

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.							
Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	14/10/26	Manager:	LH	Date: 15/10/26

Application Ref:	3/2026/0538			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	3/5/23	Site Notice:	3/5/23	
Officer:	BT			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Construction of 15 eco lodges and infrastructure to provide additional accommodation for Eaves Hall.
Site Address/Location:	Eaves Hall, Moor Lane, West Bradford, BB7 3JG.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
West Bradford Parish Council:	Consulted 20/7/26 – no response received.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections subject to conditions.
Lead Local Flood Authority:	No objections subject to conditions.
LCC AONB Officer:	Consulted 17/4 – no response.
RVBC Engineers:	No objections.
RVBC Countryside:	No objections.
RVBC Environmental Health:	No objections subject to conditions.
Lancashire Fire And Rescue Service:	No objections subject to adherence with standing advice.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
Objections have been received from two households in relation to the proposal which are summarised as follows: • Impact of the proposal upon residential amenity • Impact of the proposal upon the ecology of the area	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN2: Landscape
Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development And Climate Change
Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets
Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations
Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees And Woodlands
Policy DME2: Landscape And Townscape Protection
Policy DME3: Site And Species Protection And Conservation
Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets
Policy DME6: Water Management
Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth And The Local Economy
Policy DMB3: Recreation And Tourism Development

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 66

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:**3/2025/0964:**

Certificate of Lawfulness for existing development to establish lawful commencement of planning permission 3/2023/0263 for the construction of 15 eco lodges and infrastructure to provide additional accommodation for Eaves Hall (Refused)

3/2023/0263:

Construction of 15 eco lodges and infrastructure to provide additional accommodation for Eaves Hall (pursuant to variation of conditions 2 (Plans), 3 (Materials), 4 (Landscaping), 5 (Refuse/Cycle Store), 7 (External Lighting), 12 (Landscaping Scheme), 14 (Drainage Scheme), 15 (Surface Water Pollution), 16 (Surface Water Ponds), 19 (Construction Method Statement) and 22 (Bird/Bat Boxes) of planning permission 3/2020/0544 to reflect updated layout and change of lodge type and additional technical details submitted) (Approved)

3/2022/0396:

Variation of Condition 2 (Plans) of planning application 3/2020/0544, to reflect the updated layout and change of lodge type. Conditions 3, 4, 5, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 22 to be varied as additional information included within application to allow condition to be discharged. Resubmission of 3/2021/1020. (Refused)

3/2021/1020:

Variation of Condition 2 (Plans) of planning application 3/2020/0544, to reflect the updated layout and change of lodge type. Conditions 4, 5, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 22 to be omitted as additional information included within application to allow condition to be discharged. Sample provided to discharge condition 3. (Refused, dismissed on appeal)

3/2020/0544:

Construction of 15 eco lodges and infrastructure to provide additional accommodation for Eaves Hall (Approved)

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to a vacant land parcel which lies approximately 150 metres to the North-west of Eaves Hall within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. The land parcel comprises a rectangular shaped field with the topography of the land parcel descending from North to South. The application site is bound by trees on its South-western and North-eastern flanks with additional trees and a lodge lining the North-western perimeter of the site. Access to the application site is from the South-east from Eaves Hall Lane via an existing vehicle access track which provides access to the grounds at the rear of Eaves Hall. The application site occupies an elevated position above Eaves Hall and the residential properties to the South-east by virtue of the descending North to South topography of Eaves Hall Lane. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Planning consent is sought for the construction of fifteen eco lodges and associated infrastructure to provide additional accommodation for Eaves Hall. The proposal is a resubmission of previously approved application 3/2020/0544 which was subsequently varied under application 3/2023/0263.

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 fifteen eco lodges within the application site all of which would provide basic amenities and it is not considered that this would amount to a large scale tourist operation in terms of visitors and activity. 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:

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 Statements DMI2 and EC3 and Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMG3 and DMB1.

Key Statement EC3 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 creation of new tourist accommodation that could potentially offer benefits to the economy of the Borough. As such, the proposed development would accord with the general intentions of Key Statement EC3. In addition, the proposed development raises no significant concerns in relation to 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 Key Statement DMI2 and 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. Policy DMB1 seeks to support business growth and developments which support the local economy of the Borough. In this instance, the proposal seeks to augment an existing well-established business operation through providing additional guest accommodation on site which in turn could also provide potential benefits to the rural economy of the Borough through visitors frequenting and utilising local businesses and services. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy DMB1. Taking account of the above, the proposal is considered to be compliant with the requirements of criteria point 1 of Policy DMB3.

With reference to criteria point 2 of Policy DMB3, the proposed eco lodges and their associated parking areas and bin and bike stores would be located in reasonably close proximity to Eaves Hall and the residential properties on Eaves Hall Lane and would therefore be well related to existing built form. The proposal would therefore 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 Eaves Hall Lane which in turn has direct connectivity to the classified road network 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 within the nearby vicinity of the proposal site (analysis shows the nearest public transport links as lying approximately 800 metres away to the South-east in West Bradford) 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 Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy which require decision taking to consider the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from new developments. This is also consistent with Policy TR3 of the NPPF (2026) which seeks to direct development to sustainable locations where possible. 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 or Key Statement DMI2 and Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy or Policy TR3 of the NPPF (2026).

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.

Policy S5 (1) (b) of the NPPF (2026) allows for development outside of settlements for rural businesses and services, including tourism, where a location outside settlements is shown to be necessary. In a similar vein, Policy E4 of the NPPF (2026) seeks to support the sustainable growth of businesses in rural areas including facilities to support rural leisure and tourism, with a stipulation that where possible, developments should utilise previously developed land and sites that are physically well-related to existing development. The same policy also requires the siting and design of developments to be appropriate with regard to the character of their surroundings. In this instance, it is understood that there is currently an insufficient quantity of bedrooms within Eaves Hall (which operates as a wedding venue) to accommodate guest numbers in relation to wedding functions, with one night stays currently being the only option at the site. Consequently, the proposal seeks to address this issue through introducing additional guest accommodation at the site in the form of the proposed eco lodges which would allow for extended stays for wedding guests at the site who would otherwise have to find accommodation elsewhere in the Borough or limit the length of their stay. As such, the introduction of tourist accommodation in the location proposed is considered to be justified in this case. In addition, the proposed development would utilise previously developed land and would also be physically well related to Eaves Hall and neighbouring properties on Eaves Hall Lane. Furthermore, the proposed development raises no concerns with regards to its impact upon the character of its surroundings. Accordingly, the proposal would align with the aims and objectives of Policies S5 and E4 of the NPPF (2026).

Taking account of all of the above, the proposal would satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EC3 and Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMB1 and DMB3 of the Core Strategy and Policies S5 (1) (b) and E4 of the NPPF (2026) and is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to further assessment of additional material planning considerations.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

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

In this instance, there would be a sufficient separation distance in place between the proposed holiday lodges and nearest neighbouring receptors on Eaves Hall Lane therefore the introduction of the proposed development raises no concerns with regards to loss of privacy, natural light or outlook. Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with regards to potential noise and disturbances arising from use of the proposed holiday lodges. Whilst use of the proposed holiday lodges carries the potential for noise and disturbances to neighbouring receptors, a comprehensive site management plan has been provided in support of the application which includes a number of measures to limit noise and disturbances from within the site. These measures include limited arrival and departure times, the use of designated access routes, no excessive noise between 22:30 and 07:30 (with continuous breach of this resulting in offending guests being asked to leave the site), no persons other than named guests staying on site and minimal external lighting (with all external lighting turned off after 23:00). Neighbouring properties are also to be provided with a clear contact route for raising concerns, with any complaint being logged and reviewed by the site manager. The specified measures are considered to be proportionate in this instance for keeping noise and disturbances within an acceptable threshold relative to the scale of development proposed and are therefore considered to be adequate. Furthermore, no concerns have been raised with regards to noise from the proposed development in the response from the Council's Environmental Health team.

Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to noise and disturbances that would be unduly harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents and would therefore be compliant with the aims and objectives of Policy DMG1.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

Policy DP3 (1) of the NPPF states:

'Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings.'

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides 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.'

With respect to development in National Landscapes, Policy N4 (1) of the NPPF states:

'Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas.'

The above is reiterated within Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy:

'The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.'

With regards to assessing development affecting the setting of a Listed Building, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

'In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

The application site lies within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape and within the setting of Eaves Hall which holds Grade II Listed Building status. Whilst the introduction of the proposed holiday lodges and associated infrastructure to the proposal site would result in some inevitable change to the open character of the site, the proposed development as a whole would be evenly distributed throughout the site with regards to its layout and spacing therefore the openness of the site would remain legible. Having regard to the design of the proposed holiday lodges, these would be modestly sized structures with respect to their height and footprint with the size of the lodges reflecting the basic and functional end use proposed. In addition, the proposed lodges would consist of horizontal cedar cladding and sedum roof profiles, both of which would be in keeping with the rural character of the site and its immediate and wider surroundings. Furthermore, the proposed holiday lodges would comprise modestly sized window and door openings which would help to reduce occurrences of light pollution. The proposed external lighting scheme for the application site comprises a total of twelve LED post pillar bollards. The lighting bollards would be modestly sized in terms of their height and massing and detailed in a rusty brown finish which would be in keeping with the rural character of the application site. In addition, the lighting intensity of the bollards would be discreet (480 Lumens) with the lighting bollards orientated Northwards towards the pathways for each of the lodges and sited at a sufficient distance from the bird and bat box locations on the Western perimeter of the application site. As such, the proposed scheme of external lighting is considered to be acceptable. Furthermore, the large majority of the application site is screened by the mature trees which line the North-eastern and South-western perimeters of the site therefore the cumulative visual impact of the proposal development would not be overly pronounced within the public realm.

Taking account of all of the above, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the visual amenities of the area and would therefore conserve the character of the surrounding National Landscape. In addition, and for the reasons above, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the setting of the Grade II Listed Building Eaves Hall. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy and Policies DP3 (1) and N4 (1) of the NPPF (2026) and Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Major Development Test

Footnote 59 of the NPPF (2026) states that decision-makers should determine as to whether or not a proposal amounts to major development, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the statutory purposes for which the area has been designated or defined. Whilst the proposal technically constitutes major development by virtue of its site area, for the reasons conveyed above it is not considered that the proposed development would in this instance have a significant adverse impact upon the character of the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. In addition, the proposed development mirrors the development as previously approved under application 3/2023/0263 with respect to its site layout, lighting scheme and lodge design.

Consequently, the provisions of Policy N4 (2) of the NPPF (2026) with regards to proposals for major development are not considered to be applicable in this case.

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review from Lancashire County Council Highways who have raised no issues with the proposal with regards to access, parking or general highways safety. The response from the LHA recommends for the imposition of the conditions previously imposed on planning consent 3/2023/0263 which have subsequently been imposed on the current application as requested.

Landscape / Ecology:

Protected Species

Concerns have been raised through the application's consultation process with respect to the impact of the proposal upon the ecology of the area. A preliminary ecological appraisal has been submitted in support of the application which indicates that the proposed development would have undue impacts upon protected species, subject to responsible working practices being adhered to during the construction phase of the development and the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures to the site. In terms of mitigation measures, a total of ten bird and bat boxes are to be installed within the application site. The application's proposed site plan indicates that the bird and bat boxes will be affixed to suitable trees at varying heights with the bat boxes orientated to receive 6-8 hours of sunlight and the bird boxes angled to face away from prevailing winds. The proposed provision of bat and bird boxes has been reviewed by the Council's Countryside Officer who has deemed the proposed mitigation measures to be acceptable. Compliance with the recommended working practices and proposed mitigation measures has been secured through the imposition of conditions.

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 would satisfy the statutory requirements with respect to biodiversity net gain. The statutory biodiversity net gain condition has been imposed on this consent to secure the required net gain in biodiversity in order to satisfy the BNG legislation.

Other Matters:

Flood Risk

Recently updated flood risk mapping (NaFRA2 - National Flood Risk Assessment 2) identifies a portion of the application site as being at risk of flooding from surface water however the identified extent of surface water flood risk lies within the nominal risk threshold (0.1 % / 1 in 1000 annual flood risk probability) with analysis showing the identified extent of flood risk as being limited to a localised portion of the site with a shallow water depth (less than 150mm). Notwithstanding this, Policy F5 of the NPPF (2026) 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 however exceptions to this are made within the same policy in relation to sites solely at risk of surface water flooding where a site-specific flood risk assessment clearly demonstrates that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures within a development would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development without increasing flood risk elsewhere. In this instance, a comprehensive flood risk assessment has been provided in support of the application which

identifies the overall risk of surface water flooding to the development as being low, with the submitted flood risk assessment also confirming that users of the site would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development and that the proposed development would not increase flood risk elsewhere. Furthermore, the proposed development has been subject to review from the Lead Local Flood Authority who have raised no concerns with regards to flood risk from the proposal. Consequently, the proposed development raises no measurable concerns with respect to flood risk.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The provision of tourist accommodation at the application site meets with the requirements of Key Statement EC3 and Policies DMG1, DMG2, DMB1 and DMB3 of the Core Strategy and Policies S5 (1) (b) and E4 of the NPPF (2026), thus establishing the principle of development.

In addition, it is not considered that the proposed development would be unduly harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents, nor is it considered that the development proposed would be harmful to the visual amenities of the area or setting of the Grade II Listed Building Eaves Hall. Furthermore, no concerns are raised with respect to impacts upon highway safety, the ecology of the area or flood risk.

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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