

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Application Ref:	3/2020/0940	 <p>Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</p>
Date Inspected:	18/01/21	
Officer:	RB	
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:		APPROVAL

Development Description:	Change of use of land and erection of building for heliculture (snail breeding) together with six log cabins to be used as holiday lets. Resubmission of application 3/2020/0513.
Site Address/Location:	Land at Preston Road Ribchester PR3 3XL

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish Council
Ribchester Parish Council object to the development due to the development having an unacceptable impact on highway safety and flood risk.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections subject to conditions

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
<p>14 letters of representation have been received from 10 addresses with the following objections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Risk • Access is not safe • Overlooking of neighbouring dwellings • Ecology issues • Land is owned by third party not applicant. • Business is not serious • Traffic concerns due to speed of cars on Preston Road. • There is no need for the holiday lodges or heliculture business 	

RELEVANT POLICIES:
<p>Ribble Valley Core Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy • Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development • Key Statement DMI2 – Transport Considerations • Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development • Key Statement EC3 – Visitor Economy • Policy DMG1 – General Considerations • Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations • Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility • Policy DMH3 -Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB. • Policy EN2 – Landscape • Policy DME2 – Landscape & Townscape Protection • Policy DMB3 – Recreation and Tourism Development. • Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and Local Economy • Policy DME6 – Water Management

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Description of Proposal

The development proposes the change of use of land to be used for heliculture which involves the installation of ground level breeding pens. The development also proposes the erection of a two-storey building providing a hibernation unit as well as space for demonstrations and office/storage space. In conjunction with the snail farm the development also proposes the erection of up to six holiday cabins.

Site Location/Address:

The proposed development site relates to land off Preston Road, Ribchester. The site is access off Preston Road between New House Farm and land to the East of Pendle View. The development site has a site area oof 6630 square metres and is currently used for agricultural purposes.

The application site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and the north of the site borders Boyces Brook. FP 49 is also adjacent to the site.

Assessment of the proposed development:

Proposed building for heliculture:

The proposed building would serve the proposed heliculture business and would provide internal space for displays, demonstrations and lectures as well additional space required by the business. displays, demonstrations and lectures as well additional space required by the business.

DMG2 of the Core Strategy considered that within tier 2 villages and outside defined settlements area of development must meet at least one of the following considerations

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.

The proposed development relates to a proposed small-scale tourism development which would run educational courses for the local community as well as other visitors that want to visit the site as such it is considered that as the proposed building relates to a small-scale tourism use in principle the erection of a building is acceptable.

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. The proposed building will form an 'L' shape and will have a maximum length and width of 30m x 22.7m. The building will have a pitched roof measuring 4.6m at the eaves and 5.3m at the ridge. The building will have stone built dwarf walls with juniper green steel cladding above and the roof will be surfaced with Goosewing grey roof sheeting. The proposed building will be sited approximately 100m, therefore the building would not be a prominent feature and the proposed building materials ensure that the building remains in character with the rural nature of the area. When viewed from the land to the north of the site the building will have an agricultural appearance.

Holiday Cabins:

The provision of additional visitor accommodation can be supported in principle, subject to compliance with the relevant Core Strategy requirements. Policy DMB3 states that new tourism development should be physically well related to an existing settlement, village or group of buildings, except where the proposed facilities are required in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction; be well located in relation to the highway network; should not undermine the visual qualities of the area and should not introduce new built form into areas largely devoid of such development.

The proposed lodges would be located to the south of the proposed building and would share access off the private track that serves the land. Furthermore, they would be reasonably well-related to the proposed building at the site and the heliculture farm that is considered a 'countryside attraction' as well as being well related to the existing village of Ribchester. In this regard it is considered that not development would not be isolated in the landscape and would be utilised in conjunction with the proposed rural enterprise.

Further to the above, Key Statement EC1 'Business and Employment Development' seeks to strengthen the wider rural economy. Considering this, the principle of development is acceptable, subject to an assessment of any associated landscape impacts.

Existing trees and hedge row are present on the boundary to the south therefore the development site is well contained and reasonably screened from public view. Several trees are proposed to be retained and protected with appropriate tree fencing as well as the landscaping scheme proposing new tree planting. Due to site being located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 the log cabins are to be raised above ground level on stilts (approximately 0.5m) to allow water to flow underneath. The cabins will measure 14m by 6.5m measuring 3.2m at the eaves and 4.3m at the ridge. The cabins will be faced with timber cladding with timber windows and doors. The proposed parking areas, bin stores are considered proportionate to the size of the scheme. The proposed external lighting scheme is low level lighting that would have an acceptable impact on the intrinsic nature of the countryside. As such when considering the above it is not considered that the scale of development proposed would generate significant landscape impacts within the open countryside.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

The development site entrance falls adjacent to the boundary of two dwellings (New House Farm and New House Barn). The closest holiday unit is approximately 10 metres from the rear boundary of New House Farm as such it is considered that the proposed development would have limited impact on the residential amenity of these two dwellings. Concerns regarding noise nuisance have been considered when assessing the development. The Councils EHO has considered that the conditions relating to noise nuisance from the external plant and equipment and lighting be attached to any subsequent approval. Any excessive noise would be dealt with by the Councils Environment Health Team therefore the development could not be refused for this reason. The EHO also requested a condition relating to the dumping of snails.

Following the receipt of the lighting details the Councils EHO has confirmed that the proposed low level lighting will have an acceptable impact on nearby sensitive residential premises subject to the planting of trees and maintenance of such trees near the boundary of these properties.

Landscape/Ecology:

A preliminary ecological appraisal has been submitted with the development that concluded that proposed development has the potential to affect existing habitats on site. In particular one species

of conservation importance has been identified is the form of Cross wort and a large number of axiphites also exist beneath areas of hedgerow. The hedgerow is proposed to be retained therefore the survey recommended a buffer be demarcated by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to commencement and for the buffer to remain in place for the duration of the developmental operations. An area of grass land has also been identified to be of national and countrywide importance and a buffer covering areas containing axiophytic plants and cross wort should also include this area. One invasive species has been identified that is recommended to be eradicated prior to commencement. To compensate for the area of grass land that is being lost due the development the survey recommends that a compensation and enhancement plan be adhered to that will aim to enhance the biodiversity value of the area.

The survey confirms that the trees contained within the survey area are absent from bat roost suitability however any external lighting that exceeds current levels would have an impact on bats. The survey recommends areas of the site where lighting should be not proposed. Lighting is only proposed at the entrance to the site and adjacent to each log cabin and lighting the proposed car parking areas. The lights are directed away from the boundary. The survey highlights that any lighting may have a negative impact upon foraging/community bats. It is considered that the lighting proposed is the minimum required and that the bat enhancements recommended within the survey will be conditioned on any subsequent approval.

The survey has assessed the impacts on other terrestrial mammals and birds. The survey recommends that any clearance works be undertaking outside of breeding season and that a precautionary approach shall be adopted when undertaking clearance works.

Highway:

The development proposes to access the site off Preston Road. The highways engineer has no objection to the development and has recommended conditions relating to a two way vehicle road, laying of a metalled surfacing and undertaking a degree of hedgerow management along the frontage of Preston Road.

Flood Risk and Drainage:

The application proposes drainage details and United Utilities have been consulted on the scheme. The officer had no comments to make except for recommending conditions relating to the submission of a drainage scheme, foul drainage, Suds and Water Supply.

The application site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3 therefore the Environment agency were consulted on the proposed scheme. The Environment Agency determined that if the development is 'vulnerable development' then a sequential test and an exception test are required. It is considered that the scheme is 'vulnerable development' therefore a sequential test is required to be submitted with the proposed development and depending on the outcome an exception test may have also be required. The applicant's agent has not submitted a sequential test therefore the applicant has failed to demonstrate that there are no reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning consent be refused for the following reason:

Insufficient information has been provided in so far that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that there are no reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding contrary to paragraph 155, 157 and 158 of the National Planning Policy Framework.