



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

Statement of Case Planning Appeal

on behalf of

Mr Jack Lonsdale

at

Prime Performance Centre Ltd

Woodfield Farm,

Longsight Road,

Clayton le Dale

BB2 7JA

June 2026

Kirkwells

The Planning People

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Claire Bradley. I am a town planner with over thirty-five years' experience in town planning in both local government and the private sector.
- 1.2 I am currently a Director with Kirkwells, an independent planning consultancy, providing advice and support to clients in the public and private sector.
- 1.3 This document sets out the case of Mr Jack Lonsdale in relation to the refusal of planning permission for the "Additional usage to commercial property from E(g) to E(d) gym" located at Woodfield Farm, Longsight Road, Clayton le Dale BB2 7JA.. (Ribble Valley Borough Council Application Reference 3/2022/1034).
- 1.4 The planning application was refused by Ribble Valley Borough Council for the following reasons and the decision notice is included in Appendix 1:

1 The proposal would result in the loss of employment generating floorspace through the introduction of a use falling within the definition of a 'Main Town Centre Use' in an out-of-town centre location. No material considerations have been presented in this case to justify or warrant the harm resulting from the loss of employment generating floorspace use. As such, the proposal would result in direct conflict with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) and the aims and objectives of Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 The proposal would result in development within the designated open countryside outside of a defined settlement that fails to meet any of the exception criteria for allowing development in such locations. Furthermore, the rural location of the application site means that users would largely be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access the site. As such, the development is contrary to Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) as well as the National Planning Policy Framework which has a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2. The Appeal Site and the development

- 2.1 The appeal site is known as Unit 2 Woodfield Business Centre and front on to the main road. The building is an existing box profile metal sheeting building constructed on a 1-metre-high blockwork dwarf wall with steel roller shutters and uPVC windows which was granted planning consent in 2021 under application reference 3/2021/0594. Condition no.5 on planning permission 3/2021/0594 restricts the use of the building for Class E(g) business use only.
- 2.2 The building is associated with Woodfield Farm and is located on the north side of Longsight Road (A59) on land designated as Open Countryside. The wider site comprises a former farmhouse and barn (converted to offices), a dwellinghouse and an additional large box profile metal sheeting building currently occupied by the civil engineering company, Wade Group. To the south-west is Woodfield Garage and a dwelling known as Strathaven.
- 2.3 The site located on the main A59 route through a number of neighbouring Tier 1 and Tier 2 villages identified in the Ribble Valley Local Plan. These being:
- Tier 1***
- Mellor 1.9km
Mellor Brook 2.4km
Wilpshire 2.6km
- Tier 2***
- Osbaldeston 1.4km
Salesbury 1.7km
- 2.4 The application relates to changing the use of the building to accommodate Prime Performance Centre which operates as
- a therapy service,

- Prime Performance Nutrition (coaching, PT, assessments, and supplements),
 - and Prime Performance Centre (member training).
- 2.5 Alongside this, the business also runs structured group sessions and classes as part of the coaching and performance side of the business, operating as a broader performance, coaching, and wellbeing facility, not just a standard town-centre gym facility.
- 2.6 These benefits associated with this kind of training are essential for a strong economy, reducing the stress on the healthcare system, and improving performance in work and life.
- 2.7 The business is not operated as a conventional gym but is in the majority an appointment only facility, operating on a one to one basis i.e. 1 client to 1 personal instructor or small personal training groups with a personal instructor. It may be that it does not clearly fall within the E(d) use class and is potentially a 'sui generis use'
- 2.8 The opening hours are as follows:
- Monday-Friday: 6am - 10pm
Saturday: 8am - 5pm
Sunday: 8am - 2pm.
- 2.9 The majority of clients visit the site from the settlements and villages surrounding the site.

3. Planning History

3.1 The planning history for the application site is as follows:

3/2021/0594: Proposed demolition of small storage building and erection of a new commercial building. (Approved).

3/2020/0168: Discharge of condition 17 from 3/2019/0827 (landscaping) (Approved).

3/2020/0007: Discharge of conditions 23 (construction method statement), 20 (Himalayan balsam removal) and 17 (landscaping: tree planting schedule) from planning permission 3/2019/0827) (Approved)

3/2019/0827: Use of land as a storage compound and construction of building for vehicle servicing area, workshop, tool store, offices and ancillary accommodation to create a depot for a civil engineering company (Approved).

3/2014/0101: Retrospective application for change of use from agriculture to domestic curtilage (Approved).

3/2013/0442: Proposed change of use of approved garage, store and office accommodation to reinstate original dwelling (Refused and dismissed on appeal).

3/2008/0020: Agricultural storage building (Prior Approval Not Required).

3/2006/0688: Erection of replacement dwelling to include a basement, and the conversion of existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of residential curtilage to include former farm yard area (Approved).

3/2006/0343: Erection of a replacement dwelling and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of the residential curtilage to include the former farm yard area. Re-submission (Approved).

3/2005/1071: Erection of a replacement dwelling and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of the residential curtilage to include the former farm yard area (Withdrawn).

3/2005/0766: Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension to farmhouse (Approved).

3/2005/0536: Steel portal frame agricultural storage building (Permission Not Required).

4. Relevant Planning Policy

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that the determination of a planning application/appeal must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The NPPF is a material consideration when determining planning applications and appeals.

Development Plan

- 4.3 The development plan currently comprises the adopted Ribble Valley Core Strategy adopted December 2014 and the Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document adopted October 2019.
- 4.4 In determining this application, the following policies are considered the relevant policies within the Development Plan:
- Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
 - Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
 - Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development
 - Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations
 - Policy DMG1: General Considerations
 - Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
 - Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
 - Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
- 4.5 Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy states as follows|:

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 provision of Policy DMG1, and*
- 2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies in 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).*

4.6 Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations states as follows:

Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy requires development outside of defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six exceptions which are as follows:

- 1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing 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 local need or benefit can be demonstrated*

6. *The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.*

4.7 Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility states as follows:

In making decisions on development proposals The Local Planning Authority will, in addition to assessing proposals within the context of the development strategy, attach considerable weight to:

The availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development -

- 1. The relationship of the site to the primary route network and the strategic road network.*
- 2. The provision made for access to the development by pedestrian, cyclists and those with reduced mobility.*
- 3. Proposals which promote development within existing developed areas or extensions to them at locations which are highly accessible by means other than the private car.*
- 4. Proposals which locate major generators of travel demand in existing centres which are highly accessible by means other than the private car.*
- 5. Proposals which strengthen existing town and village centres which offer a range of everyday community shopping and employment opportunities by protecting and enhancing their vitality and viability.*
- 6. Proposals which locate development in areas which maintain and improve choice for people to walk, cycle or catch public transport rather than drive between homes and facilities which they need to visit regularly.*
- 7. Proposals which limit parking provision for developments and other on or off street parking provision to discourage reliance on the car for work and other journeys where there are effective alternatives.*

All major proposals should offer opportunities for increased use of, or the improved provision of, bus and rail facilities.

All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards.

The Council will protect land currently identified on the proposals map from inappropriate development that may be required for the opening of stations at Gisburn and Chatburn. Any planning application relating to these sites will be assessed having regard to the likelihood of the sites being required and the amount of harm that will be caused to the possible implementation of schemes.

The council will resist development that will result in the loss of opportunities to transport freight by rail.

National Planning Policy Framework:

- 4.6 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised December 2024, makes it clear that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is itself a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.8 Relevant section of the NPPF include:
- Section 2 Achieving sustainable development.
 - Section 4 Decision making.
 - Section 6 Building a strong, competitive economy.
 - Section 7 Ensuring the vitality of town centres.
 - Section 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities.
 - Section 9 Promoting sustainable transport.
 - Section 12: Achieving well-designed places.

5. The Officer Report and Application Process

- 5.1 The application was submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council on 03/11/2022 and validated on 05/01/2023.
- 5.2 Initial consultations were carried out on 05/01/2023 with neighbour consultation letters sent and LCC Highways and the Parish Council also consulted.
- 5.3 LCC Highways advised in their consultation response on 24/01/2023 that further information was required in relation to how the site was to be accessed.
- 5.4 Amended plans relating to the access and parking were submitted on 20/02/2023. Further comments were made by LCC Highways (06/03/2023) advising that the proposed access and no-entry sign was acceptable, and whilst 12 parking spaces were shown, a condition was recommended should the application be approved to ensure the width of the spaces was adequate.
- 5.5 A further amended site plan was submitted on 07/03/2023 addressing the matters in relation to the width of the parking spaces, with LCC Highways commenting further on 14/03/2023 to advise the scheme was now acceptable subject to their recommended conditions.
- 5.6 No comments were received from the Parish Council or any neighbouring property.
- 5.7 The applicant emailed the Council in April 2023 asking for an update or to confirm whether anything further was needed and did not receive any response. Based on that, and the fact that all business rates correspondence has been sent directly to the site, the applicant thought that everything was in order and that the use was accepted and opened the business at the site

- 5.8 No further correspondence was received from the Council on the application until a decision notice was received in January 2026, dated 09/01/2026 and refusing the application.
- 5.9 The Planning Officer's Delegated Officer report downloaded from the Ribble Valley Borough Council website is included at Appendix 2.
- 5.10 The Case Officer's assessment cites the loss of the employment generating floorspace and the change of use to a Main Town Centre use resulted in a harm greater than any benefits provided.
- 5.11 The report goes on to state:

In respect of 'Main Town Centre Use(s)' – the use of the premises as a gymnasium would be considered a 'health and fitness centre' use, with such uses being considered as being 'Main Town Centre' uses within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 91 of The Framework, in relation to such uses, states that 'Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of town centre sites be considered'

- 5.12 This section of the report concludes as follows:

No material considerations have been presented in this case to justify or warrant the harm resulting from the loss of employment generating floorspace use. As such, the proposal would result in direct conflict with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5.13 In relation to Policy DMG1, the Officer states that it is not considered to fall with any of the exception and the site is not in a sustainable location and contrary to Policies DMB1, DMG2 and DMG3.
- 5.14 With regard to matters relating to residential amenity, visual amenity/external appearance, highways and parking and landscape/ecology, no issues were raised by the Case Officer
- 5.15 Despite there being a delay of 20 months from the last correspondence from the applicant in April 2023 to the decision notice being received in January 2026, there has been no request by the Council for additional information to justify their choice of building for their business or the benefits that the business proposes to the surrounding area.

6. The Appellant's Case

6.1 This appeal statement will address the two reasons for refusal which relate to:

- Reason 1 of the refusal notice which relates to the conflict with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble valley Core Strategy and Paragraph 91 of the Framework; and
- Reason 2 of the refusal notice which relates to the conflict with Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the Framework

Policy DMB1

6.2 Policy DMB1 includes the following criteria against which to assess development:

1. The provision of Policy DMG1, and

In terms of assessment against Policy DMG 1: General Considerations, there are very little changes to the external appearance of the building, LCC Highways have no issues with the amended access and parking details, the development will not impact on the amenity in the area, there is no impact on any element within the environment section, no impact on infrastructure and the development will not prejudice any future developments.

2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies in the LDF, and

In the Officer report, the assessment was carried out, and the development was considered to comply with all other relevant policies in the Development Plan with the exception of DMG2 and DMG3 which will be assessed in the following sections.

3. *The environmental benefits to be gained by the community, and*

The proposed use will provide a valuable service to the local towns and villages listed in Paragraph 2.3, and whilst due to the location, travel to this site is likely to be via private car or bicycle, a local resident travelling to a gym in a Main Town Centre location would also have to travel by private car and would have to travel the following distances(as the crow flies):

Whalley – 8km

Clitheroe – 13 + km

Longridge – 7 km

The community benefits of having a gym facility close to the smaller villages outweigh any harm by not locating it in a town centre.

4. *The economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the borough, and*

The Woodfield Farm site is also home to the Wade Group a Civil Engineering company providing a storage compound, building for vehicle servicing area, workshop, tool store, offices and ancillary accommodation. The unit which is occupied by the appellant was constructed for Use Class E(g) and amounts to around 360 sq. metres. Given the location, and the size of the unit, it is unlikely that there will be any significant economic or social impact caused by the loss of employment opportunities. Indeed, there is potential for a social benefit through the increased wellbeing of residents. The development employs 3 people and therefore offers employment opportunities in the rural area.

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 applicant is not aware of any attempts by the owner to secure an alternative employment generating use.

- 6.3 The development is considered to be in full compliance with Policy DMB1 as demonstrated above.

Main Town Centre Use

- 6.4 Section 7 of the NPPF relates to ensuring the vitality of Town Centre and states the following:

91. Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.

92. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.

93. This sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development.

- 6.5 As the Ribble Valley Core Strategy was produced prior to the NPPF, but adopted in December 2014, there is no similar policy within it.
- 6.6 Prior to taking the unit that is the subject of this appeal, the applicant's search for properties involved the Town Centres of Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe, and

wider town centres. However, no suitable town centre properties were available at the time.

- 6.7 The application for planning permission was submitted in 2022, and relevant consultation responses received and addressed.
- 6.8 The appellant emailed the Council in April 2023 asking for an update or to confirm whether anything further was needed and did not receive any response. Based on that, and the fact that all business rates correspondence has been sent directly to the site, the applicant thought that everything was in order and that the use was accepted and opened the business at the site
- 6.9 Had a sequential been requested at the time of the application, the appellant could have provide the details of all properties viewed, however this was never requested, and it is difficult to recall the exact details of the properties.
- 6.10 As detailed previously, Prime Performance Centre operates as
- a therapy service,
 - Prime Performance Nutrition (coaching, PT, assessments, and supplements),
 - and Prime Performance Centre (member training).
- 6.11 Alongside this, the business also runs structured group sessions and classes as part of the coaching and performance side of the business, operating as a broader performance, coaching, and wellbeing facility, not just a standard town-centre gym facility.
- 6.12 These benefits associated with this kind of training are essential for a strong economy, reducing the stress on the healthcare system, and improving performance in work and life.

- 6.13 The business is not operated as a conventional gym but is in the majority an appointment only facility, operating on a one to one basis i.e. 1 client to 1 personal instructor or small personal training groups r with a personal instructor. It may be that it is does not clearly fall within the E(d) use class and is potentially a 'sui generis use'
- 6.14 With regard to Paragraph 93 of the NPPF, in this case it is considered that the application is a small scale rural development that results in less need for local residents to travel longer distances to the Town Centres in the Ribble Valley.
- 6.15 As stated above, the site located on the main A59 route through a number of neighbouring Tier 1 and Tier 2 villages identified in the Ribble Valley Local Plan. These being:

Tier 1

Mellor 1.9km

Mellor Brook 2.4km

Wilpshire 2.6km

Tier 2

Osbaldeston 1.4km

Salesbury 1.7km

- 6.16 The proposed use will provide a valuable service to these local towns and villages , and whilst due to the location, travel to this site is likely to be via private car or bicycle, a local resident travelling to a gym in a Main Town Centre location would also have to travel by private car and would have to travel much further distances (as the crow flies) as follows:
- Whalley – 8km
- Clitheroe – 13 + km
- Longridge – 7 km

- 6.17 There are both environmental, social and community benefits of having a gym facility close to the smaller rural towns and villages that outweigh any harm by not locating it in one of the three main town centres in the Borough.

Policy DMG2

- 6.18 Policy DMG2 relates to Strategic Considerations and requires that development should be in accordance with the Core Strategy Development Strategy and support the spatial vision for the Borough.

- 6.19 The Policy goes on to state that within the Tier 2 settlements and outside of the defined settlement areas, development must meet one of the considerations listed in the policy which are:

- 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.*

- 6.20 The development is considered to be a small scale recreational use that is appropriate to a rural area, in addition there is a local benefit as demonstrated in paragraphs 6.10 to 7.17 above.

- 6.21 The development is in an existing building, which is in keeping with the character of the countryside which is a requirement of Policy DMG2

- 6.22 The development is considered to comply with Policy DMG2.

Policy DMG3

- 6.23 Policy DMG3 relates to transport and mobility and states that the Local Planning Authority will attach considerable weight to:

The availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development -

- 1. The relationship of the site to the primary route network and the strategic road network.*
 - 2. The provision made for access to the development by pedestrian, cyclists and those with reduced mobility.*
- 6.24 The site is located directly on the A59 which form a major part of the strategic road network in the Ribble Valley. The site is located close to a number of small towns and villages that fall within Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the development hierarchy, and provides a service to the local area resulting in less need to travel longer distances by car to Clitheroe, Whalley and Longridge.
- 6.25 There is an acceptable access to the site for pedestrians, cyclists and those with reduced mobility. There is also sufficient parking within the site as confirmed by the Local Highway Authority.
- 6.26 The development is considered to be in accordance with Policy DMG3

7. Conclusion

- 5.1 The appellant's case seeks to address the reasons for refusal as detailed in the decision notice.
- 5.2 This Statement of Case puts forward that the development does comply with Policies DMB1, DMG1, DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.
- 5.3 At the time the appellant was looking for property, there were no town centre locations that were suitable.
- 5.4 The development also provides a local service for a number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 towns and villages reducing the need for longer travel to the main town centres.
- 5.5 The appellant requests that the appeal is upheld, and permission is granted for the development.

Appendix 1: Application: 3/2022/1034 Decision Notice

Appendix 2: Application: 3/2022/1034 Officer Report

Kirkwells

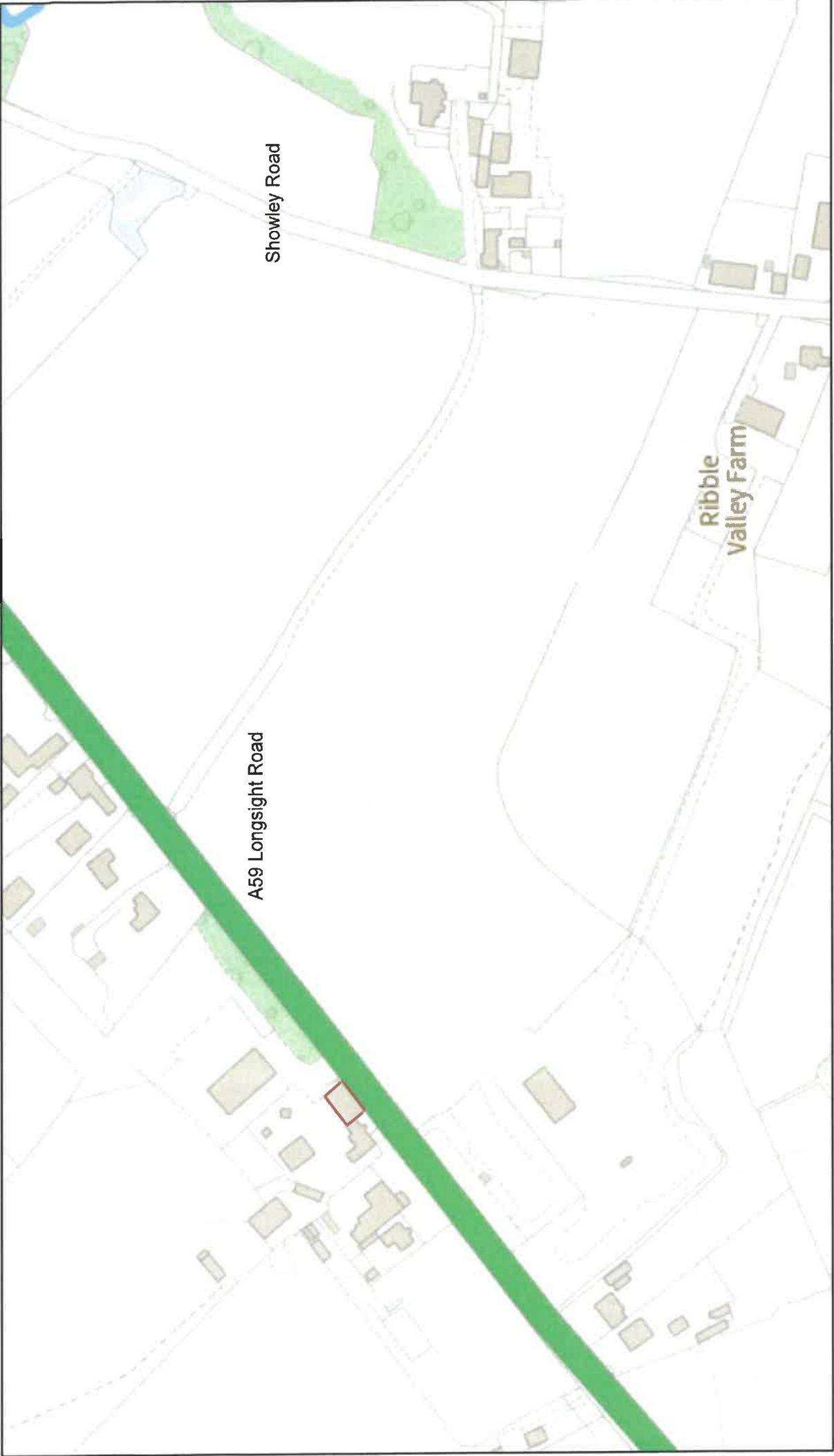
The Planning People

For more information on the contents of this document contact:

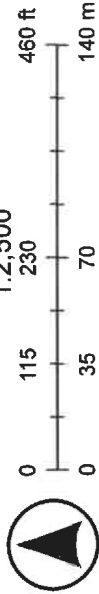
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Lancashire County Council Map



7/3/2026, 8:50:50 AM



RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Development Department

Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 2RA

Telephone: 01200 425111 www.ribblevalley.gov.uk planning@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

APPLICATION NO: 3/2022/1034

DECISION DATE: 09 January 2026

DATE RECEIVED: 12/12/2022

APPLICANT:

Mr Jack Lonsdale

Prime Performance Centre Ltd

7 Grange Heights

Haslingden

Rosendale

BB4 4QL

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: Additional usage to commercial property from E usage to E(d).

AT: Woodfield Farm Longsight Road Clayton le Dale BB2 7JA

Ribble Valley Borough Council hereby give notice in pursuance of the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that permission **has been refused** for the carrying out of the above development for the following reason(s):

- 1 The proposal would result in the loss of employment generating floorspace through the introduction of a use falling within the definition of a 'Main Town Centre Use' in an out-of-town centre location. No material considerations have been presented in this case to justify or warrant the harm resulting from the loss of employment generating floorspace use. As such, the proposal would result in direct conflict with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) and the aims and objectives of Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2 The proposal would result in development within the designated open countryside outside of a defined settlement that fails to meet any of the exception criteria for allowing development in such locations. Furthermore, the rural location of the application site means that users would largely be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access the site. As such, the development is contrary to Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) as well as the National Planning Policy Framework which has a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

P.T.O

APPLICATION NO: 3/2022/1034

DECISION DATE: 9 January 2026

Note(s)

- 1 Applications for planning permission are assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies within the Core Strategy for the Ribble Valley. The Local Planning Authority adopts a positive and proactive manner and will consider representations, liaise with consultees, and seek amendments to proposals where appropriate within statutory timescales.
- 2 The proposal does not comprise sustainable development and there were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions that could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable. It was therefore not possible to approve the application.
- 3 This Decision Notice should be read in conjunction with the officer's report which is available to view on the website.

Nicola Hopkins

NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

Notes

Right of Appeal

If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- If you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.
- If this is a decision to refuse planning permission, or approve with conditions, a householder application, if you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 12 weeks of the date of this notice.
- If this is a decision to refuse planning permission, or approve with conditions, a minor commercial application, if you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 12 weeks of the date of this notice.

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION CONTINUED

APPLICATION NO: 3/2022/1034

DECISION DATE: 9 January 2026

Appeals can be made online at: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-decision> . If it is a householder appeal it can be made online at: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-householder-planning-decision> . If you are unable to access the online appeal form, please contact the Planning Inspectorate to obtain a paper copy of the appeal form on tel: 0303 444 5000. The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal but will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal. The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to the Secretary of State that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order. If an enforcement notice is served relating to the same or substantially the same land and development as in your application and if you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision on your application, then you must do so within: 28 days of the date of service of the enforcement notice, or within 6 months [12 weeks in the case of a householder appeal] of the date of this notice, whichever period expires earlier. In certain circumstances, a claim may be made against the local planning authority for compensation, where permission is refused or granted subject to conditions by the Secretary of State on appeal or on a reference of the application to him. The circumstances in which such compensation is payable are set out in section 114 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Purchase Notices

If permission to develop land is refused or granted subject to conditions, whether by the local planning authority or by the Secretary of State for the Environment and the owner of the land claims that the land has become incapable of reasonably beneficial use in its existing state and cannot be rendered capable of reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted, they may serve on the Council of the county borough or county district in which the land is situated a purchase notice requiring that Council to purchase their interest in the land in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	LW	Date:	08/01/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	9/1/26
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Application Ref:	3/2022/1034			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	16/12/25	Site Notice:	N/A	
Officer:	LW			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				
				REFUSAL

Development Description:	Additional usage to commercial property from E(g) to E(d) gym.
Site Address/Location:	Woodfield Farm, Longsight Road, Clayton le Dale BB2 7JA.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No comments received with respect to the proposed development.	

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

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No representations received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
 Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
 Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development
 Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
 Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
 Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
 Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2021/0594: Proposed demolition of small storage building and erection of a new commercial building (Approved).

3/2020/0168: Discharge of condition 17 from 3/2019/0827 (landscaping) (Approved).

3/2020/0007: Discharge of conditions 23 (construction method statement), 20 (Himalayan balsam removal) and 17 (landscaping: tree planting schedule) from planning permission 3/2019/0827 (Approved)

3/2019/0827: Use of land as a storage compound and construction of building for vehicle servicing area, workshop, tool store, offices and ancillary accommodation to create a depot for a civil engineering company (Approved).

3/2014/0101: Retrospective application for change of use from agriculture to domestic curtilage (Approved).

3/2013/0442: Proposed change of use of approved garage, store and office accommodation to reinstate original dwelling (Refused and dismissed on appeal).

3/2008/0020: Agricultural storage building (Prior Approval Not Required).

3/2006/0688: Erection of replacement dwelling to include a basement, and the conversion of existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of residential curtilage to include former farm yard area (Approved).

3/2006/0343: Erection of a replacement dwelling and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of the residential curtilage to include the former farm yard area. Re-submission (Approved).

3/2005/1071: Erection of a replacement dwelling and the conversion of the existing dwelling to provide garaging and office accommodation and the extension of the residential curtilage to include the former farm yard area (Withdrawn).

3/2005/0766: Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension to farmhouse (Approved).

3/2005/0536: Steel portal frame agricultural storage building (Permission Not Required).

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to an existing box profile metal sheeting building constructed on a 1-metre-high blockwork dwarf wall with steel roller shutters and uPVC windows which was granted planning consent in 2021 under application reference 3/2021/0594. Condition no.5 on planning permission 3/2021/0594 restricts the use of the building for Class E(g) business use only, with the use of the building for any other purpose, including any other purpose within Use Class E, requiring planning permission in order to prevent any other uses within the use class being created which may not be appropriate in this location.

The building is associated with Woodfield Farm and is located on the north side of Longsight Road (A59) on land designated as Open Countryside. The wider site comprises a former farmhouse and barn (converted to offices), a dwellinghouse and an additional large box profile metal sheeting building currently occupied by the civil engineering company, Wade Group. To the south-west is Woodfield Garage and a dwelling known as Strathaven.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks consent for the change of use of the building from Use Class E(g) (business) to Class E(d) (gym), including an extension of opening hours to 6.00am to 10.00pm Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm on Saturdays and 8.00am to 2.00pm on Sunday and Bank Holidays.

It is noted that the proposal has now been implemented, with the building currently occupied by "Prime Performance".

Principle of Development:

In respect of the principle of the change of use of the building, given the application relates to an existing commercial unit, Policy DMB1 is engaged insofar that it relates to development that supports Business Growth and the Local Economy, with the Policy reading as follows:

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 provision of Policy DMG1, and*
- 2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies in 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).*

In respect of the provisions of Policy DMB1, the policy provides material considerations which exist as 'exceptions' to allow for the loss of employment generating uses in certain circumstances. However, in this case there would be no associated environmental benefits to be gained by the community.

The economic impact of losing employment generating floorspace, originally granted consent for Use Class E(g) (pursuant to permission 3/2021/0594), and the introduction of a 'Main Town Centre Use' in an out-of-town centre location is considered to be more harmful than any benefits that would be resultant from the granting of consent.

In respect of 'Main Town Centre Use(s)' – the use of the premises as a gymnasium would be considered a 'health and fitness centre' use, with such uses being considered as being 'Main Town Centre' uses within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Paragraph 91 of The Framework, in relation to such uses, states that 'Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of town centre sites be considered'.

In respect to the provisions of Paragraph 91 – the applicant has failed to provide any information that would satisfy the requirements of The Framework.

As such and taking account of the above, it is considered that the proposal would result in the loss of employment generating floorspace through the introduction of a use falling within the definition of a 'Main Town Centre Use' in an out-of-town centre location. No material considerations have been presented in this case to justify or warrant the harm resulting from the loss of employment generating floorspace use. As such, the proposal would result in direct conflict with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The application site is also located outside of a defined settlement area and within the Open Countryside. Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy requires development outside of defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six exceptions which are as follows:

- 1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing 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 local need or benefit can be demonstrated*
6. *The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation*

In this instance, it is not considered that the development satisfies the requirements of being essential to the local economy or social wellbeing or the area. In addition to this and as stated above, the use of the premises as a gymnasium would be considered a 'health and fitness centre' use, with such uses being considered as being 'Main Town Centre' uses within the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to be appropriate to the rural area and therefore it cannot be considered that the proposal would meet any of the exception criterion contained within Policy DMG2 in relation to new development outside of defined settlement limits, in which case there is no explicit policy support for a gymnasium in the location proposed.

Having regard to the sustainability of the site location, Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy requires decision making to consider the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from new developments. This is consistent with the NPPF which requires development proposals to promote sustainable transport.

In this instance, the proposal site is not within walking distance of any defined settlement area and whilst it is located within reasonably close proximity to bus services on Longsight Road, it is considered that users of the gym would largely be dependent upon private motor vehicles. Accordingly, the proposed change of use of the building would amount to unsustainable development by virtue of the site being in an unsuitable location for a gymnasium.

Taking account of the above, the proposal would fail to meet the aims and objectives of Policies DMB1, DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework and is therefore considered to be unacceptable in principle.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Taking account of the location of the unit directly adjacent to existing commercial uses, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any measurable direct impacts upon existing nearby residential amenities.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

The submitted details do not propose any external alterations to the building nor alterations to the existing site configuration. As such the proposal is unlikely to result in any measurable visual impacts upon the character or visual amenities of the immediate area.

Highways and Parking:

The application has been subject to review by Lancashire County Council Highways. The Local Highway Authority (LHA) have no objection to the use of the existing access with it being established and approved to serve the commercial building under application reference 3/2021/0594. The LHA also welcome the erection of a 'No Entry' sign adjacent to the proposed parking spaces to inform users of the parking area to not use the access down the side of the existing commercial building which is occupied by the 'Energy Centre' and instead use the same access in which they entered the site. The proposal will also provide 12

car parking spaces which complies with the LHAs parking guidance given the internal floor area of the buildings.

With the above in mind, the LHA does not raise an objection to the proposal 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 imposition of conditions.

Landscape/Ecology:

No ecological constraints have been identified with respect to the proposed development.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning consent be refused for the following reason:

01:

The proposal would result in the loss of employment generating floorspace through the introduction of a use falling within the definition of a 'Main Town Centre Use' in an out-of-town centre location. No material considerations have been presented in this case to justify or warrant the harm resulting from the loss of employment generating floorspace use. As such, the proposal would result in direct conflict with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) and the aims and objectives of Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

02:

The proposal would result in development within the designated open countryside outside of a defined settlement that fails to meet any of the exception criteria for allowing development in such locations. Furthermore, the rural location of the application site means that users would largely be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access the site. As such, the development is contrary to Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2008-2028) as well as the National Planning Policy Framework which has a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

