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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2021/0268 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 21/04/2021 |
| **Officer:** | AB |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | **Proposed change of use of agricultural land for the development of a holiday park containing 9 lodges and a manager’s lodge with associated access and landscaping. Resubmission of 3/2020/0307.** |
| **Site Address/Location:** | **Land south west of Ribblesdale Hall Sawley Road Chatburn BB7 4LD** |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| None received. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** |  |
| No objections. |
| **Lead Local Flood Authority:** |  |
| No comment. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| No representations have been received. |
| **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**3/2020/0307 - Proposed change of use of agricultural land for the development of a holiday park containing 9 lodges and a managers lodge with associated access and landscaping. Withdrawn.3/2012/0934 - New 10KWp Solar Photovoltaic free-standing installation. Approved. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1 – Development StrategyKey Statement DS2 –Sustainable DevelopmentKey Statement EN2 – LandscapeKey Statement EC1 – Business and Employment DevelopmentKey Statement EC3 – Visitor EconomyPolicy DMG1 – General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2 – Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DMG3 – Transport and MobilityPolicy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape ProtectionPolicy DME3 -- Site and Species Protection and ConservationPolicy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local EconomyPolicy DMB3 – Recreation and Tourism Development**National Planning Policy Framework** |
| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**Planning permission is sought for change of use of agricultural land for the development of a holiday park containing 9 lodges and a manager’s lodge with associated access and landscaping. The application site is located with the open countryside approximately 350 metres from the village of Chatburn. The site is in the same ownership as Ribbledale Hall, a large detached dwelling with gardens located directly to the north-east of the proposed development site. The access and track to Ribblesdale Hall is from the north-west side of Sawley Road and is directly adjacent to an existing field gate which is to used as the main access to the proposed tourism site. Six polytunnels have recently been constructed on adjacent land to the south, between the application site and Sawley Road, and are used in association with a newly established market garden/garden centre. |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**It is proposed to provide tourism accommodation in the form of nine timber holiday lodges in a V-shaped arrangement. The lodges are faced with horizontal timber cladding and uPVC windows and door. Each lodge would provide living and kitchen areas with four two-bed and five three-bed units. The three-bed units measure 6.1 wide by 12.8 metres in length.A new vehicular access track would be created from the existing field gate entrance and extend approximately 75m into the site before it branched into two. The proposed track would be constructed using a grasscrete surface. Each lodge would have two parking spaces located adjacent to each unit.The proposal also includes the provision of a tenth lodge for managers office. This lodge is located adjacent to the entrance track such that any traffic entering and leaving the site would have to pass.  |
| **Principle of Development**Core Strategy Key Statement EC1 supports in principle developments that contribute to farm diversification and strengthening of the wider rural economy.Key Statement EC3 relates specifically to the visitor economy stating that proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged. The proposed development would contribute to the tourism economy and as such the proposal accords with the general intentions of Key Statements EC1 and EC3.The application site is located in the Open Countryside. Core Strategy Policy DMG2 requires development outside of defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six considerations one of which is *“4) The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area”*. The proposal is for a small scale tourism development of a type that is appropriate to a rural area. Policy DMB3 relates specifically to recreation and tourism development. Tourism and visitor attractions are generally supported 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, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available;**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.*The area surrounding the application site is rural in character but is not devoid of built development. Ribblesdale Hall and its associated domestic outbuildings are located close to the north-east. To the south of the site are six polytunnels which have been recently erected following the grant of planning consent for use in conjunction with a market garden linked to the agricultural and horticultural use of a wider site. The proposed development site can therefore be described as physically well-related to existing built form.The site is around 500 metres from the village centre of Chatburn and around 4.5 km from the principal settlement of Clitheroe which offers a wide range of facilities and services. There is continuous footway provision from the proposed development site into the village of Chatburn from which there are regular bus services to Clitheroe. The site can therefore be considered to be in a reasonably sustainable location and would be accessible to those without the use of a private motor vehicle. In addition, the site is also located close to the A59 which is the primary vehicular route through the Borough.The proposed development of 9no lodges would not generate a significant number of vehicle movements and the surrounding roads could easily accommodate the additional journeys created. Subject to further consideration of the visual and landscape impact of the development and its impact on trees and ecology, the principle of development in this location is considered to be acceptable.**Effects Upon the Landscape/Visual Amenity**The proposed development is located in the Open Countryside. Key Statement EN2 requires development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape. This is supported by Policy DMG1 which states that particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character and criterion 3) of Policy DMB3 above. It is therefore clear that whilst the development of tourist and holiday accommodation is acceptable in principle in rural areas, great care must be given to ensure that the visual appearance of the development does not harm the character and visual appearance of the area. It is considered that there would be relatively limited close-to-mid-range public views into the site. The site would be set back from Sawley Road by approximately 75 metres and there are intervening trees and hedges and the aforementioned polytunnels which would screen direct views. There are public rights of way located approximately 275m west and 300m north-west. It is not considered that the development site would be prominent in views for these PROWs given intervening distances, the natural contours of the land and intercepting trees and hedgerows. There may be long distance views of the site from Grindleton (in the AONB) as the land rises from the north side of the River Ribble (circa 180m north-west of the application site) but the scale of the development would mean there would be limited negative impact on wider views of the countryside from long-distance. There remains however the requirement to ensure the visual impact of the development is minimised. Should consent be granted conditions would be imposed to require the submission of a scheme of hard and soft landscaping and an external lighting scheme to ensure any illumination is low level. Furthermore, full details will be required of any other provisions required including waste and recycling facilities.The visual impact of the new access tracks has been minimised through the proposed use of a grasscrete surface which from long-distance views would assimilate well with the surrounding undeveloped grassland. |
| **Effect on Residential Amenity:**In terms of its impact on the residential amenity of nearby residents, the nearest residential property is Ribbledale Hall which is owned by the applicant. With regards to noise nuisance and disturbance, the Council’s Environmental Health Officer has raised no concerns. However, it is important that the site is managed in order to limit noise levels during certain hours. The location of the site within the open countryside where existing ambient noise levels can be very low means, therefore, that such activities can greatly impact on surrounding amenity. The site management plan submitted with the application states that guests will be required to comply with site’s codes of conduct including limiting noise between 10pm to 8am. Given the location of the applicant’s residence adjacent to the site he is well-placed to ensure guests accord with site rules. In addition, one full-time site manager would be employed at the site and would be present during the day-time and contactable at all other times. |
| **Ecology and Trees:**In terms of its impact on local wildlife and ecology, the application site is grazing land although there are a number of mature trees and hedgerows within and on the edge of the site. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal refers to the applicant’s intention to undertake significant native landscaping including new tree and hedgerow planting. Four mature trees have features potentially suitable for roosting bats and the site provides high quality bat foraging habitat. All trees with bat roosting potential would be retained and lighting must be low level, directed downwards and away from boundary trees/hedges.In order to provide biodiversity enhancement, it is recommended that bat and bird nesting/roosting features be provided and such features could be mounted on trees within the applicant’s ownership. |
| **Highways:**The Country Surveyor (Highways) has raised no objections having originally required widening of the existing access to 7m for a distance of 10m into the site. This is to ensure that two vehicles can pass unhindered prior to accessing/egressing to/from the adjacent public highway. |
| **Conclusion:**Taking into account the above, it is considered that the proposals would not result in any undue visual or landscape impacts and would provide visitor accommodation which would be of economic benefit to the applicant and other businesses in the local area. It is recommended that the application be approved subject to appropriate planning conditions. |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning consent be granted. |