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PLANNING + DEVELOPMENT

Planning Statement

Full Planning Application for the erection of 1 no. rural workers' self-build dwelling, extension to existing building for hay storage, additional stabling and treatment room building, as well as a machinery store.

Lower Fold Stables, Northcote, Langho

For Ailsa Vines Veterinary Physiotherapist

August 2026

Job Number: 18-223

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Appendix 1 – Business Statement Case

1.0 Introduction and Approach

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Maybern Planning and Development ('Maybern') on behalf of Ailsa Vines Veterinary Physiotherapist ('AVVP' or 'The Applicant') seeking full planning permission via Ribble Valley Borough Council ('RVBC' or 'The Council') for the erection of 1 no. rural workers' self-build dwelling, extension to existing building for hay storage, additional stabling and treatment room building, as well as a machinery store at Lower Fold Stables, Northcote.

1.2 This Planning Statement sets out:

- A description of the site and surroundings;
- The scope of the development proposal;
- The statutory and planning policy context of the site and application proposals; and
- Assessment of the proposals against the statutory and planning policy context and other material considerations and technical matters relevant to the site proposal.

1.3 The application is submitted following a pre-application enquiry submission and the consideration of feedback received (LPA ref: RV/2024/ENQ/00054).

1.4 Submitted in conjunction with this Planning Statement are the following:

- Planning Application Forms and Certificate - via the Planning Portal ref PP-14946998

PLANS AND REPORTS (*Provided by Sunderland and Peacock unless stated*):

- Location Plan – Ref – 6925 L01
- Existing Site Plan – Ref - 6925 S01
- Existing Agricultural Building and Outbuilding Plans and Elevations – Ref - 6925 E01
- Proposed Overall Site Plan and Drainage Strategy – Ref - 6925 P03C
- Proposed Manager's and Family Accommodation Site Plan and Drainage Strategy – Ref - 6925 P02C
- Proposed Dwelling Elevations and Floor Plans – Ref - 6925 P01D
- Proposed Stables and Machinery Store Elevations and Floor Plans – Ref - 6925 P04B
- Proposed Hay Store Extension Elevations and Floor Plans – Ref - 6925 P05B
- Existing and Proposed Site Section – Ref - 6925 P06B
- Bat Survey

Pre-Application Enquiry Advice

1.5 Formal pre-application was requested by Sunderland and Peacock in July 2025, with a written response provided by RVBC in December 2025. Maybern Planning and Development was not involved in the project at this time, however has reviewed the response provided in writing by the Council.

1.6 The Pre-Appliction enquiry request was used to facilitate an opportunity for the applicant to formally present and engage with the Council with regards to a development proposed at the site. The development proposal submitted via this enquiry comprised a small dwelling which consisted of 3 bedrooms and simple gabled elevational form and comprised managers accomodation.

1.7 The pre-application response from RVBC provides relevant context for the site and a residential proposal.

1.8 The response on the matter of (residential) principle was primarily related to the creation of a new residential dwelling approximately 400m outside of the nearest Tier 2 settlement (Langho), within the Open Countryside. Due to this, it was noted that sufficient justification would be required to ensure that accommodation for the purposes of attending out of hours and emergency animal care at the centre is sufficiently demonstrated as part of any application to justify the proposal, in line with policy DMG2 and DMH3.

1.9 Other potential impacts on the principle of development being accepted included the following:

- Scale and footprint should be a consideration of development within an open countryside location and would be required to be symapthetic to the site and inkeeping with the surrounding landscape;
- Undue imapacts upon Chew Bank Wood BHS (1.1km to the northeast) will require consideration;
- Access and parking would be required to be incorperated in line with the councils standards;
- Impact upon surrounding properties residential aminity.

1.10 Overall, it was confirmed that the benefits of building a residential accommodation for the site to meet the needs of the business would be required to outweigh the identified harm from the conflict with policy DMG3, as the Officer considers that the site is not located within a sustainable location.

1.11 The extension to the hay store, as well as the stable block/treatment room and machinery store was not included within the plans for pre-application discussions, but are included as these are nessassary developments to support the businesses growth and to allow for the business to respond to current demand.

The Applicant:

1.12 The applicant owns and operates AVVP, a small business specialising in equine physiotherapy and the rehabilitation of injured horses and ponies. The business provides specialist treatment that supports animal welfare for a range of private clients, their horses, as well as wiorking in partneship with vet practicies.

1.13 As injured animals often require care and monitoring at all times, the business operates on a 24-hour basis. The applicant is therefore seeking planning permission for a worker's self-build dwelling, together with expansion to existing storage facilities including a hay store and stables/treatment room and machinery storage building, to support the ongoing care of horses and to meet increasing demand for specialist rehabilitation services.

1.14 The applicant is currently the sole full time employee of the business, however the business also employs 7 others on a part time basis.

1.15 Living on-site would allow the applicant to respond immediately to the needs of the horses and ponies whom can often arrive in emergancy situations out of working hours, as well as providing continuious care to those in need which promotes significant animal welfare benefits. The proposed development would also support the planned expansion of the business, enabling it to accommodate 3 additional animals, whilst ensuring its efficiency and long-term sustainability.

1.16 Before purchasing the site in 2020, the applicant operated solely as a mobile equine physiotherapist, travelling to clients' premises. At that time, the yard was used for housing privatly owned horses as well as a dog grooming business.

1.17 Since purchasing the site in 2020, the applicant has carried out repairs and invested in improvements, including installing CCTV, smoke and security alarms, and upgrading the stable doors with magnetic keypad locks that automatically release in the event of a fire, improving safety for the animals.

1.18 Other improvements include fencing around the sand ménage, two temporary wooden isolation stables, six rehabilitation paddocks, new perimeter fencing, and resurfacing the woodchip turnout area.

1.19 For additional information on the applicant and AVVP, please refer to the Business Case included within **Appendix 1**.

2.0 The Site and Surroundings

2.1 The application site is located on a land parcel associated with Lower Fold Stables, sited approximately c.70 metres from Northcote Road, extending to 0.15ha. The site fronts onto the existing access road for the Lower Fold Stables and is located within immediate proximity to the existing stable and menage area.

2.2 The land in question is a mix of greenfield and hardstanding and comprises a relatively flat topography.

2.3 The land surrounding the application site (as edged blue in the submission documents) is used for grazing and is temporarily rested throughout summer months to facilitate grass growth for hay making which is then used on-site.

2.4 There is a woodchip area/small paddock which is used for the turnout of horses. Stabling is also located on-site, as well as a wash box which is currently used as a treatment area.

2.5 The wider site also features a main stables building, which includes a small office, meeting room and kitchen area.

2.6 There is current maximum capacity of 8 horses/ponies for treatment at the facility. There are 2 isolation units, for when horses arrive and in instances of contagious diseases.

2.7 The site is shown at Figure 1 below (the red lines having been added by Maybern to denote the approximate site boundaries) and provides an aerial view of the site within its wider built and natural environment contexts.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the approximate application site (edged red) and its wider setting

2.8 The site will be accessed via the existing access point to the site's west along Northcote Road.

2.9 A small number of boundary trees and hedges are present running along the access road to the site.

2.10 Open greenfield land lies to the north, east and south of Lower Fold Stables, while Northcote Stud is situated immediately to the east, adjacent to Northcote Road.

Accessibility and Services

2.11 The site is located along Northcote Road, which falls within close proximity to Langho Roundabout. From this location, access can be provided to Langho directly via Whalley Road or to Whalley and Clitheroe via the A59. Preston city centre is located further afield but is also accessible via the A59. Said roads provide the site with strong access potential with regards to its proximity to wider service provision located throughout the mentioned settlements.

2.12 The sites immediate surroundings are rural in nature, given its location within the open countryside, with limited services, amenities and facilities. However, there are a small number located within Langho which help to facilitate the sites sustainability.

2.13 There are limited public transport links within close proximity to the site, however the site is served by a footway which runs toward the A59. Langho does feature a railway station which provides regional linkages to Clitheroe and Manchester Victoria as well as bus services to surrounding settlements.

Planning History

2.14 A review of RVBC on-line planning search facility reveals that there has been a number of relevant planning applications made for the site. The details of which can be seen within the table below:

Application Reference	Description	Status
3/2006/0514	Full Application: Erection of building for the stabling of 12 horses, associated feed storage, outdoor menage and covered midden.	Approved with conditions 16.08.2006
3/2010/0999	Full Application: Change of Use from two stables into a dog grooming business	Approved with conditions 06.04.2011
3/2011/0963	Full Application: Change of Use of agricultural land to create a winter turnout area/sand paddock for equine use at Lower Fold Stables.	Approved with conditions 13.03.2012
3/2019/0832	Variation of Condition Application: Variation of condition 3 from planning permission 3/2011/0963 (Proposed change of use of agricultural land to create a winter turnout area/sand paddock for equine use) to allow the condition restricting permission to the applicant to be changed so that it will	Approved with conditions 21.11.2019

	apply to any user of the existing stables.	
3/2024/0906	Advertisement consent: Two free-standing 1500mm x 1000mm composite signs on reverse mounted black steel posts and one 2800mm x 800mm composite tray sign mounted on cladding of existing barn.	Approved with Conditions 30.06.2025
3/2025/0171	Full Planning Application: Change of use of building and associated land from Stables and Dog Groomers (Sui Generis) to an Animal Physiotherapy Centre (Sui Generis).	Approved with Conditions 06.06.2025

Wider Planning History

2.15 An additional planning application submitted for similar development within Ribble Valley can be seen below:

- Full Planning Application (ref: 3/2025/0068) was submitted on the 23.01.2025 for the Proposed construction of a two-bedroom rural workers' self-build dwelling, new access track, package treatment unit and solar panels on existing stables building. This application was approved on the 16.05.2025.

  This application is directly relevant as it related to a rural workers' self-build dwelling at an equestrian physiotherapy/rehabilitation centre, much like the proposals under this application. As such, the principle of development for this application is directly comparable to the proposals under this application.

  The officers report[1] details that although the site is located within the open countryside, the proposals were brought forward inline with Policy DMG2 and Policy DMH3. In relation to Policy DMG2, the officer stated that "*the proposed dwelling for occupancy by a rural worker could be considered essential*", thus allowing the proposal to fall under criteria 1, which states that '*The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area'*. With regard to Policy DMH3 a functional and financial test was carried out and this determined that the functional need for a rural workers dwelling on the site was established.

  It was considered that the proposals were also "*consistent with NPPF Paragraph 84 (a) which allows the provision of a dwelling for a rural worker*".

  With regards to the site's sustainable location, although the site was determined to be some distance away from the Borough's defined settlement areas, with a lack of public transport links, pavements and street lighting, it was considered that "*an isolated site location which will be dependent on private motor vehicle is justified in this case*".

Surrounding Uses:

2.16 The immediate surroundings of the development site are consistent with the proposed use, comprising existing buildings and associated hardstanding which facilitate the current business. This

[1] Officers report, application ref: 3/2025/0068, 16.05.2025

includes a menage area, a grazing area, barn/storage facilities, and the access and egress roads serving these functions.

2.17 Northcote Stud is located to the east of the site, adjacent to Northcote Road. This site houses a larger number of horses than Lower Fold Stables and is used for breeding and training of horses, as well as hosting a number of competitions and events. It also contains an equestrian retail shop, café and licenced bar.

2.18 To the north, east and south the site is bound by open countryside.

2.19 There are no neighbouring residential properties within proximity to the site which could be impacted in terms of amenity.

General Technical Considerations

2.20 The site lies within Flood Zone 1, the lowest classification for flood risk as defined by the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning. The site is also void of land which is subject to risk of surface water flooding.

2.21 The site does not lie within a conservation area, nor does it lie within the immediate setting of any listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets.

2.22 With regards to the topography of the site, the current levels of the site are relatively flat. The topography of the site has been considered in the finalised layout submitted.

2.23 The site contains limited tree cover, however the access track running into the site is bound by tree/hedge coverage to the immediate north, most of which can be retained as part of any scheme of development. It is understood there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the land.

Development Plan Allocations

2.24 As per the Ribble Valley Local Plan proposal map, the site falls outside of the defined settlement boundary for Langho and is therefore designated as open countryside.

2.25 The site does not comprise Green Belt or Nationally protected landscape.

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 This full planning application seeks permission for the:

'The erection of 1 no. rural workers' self-build dwelling, extension to existing building for hay storage, additional stabling and treatment room building, as well as a machinery store.'

3.2 This section summarises the proposal and should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and technical reports.

Rural workers' self-build dwelling

3.3 The proposed rural workers' self-build dwelling comprises a detached configuration and is one and a half storeys in height. It includes a simple elevational form with gable ends and rear dormer windows. Please see the Proposed Manager's Accommodation Elevations and Floor Plans – Ref - 6925 P01D for reference.

3.4 The material pallet for the unit would be of natural stone, vertical timber cladding and stone quoins. The unit will feature natural slate on the roof and a capped angle ridge tile in slate black. Rainwater goods are to be provided in black pvcu. Timber window frames and natural stone surrounds are to be provided on the building's standard elevations, with velux flush fitting rooflights to the front and rear. The properties front door is to be provided in timber, whilst the rear of the property is to feature a powder coated aluminium bi fold door which is to match the window and door frame colours.

3.5 The dwelling will have 2 dedicated parking spaces located at the front of the property, in line with required standards to the unit sizes (bedroom numbers) and separate to the business, visitor parking already function off-site. The unit will also have EV charging point facility installed prior to occupation.

3.6 The dwelling will feature a bin collection point to the front of the proposed driveway and will allow the dwelling to be served by the existing waste collection arrangements for the site.

3.7 Hard landscaping provided surrounding the proposed dwelling will include a private driveway for the property comprising permeable tarmac. Private pathways to and around the property will comprise of sandstone flag paving.

3.8 The dwelling features rear and side amenity space, through the provision of garden, lawned and patio areas that will be enclosed by timber and rail fences and a hedgerow/tree planting screen. This will help the proposal maintain the appropriate amenity and access space around the dwelling for the future prospective occupier/s.

Hay storage extension

3.9 The additional hay storage building will comprise an extension to the existing animal physiotherapy building located on-site. Please see the Proposed Hay Store Extension Elevations and Floor Plans – Ref - 6925 P05A for reference. This extension will comprise of a 82m^2 enlargement of the animal physiotherapy building bringing the total floor space of the building to 467m^2.

3.10 The material pallet for the extension is to marry up with the existing buildings materials. This will feature walls made from metal cladding in dark green and blockwork. The front elevation will feature timber doors on a metal frame, whilst the roof will feature profiled metal sheeting.

Stables, Treatment Room and Machinery Store:

3.11 The proposed additional stables, treatment room and machinery store comprise a new building located to the immediate west of the existing tractor garage. Please see the Proposed Stables and Machinery Store Elevations and Floor Plans – Ref - 6925 P04B for reference. These new buildings on-site will comprise a 162m^2 in new floor space to allow for physiotherapy and INDIBA treatments to be carried out in a confined, isolated and secure environment. This will also allow for the housing of 2 additional horses/ponies and equine machinery required for running the business.

3.12 The material pallet for the stables and machinery store will comprise of timber cladding, timber stable doors, profiled metal roof sheets and widows and rooflights, as well as a singular external roller shutter on the treatment room. This will allow for the proposed buildings to the existing buildings on-site and will ensure that these are inclusive in character.

3.13 The stable, treatment room and machinery store are to adjoin the existing garage on-site, which is currently used for housing a tractor.

Access, Connectivity and Parking

3.14 The proposed dwelling, hey store, stables, treatment room and machinery store will be accessed using the existing access/egress point to the Lower Fold Stables site, located to the western boundary of the land holding where it meets with Northcote Road. This access will sustain all parts of the proposal, with a separate driveway arrangement provided for the proposed dwelling. No Parking provision or driveway will be required to serve the extension to existing facilities, given the yard space currently available.

3.15 Given the established lawful use which comprises an Animal Physiotherapy Centre (Sui Generis), there will be limited access/highways implications. It is not anticipated that the proposed development would intensify or rise to any unacceptable harm in respect of highways safety or capacity.

3.16 The site provides parking provision in line with the adopted parking standards, with 2 x 2.4m spaces provided in front of the proposed dwelling. The parking spaces are also to be immediately served by electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

3.17 The access points and car parking spaces proposed are to accommodate for vehicles belonging to or associated with the owners of the properties.

3.18 The site will be served by council refuse collection operations, as is currently the case.

3.19 Secure cycle storage will be provided alongside the individual units throughout the development by means of storage within associated garden space.

Landscaping

3.20 The submitted plans include a landscape layout in order to demonstrate how the proposal will deliver a high-quality environment. The unit will feature an on-plot gardens to the rear, with a side landscaped garden space which provides the property with visual screening from Northcote Road. Landscaping strips to the front and rear of the property will also be provided with tree and hedge planting proposed to provide an attractive buffer. The proposals also include the introduction of tree, hedge, grass and planting areas to the rear of the proposed properties to provide quality rear amenity space. A specification of this can be found on the Proposed Manager's and Family Accommodation Site Plan and Drainage Strategy – Ref - 6925 P02C.

3.21 The provision of additional planting noted will allow the proposal to enhance the sites open nature, whilst creating a visually attractive development.

4.0 Planning Policy Context and Other Material Considerations

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

> "*In making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise*".

4.2 Therefore, the starting point for the consideration of any planning application is the Development Plan.

4.3 It is also relevant that material considerations will include national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), in respect of the approach to decision making and to support and aims for development relevant to specific policy topics and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). A draft update to NPPF has been released (December 2025) but is not in place for decision making purposes.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

4.4 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

4.5 It establishes '*three overarching objectives'* for sustainable development comprising economic, social and environmental (para. 8). It confirms these objectives '*are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways'*. In respect of the social role, there aim is to support and enhance communities through the provision of a sufficient number and range of homes for the future, whilst creating well designed/attractive places, which have strong amenity provision to benefit community wellbeing.

4.6 NPPF paragraph 39 provides that:

'*Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible*.'

4.7 Paragraph 78 requires LPAs to identify and update housing supply to provide a minimum of 5 years of housing against the local housing need where strategic policies are more than 5 years old[2].

4.8 Paragraph 84 details that policy and decision should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following criteria apply:

a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;

c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

[2] Footnote 39 referencing use of the standard method as per NPPG.

d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or

e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

i. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and

ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

4.9 Paragraph 110 specifies the following:

'*the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making*'.

4.10 Paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

4.11 Other key matters within the NPPF relevant to the proposals include:

- promoting walking, cycling and public transport (Para. 109) and only preventing or refusing development on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network following mitigation would be severe (Para. 116)
- for development to add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development, and to be 'sympathetic to the local character… including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting' and also establish 'a strong sense of place' (Para. 135)
- to assist with protection and enhancing landscapes and biodiversity including via opportunities for net gain (Para 187); and
- to accord with aims for climate change in terms of energy efficiency/ good design (Paras 162/164), and minimising flood risk locations from any form of flooding; with due regard to the sequential testing of sites unless proposals come forward on allocated sites where the applicants need not apply the test again (Para 180).

The Development Plan

4.12 In accordance with Section 70(2) of the 1990 Act and Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, the statutory development plan for the site comprises the RVBC Core Strategy (adopted 2014) (CS) and the RVBC Housing and Economic Development DPD (adopted 2019) (HED) which predate the issue of current NPPF.

4.13 RVBC have begun progression on the Local Plan Review and are currently seeking engagement with residents within the Local Plan Scoping Consultation (Regulation 20). As such, RVBC Consulted upon the Ribble Valley Local Plan Scoping Consultation Document at the Planning and Development Committee on the 25th June 2026. Within this document the council identify a number of key issues,

challenges, opportunities and priority themes that the provision of a new local plan must seek to address.

4.14 In respect of the development plan, the application site lies outside of the settlement boundary and as such is designated as open countryside as per the proposals map.

4.15 The pertinent policies from the CS and HED relevant to the proposals at the site are summarised below:

- DS1 – Spatial Strategy - Within Tier 2 Villages, development will be required to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits.

- DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.

- EN2 – Landscape – requires development schemes to be in keeping with landscape character. Development is also to reflect local distinctiveness, style and scale through development features and materials used.

- EN3 - Sustainable Development and Climate Change – for development to consider sustainable design and construction standard.

- EC1 - Business and Employment Development – seeks to direct employment related development toward principal settlements, employment designated sites and locations well related to the A59 corridor.

- DMI2 - Transport Considerations – all new development should be located sustainably to minimise the need to travel with strong active travel links alongside public transport provision to reduce the need to travel via motor vehicle.

- DMG1 - General Considerations –development proposals are to adhere to principles including (inter alia):

  - Design – to afford high quality design, to be sympathetic to surroundings, to be of correct density and layout, to use sustainable construction techniques and to follow the code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes.

  - Access – to consider all vehicular implications, to provide safe access and egress, to protect and enhance PROW's.

  - Amenity – to not affect the current/pre-existing amenity of the development sites surroundings, to provide adequate distancing and lighting, have regard to public safety (through use of design principles), consider air quality and mitigate against any adverse impacts.

  - Environment – consider environmental impacts (specifically with regards to ecology and biodiversity).

  - Infrastructure – to not result in a net loss of any important open space, consider potential impacts upon local infrastructure provision.

- DMG2 - Strategic Considerations – a two-part policy relevant to location, with part 2 outlining:

  (2) - Outside defined settlement areas or within tier 2 villages - development to meet at least one of five criteria including:

(1) be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area;

- DMG3 - Transport and Mobility – considerable weight is attached to the location and quality of '*public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development'.* Developments are to offer opportune use of public transport, whilst providing adequate car parking spaces in line with current standards.

- DME1 - Protecting Trees & Woodland – requires the conservation of trees and woodland and the enhancement of biodiversity.

- DME2 - Landscape & Townscape Protection –developments will be refused if they significantly harm significant landscape or landscape features.

- DME6 - development is to be strongly resisted where an unacceptable risk from flooding is present.

- DMH3 - Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB – a criteria policy for development to be limited to (1) in assessing proposals for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied.

- DMB1 - Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy – proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle.

5.0 Assessment Against the Development Plan and Other Material Considerations

5.1 This section of the supporting statement assesses the proposal and its compliance with the development plan and other relevant material considerations.

Principle of Development

Rural workers' self-build dwelling

5.2 Given that the site is not located within any of the Borough's defined settlements as laid out within Key Statement DS1, the application will be required to meet Policy DMG2, which reads as the following:

Within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas 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*

5.3 As per the policy criterion above, the provision of a rural worker's self-build dwelling will be progressed under criteria 1. It was previously considered by the Case Officer of application 3/2025/0068 that such a dwelling which would be occupied by a rural worker "*could be considered essential to the local economy of the area".* Due to this proposal being for an identical use (rural workers' self-build dwelling at an equestrian physiotherapy/rehabilitation centre), it is considered that this proposal should be progressed under the same circumstances.

5.4 The progression of the application under this criterion also hinges upon successfully satisfying Policy DMH3, which states the following:

"Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied".

5.5 With regards to the DMH3 wording, please see below the *Functional and Financial Test for used in considering proposals for permanent agricultural, forestry and other essential dwellings* (Ribble Valley Local Plan: Glossary*),* as well as an assessment of how this application meets said test:

1. *Is there a clearly established existing functional need?*

   The proposal site currently has capacity for 8 horses, most of which require 24-hour care at the facility. Horses which are admitted to the facility are often held until they return to fitness, to allow for them to successfully overcome their injuries. Following successful rehabilitation they

are released/returned to owners, with the vacant stable spaces is subsequently filled with a new horse/pony due to high demand. Horses at the facility require regular health checks and often require treatment outside of normal working hours. Furthermore, the security of the equine animals and applicant's equipment also needs to be taken into account. As such, there is an established functional need on the applicant's land holdings at Lower Folds Stable, especially with regard to the growing demand and capacity for treatment and housing of injured equine animals on-site.

Further details of functional need can be found within the supporting **Business Case Statement** submitted alongside this application.

2. *Does the need relate to a full time worker or one who is primarily employed rather than a part time requirement?*

   As referenced within the introduction, the applicant is a full-time worker at the business and is the registered owner. The operation of the business runs 24-hours a day, given the needs of the horses and ponies housed on-site. As noted within the **Business Case Statement**, there are 7 part time staff members, who the applicant relies heavily on for the viability of their business. It is noted however, that the applicant struggles to manage a constant presence on-site which given the nature of the business is concerning, thus the requirement for accommodation on-site.

   Given this, the criterion should be considered as satisfied.

3. *Have the unit and the agricultural activity concerned been established for at least 3 years, been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so?*

   Having regard to financial viability, details of the applicant's financial position are detailed within the **Business Case Statement**. This supports the application and shows the applicant's existing business to be financially sound with a clear prospect of remaining so for the foreseeable future. It also demonstrates a sizable investment into repairs and improvements, as well as state of the art equipment for use at the stables for the benefit of patients and the growth of the business.

   Given this, the criterion should be considered as satisfied.

4. *Could the functional need be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit*

   Having regard to the final requirement, and in the interests of safeguarding the welfare of the horses receiving treatment on site, ensuring the efficient operation of the holding and maintaining the overall security of Lower Fold Stables, it is essential that one full-time worker who is actively involved in the day-to-day management of the equine physiotherapy unit resides on the holding. At present, however, there is no existing dwelling on the holding to accommodate the applicant.

5.6 As per the above, the proposal for a rural workers' self-build dwelling is considered to satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 84 (a) of the NPPF and Policies DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy, even given the sites location within the open countryside.

Principle of Development for both the Hay Storage extension and the Stables and Machinery Store

5.7 Similar to the principle for the rural workers self-build dwelling, the principle for the Hay Storage extension and the Stables and Machinery Store would be required to meet Policy DMG2, as per the sites location within the open countryside. As per the relevant policy criterion, these proposals will also be secured progressed under criteria 1 given they are fundamental/intrinsically related to the on-going financial viability of the business.

5.8 The proposal for said development would also be required to meet the *Functional and Financial Test,* as required to meet policy DMH3. Please see below the relevant assessment for these proposals:

1. *Is there a clearly established existing functional need?*

   The stable and treatment room proposals will allow for the accommodation of an additional 2 horses which require 24-hour care at the facility, as well as additional space for treatment. It is confirmed within the **Business Case Statement** that there is currently a waiting list of patients for rehabilitation, and that the additional stable and treatment room provision would likely allow the applicant to stay on-site, rather than travelling to new patients. It is also noted that the applicant is unable to grow the business with the current number of stables and treatment facilities located on-site.

   Similarly, the provision of a hay storage extension and a machine store will provide the safe, efficient, and sustainable management of the business. Both buildings are directly related to the operational needs of the business and represent standard infrastructure commonly associated with equestrian businesses, and are necessary to support horse welfare, efficient land management, and the ongoing viability of the business.

   As such, there is an established functional need on the applicant's land holdings at Lower Fold Stable, especially with regard to the growing demand and capacity for treatment and housing of equine animals on-site.

2. *Does the need relate to a full time worker or one who is primarily employed rather than a part time requirement?*

   As above, the applicant is a full-time worker at the business and is the registered owner. The operation of the business runs 24-hours a day, given the needs of the horses/ponies housed on-site.

   The provision of additional stable units, a machine store and a hay store extension will allow the applicant, the sole full time employee, to remain and treat more animals at the yard more frequently, rather than having to travel to clients/patients. It is noted within the **Business Case Statement** that the applicant often traves to clients/patients due to the constrained facilities on-site currently.

   Given this, the criterion should be considered satisfied.

3. *Have the unit and the agricultural activity concerned been established for at least 3 years, been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so?*

   As above, details of the applicant's financial position are detailed within the **Business Case Statement.** However, it should be noted that the applicant has been qualified as a Vet Physio for 10 years, whilst the rehabilitation yard has been established for 5 years.

   Given this, the criterion should be considered as satisfied.

4. *Could the functional need be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit*

   The provision of the proposed hay storage extension, stables, treatment room and machinery store could not be fulfilled by any other unit on-site.

   As such, this criteria is also satisfied.

5.9 Overall, the development proposals would support the expansion and growth of AVVP, delivering associated benefits to the local/rural economy. The proposals are should therefore be supported in accordance with the thrust of Policy DMB1.

5.10 The proposals at the site have been carefully thought through and updated after pre-application discussions and with direct regard to the criteria for Policy DMG1:

Design

5.11 As per section 3 above, the development proposals comprise a high standard of building design through the use of high quality and sympathetic materials/features allowing for a style which completements the wider Lower Fold Stables holding and the rural surroundings. The size, scale and massing of the proposals are constant with the current built form at the site and would not result in incongruous development within this location, given the size of the land holding and existing built form.

5.12 Furthermore, the proposed tree and hedgerow planting will provide a substantial green buffer to the development, helping to integrate the proposals into the surrounding landscape. The development will therefore not adversely affect the established landscape character of the area. This will be achieved through the proposed planting along the site boundaries, which will provide appropriate screening of the development from Northcote Road while also limiting views into and out of the site from the surrounding open countryside.

5.13 As per the design of the proposals, the application also takes regard to other relevant design policies such as Policy EN2, EN3 and DME2.

Access

5.14 The traffic impacts of the proposals are considered to be minimal, as the proposed development is not anticipated to result in any unacceptable harm to highway safety or capacity. Users of the site will remain the same, other than for clients of the additional horses that can be housed as a result of the proposals, however, this would not quantify a significant change to visitors on a day-to-day basis.

5.15 The current/existing site access is safe and will support the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated from the proposals.

5.16 The site has access potential via an existing footway which runs toward Langho in line with DMI2, whilst the provision of one additional rural works dwelling should not require compatibility with DMG3.

Amenity

5.17 Given the rural nature of the surrounding area, there are limited residential properties within the immediate vicinity of the Lower Fold Stable Land holding. Northcote Stud contains a residential unit within its grounds, located approximately 35m to the east of the site. The distance between the proposal and this residential unit are far in excess of the council's guidelines. Furthermore, the existing use of Northcote Stud is comparable to that proposed and is therefore unlikely to be sensitive to or impacted by the proposals. On this basis, the proposal is not anticipated to give rise to any significant adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Technical Considerations

Trees and Landscaping

5.18 The development will not adversely impact on-site or perimeter trees; therefore, no removals are proposed. Additional tree and hedgerow planting will be provided, as detailed in the Proposed Manager's and Family Accommodation Site Plan and Drainage Strategy – Ref - 6925 P02C. As such, the development proposal complies with DME1.

5.19 Given the distance, there would be no undue impacts upon Chew Bank Wood BHS (1.1km to the northeast).

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

5.20 A bat survey has been carried out and is provided in the supporting documents to the application.

5.21 The proposed rural workers dwelling will be progressed via self-build exemption and thus isn't required to provide toward BNG.

5.22 Due to the remainder of the site comprising hardstanding/being previously developed, there is limited habitat on site that will be lost as a result of the development, with only 24 square metres of habitat loss on site. As such, this falls under the de minimis threshold for Biodiversity Net Gain and as such is exempt.

5.23 The entirety of the site measures 0.15ha and falls under the 0.2ha cap for BNG provision as recently adopted within Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)).

5.24 Alongside this, the development is to provide onsite greenspace and tree planting in order to enhance the sites biodiversity. Due to this, policy policies DME1, DME3 and DMG1 are met.

Drainage and Flood Risk

5.25 As per the sites location within Flood Zone 1 and the absence of surface water flooding, the site is determined to be free from flood risk.

5.26 As per both the Proposed Overall Site Plan and Drainage Strategy – Ref - 6925 P03C and Proposed Manager's and Family Accommodation Site Plan and Drainage Strategy – Ref - 6925 P02C, a drainage strategy has been incorporated. This allows the proposals to adhere to policy DME6.

5.27 Functionality of the drainage strategy can be obtained via the listed plans above.

Conclusion

5.28 As above, it is apparent that the scheme should be considered as a whole under criteria 1 of policy DMG2 as confirmed under approved application ref: 3/2025/0068.

5.29 It is also clear that the proposals are able to meet the '*Functional and Financial Test for used in considering proposals for permanent agricultural, forestry and other essential dwellings',* as requested via policy DMH3.

5.30 The proposed development has been prepared with due considerations to high levels of design, as well as the site's key characteristics, surroundings and technical matters.

5.31 The proposals have limited to no technical constraints and incorporate a landscaping scheme and drainage strategy.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

6.3 The development has been assessed against relevant local and national planning policy and found to be in general accordance.

6.4 In respect of the three elements of sustainable development of NPPF, the proposal provides significant relevant benefits as follows:

Social

- Provision of a rural works dwelling which is quintessential to the smooth running and viability of a business
- Provision of buildings required for the sustainability and viability of a business
- No material harm to public views
- No undue harm to residential amenities
- Improvement to equine welfare
- Delivery of a high quality and secure living setting for the rural worker

Economic

- Local jobs support for construction companies and related local suppliers during the construction process
- Consumer expenditure from future residents to support local businesses
- The expansion and growth of an existing business
- Additional associated benefits to the local/rural economy

Environmental

- Provision of landscaping and new tree and hedgerow planting to the site whilst maintaining key trees on and around the site
- No undue flood risk to arise and relevant sustainable drainage provision to be made
- No harm to heritage assets

- Delivery of a high-quality built environment that respects neighbouring uses and amenity
- Development of a character and scale which is in keeping with the surroundings in terms of the built and natural environment

6.5 The site is not subject to specific protection and there are clear benefits that a grant of planning permission would deliver in line with the Framework.

6.6 There are no significant adverse impacts of the proposal and the application should be approved.

6.7 Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that RVBC grants planning permission without delay.

MAYBERN

PLANNING + DEVELOPMENT

Appendix 1

Business Case Statement

A key element of the justification for the grant of planning permission for the proposed dwelling, is centred around the specific needs of the business and the nature of how it operates. This Statement therefore largely relates to the specifics of the need for managers accommodation on-site and the reasons why the proposed dwelling is essential, however this Statement also includes elements relating to the other parts of the proposed development (business expansion) by way of explanation.

Existing Site & Business Context

Ailsa Vines Veterinary Physiotherapist was established in 2016. The applicant acquired the application site in July 2020, following an extended period of vacancy during which it had fallen into poor condition. The arena and woodchip areas were overgrown, fencing required repair or replacement, and the stables needed substantial cleaning, decoration and general improvement before they could be brought back into use.

Since acquiring the site, the applicant has undertaken significant repairs and investment. Improvements include internal and external security cameras; fire and intruder alarm systems; upgraded, keypad-operated magnetic doors designed to release in the event of fire; replacement fencing around the arena and site perimeter; two temporary isolation stables; six rehabilitation paddocks; and resurfacing of the woodchip turnout area.

Before acquiring the site, the business operated solely on a mobile basis, with the applicant travelling to clients' yards to provide physiotherapy treatments. The premises have enabled the business to expand into residential rehabilitation, allowing horses and ponies to receive structured care following injury, surgery or veterinary treatment.

In 2023, the business invested approximately [redacted] in an INDIBA radiofrequency treatment device. The applicant is the only registered trainer in Lancashire to acquire this specialist equipment. Its availability is a significant reason why clients are referred to and travel to the facility.

Current Use of the Site

The land in and surrounding the application site (as edged blue in the submission documents) is used for grazing, with part rested for approximately four months during the summer so that grass can be cut, baled and wrapped to provide good-quality forage for horses accommodated at the site. A woodchip turnout area is available for animals whose diets or medical needs prevent grass turnout.

The main stable building accommodates rehabilitation patients. The wash box currently doubles as the treatment area for resident horses and animals attending one-off appointments. The building also contains a combined office, meeting and kitchen space, but lacks the separate staff, meeting, kitchen and welfare facilities expected of a modern operation.

Two temporary wooden isolation stables were erected to manage newly admitted horses and reduce the risk posed by contagious diseases, including strangles and equine influenza. The current operational capacity is eight resident rehabilitation patients, with the isolation units providing temporary separation rather than additional permanent capacity. The business has no use of any other land or premises.

Existing Equestrian Operations

[redacted]

The yard is currently staffed between approximately 8.00 am and 2.30 pm, with evening cover generally provided between 5.30 pm and 7.00 pm. [redacted] Cameras are monitored continuously, but where an incident occurs outside staffed hours, the business must rely on local staff or family members until the applicant can reach the site. Remote surveillance cannot provide the physical assessment or immediate intervention that may be required.

Furthermore, horses and ponies housed on-site may need to be collected from or returned to the premises outside regular working hours, at weekends, or on a 24/7 emergency basis, including following treatment at equine hospitals or injury.

In addition to residential rehabilitation, the business provides occasional holiday livery for former patients whose owners cannot maintain their rehabilitation programmes while away. Individual riding sessions may be arranged to support continued recovery, and the applicant currently delivers INDIBA training for veterinary and physiotherapy professionals. Veterinary surgeons also occasionally hold educational evenings for horse owners at the site.

Financial Position

The business has an annual turnover of approximately [redacted] and annual running costs of around [redacted]. It operates profitably while continuing to fund improvements and specialist equipment.

The applicant provides mobile physiotherapy services at private and professional yards on two or three days each week. This work remains important to the business, supporting investment in equipment such as H-Wave and INDIBA systems while also generating referrals for residential rehabilitation.

The business is operated by the applicant with family support and five part-time members of staff.

Need for Development

The development is required to support the safe operation and sustainable growth of the business. Its central purpose is to enable a suitably qualified manager to live at the site and provide an immediate response when a horse or pony requires attention outside normal staffed hours.

The business accommodates animals recovering from surgery, injury, sedation and medication. Some require dressings to be checked and repositioned, medication to be administered at prescribed intervals, feeding to be delayed following treatment, or signs of deterioration to be identified promptly. Horses are also susceptible to acute conditions such as colic, where early recognition and intervention can be critical. Stallions and animals with serious or complex conditions may require particularly close supervision.

[redacted]

rehabilitation and management. [redacted] horses at a [redacted], resulting in lost business.

The existing stabling and treatment arrangements also restrict growth. The business regularly turns away work because it cannot accommodate further patients. The proposed additional stabling would increase capacity, while a dedicated treatment room would provide a cleaner, more controlled and bio secure environment. Relocating treatments from the existing wash box would also allow that space to be returned to stable use.

Without the development, the business would remain constrained by [redacted], [redacted] arrangements and repeated [redacted]. The proposal would enable a safer, more efficient and financially sustainable operation and supports the case that there is an essential functional need for a rural worker to live permanently at the place of work, in accordance with relevant national planning policy.

The Proposed Development

The proposed manager's accommodation is required to enable a permanent, 24-hour presence at the site, allowing an immediate response where any horse or pony requires emergency attention. As the operator has a duty of care to all animals accommodated at the premises, an on-site presence is integral to their safety and welfare while also enabling the practical integration of business and family responsibilities.

Many horses arrive following surgery or treatment and require careful monitoring while recovering from sedation or other medication. Dressings must be regularly checked to ensure they remain correctly positioned and continue to provide the necessary support or pressure. Some horses cannot be fed immediately upon arrival and therefore require later checks and feeding, while others may need medication administered at prescribed intervals, including during the evening or overnight.

The accommodation would provide reassurance to customers that their horses and ponies are being supervised around the clock. It would also allow horses arriving later in the day to receive appropriate overnight monitoring and enable any deterioration in their condition to be identified and addressed promptly.

Equine care fundamentally requires a physical presence because horses can experience rapid changes in health, including potentially serious digestive complications. Their welfare depends upon regular observation, consistent feeding routines and an immediate response to emergencies. The proposed accommodation would therefore support the operator's professional duty of care and recognised equine welfare practices.

The manager, Ailsa Vines, holds a First-Class Honours degree in Zoology and a postgraduate diploma with distinction in Veterinary Physiotherapy. She is registered with the National Association of Veterinary Physiotherapists and also holds an Equine Body Worker Certificate. In addition, she is a fully qualified INDIBA practitioner and trainer, with approximately ten years' post-qualification professional experience.

Proposed Facilities and Services

The business treats a wide range of complex cases, including horses discharged following spinal or back surgery, neurectomy, ligament procedures and joint conditions. It also rehabilitates animals affected by tendon and ligament injuries, serious wounds, hoof injuries, gastric ulcers, severe lameness and allergies. This is done via hands on vet physio and INDIBA treatments.

The facility complements rather than duplicates the work of veterinary surgeries and hospitals. Following acute clinical treatment, it provides the longer-term care that veterinary establishments do not generally offer, including extended box rest, controlled hand-walking, managed turnout in purpose-built paddocks, medication and hands-on veterinary physiotherapy.

This service is particularly important where owners cannot safely deliver prescribed rehabilitation at home. Horses may become distressed when confined at their usual yard; owners working full time may be unable to provide regular exercise, monitoring or medication; and conventional livery yards may lack individual turnout areas or appropriately trained staff.

The proposed facilities would allow treatment to take place in a dedicated environment, increase residential capacity and enable exercise and turnout to be arranged according to each animal's clinical needs rather than existing staff availability.

Scale and Operation

Following completion, the site would accommodate approximately 11 or 12 horses and ponies at any one time.

Visitor numbers would remain limited and would vary according to individual cases. Veterinary surgeons and farriers would attend when required, while owners may arrange visits, typically lasting around one hour, to review progress. One-off treatment appointments currently take place on one or two days each week. Reduced travelling time would allow the applicant to manage these appointments more efficiently and accommodate a modest increase in visiting patients.

Although routine activities would continue to be managed during normal working periods, the nature of the service requires 24-hour operational availability. Emergency admissions can arise without notice, discharge times from veterinary hospitals may change according to an animal's recovery, and horses may need to leave the site from approximately 6.00 am to attend early veterinary appointments.

The urgency of admissions is illustrated by a horse brought to the site immediately after becoming trapped in sheep-wire fencing and sustaining serious injuries to both hind legs. It remained at the premises for six months and made a full recovery. Other admissions follow planned surgery, but their timing can still change at short notice. An on-site manager would allow the business to respond safely and promptly in each circumstance.

Ancillary Training and Education

No retail activity is proposed. The development would, however, support occasional professional training and educational activities ancillary to the principal rehabilitation use. These would include training for veterinary physiotherapists and INDIBA practitioners, educational evenings, veterinary talks and professional knowledge-sharing sessions.

As demand grows, the applicant may also train an additional veterinary physiotherapist. This would increase the availability of specialist skills and support the future resilience of the business without introducing a separate events or training use.

Business Personnel Needs

The development would support the recruitment of a part-time administrative assistant and the training of additional personnel. This would establish a reliable pool of competent staff able to cover holidays, sickness and childcare-related absences.



The proposal would therefore reduce operating costs, improve staffing resilience and provide a stronger financial basis for continued operation.

Employment and Economic Benefits

The proposal is expected to create one or two part-time positions, comprising an administrative assistant and potentially a trainee veterinary physiotherapist. The latter would provide an opportunity for specialist training and professional development within the equine rehabilitation sector.

The business supports veterinary practices, farriers and other equestrian service providers. Practices with which it works include Oakhill Equine Vets, Gillivervet, North West Equine Vets, Orrell & Davies, Aireworth Vets, Hambleton Equine Clinic, Leahurst Equine Hospital and Rainbow Equine Hospital. Increased patient capacity would generate additional work for these providers.

Feed is purchased from Ribble Valley Animal Feeds, and higher occupancy would increase expenditure with this local supplier. Recovering horses may subsequently use nearby facilities or compete at Northcote Stud, while owners visiting from outside the area contribute to local pubs, restaurants and other services.

The business also uses local farmers for muck removal, repairs to fencing and hedge trimming.

The development would therefore create employment and produce wider economic benefits through increased use of local suppliers, professional services and hospitality businesses.

Demand and Market Evidence

Demand is evidenced by a regular waiting list, positive client feedback and continuing referrals from veterinary professionals and previous clients. The applicant's professional reputation and success within the national show ring also generate enquiries.

The geographical reach of the client base demonstrates the limited availability of comparable provision. During the previous year, horses were admitted from Staffordshire, Cheshire, West Wales, Cumbria and Yorkshire, in addition to clients within an approximately 60-mile radius. In one case, a client travelled around six and a half hours each way to use the facility.

There is no directly comparable business in Lancashire. HLS, approximately 10 miles away, and Readwood, around five miles away, provide water-treadmill rehabilitation but do not offer an equivalent service. Neither provides an on-site veterinary physiotherapist, comparable specialist equipment or year-round turnout across fields, rehabilitation paddocks and woodchip areas.

The business occupies a distinct position in the market by combining qualified assessment, veterinary physiotherapy, INDIBA treatment and structured residential rehabilitation. The applicant is also trained in specialist bandaging, wound care, medication administration and temperature monitoring, enabling care to be delivered in accordance with veterinary discharge instructions.

The proposed development would respond directly to demonstrated demand by increasing capacity and enabling the business to provide the continuous supervision required for complex and post-operative cases.