

Mr Ben Taylor
Planning Services
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe BB7 2RA

By email only: [REDACTED]

Your Ref: 3/2026/0154
Date: 22nd March 2026

Dear Ben

Re: Formal Objection to Planning Application 3/2026/0154 for Regularisation of construction of a steel portal framed building for use as a pet crematorium facility (sui generis) at Dockber Laithe Farm, Sawley Old Brow, Sawley, BB7 4LF. This application follows a recent refusal of application 3/2025/0517.

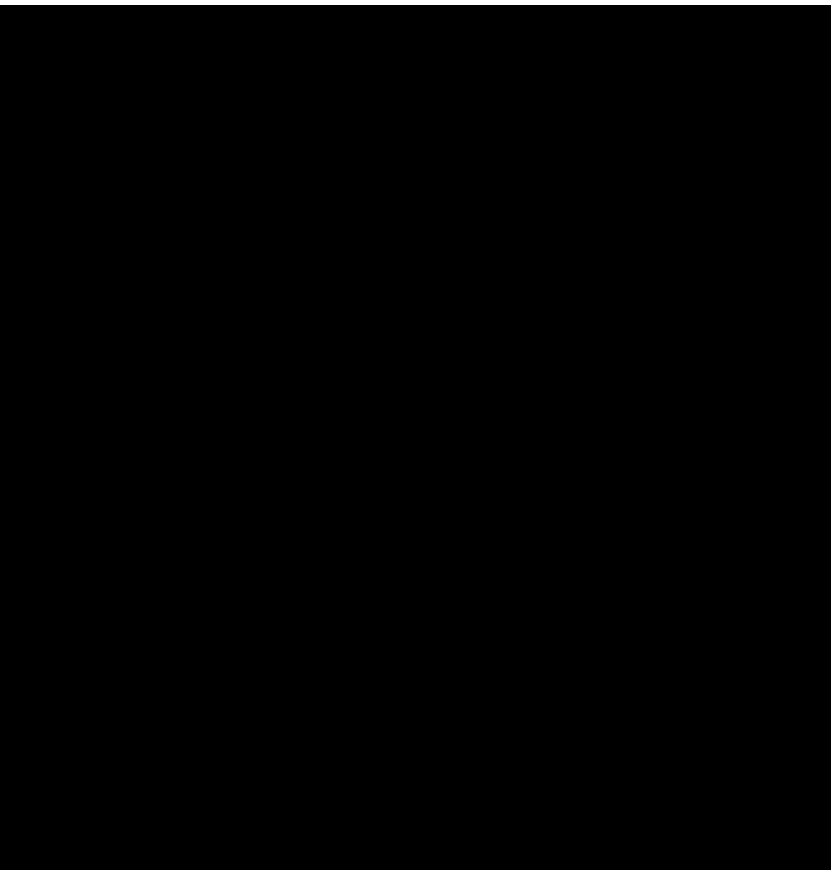
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. This letter relates to the ongoing operations taking place at Dockber Laithe Farm in relation to the use of a steel portal framed building as a pet crematorium, objections are made on the following grounds;

1) Adverse impact – Smoke and Odour

Burning takes place at the pet cremator most days from 2pm onwards. When the wind direction is blowing towards us there is an odour of burning hair/flesh that fills the air. We note from the submitted Odour Assessment that there are two small animal carcase cremators in the building.

[REDACTED] to the [REDACTED], a plan showing how [REDACTED] as Appendix A. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

We have been concerned about the pet crematorium use at Dockber Laithe Farm since it first started and were relieved when a retrospective planning application was registered in October 2025 so that we could make formal comments for consideration as part of the planning process. We have been adversely affected by the continual odour of burning and associated smoke coming from the pet crematorium since the use began approximately 24 months ago, with the burning taking place most days from 2pm onwards. A video dated March 2025 is attached (separately) and a photograph is attached below. Both the video and the photograph below show flames and plumes of smoke being omitted from the pet crematorium.



We are concerned about the intensification of non-agricultural uses occurring at Dockber Laithe Farm. Sadly another application has now been submitted, which we again object to.

Policy DMG1 of the RVBC adopted Core Strategy (2014) states that development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature..... It is our opinion that the pet crematorium does not meet this criteria.

2) Supporting local business' & employing local people.



It is not clear to why the proposal supporting an existing business in Burnley (outside RVBC area) is a benefit.

It is also unclear over what period the anticipated four journeys will take place and further clarification about the level of activity should be sought about the number of journeys and when they will take place. If RVBC is minded to approve the submission, we would appreciate precise and specific wording in any conditions attached to the decision notice to ensure that the approved level of activity is clear and enforceable to prevent operations increasing without there being any mechanism for control of future breaches of planning control.

3) Shared access.

The submission advises that: -

The 'operational model' involves transfer of deceased pets from Beloved Pet's main premises in Burnley to the site at Dockber Laithe Farm. After cremation, the ashes are taken to Burnley for packaging and delivery back to clients. There will be no public access and the only vehicle movements to and from the site are that of the operators of the site, these movements are not anticipated to exceed four journeys along the existing access track leading to Dockber Laithe Farm.

Access to   share the maintenance costs of the single track lane 50/50. With an additional 7 properties having access over the lane towards the village. There are no allocated passing places.

Any additional vehicle activity, especially during the night is an additional worry and stress to us on the grounds of security and maintenance costs.

4) Forest of Bowland National Landscape

Policy DMG3 of the RVBC adopted Core Strategy (2014) advises that in protecting the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscapes) the Council will have regard to the economic and social well being of the area. However, the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) was published ten years later than the RVBC Core Strategy was adopted, paragraph 189 reflects the important consideration set out in policy DMG3, stating that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, Broad and Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

We are of the opinion that the siting of this pet crematorium is not in an appropriate location, within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. We as farmer's cherish the landscape that we are custodians of and wish to bequeath it to the future generations in a better state than we found it in.

5) Public Right of Ways

Policy DMG1 of the adopted RVBC Core Strategy (2014) requires developments to consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.

The photograph below was taken by from bridleway BW00339020 / The Ribble Way looking south towards the pet cremator. The separation distance between the development and the footpath is approximately 45m. In our opinion it is not appropriate to the agricultural character of the surrounding landscape, specifically the industrial flue / chimney.



Photograph taken October 2025 looking south from Bridleway BW00339020 (the Ribble Way footpath) towards the pet cremator

6) Rural Economy

We note that the submitted information refers to “the applicant operating a well-established agricultural enterprise that is currently facing increasing financial pressures. These challenges stem from the phased reduction of Basic Payment Scheme support, rising production costs, and heightened market volatility”. These are issues also encountered by every other farmer in the country but it does not

mean that development that is not appropriate for an open countryside setting such as this should be granted planning permission.

The landowner does not actively farm his land. He owns just 2 pet sheep and the majority of his land is rented to a local farmer with his buildings used by numerous local businesses, some used on a light industrial basis. We feel that the addition of this business to an agricultural holding is a precursor to even more development in the future.

In this location outside a defined settlement, to be compliant with adopted RVBC Core Strategy policy DMG2 (2014), the development must meet at least one of 6 criteria set out. There are two criteria relevant to this development that the proposal does not meet (1) the development should be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area; and (2) the development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where local need or benefit can be demonstrated. The proposal does not benefit the local economy or social wellbeing of the area, there is no demonstrated benefit of the operation of the pet cremator. The other 4 no. criteria set out in DMG2 are not relevant to this type of proposal.

7) Hours of Operation

We hear vehicles passing our home [REDACTED] farmyard during the night and the cremator(s) burning at night. The 'hours of opening' section of the submitted application form does not specify hours of operation.

8) Letter from Applicants Burnley Landlord

We read from the attached Burnley landlord letter stating that the landlord cannot permit a crematorium at the current site, but is 'happy to discuss alternative options, explore other types of occupancy or different units that may be more suitable.'

9) Enforcement Notice

On the 22nd January 2026 the landowner had an enforcement notice issued to remove a static caravan from his land that he had not obtained planning permission for. The caravan was in full time occupancy. This demonstrates a continued lack of disregard to obtaining the appropriate permissions.

10) Conclusion

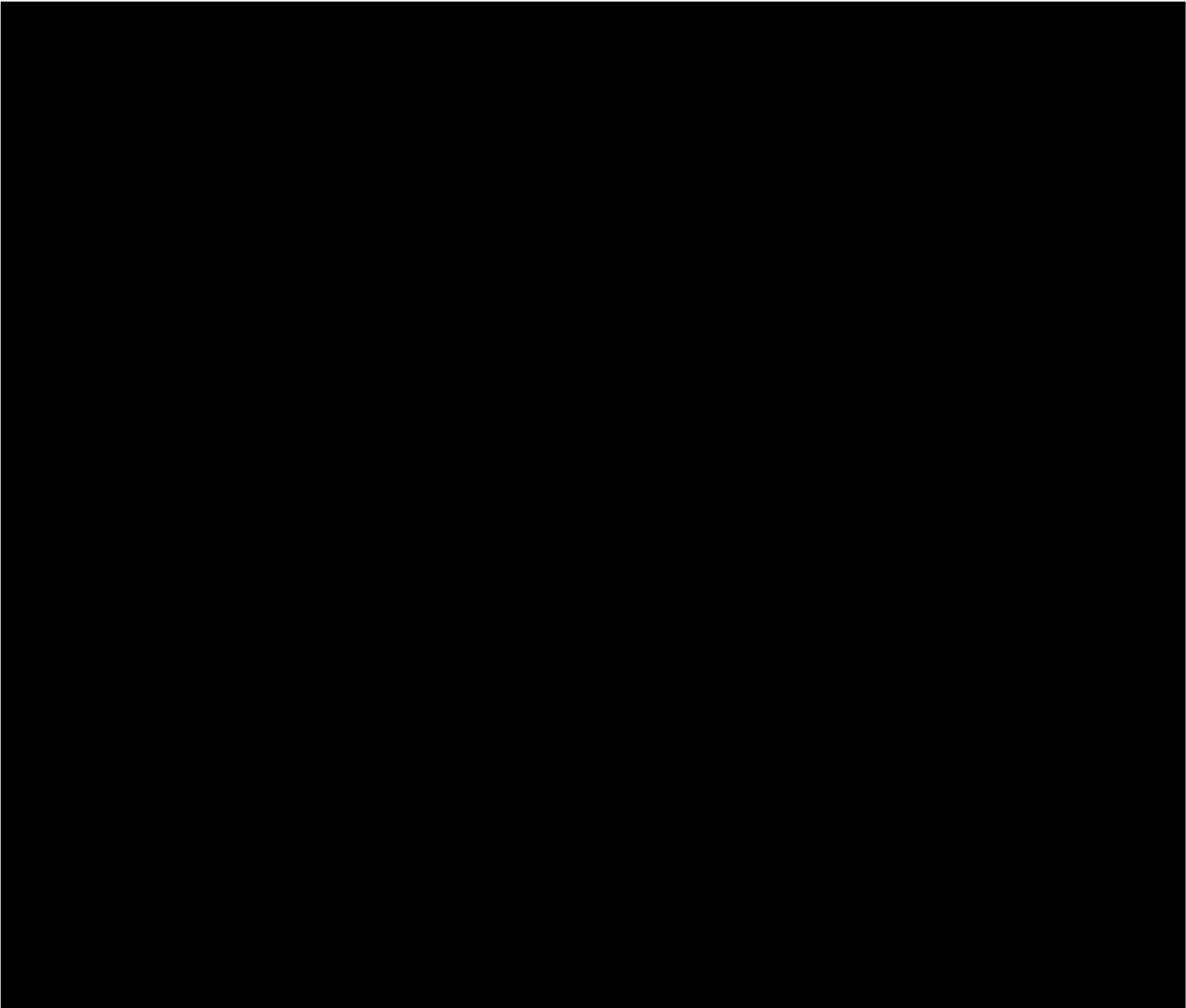
There could be farm diversification projects suitable for this open countryside setting within the National Landscape that we would be supportive of, so long as any proposal did not introduce unacceptable amenity or visual impacts for us as immediate neighbours, unfortunately this proposal is not one that they can support.

For the reasons set out above, our we wish to object to the retrospective application for the change of use to a pet crematorium.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[Redacted]



[REDACTED]

From: Contact Centre (CRM) <contact@ribblevalley.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 March 2026 12:04
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Application Comments - 3/2026/0154 FS-Case-816187010

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Lancashire

[REDACTED]

Planning Application Reference No.: 3/2026/0154

Address of Development: Docket Laithe Farm

Comments: I strongly object to this retrospective planning application.

This is not an appropriate location for carrying out pet cremations.

It is too close to people's homes, to the public footpath, and to grazing animals.

Whilst people who live in the countryside are well used to the normal agricultural smells, like muck spreading, they should not be subjected to the smell of burning animals infiltrating their homes, or to breathing in pollutants.

It is also the last thing that people walking, often with their dogs, should be confronted with, when they should be enjoying exploring our beautiful countryside.

Please put the needs of Ribble Valley residents first, and ask the company to relocate their cremators to a more appropriate location.

[REDACTED]

From: Contact Centre (CRM) <contact@ribblevalley.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 March 2026 14:23
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Application Comments - 3/2026/0154 FS-Case-816778360

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Lancashire

[REDACTED]

Planning Application Reference No.: 3/2026/0154

Address of Development: Dockber Laithe Farm, Sawley Old Brow
Sawley
BB7 4LF

Comments: Dear Sir/Madam

We wish to comment on the following
Planning application no 3/2026/0154

Regularisation of construction of a steel portal framed building with associated chimney stack for use as a pet crematorium facility (sui generis)

This facility has been in use since early 2024 and was subject of the refused planning application No 3/2025/0517. We have not seen anything different in this application apart from the proposed fitting of a cowl above the chimney stack. Therefore, our original objections remain the same.

It is stated that there would be no more than 4 vehicle journeys, assuming this is per day, these seem to be happening at all times of the day and night, often in the early hours. There are still no published hours of operation, and the passing traffic in the early hours is cause for concern and unease especially in the current climate of rising rural crime.

There is a very detailed Odour Assessment which gives much detail about the process involved in running the site including a model of possible receptors of any odour produced. However, it also states that 'exact emissions are unknown'. The weather data used is from Manchester Airport, 50 miles away, and in a very different topological position. Whilst there is no doubt that the prevailing wind in West or South South Westerly, we are in a valley protected to the north by a 150m ridge, the same to the south and south west. This has the effect of a localised microclimate, which in periods of light winds or a temperature inversion, can make distribution of mist and odour slower than in a more open area. There is no mention of the local topography in the assessment, or indeed any suggestion that the authors of the odour assessment visited the site. Further to this it describes the position of cremator as 'site is in an open area' when it is positioned in a corridor between 2 bigger buildings, under the gable of the largest of the 2. The chimney stack is dwarfed by the adjoining building. On days of quiet weather the odour reaches further than the model suggests and sitting in the garden in summer there is an odour of cooking, not pleasant when you are aware of the origin.

Whilst the site is not [REDACTED], it can clearly be seen from The Ribble Way,

and there is a line of sight from FP0339019 and FP0339018, both of which are busy, popular routes from Sawley.

Beloved Pets Limited is certainly a reputable company who are fulfilling a needed service, but as stated in the Planning Statement, 85% of company business is in East Lancashire not the Ribble Valley which is well served by a network of rural vets who provide a similar service. Also, whilst a crematorium has not been possible in the current Burnley headquarters of Beloved Pets Limited, Appendix 1 of the Planning Statement implies that the landlord there did offer to discuss units which would be more suitable, and most likely closer to the core business.

Whilst we have every sympathy for farmers having to find ways to diversify to survive in the current financial climate, Dockber Laithe cannot currently be described as a working farm, having only a very tiny flock of sheep (single figures), the majority of the land is let out to a local farmer, and the rest of the farm is now given over to industrial units and other business enterprises. In fact, it is described in the Planning Statement as consisting of 'large utilitarian structures'. We feel that this building is an addition to the existing premises with the sole purpose of adding yet more industry and businesses to the site. This is a worry as is it a precursor to even more development?

Therefore, we wish to object to this planning application

Yours

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