


**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>		<b>Date:</b>		<b>Manager:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Site Notice displayed</b>		<b>Photos uploaded</b>						

<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2020/0331	 <b>Ribble Valley Borough Council</b> <a href="http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk">www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	~		
<b>Officer:</b>	AB		
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>		<b>Decision</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>

<b>Development Description:</b>	<b>Erection of a single storey extension to an events/function building, whose main purpose is holding wedding ceremonies.</b>
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	<b>Foxfields Farm, Hobbit Hill, Whalley Road Hurst Green BB7 9PN</b>

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
None received.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
<b>LCC Highways:</b>	
No objections.	
<b>Lead Local Flood Authority:</b>	
No comment.	
<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
No representations have been received.	

**RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:**

**Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**

- Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
- Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development
- Key Statement EN2 – Landscape
- Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development
- Key Statement EC3 – Visitor Economy
- Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
- Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
- Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility
- Policy DME1 – Protecting Trees and Woodland
- Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection
- Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation
- Policy DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
- Policy DMB3 – Recreation and Tourism Development

- National Planning Policy Framework**
- National Planning Policy Guidance**

**Relevant Planning History:**

3/2019/0569 - Erection of single-storey events/function building. Extension of service road and grass over hardstanding area currently used as a base for a marquee. Approved.

3/2017/0957 - Change of use of agricultural land to a camping facility including an area for tents and the siting of five camping pods and a facilities building with associated vehicular access tracks and pedestrian tracks. Approved.

3/2019/0569 - Erection of single-storey events/function building. Extension of service road and grass over hardstanding area currently used as a base for a marquee. Approved.

**ASSESSMENT PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:****Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The site is located within the open countryside and in relatively close proximity to the boundary with the Forest of Bowland AONB. The application site is accessed along a private track leading from Whalley Road and serves a number of different properties.

The site has been developed as a tourism and wedding destination including camping pods and wedding barn. The wedding barn was completed in October 2020 but has not been fully operational due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**

The application proposes an extension to the existing venue. Whilst the site has an outdoor wedding ceremony area which is ideal in good weather, this has caused issues during poor weather conditions.

Wedding parties and planners have suggested a separate indoor ceremony room would be a key addition. The proposed ceremony room would not increase overall capacity at the venue as it would be used for ceremonial aspects of the wedding day only and visitor numbers, access and parking would remain unaffected.

The proposed extension would be to the west side of the existing building. It would have a dual-pitched roof set down from the main roof by around 600mm. The extension would measure approximately 8.5m x 9.5m and would be faced in materials to match the main building.

All other aspects of the site would remain unchanged.

**Principle of Development:**

In relation to the principle of the development, Core Strategy Key Statement EC1 supports developments that contribute to farm diversification, strengthening of the wider rural and village economies.

Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy states 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; and that 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 states that outside the defined settlement areas development must meet at least one of six considerations. This includes development for small-scale tourism or recreational development appropriate to a rural area. Policy DMG2 also requires development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape by virtue of its size, design, materials, landscaping and siting.

The requirement of Policy DMG2 is that tourism or recreational development in rural areas is 'small-scale'. This includes consideration of the scale of built form, number of guests or visitors that would be attracted, and the potential for the use and associated buildings to be assimilated into the landscape.

The proposed extension would likely extend the period during the year when wedding events can be held to the benefit of the existing business.

**Visual Amenity:**

As noted above, the site has already been developed as a countryside wedding venue including overnight pod accommodation and wedding barn.

The proposals would not result in an increase in capacity of the existing wedding building. It would be used solely for the wedding ceremony and could be restricted to such use by planning condition. The proposed extension would be seen as a subservient addition to the existing building that would respect its existing design and appearance. As such, it would not be experienced as a prominent new addition and would not result in any harm when compared with the existing situation.

**Impact on Residential Amenity**

It is not considered that the proposed extension would result in any addition noise from the site when compared with the already approved development.

Conditions to control the hours of use and amplified music that were imposed on the main building would be repeated such that the entire building would be subject to the same restrictions.

**Highway Safety and Footpaths:**

On the basis that the existing use would not be intensified the County Highways Officer has raised no objection to the proposals.

**Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the proposals are considered to comply with the relevant Core Strategy policies relating to tourism and economic development. Subject to appropriate planning conditions the proposed development would not unduly impact on the visual appearance and landscape character of the area, or the amenity of nearby residents.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the application be approved.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	That planning permission be approved.
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