surroundings over time, providing additional screening and offsetting the visual effects of the additional built development at the site.

Overall, whilst the proposal introduces additional built form, it is considered that the scale, siting, design and landscaping scheme ensure that it would not result in unacceptable harm to the visual amenity of the site or the wider landscape.

Highways and Parking:

Concerns have been raised by third-party representations in relation to highway safety. However, the application has been reviewed by Lancashire County Council Highway Authority, which raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

The proposal does not involve any alterations to the existing access arrangements, with the site continuing to be accessed from Primrose Lane. This is a narrow rural lane with limited passing opportunities, and the Highway Authority has highlighted its constraints in accommodating increased traffic flows. In particular, concerns have been raised in relation to traffic associated with previous events held at the site, which have resulted in additional pressure on the local highway network.

Notwithstanding these constraints, it is noted that the current proposal does not seek to intensify the use of the site. The development is intended to serve the established 12 holiday lodges only, with no increase in the number of units, guest capacity, or visitor numbers. The Highway Authority is satisfied that, on this basis, the development would not give rise to a material increase in trip generation or traffic movements. Consequently, the proposal would not have a significant impact on highway safety or capacity in this respect.

In terms of parking provision, no changes are proposed to the existing on-site arrangements. Given the proposal would not increase the number of guests, the existing level of parking is considered adequate to serve the development. The Highway Authority has confirmed that the retained provision is acceptable.

To safeguard the local highway network and ensure that the development remains ancillary to the approved tourist accommodation, it is considered both reasonable and necessary to impose a condition restricting the use of the extended facilities to guests staying on-site only. This approach is consistent with previous permissions on the site and will prevent intensification through use by members of the general public.

Subject to such conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable with respect to highways and parking.

Landscape/Ecology:

The application has been supported by an Ecological Survey and Assessment (September 2025), an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (March 2026) and a Preliminary Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain (February 2026), alongside a detailed landscaping scheme.

Ecological Survey

The submitted Ecological Survey confirms that the site of generally low ecological value, comprising predominantly improved grassland and managed areas with no priority or irreplaceable habitats identified. The proposal is therefore not considered likely to have any adverse direct or indirect effects on statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites.

While the habitats present are limited in ecological value, they do provide opportunities for foraging and commuting species, including bats, as well as potential nesting habitat for birds. The Survey reasonably discounts the presence of roosting bats within the existing buildings to be affected by the proposed works. Nevertheless, precautionary mitigation and enhancement measures are recommended, including the implementation of a sensitive lighting scheme to avoid disturbance to foraging and commuting bats.

The assessment also identifies a low likelihood of impacts on great crested newts; however, precautionary working methods during construction are recommended to safeguard a range of protected species, including hedgehogs and amphibians. These measures can be secured via appropriately worded planning conditions.

In addition, the proposal presents an opportunity for biodiversity enhancement, including the installation of bird and bat boxes and provision of habitat features such as hedgehog shelters. The control and management of invasive species, including Indian Balsam identified on site, can also be secured as part of the development and would deliver an ecological benefit.

As such, subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures which can be secured by condition, the proposal is considered acceptable with respect to ecology.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies a range of trees and tree groups across the site, the majority of which are of low quality, with a small number categorised as moderate quality. The assessment confirms that the proposed development can be implemented without the removal of any existing trees. Limited facilitation works, including pruning of one moderate quality group, may be required; however, this is not considered to materially harm the character or visual amenity of the site.

All retained trees can be adequately protected during construction through the implementation of tree protection measures in accordance with the submitted Tree Protection Plan. These measures can be secured by condition.

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

The submitted BNG Assessment demonstrates that the proposal would deliver a significant on-site biodiversity net gain of approximately 83.7% in habitat units, primarily through the proposed planting of new trees and associated habitat enhancements.

The delivery and long-term management of these enhancements can be secured through the statutory biodiversity gain condition.

In conclusion, whilst concerns have been raised by third-party representations regarding potential impacts on local wildlife, the application is supported by appropriate ecological information. Subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures, which can be secured by condition, the proposal is not considered likely to result in unacceptable harm. Accordingly, the development is considered acceptable in this regard.

Other Matters:

Flood Risk and Drainage

The development area is at risk of surface water flooding, and a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted in support of the development. The Assessment identifies that the surface water flood risk is primarily associated with localised low points within the site where gullies and drainage features have been installed to intentionally capture and manage surface water run-off. It is concluded that the overall risk of surface water flooding is low, with areas of potential pooling limited to extreme events, such as the 1 in 1000-year storm scenario.

Notwithstanding this, appropriate mitigation measures have been identified. These include ensuring that flush thresholds, doorways and other access points are not positioned adjacent to gullies, channel drains, or areas where exceedance flows may pond during periods of intense rainfall. Such measures can be secured by planning condition.

A proposed drainage scheme has also been submitted with the application. This has been reviewed by United Utilities, and no objection has been raised.

Other Concerns Raised by Third-Party Representations

It is noted that concerns have been raised regarding guests walking through adjacent fields which are not designated Public Rights of Way. However, such matters fall outside the scope of planning control and therefore cannot be afforded weight in the determination of this application.

Representations have also questioned the need for additional facilities at the site, particularly in light of existing recreational development within the wider area. As set out elsewhere in this report, the proposal seeks to enhance and rationalise the existing offer associated with the established tourism use, rather than to intensify the use of the site. In any event, the presence of other recreational developments in the surrounding area does not, in itself, constitute a material planning reason to resist the proposal.

Concerns have also been raised that the applicant may be advertising properties for holiday accommodation without the benefit of planning permission, that temporary structures such as teepees or wigwams have been erected on site and that the existing wellness and dining facilities are being made available to members of the public rather than being restricted to on-site guests. These matters relate to potential breaches of planning control and, as such, fall to be considered separately under the Council's enforcement powers. As such, they do not form part of the assessment of the current application.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

As such, it is 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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