

Ribble Valley Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Church Walk  
Clitheroe  
Lancashire  
BB7 2RA



2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

FAO Adam Birkett

Dear Mr. Birkett,

Re. Planning Application No. 3/2021/0077 – Smithy Cottage, Birks Brow

We are in receipt of your letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 in relation to the above referenced planning application.

Having read through the application we have a number of concerns and list these below.

To underline the reasoning behind our comments we feel it is important for the planning committee to understand that Birks Brow sits within an area of natural beauty and we have concerns that the erection of a permanent lodge in the position shown will have an adverse effect on this environment.

Whilst we understand the attraction of providing holiday accommodation, we feel that this should be done in a way that is sympathetic to surroundings. Conversion of existing properties ensures that this is the case whereas the erection of a lodge of this type would result in a finished project which would be completely out of character for this area. The materials of construction are at odds with all other properties in the area; an important factor that the planning department has been keen to maintain in other applications.

Approval would also potentially set a precedent, whereby others would seek to erect similar buildings for financial gain. Our property is currently surrounded by agricultural land and we are concerned that any change of use to a holiday let would have a negative impact on aesthetics, nature of the area and property value.

For information, we are aware of the intention to make significant alterations to Smithy Cottage and we made no comment when this application was submitted as we supported the proposal.

For clarity, we have made comments against specific drawings / documents.

#### Application Form

- Section 7 – Colours for walls, roof, windows and doors are not stated.
- Section 18 references 3 part-time employees. Whilst this presents a positive look to the application it is difficult to understand how 3 part time vacancies would be created.
- Section 22 suggests that a site visit may be arranged. We strongly request that this be done to better understand the impact of the proposed development on our property and the area as a whole. We would welcome the opportunity to attend any such visit.

### Proposed Site Section and Associated Drawings

- Section shows relative levels in a single direction only. Our property [REDACTED] lies due North of the proposed development (assuming the 'North' arrow is correct as shown on the plan) and the land falls sharply from proposed location of works to our property. As such the development will have a significant adverse visual impact on our property and noise from those inhabiting a 3 bedroomed Lodge would carry as the area is currently extremely quiet.
- The physical size of the Lodge would be very imposing. The footprint appears to be larger than Smithy Cottage itself.  
The orientation of the Lodge is not shown. It is marked only as a rectangular block with no access arrangement indicated.
- Proposed Trees / Hedgerow appear to provide a degree of screening to minimise impact on the owner's Cottage and from Forty Acre Lane but offer no such protection to our property. The addition of screening along the length of the boundary between the development plot and the owner's main field (blue line on plan) would reduce visual and noise related impact on our property. As we own the adjoining field we could of course provide such screening ourselves but this would need to be in the form of rapid growing trees such as conifers to the full length of our field whereas trees of lower height, provided by the applicant on the boundary of his application, would achieve a better end result.
- Proposed location of Waste Bins is not shown.
- Proposed location of Septic Tank is not shown.

### Planning Statement

- Section 1 advises that the land is no longer viable as an agricultural unit but local farmers utilise our land (circa 2.5 acres) for grazing by sheep which we permit at no cost to them. Furthermore, the 4.5 acres in question were utilised by animals until quite recently.
- Section 2 – Page 3 – states that Smithy Cottage is not overlooked by any neighbouring properties. This is incorrect as we look directly at Smithy Cottage and the land where the proposed development is to take place. *See photo which clearly demonstrates that the proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on our property, including traffic movements.*

### Planning Statement Supplement

- Note 2 – The occupants of Smithy Cottage have been vocal in their objections to previous applications by others so it is surprising to read their support here.
- Note 3 – The Lodge clearly is not in keeping with the surroundings. There is no other property of this type in this area.

We trust that the above points are clear but would of course be available to discuss should you wish to do so.

Yours Faithfully,

[REDACTED]