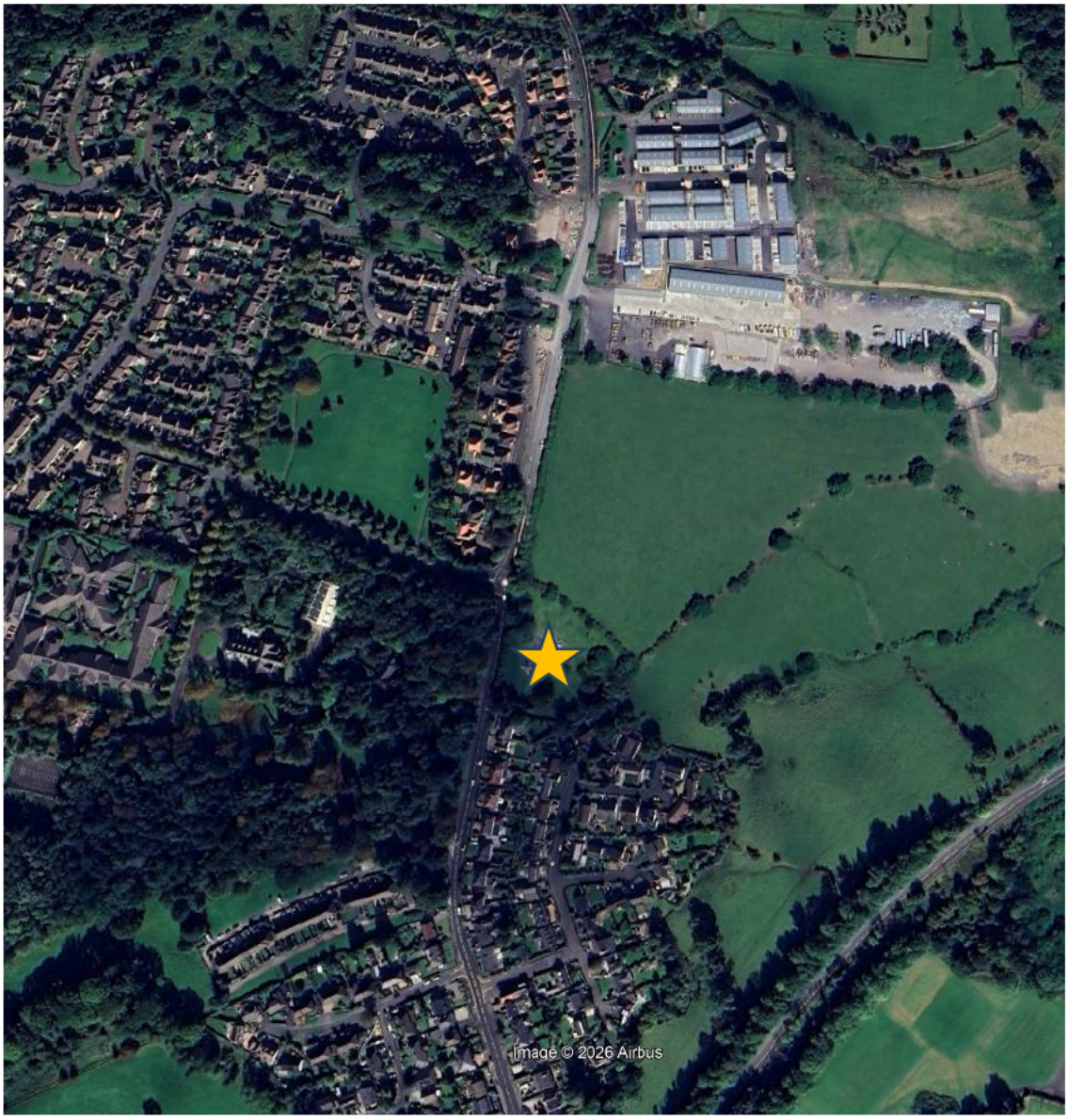
JUDITH DOUGLAS TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

Acorn House, 114 Mitton Road, Whalley BB7 9JN.



Proposed physiotherapy clinic at the residence of the physiotherapist.

Planning, Design, and Access Statement. JDTPL0421

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STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE PHYSIOTHERAPIST RESIDING AT ACORN HOUSE, 114 MITTON ROAD, WHALLEY BB7 9JN.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Judith Douglas Town Planning Ltd in support of a full planning application for the provision of a single storey physiotherapy clinic within the garden of Acorn House to be operated by the physiotherapist living at the property.

1.2 It provides a description of the site and the proposed development, its compliance with the development plan and an assessment of other material considerations. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying information:
6827 L01 Location Plan
6827 006 Clinic Existing Site Plan
6827 007E Clinic Proposed Site Plan
6827 008B Clinic proposed floor plan and elevations
6827 009B Clinic Visibility splays
Protected species survey August 2026

2.0 APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The site is located within the open countryside outside but between the settlement boundaries of Calderstones and Whalley as defined in the Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development, Development Plan Document. The settlement boundary of Calderstones is on the opposite side of the road to the site, and the settlement boundary of Whalley is approximately 400m to the south east. The Landscape Character type is Undulating Lowland Farmland. There are no public footpaths close to the site. The site is not within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings nearby. The site is in flood zone 1, an area least likely to flood. Part of the land within the curtilage of the development is potentially affected by surface water flooding, however the actual development site and access to it is not within the affected area.

2.2 Acorn House is a substantial detached two storey dwelling set within a large garden. The garden is adjacent to the dwellings on Moor Field to the south. 180m to the north is the premises of Gateway Auctions (plant and machinery) and Mitton Road Business Park. To the west on the opposite side of Mitton Road is Calderstones Hospital and the housing at

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Calderstones. Vehicle access is from Mitton Road just to the south of the junction of Mitton Road with Calderstones Drive.

2.3 Mitton Road is a classified road B 6246. The speed limit at the entrance to the site is 30 mph. Bus stops are 75m to the south and 70m north of the site, with an hourly service number 5 between Clitheroe and Chipping, together with high school services. The site is approximately 810m from Whalley train station and 1.3km from the centre of Whalley. Mitton Road has footpaths on both sides of the carriageway and street lighting and is a route which is suitable for cyclists.

2.4 The site area is 588m2

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The planning history below is taken from the Council's website. It is not a complete record of the planning history of the site.

Application	Address	Development	Decision
3/2006/0604	**Acorn House 114 Mitton Road Whalley**	Extension to existing house forming entrance, lounge, conservatory and bedroom	**APPROVED NO CONDITIONS** Date : 16/08/2006
3/2023/0364	**Acorn House 114 Mitton Road Whalley BB7 9JN**	Proposed ground floor extensions and alterations to form bedroom, dressing room, ensuite, gallery and utility. Conversion of garage to form hobbies room and WC. First floor extension to form shower room. Cedral cladding fixed externally. Widen access road and move gate posts. 2.1m close boarded fence to west roadside boundary.	**APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS** Date : 30/08/2023

3.2 Other planning permissions for similar developments include:

Application	Address	Development	Decision
3/2022/0395	**Clitheroe Golf Club Whalley Road Barrow BB7 1PP**	Change of use from existing bungalow to a sport physiotherapy facility to include two treatment rooms, disabled toilet and reception within the existing layout. Internal alterations to form an exercise room. External ramps to be constructed within the curtilage for disabled access. One disabled car parking space will be dedicated to the facility and two additional car parking spaces will be allocated to an existing unused area adjacent to the building.	**APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS** Date : 21/06/2022
3/2020/0856	**4 Meadow Croft West Bradford Clitheroe BB7 4TJ**	Conversion of existing garage to a habitable work space to carry out physiotherapy and use as a home gym	**APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS** Date : 17/12/2020

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4.0 SCHEME PROPOSALS

4.1 The scheme proposes a single storey detached outbuilding within the garden of Acorn House to accommodate a physiotherapy clinic. Adjacent to this is a proposed parking area for four cars including a disabled space. The footprint of the building is 8.0m by 9.4m giving a floor area of 75,2m2. The height to the ridge is 5.234m and to the eaves is 2.850m. It is to be constructed in render with Cedral Cladding to the walls, and slate to the roof to match the existing house. The parking area is to be finished in tarmac. The existing garage buildings marked garage 2 and garage 3 on the existing site plan are to be demolished. These have a footprint of 3m by 5m and 2.8m by 6.8m giving a total floorspace of 34.04m2

4.2 The physiotherapy clinic will be owned and run by the applicant who lives at Acorn House. The clinic has two consultation rooms, and a reception area. The proposed operating hours are a maximum of 7.30am -7.00pm weekdays only, with 45-minute appointments with a maximum of two patients being treated at any one time. There is a break between patients so that there is no overlap and there will not be four patients at the site at any one time. The clinic will run with one full-time physiotherapist, which is the applicant, assisted by another physiotherapist. This second post is likely to be part-time equivalent shared between one or two physiotherapists. They will be assisted by a receptionist. The maximum number of staff on site at any one time will be 3.

4.6 The clinic will only ever be run by the applicant who lives at Acorn House. The applicant is willing for a condition to be imposed so that the physiotherapy clinic can only be operated by a person residing in Acorn House. It is envisaged that when the applicant retires, permission will be sought to repurpose the clinic as ancillary or incidental accommodation to Acorn House such as garaging, home gym or garden room.

4.3 The applicant has been established as a physiotherapist working in Whalley since 1998. She established her own practice around 2000 and moved to the clinic she now occupies at Victory House in or around 2003. Whalley Physiotherapy was incorporated in 2013. At its height, there were 7 physiotherapists in the practice (full time and part time). The applicant has always been the sole owner of Whalley Physiotherapy as the sole full-time practitioner, along with 3 part-time practitioners, a chiropodist and 3 admin staff. Whalley Physiotherapy is probably the longest established practice in the Ribble Valley with referrals from a number of local medical practitioners and consultants.

4.4 The applicant is 61 and the practice is no longer viable in its present location because of retirement of a number of her physiotherapists over recent years, increased rent, rates and other outgoings. The plan is to move to Acorn House where outgoings will be much lower

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and allow the practice to continue at a reduced scale with the applicant as its lead practitioner assisted by 1 to 2 part-time physiotherapist and a receptionist. Relocating to Acorn House allows the applicant to retain her practice in the local area where she has built her business and reputation. There are no suitable alternative premises in the village with parking and ground floor access, which patients will need.

4.5 Basing the clinic at her home allows the applicant to continue her practice working full-time until the age of 67 and then reducing hours beyond that age to achieve a better work/life balance which would not be possible at her present location. The applicant has long waiting-lists every week, as patients are unable to secure the care needed within reasonable time periods in the Ribble Valley. The operator of the clinic will always be the applicant until the clinic closes and she has no plans to sell the business or allow any third party to lease the new buildings. Hence the clinic is to be situated close to the present house and can be used by the applicant and her family thereafter.

4.6 Many of her patients have mobility issues such that level access and ground floor accommodation is essential. Easy access to parking is also required. The accommodation must provide adequate privacy for the clinic to provide treatment for patients. These requirements have meant that it has been impossible to find suitable alternative premises in the center of Whalley.

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework. Annex A states that:
"The policies in this Framework are material considerations which must be taken into account in decision-making from the day of its publication". Paragraph 3 of Chapter 1 states *"Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The national decision-making policies in this Framework are a material consideration in making these decisions and should be read alongside the policies in the development plan"*. Annex 3 paragraph 2 states "*Development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in this Framework should be given very limited weight. The only exception to this is where they have been examined and adopted or made against this Framework. Other development plan policies should not be given reduced weight simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of this Framework."*

5.4 The following National Development Management Policies in the Framework are relevant to this proposal.

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S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
S5: Principle of development outside settlements
E2: Meeting the need for business land and premises
E4: Rural business development
DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
DP4: The design process
TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations
TR4: Street design, access and parking
P3: Living conditions and pollution
N2: Improving the natural environment

NPPF 2026

5.2 The glossary of the NPPF defines main town centre uses as
"Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)."

5.3 The specific policies in the Core strategy relevant to the application are:
Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility
Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation

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6.0 EVALUATION

6.1 This section of the statement will justify the acceptability of the proposed development and demonstrate its accordance with the development plan and national planning policy. The main issues to be considered are:
principle of the development,
residential amenity,
visual impact,
highways, and
ecology

Principle of development

6.2 A physiotherapy clinic is classed as a medical or health service. Unlike fitness centres or gyms, it is not included in the list of main town centre uses in the glossary of the NPPF. As it is not a main town centre use there is no requirement for a sequential test to be carried out to justify an out-of-centre location for the proposed physiotherapy clinic. The proposed development is a mixed use of residential, and a medical service use and as such is sui generis, that is, it does not fall into a specific use class.

6.3 The development will provide employment for 2 full-time equivalent jobs. Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy states: *"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."* Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations states that outside settlement boundaries, development must meet at least one of 5 stated criteria including *"5. The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated."*

6.4 The benefit in this case is the provision of physiotherapy treatment in a sustainable location. In addition, the site is accessible by public transport and the location outside a settlement is necessary due to the lack of suitable premises in the centre of Whalley. The NPPF Policy S5 supports development for rural businesses and service where the location is shown to be necessary policy S5. 1b. In addition, the site is a brownfield site, as it is within the garden of Acorn House and replaces existing outbuildings and accords with NPPF policy S5 1.d. Policy S5 1.d supports the redevelopment of previously developed land including a material change of use to mixed-use residential as is proposed here.

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6.5 The NPPF glossary definition of public service infrastructure includes healthcare facilities of all types. NPPF policy HC4 1.b says that substantial weight should be given to the benefits where new or improved public service infrastructure is to be provided and development proposals would make a demonstrable contribution towards promoting good health.

6.6 The proposed development is small scale and will provide a valuable service to the local population. The development is to be purpose built. In section 3 above there are examples of planning permissions being granted for similar proposals. The permission granted at 4 Meadow Croft, West Bradford was in a similar rural location and was also a mixed use of physiotherapy clinic and residential dwelling. The Officer's report to the application did not raise an objection to the principle of the development quoting the same Core Strategy policies as those given above. See appendix 1. A personal planning permission was given to the applicants on a temporary basis reference 3/2020/0856. Later, a permanent personal permission was granted 3/2022/0853.

6.7 The permission granted at Clitheroe Golf Club for a sport physiotherapy facility with two treatment rooms was granted permission in 2022. The site is outside a settlement boundary and in the open countryside. The Officers report to the application quoted policies DS1: Development Strategy, DS2: Sustainable Development and Policy DMG1: General Considerations and again the Officer's report did not highlight any conflict with these policies. See Appendix 2.

6.8 Planning permission has been granted for the change of use to a sui generis use for animal therapy/welfare at Unit 40 Mitton Road Business Park Whalley BB7 9YE. This proposal was considered against the requirements of policy DMB1. The animal therapy use was considered not to fall within a 'Main Town Centre' use as defined in the NPPF and the low-key nature of the activity was noted. It was concluded that the *"proposal is unlikely to have any measurable impact upon the vitality of any nearby established town centre areas."* The out of centre location of the proposed animal therapy/welfare use was supported. See appendix 3. The proposed physiotherapy clinic is approximately 350m to the south of Unit 40. These examples show that the Council has supported similar proposal on sites outside main settlements and in the open countryside.

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Residential amenity

6.9 The nearest residential are properties approximately 50m to the south. The entrance to the site and the proposed clinic and garage is on the north side of the house so that there would not be any undue disturbance to the occupiers of the dwellings on Moor Field. The

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clinic will only operate during weekdays and not at unsociable hours. The operator of the clinic and the occupier of the dwelling Acorn House are the same, so that the amenity of the host dwelling is preserved. The development will not result in any overlooking of neighbouring properties or have any overbearing impact. This accords with Policy DMG1: General Considerations.

Visual Impact

6.8 Acorn House is a substantial two storey dwelling, set within a large garden and has two large outbuildings used for garaging and domestic storage. It is proposed to demolish these and replace them with the proposed clinic and garage. The principal elevation of Acorn House is set back approximately 18m from Mitton Road, where there is a substantial hedge adjacent to the footpath along the highway. The proposed clinic building is set back from the western principal elevation of the house and is single storey. It is closely related to the house. The additional area of hardstanding is small and neither the proposed building or parking area will be prominent or out of place in the landscape.

Highways and parking

6.9 The development is in a sustainable location which can be reached by public transport or on foot or by cycle. There are bus stops very close to the site with an hourly bus service, and the site is in walking distance of the train station and the settlements of Calderstones and Whalley. The existing house has four bedrooms which requires three off-street parking spaces. The proposed use at a maximum would have two employees on site (excluding the applicant) and two clients requiring four parking spaces. The total number of on-site parking required is seven spaces. There is space for at least seven cars within the site. There is no overlap between appointments as the consulting rooms need to be cleaned and prepared between patients. Cycle parking is provided.

6.10 The submitted drawings show the visibility splay available at the site entrance as 2.4m by 43m to the north and to the south. According to Department for Transport, Manual for Streets, these are the sight-line distances which are required when the speed limit is 30mph. This will require the roadside hedge which is under the applicant's control to be trimmed back. It is also proposed to widen the entrance to 4.2m wide for about 6m into to site to allow two cars to pass each other. The gate posts are proposed to be moved further into to site, with the gates opening away from the road, so that cars can pull clear of the highway in front of the gates. The proposal provides adequate parking and will not harm highway safety. It conforms to the requirements of Policy DMG1 and DMG3.

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Ecology

6.11 As the proposed development includes the demolition of outbuildings, we have carried out a bat survey. The bat survey concludes that the buildings are not being used by bats or nesting birds and has negligible potential for roosting bats. The ecologist has suggested bat roosting provision to encourage the local bat population. A ridge tile providing roost potential is suggested. This accords with Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 As we have described, the proposed physiotherapy clinic is in principle acceptable subject to conditions limiting the operation of the clinic to persons residing in Acorn House. The development will provide employment and a much-needed health facility in a sustainable location, in accordance with policy DMB1. The proposed clinic is appropriate in design, location and form. The development responds positively to the character of the existing building. The proposal will provide high-quality development with appropriate levels of parking and alterations to the existing access to ensure highway safety is not compromised. This is compliant with policy DMG1.

7.2 The development will have no significant impact upon the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and as such accords with policy DMG1.

7.3 No environmental or technical matters have been identified which would weigh against the development. In light of all the issues detailed within this Statement, the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied, and the application supported.

Appendices

1. 3/2020/0856 4 Meadow Croft, West Bradford. Officer Report.
2. 3/2022/0395 Clitheroe Golf Club Whalley Road Barrow BB7 1PP. Officer report.
3. 3/2025/0122 Unit 40 Mitton Road Business Park Whalley BB7 9YE

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