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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | **SK** | **Date:** | **9.2.24** | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **9/2/24** |
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| **Application Ref:** | 2023/0452 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 02/08/23 | **Site Notice:** | 02/08/23 |
| **Officer:** | Stephen Kilmartin |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed construction of single storey pavilion restaurant. Change of use of grazing land to hotel grounds and to facilitate new vehicular access, parking and landscaping. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Northcote Hotel Northcote Road Langho BB6 8BE |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| Billington and Langho Parish Council have offered the following observations:*Following the meeting of the Parish Council, we would like to say that we do not object in principle to the expansion of the business. Northcote generates lots of revenue and jobs in the area.**The concern is just the positioning of the new road accessing the parking for it. It is just a few yards from Northcote stud and the one opposite. I note that the average speed is low however this is due to the narrowing of the road the bends and the fact that lots of horse boxes and commercial vehicles use it. Langho Football Club also impacts with road parking and lots of children getting in and out of cars on occasions.**In the notes re accidents, we are sure several ones are missing i.e. the fatalities on the A666. The horse collision on Northcote Road and several more on the A59 (which resulted in traffic being diverted through Whalley which traffic chose to use Elker Lane then Northcote Rd to avoid lengthy delays).**In the notes there are only 9 spaces for cars in the carpark – we do not feel this is enough.* |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** |  |
| Following the receipt of revised/additional information the Local Highways Authority have raised no objection to the proposal stating the following:*Lancashire County Council acting as the Local Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site subject to the following conditions being stated on any approval.****Site Access*** *The LHA are aware that the site currently has two accesses which are both located off Northcote Road which is a C classified road subject to a 60mph speed limit. The access closest to Northcote Road is used for servicing and for staff parking only, while the secondary access is used by customers to the existing hotel and restaurant. As part of this application, the Applicant wants to provide a new vehicular access, approximately 120m to the south of the customer access. This new vehicular access will be used to serve the proposed restaurant only.* *The LHA have reviewed Vectos drawing number VN222320-D102 Rev B titled "Site Access Arrangements" and understands that the access will be a minimum of 5.5m wide. Usually when a new access is being proposed, the LHA would request that a swept path drawing of a refuse vehicle is submitted showing that the access and internal carriageway is suitable for servicing movements. However, as documented in the Transport Statement, the proposed restaurant will not be serviced by the access and instead all deliveries and waste collections will occur at the existing servicing access for the site. Deliveries for the proposed restaurant will then be transported internally via a 3m wide access route, which will remain separate from the proposed internal carriageway, linking the proposed restaurant to the main site. Refuse will also be transported in this way to the existing sites bin collection point.* *The LHA have no concerns regarding this arrangement but will condition that the proposed restaurant remains auxiliary to the existing site and should the restaurant be sold or sublet, access and internal carriageway improvements will be required. Therefore, currently as presented, the LHA are satisfied with the access width.**The LHA have also validated the traffic survey which was conducted along Northcote Road between 20th-26th March 2023. The survey found that 85th percentile speeds were between 33mph and 34mph in both directions. Therefore, for the site to comply with the LHAs guidance, the LHA require visibility splays of 2.4m x 50m to the north and 2.4m x 51m to the south of the proposed access.* *The Agent has provided Vectos drawing number VN222320-D102 Rev B titled "Site Access Arrangements" which shows that the access can provide adequate visibility. The access can achieve the required visibility to the north by removing tree 7B, as shown on 3D Reid drawing number 2261-EXA-XX-XX-DR-L-00150 Rev P03 titled "Tree Removal Plan" and by setting back the retaining wall feature from the adopted highway.* The LHA have no objection to the removal of the tree or setting back the retaining wall further into the site for a short distance but will condition that a landscaping plan is submitted prior to commencement. This is to ensure that suitable vegetation such as slow growing shrubs are planted in between the adopted highway and the retaining wall. The LHA advise the Agent that setting back the retaining wall and the creation of the proposed access will be subject to a Section 278 agreement. **Highway Safety** *There have been four recorded Personal Injury Collisions (PICs) within 500m of the application site in the last five years. Notwithstanding this, the LHA do not have any concerns that the proposal would exacerbate the existing highway safety situation as there are no significant trends among the PICs.***Internal Layout** *The LHA have reviewed Vectos drawing number VN222320-D102 Rev B titled "Site Access Arrangements" and are aware that 12 car parking spaces will be provided for the proposed restaurant. This does not comply with the LHAs parking guidance as defined within the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan, which requires the site to provide 35 car parking spaces given the internal floor area of the site.* *However, the LHA will accept the shortfall in parking. This is because as demonstrated within the Transport Statement and the Northcote Manor Development Outline Parking Management Plan, the LHA are satisfied that should the proposed car park be full to capacity, there is adequate spare capacity either on the customer or staff car park. Therefore, given that the proposal will remain ancillary to the existing site and the proposal will operate by reservations only which will allow a parking strategy to be formulated every day as stated within the Outline Parking Management Plan, the LHA are satisfied that vehicles are unlikely to park on the adopted highway. Each existing car park will also provide an internal pedestrian link to the proposed restaurant which is welcomed.**Furthermore, the LHA have reviewed the drawing and are satisfied with the internal carriageway widths. However, the LHA will condition that the car parking area is adequately surfaced in a bound material to prevent any loose material or mud being left on the adopted highway.*Further to the above, should consent be granted, the Local Highways Authority have requested that conditions be imposed in respect of the following matters:* Submission of a Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement
* Submission of a scheme for the construction of the site access and off-site highways mitigation
* Access arrangement to be implemented prior to first use of the premises
* Retention of visibility splays
* Submission of Management scheme for landscaping within visibility splays
* Submission of details of retaining structure adjacent the highway
* Outline parking management Plan to be adhered to
* Car parking and internal highway to be surfaced prior to first use of the premises
* The proposed restaurant to only be used ancillary to the existing Northcote Manor site and shall not be used by way of sale or sub-letting to form a separate commercial entity.
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| No representations have been received in respect of the proposal. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development StrategyKey Statement DS2: Sustainable DevelopmentKey Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate ChangeKey Statement EN4: Biodiversity and GeodiversityKey Statement EC1: Business and Employment DevelopmentKey Statement EC2: Development of Retail, Shops and Community FacilitiesKey Statement EC3: Visitor EconomyKey Statement DMI2: Transport ConsiderationsPolicy DMG1: General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2: Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DMG3: Transport & MobilityPolicy DME1: Protecting Trees & WoodlandPolicy DME2: Landscape & Townscape ProtectionPolicy DME3: Site and Species Protection and ConservationPolicy DME5: Renewable EnergyPolicy DME6: Water ManagementPolicy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local EconomyPolicy DMB3: Recreation and Tourism DevelopmentNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) |
| **Relevant Planning History:****2018/0795:**Proposed extension to provide additional function room, with associated patio areas. (Approved)**2014/0402:**Discharge of condition 4 of planning consent 3/2014/0154. (Approved)**2014/0382:**Non-material amendment to planning permission 3/2014/0154/P. Reduction of building from 3 storey to 2 storey. amendment of finished ground level from +76.00m to +77.0m resulting in a reduced ridge height of +87.65m. Overall number of bedroom suites reduced from 10 No. to 8 No. (Approved)**2014/0154:**Proposed construction of a new bedroom lodge building with guest bedrooms and access track and car parking. (Approved) |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to an area of land within the grounds of Northcote Hotel, Langho. The application site is located to the northern extents of the existing hotel complex in an area accommodating gardens/flowerbeds and growing beds associated with the Hotel.The site lies within the designated open countryside, being located outside of any defined settlement limits, being bounded to the west by Northcote Road, with land associated with Northcote Stud bounding the site to the north and ‘Langho Roundabout’ bounding the wider site to the east. The are, save that for the hotel complex, is largely rural in character with a number of equestrian buildings/agricultural buildings being within the vicinity and a newly constructed residential development (Northcote Park) being located on the southern side of Longisght Road (A59) to the south.  |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**The application seeks full consent for the erection of a single storey ‘pavillion’ restaurant as part of the expansion of the existing Northcote Hotel commercial enterprise including the incorporation of grazing land into the hotel grounds and creation of a new vehicular access off Northcote Road to the western extents of the application site.The submitted details propose that the pavilion restaurant will be single-storey in scale, being of a flat-roofed contemporary appearance employing varied cladding applications and large expanses of glazing to monopolise upon the views across the landscape to the north. The proposed site-plan allows for dedicated parking provision to serve the restaurant (12 parking bays), with associated vehicular turning area and drop-off point. It is further proposed a pedestrian link will be formed to connect the restaurant to that of the remainder of the buildings associated with Northcote Hotel including the provision of a ‘buggie route’ to facilitate servicing of the building from the existing Hotel complex. |
| **Principle of Development:**The proposed development represents the expansion of an existing well-established and well-renowned commercial enterprise/visitor attraction within the countryside, as such Key Statements EC1 and EC3 and Policies DMG2, DMB1 and DMB3 are primarily, but not solely, engaged in respect of assessing the acceptability of the principle of the development and its alignment or potential conflict with the aims and objectives inherent to the Ribble Valley Corey Strategy.In this respect Key Statement EC1 is broadly supportive of the expansion of existing business/commercial enterprises stating that *‘the expansion of existing businesses will, wherever appropriate, be considered favourably’*. With Key Statement EC3 further endorsing the aims of EC1 stating that *‘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. Significant new attractions will be supported, in circumstances where they would deliver overall improvements to the environment and benefits to local communities and employment opportunities’.*Policy DMG2 seeks to protect the countryside character by limiting development to that which is considered appropriate in a rural location. The development is proposed to build on the success of the existing business which includes Michelin starred restaurant and is a valuable tourism asset to the Borough. As such it is considered to satisfy policy DMG2, being essential to the local economy.Policy DMB1 is engaged, affording general Development Management considerations in respect of such development stating that:*Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. development proposals will be determined in accord with the core strategy and detailed policies of the LDF as appropriate. the borough council may request the submission of supporting information for farm diversification where appropriate.**The expansion of existing firms within settlements will be permitted on land within or adjacent to their existing sites, provided no significant environmental problems are caused and the extension conforms to the other plan policies of the LDF.**The expansion of established firms on land outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape. There may be occasions where due to the scale of the proposal relocation to an alternative site is preferable.**Proposals for the development, redevelopment or conversion of sites with employment generating potential in the plan area for alternative uses will be assessed with regard to the following criteria:*1. *The provisions of Policy DMG1, and*
2. *The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies of the LDF, and*
3. *The environmental benefits to be gained by the community, and*
4. *The economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the borough, and*
5. *Any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site (must be supported by evidence (such as property agents details including periods of marketing and response) that the property/ business has been marketed for business use for a minimum period of six months or information that demonstrates to the council’s satisfaction that the current use is not viable for employment purposes.)*

*The council in accord with its vision and key statements wishes to create the right environment for business growth whilst ensuring development is sustainable.*With Policy DMB3, in respect of tourism and visitor facilities/attractions, stating the following:*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, 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.*

Taking account of the above, the adopted development plan is broadly supporting of sustainable economic growth and development proposals that result in the enhancement/expansion of existing businesses within the Borough. With in principle support also afforded to proposals that result in widening the spectrum and range of tourism and visitor facilities in the borough.In this respect, notwithstanding other development management considerations, the principle of the development raises no significant measurable nor quantifiable direct conflict with Key Statements EC1 and EC3 nor Policies DMB1 or DMB3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.Policy DMG3 is engaged and places weight on the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure serving a development, to reduce dependency on private motor vehicle. The nearest bus stop is on Whalley Road, approx 500m from the site. The nearest train station is Langho, approx 800m from the site. There is a footpath between the site and Whalley Road although this is unlit and quite narrow. It is likely that the majority of staff and visitors will arrive by car, which does weight against the proposal. |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**The application site lies within the grounds of Northcote Hotel, being devoid of any direct relationship with any nearby residential receptors. As such it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any measurable adverse impacts upon existing residential amenities.Taking the above into account the proposal raises no measurable conflict with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seeks to protect existing residential amenity and ensure adequate levels of residential amenity for future occupiers of proposed residential development(s). |
| **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**The application site lies within the designated open countryside, albeit partially within the grounds of the existing Northcote Hotel complex, with the submitted details also proposing the expansion of the hotel grounds into an area of agricultural land to the north. As such, consideration must be given in regard of the proposal visual compatibility with the inherent character of the area and the wider landscape setting, with Policy DMG2 requiring that *‘development within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting’*. With Policy DMG1 aiming to ensure and secure good design that is appropriate to and results in the enhancement of the character of the area stating: *In determining planning applications, all development must:**DESIGN*1. *Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building on context toolkit.*
2. *Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
3. *Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*
4. *Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy DME5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*
5. *the code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.*

*ACCESS*1. *Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
2. *Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*
3. *Consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.*

*AMENITY*1. *Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
2. *Provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
3. *Have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
4. *Consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible.*

The proposed pavilion restaurant will be read in context of nearby built-form associated with Northcote Hotel and as such the introduction of built-form in this location would not be read as being an analogous nor incongruous introduction into the landscape. In respect of the design, external appearance and configuration of the proposed restaurant building. The submitted details propose that the pavilion restaurant will be of a flat-roofed contemporary appearance, employing roof overhangs and adopting a simple linear geometric footprint.It is proposed that the building will be faced in Charred Vertical Timber Cladding, and Bronze Anodised Aluminium Cladding, with ‘high performance’ curtain wall glazing with intermediate externally expressed mullion detailing ‘green roof’ elements with the restaurant providing for approximately 48 covers. The low-lying architecture and overall form of the restaurant allows for the building to site within the lower-level gradient of the site which reduces in height towards the north, allowing it to be sympathetically visually assimilated into the immediate landscape setting.Whilst it is accepted that the pavilion restaurant is of a strident contemporary language, the overall simple articulation of the building in concert with the proposed site arrangement and landscape mitigation, allows the proposal to represent a form of development that would result in the enhancement of its immediate setting and would not result in any significant adverse visual impacts upon the character nor visual amenities of the area.As such and taking account of the above matters, the proposal raises no measurable conflict with Policies DMG1 or DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seek to protect against development that will result in adverse impacts upon the character or visual amenities of the immediate or wider area.  |
| **Highways and Parking:**The Local Highways authority have raised no objection to the proposal stating that it is not considered that the proposed development will result in any significant impact(s) on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site subject to the imposition and adherence to a number of planning conditions relating to the following matters:* Submission of a Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement
* Submission of a scheme for the construction of the site access and off-site highways mitigation
* Access arrangement to be implemented prior to first use of the premises
* Retention of visibility splays
* Submission of Management scheme for landscaping within visibility splays
* Submission of details of retaining structure adjacent the highway
* Outline parking management Plan to be adhered to
* Car parking and internal highway to be surfaced prior to first use of the premises
* The proposed restaurant to only be used ancillary to the existing Northcote Manor site and shall not be used by way of sale or sub-letting to form a separate commercial entity.

As such, and in the absence of any objection being raised by the Local Highways Authority, the proposed development raises no significant direct conflict(s) with Key Statement DMI2 or Policy DMG3 which seeks to ensure the continued safe operation of the immediate highway network and to ensure that adequate highway/pedestrian infrastructure is brought forward to adequately serve the development proposed. |
| **Landscape/Ecology:**The application has been accompanied by the submission of an ecological Impact Assessment and details in respect of an Arboricultural Impact(s) and methodology for works affecting existing trees/hedgerow(s).The submitted Ecological Impact Assessment describes the site as comprising *‘the original Manor and southern extension with a separate Garden Lodge to the east. The surrounding gardens comprise mown modified grassland with areas of mature scattered trees and scrub with an area of broadleaved woodland at the southern and eastern boundaries. Hedgerows and kitchen gardens intersperse the grounds with a small pond present at the centre. The wider landscape is predominantly rural comprising agricultural land with associated hedgerow, tree lines and pockets of woodland. The small village of Langho is present to the southwest’.*The report identifies no direct impact(s) upon protected species or species of conservation concern as a direct result of the proposal with the Executive Summary providing the following recommendations:**Additional surveys*** Nesting bird checks for any vegetation removal undertaken within the breeding bird season (March-august).
* If no works are undertaken on site within 12 months of the UKHAB survey, a pre-works site walkover to check for badgers will be undertaken a maximum of two months prior to the commencement of works.

**Pollution control measures*** Ensure best practice measures are applied to minimise possibility of pollution to habitats of importance.

**Habitats*** Avoid losses of native hedgerows, mature trees and woodland wherever possible–loss of mature trees cannot be simply mitigated for
* Compensate for any losses by improving existing hedgerows and/or creating new hedgerows and woodland
* Compensation for the loss of any scrub and mature trees will comprise the planting of locally sourced native tree and scrub species
* Safeguard retained hedgerows, woodland and trees with Root Protection Areas
* Creation of a new pond to compensate for pond loss
* Mitigation and compensation for the loss of habitat should take the form of a suitable landscaping plan

**Bats*** T1, T3 and T4 if removed are all of low bat roost potential. These trees should be soft felled. Installation of bat boxes on retained trees
* Compensate for loss of foraging and commuting habitat
* Design on-site lighting in accordance with the appropriate guidance

**Badger, Small Mammals, Amphibians*** A reasonable avoidance measure (RAMS) approach
* Provision of natural hedgehog boxes located in quiet undisturbed areas with ground covering vegetation, preferably within the broadleaved woodland

**Invertebrates*** Retaining wood piles and deadwood from trees to attract invertebrates and fungi

**Enhancements*** Additional planting of scrub and scattered trees in and around the margins of the site, that is in excess of mitigation requirements, will improve the diversity of habitats. New planting should comprise native species of local provenance, to include berry bearing shrubs. Planting of such additional native species will benefit many species of wildlife including bats, birds and amphibians;
* The creation of habitat for invertebrates by excavating small trenches, filling with suitable materials (e.g. rubble and woody debris) and covering with freely draining soils to form a low mound and sown/planted with nectar rich wildflowers/shrubs
* The installation of additional bat and bird boxes

The submitted proposals further propose the removal of a number of trees to both facilitate the development and enable the provision of the creation of a new vehicular access off Northcote Road at the western extents of the site. In this respect it is proposed that three category B trees will be removed to enable adequate visibility splays at the western extents of the site adjacent Northcote Road. With groupings of small Category ‘B’ and ‘C’ groupings being removed within the site to facilitate the construction of the pavilion restaurant associated car-parking area(s).In respect of the above tree-loss, the submitted ‘General Arrangement Plan’ proposes significant ‘large tree’ and ‘small multi-stem/fastigiate’ tree planting to offset and mitigate the loss of existing tree-coverage which would result in an overall net gain in the tree presence and coverage across the site, with new hedgerows, wildflower meadow, ornamental and formal planting being proposed. As such and taking account of the above matters and replacement landscaping provision(s), the proposal is considered to align with the aims and objectives of Key Statement EN4 and Policies DME1, DME2 and DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seek, amongst other matters, to ensure there are no adverse impacts upon habitats/protected species resultant from development. Further seeking to ensure that than any losses of habitat/biodiversity should be compensated for, with such compensation resulting in over net gain in biodiversity/ecological value and ensuring the enhancement of ecological networks and green infrastructure within the borough. |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**The proposal would result in disbenefits in regard to urbanising the rural landscape, reliance on private motor vehicle and loss of category B medium value trees. However there are clear economic benefits to the development and the visual impact has been assessed as acceptable. As such, 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. |