

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

For the construction of three new leisure facilities at
Foxfields Country Hotel
Whalley Road
Billington
Lancashire
BB7 9HY



Date: APRIL 2026

Job ref: 7337

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Sunderland Peacock Architects in support of a planning application for the proposed construction of three new leisure facility buildings within the grounds of Foxfields Country Hotel, Billington.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings / documents, including proposed plans and elevations:

Sunderland Peacock & Associates Ltd

- 7337-E01 Existing Topographical Land Survey
- 7337-E02 Location Plan
- 7337-S01 Existing Site Plan
- 7337-S02 Proposed Site Plan
- 7337-S03 Proposed BNG Site Plan
- 7337-SK02B Proposed Plans, Elevations and Site Plan
- 7337-SE01 Proposed and Existing Site Section
- 7337-F&S01 Proposed Foul Water and Surface Water Drainage Plan
- 7337 Proposed Visual

Lakeland Tree Consultancy

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated April 2026

Knight Sky Ecology

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated April 2026
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Strategy dated April 2026

The purpose of this document is to explain the design rationale, demonstrate how the proposal responds to its context, and assess the development against relevant national and local planning policies.

Site

Foxfields Country Hotel is an established Hotel venue located in Billington within the Ribble Valley. The site comprises the main hotel building, associated parking areas, and landscaped gardens containing mature trees and vegetation.

The application site lies within the hotel grounds and is characterised by soft landscaping, including grassed areas and established trees. The submitted site plan illustrates how the new proposed leisure facility buildings are carefully positioned within this landscape, retaining existing vegetation and sit within the existing landscape, working around natural features.



Location Plan

The surrounding area reflects this with a semi-rural character, residential properties, and open countryside.



Biodiversity

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken to assess the ecological value of the site and any potential impacts arising from the development.

The site is primarily composed of species-poor grassland of low ecological value, and no priority habitats are present within the development footprint. The nearest habitat zone is the woodland located adjacent to the site, which will remain unaffected.

Shown above, a new batch of trees will be planted to the south west of the proposed development. This area will offset the grassland taken up by the structure and paths.

The site provides limited habitat for protected species. There is low potential for amphibians due to the lack of suitable habitat, and no evidence of badgers or reptiles was recorded. Surrounding trees provide nesting opportunities for birds and foraging habitat for bats, but the development area itself contains no features of ecological significance.

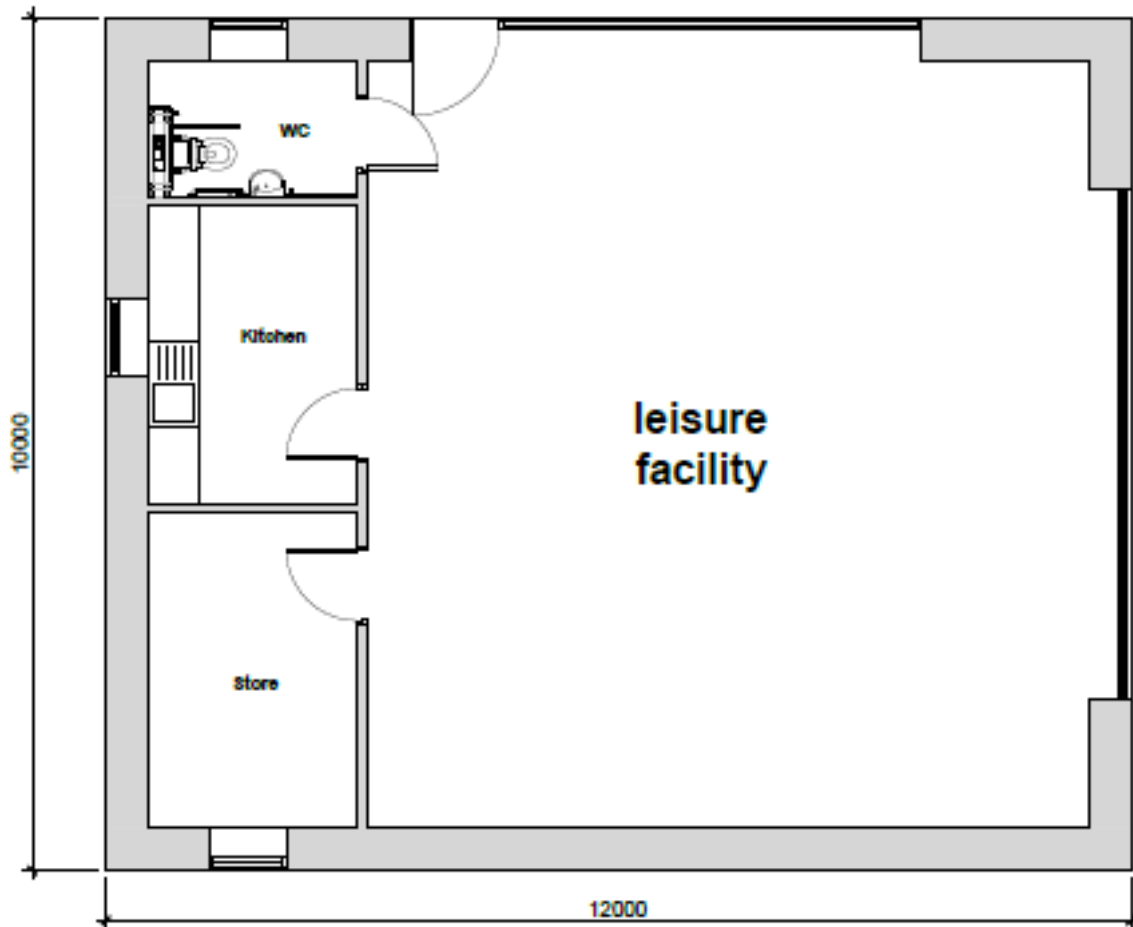
The proposal has been designed to avoid impacts on these features, and no adverse effects on protected species are anticipated.

Proposal

The proposal consists of three single-storey leisure facility buildings located within the existing hotel garden. Each building will contain a W.C., kitchen, and storage space, designed to support a range of complementary hotel uses.

The buildings are arranged as three distinct but connected structures, linked by a sweeping, organic pathway that gently curves through the site. This path responds directly to the existing trees, weaving between them to minimise disruption and retain the natural character of the landscape.

The site layout demonstrates a clear intention to integrate development within the existing environment rather than impose upon it. The buildings are modest in scale and positioned to respect existing vegetation and site constraints.



Proposed Plans

Use

The development supports and enhances the existing hotel operation by providing three dedicated leisure functions:

The first leisure facility building will provide a permanent space for nail and massage treatments. Currently, this activity takes place within hotel bedrooms, requiring equipment to be moved between rooms. The proposed facility offers a purpose-built environment, improving both operational efficiency and guest experience.

The second leisure facility building will function as an extension to the existing gym facilities. The current gym is operating at capacity, and this additional space will allow more guests to access fitness facilities during their stay, improving the overall offering of the hotel.

The third leisure facility building will provide a multi-use space and dedicated zone for Pilates sessions. At present, the hotel's conference room is used for storage of the Pilates equipment, making it inconvenient to host events. The new building resolves this conflict by providing a flexible and accessible space for the Pilates sessions.

Collectively, these uses align with the ongoing operation of the hotel and enhance its viability as a leisure destination.



Proposed Site Plan

Design

The development comprises three small-scale buildings arranged within the landscaped garden area. Their positioning has been carefully considered to follow the natural pattern of the site, avoiding significant tree removal and maintaining the openness of the space.

The buildings are modest in height and footprint, ensuring they remain subservient to the main hotel and do not dominate the landscape. This design principle is consistent with local policy, where development should respect its context and surroundings.

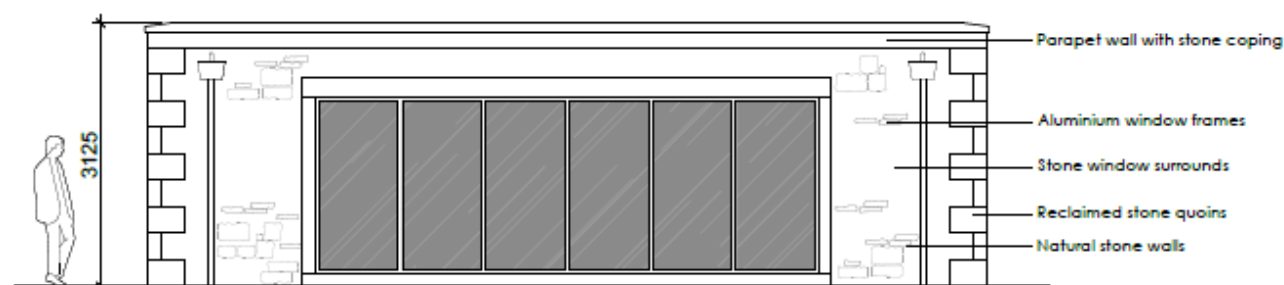
Appearance / Style

The architectural language is deliberately simple and robust, reflecting the rural character of the area. The buildings will be constructed using natural stone, grounding them visually within the site and referencing traditional local materials.

The use of stone walls, with detailing such as quoins and window surrounds ensures a high-quality and durable finish.

The roofs will be flat in form, providing a clean and contemporary contrast to the traditional material palette. This simplicity avoids unnecessary visual complexity and allows the buildings to sit quietly within their setting.

The overall appearance is restrained, ensuring the development enhances rather than detracts from the character of the hotel grounds.



Proposed Elevations

Landscaping

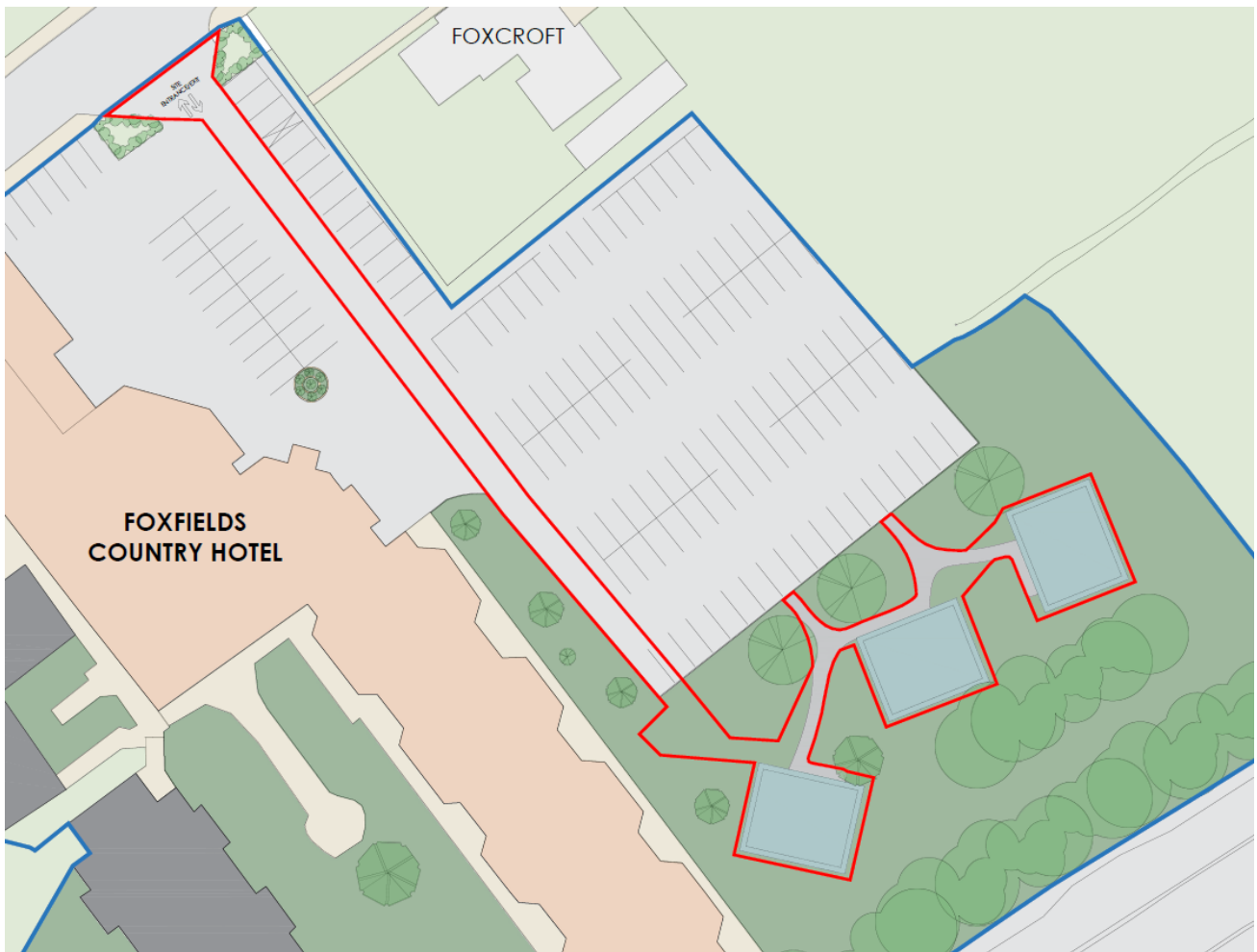
A key aspect of the design is the integration with existing trees and vegetation. The buildings and connecting pathway have been arranged to follow the natural layout of the landscape, creating a flowing composition that respects the site.

The sweeping path provides a clear and legible route between buildings while reinforcing the organic nature of the scheme. This approach reduces the visual impact of development and maintains the garden setting.

Access

Access to the site will remain as existing. The internal layout of the buildings ensure easy access and the buildings are easily accessible via the new connecting pathway with no stairs, making the whole site wheelchair friendly.

The paths have been designed to provide safe and convenient movement between the hotel and the new facilities. Gradients and surfaces will be suitable for all users, ensuring inclusive access wherever possible.



Proposed Site Plan

Parking

There will be no change to the existing parking arrangements at the hotel.

The proposed development is intended solely for use by existing hotel guests and does not introduce new visitor demand. As such, it will not result in additional traffic generation or increased pressure on the car park. The new leisure facility buildings are required due to the ad hoc nature of the existing leisure facilities being compromised and inadequate for today's standard / expectation, as outlined on page 3 previously.

This approach aligns with planning policy guidance. Developments should not adversely impact highway safety or parking provision.

Planning

The proposal has been considered against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

National policy promotes sustainable development and supports economic growth, particularly where proposals enhance existing businesses and make efficient use of land.

At a local level, several policies are relevant:

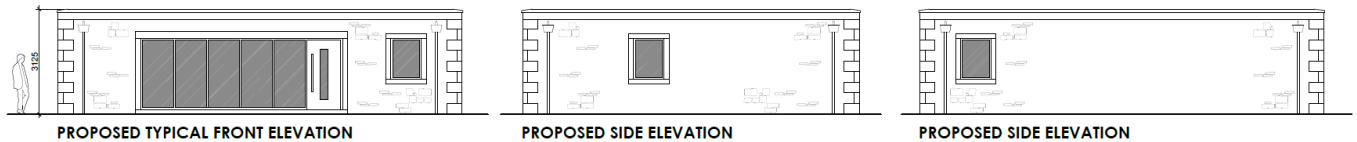
Core Strategy Key Statement EC3 supports the visitor economy, encouraging developments that strengthen tourism and hospitality within the borough. The proposal directly aligns with this objective by enhancing the leisure offer at an established hotel.

Policy DMB1 supports business growth and the expansion of existing enterprises. The additional facilities will allow Foxfields Country Hotel to diversify and improve its services.

Policy DMB3 relates to recreation and tourism development, requiring proposals to be well-related to existing buildings, appropriate in scale, and not harmful to the character of the area. The development satisfies these criteria through its modest scale, local materials, and integration with the landscape.

Policies DMG1 and DMG3 require development to be safe, accessible, and not adversely affect the highway network. As no additional traffic or parking demand is created, the proposal complies with these requirements.

Overall, the development is consistent with both national and local planning policy and represents sustainable development.



Proposed Elevations

Planning

The design has been informed by the Arboriculture Impact Assessment and places significant emphasis on retaining all existing trees.

The buildings have been carefully positioned to work around established trees and shrubs, ensuring that the natural landscape is preserved. The submitted drawings and visual clearly illustrate existing vegetation is to be retained wherever possible and how the development seamlessly sits within the existing landscape.

The sweeping pathway layout further reinforces this approach, avoiding root protection areas and minimising ground disturbance.

This strategy aligns with local planning policy, which seeks to protect trees and incorporate existing natural features into development proposals.



Conclusion

The proposed development represents a classy addition to Foxfields Country Hotel.

By introducing three modest leisure buildings within the existing garden, the scheme enhances the functionality and attractiveness of the hotel without altering its character or increasing its impact on the surrounding area.

The design responds directly to the site's natural features, particularly the existing trees, and integrates seamlessly through careful layout and material selection.

There are no adverse impacts on parking, highways, or the wider landscape, and the proposal aligns with both national and local planning policy.

Overall, the development provides a high-quality, sustainable enhancement to an established business, supporting the visitor economy of the Ribble Valley while respecting its rural setting.