The River House, Balderstone Hall Lane, Balderstone. BB2 7LA

Replacement of existing outbuilding with holiday cottage and garage.

Planning Statement

December 2015
PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING DOMESTIC OUTBUIDLING WITH A HOLIDAY COTTAGE COMBINED WITH GARAGING. THE RIVER HOUSE, BALDERSTONE HALL LANE, BALDERSTONE.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning statement is in support of a planning application to replace an existing domestic outbuilding with a new outbuilding to be used as holiday accommodation. The rationale behind the proposed development is to boost the facilities for tourism in the area. The statement summarises the description of the site, the proposed development and its compliance with the development plan and national planning policy.

2.0 APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The site is located approximately 1.3km west of the village of Balderstone and 3km from Mellor Brook. It stands in a stunning location on the banks of the river Ribble. The site is close to the established visitor attractions of Brockholes Visitor Centre, Huntley’s and Dowson Visitor Centre. There is easy access form the site to an extensive public footpath network, public footpath 68 passes to the west of the site. The applicants have fishing rights at the site on the banks of the river Ribble. The site comprises the dwelling The River House and its outbuildings which are set within a group of buildings including the Baldestone Hall Farm Balderston Hall and Sheepfoot Farm. The River House is semi-detached with Balderstone Hall Farm. Vehicular access to the site is directly off Balderstone Hall Lane which is an adopted highway. The surrounding land is in agricultural use and the landscape is open in character. The site lies in open countryside as define in the adopted Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

Planning History

2.2 The following planning applications have relevance to the site:

- Application 3/2005/0572 – Balderstone Hall Farm, small lean-to extension to rear of building approved 02/08/2005
- Application 3/2013/0341 – The River House proposed single storey rear extension refused 10/06/2013
3.0 **SCHEME PROPOSALS**

3.1 The development being proposed is the replacement of an existing domestic outbuilding with a new purpose built holiday unit. The proposed development is described in the following drawings:

4820 004E Existing site plan
4820 005 Existing outbuilding plans and elevations
4820 006E Proposed site plan
4820 007D Proposed Plans and Elevation
4820 009-Location plan

Details of the materials to be used, a tree survey, bat survey and a flood risk assessment are also supplied.

3.2 The proposed holiday cottage with garage will replace the existing domestic outbuilding. The existing building has a footprint of 17.6m by 10.75m and is 5.1m to the ridge and 3.2m to the eaves. It is constructed with horizontal timber boards, profiled metal sheet and blockwork to the walls and a corrugated sheet roof. The proposed outbuilding has a footprint of 22m by 7.7m and is 5.4m to the ridge. The materials chosen following pre-application advice are horizontal cedar cladding above natural stone to the walls, Kingspan corrugated sheet roofing coloured grey with powder coated aluminium composite doors and windows also coloured grey. The materials reflect the appearance of many agricultural buildings in the area.

3.3 The site is in a unique and beautiful location which would be attractive to holiday visitors. The site can provide a specialist and highly sought after opportunity to fish the river. Most fishing rights being privately owned or belonging to angling societies and not easily obtained by holiday makers.

1 and 2. Views of the river Ribble from the site. The site benefits from fishing rights.
4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted 2014) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

Core Strategy (2014)

4.2 The following policies are of relevance to the proposal:

- Policy DMB3: Recreation and tourism development – planning permission will be granted for development proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities in the borough. Proposals must be physically well related to an existing main settlement or village or to an existing group of buildings. The development should not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design.

- Key Statement EC3: Visitor Economy - Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley will be encouraged, including the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities through the conversion of existing buildings or associated with existing attractions. Significant new attractions will be supported, in circumstances where they would deliver overall improvements to the environment and benefits to local communities and employment opportunities.

- Policy DMG1: General Considerations – sets out various criteria to be considered in assessing planning applications, including a high standard of building design, proposed development being sympathetic to existing land uses, highway safety and not adversely affecting the amenities of the area.

- Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations - Development in the open countryside is appropriate where is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area. Development in the open countryside will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its design, use of materials, landscaping, and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.

- Policy 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.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) lists 12 core planning principles which should underpin decision taking. Within the core principles (para. 17), the following policy references are relevant to this application:

- Support sustainable economic development to deliver the...businesses...that the country needs
- ...take account of the different roles and character of different areas... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it
- ...respond positively to wider opportunities for growth
- ...deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs

4.4 ‘Supporting a prosperous rural economy’ section of the Framework states that planning should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings should be supported. In addition, sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside should also be looked upon favourably according to para. 28.

5.0 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

5.1 Pre-application advice was provided by Planning Officer Rachel Horton on the 16th September reference RV/2015/ENQ/00115\(^1\). This confirmed that in principle the proposed holiday let is acceptable and that the design of the proposed building as also acceptable and compliant with policy DMH5 of the Core Strategy.

5.2 Rachel Horton suggested amendments to the scheme including keeping the whole of the development within the existing curtilage of the site, that the proposed building be constructed with cedar cladding above natural stone to the northern, southern and western elevations to give provide a similar appearance to functional agricultural buildings. She suggested dark coloured corrugated material be proposed as the roof covering. These suggestions have been incorporated into the scheme.

5.3 It was noted that the main view from the proposed holiday cottage would be towards the river and that this elevation is proposed to be completely glazed. Concern was raised that the eventual proposal might include a balcony or decking which could potentially affect the trees in this location and be harmful to the appearance of the area. A large overhanging eaves is provided on the glazed

\(^1\) See appendix
elevation facing the river with bi fold doors so that the lounge area can be opened in fine weather to enjoy the view.

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.

6.2 Both the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Key Statement EC3 Visitor Economy) and the NPPF prioritise the growth of the rural economy and see the promotion of rural sustainable tourism as a way in which this can be achieved. Policy DMB3 Recreation and tourism development sets out how the Council wish to encourage the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities.

6.3 Policy DMB3 relates directly to recreation and tourism development and the proposal is in conformity with its requirements. The holiday accommodation will extend the range of tourism facilities in the Borough. It is physically well related to and existing group of buildings. It would not harm the character quality or visual amenity of the countryside since is replaces an existing larger building of inferior materials and replaces it with a smaller high quality, well-designed building. The building is set within an existing residential curtilage and so will not expand the site into undeveloped agricultural land. The site is served by an adopted highway and the levels of traffic associated with the use would not harm highway safety.

6.4 Policy DMG2 is also satisfied since the development of the holiday cottage complies with criteria 4 of the policy because it is directly related to small scale tourism or recreational development appropriate to a rural area. It is in keeping with the character of the open countryside. The policy says “where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build”. The wording of this policy allows that in some cases new build will be appropriate and that not all tourism accommodation need be created by the conversion of an existing building. In this case the existing building could be converted to holiday accommodation but the resulting building would be inferior in terms of design and impact on the landscape than to the building which is proposed. It is reasonable to apply the exception in this case so that the accommodation can be provided in a new building.

6.5 Policies DMB3 and DMG2 underpin the sustainable development strategy set out in Key Statement EC3 in support of the visitor economy. The proposed development is close to several local visitor attractions at Brockholes, Dowsons visitor centre and Huntleys. The site also has the potential to offer recreational activity in the form of fishing and walking routes. Policy DMG2 seeks to ensure that, for the purpose of delivering sustainable development, development is in accordance with the Core Strategy Development Strategy and supports the spatial vision. It indicates that outside defined settlement areas, development should meet at least one of a number of considerations. We have demonstrated that the proposal is compliant with this policy and therefore the proposal represents sustainable development.
6.6 The outbuilding that it is proposed to replace has been in domestic use in association with The River House for at least 10 years. The building was included in the domestic curtilage as shown on the plans for the original conversion of the barn to dwellings. The proposed replacement building includes garaging.

*Trees*

6.7 A tree report has been submitted with the application which indicates that there are two trees close to the building. These are identified as T1 horse chestnut and T2 white willow. The proposed holiday cottage will not compromise the root protection area of these trees.

*Flood risk*

6.8 A flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application. The report advises that the site of the holiday cottage is within Flood Zone 2. It recommends that the floor level of the holiday cottage should be set 300mm above the existing ground levels and that a flood warning and evacuation strategy is devised so that the site owners and guests are aware of the risk, understand their responsibilities and are aware of the safest point of refuge. The design of the holiday cottage has been amended to incorporate the raising of the floor level. The flood warning and evacuation strategy can be required by a planning conditions to be provided before the cottage is first occupied.

*Protected species*

6.9 A protected species survey has been carried out. The report concludes that the building is located in an area with high value foraging potential however the building does not provide high value roost potential, there are no signs that it is currently used or has been used in the past for roosting, maternity or hibernation. The removal of this building will not disturb an existing bat roost or remove any potential habitat. It is highly unlikely that any bats will be uncovered or harmed.

### 7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 This statement has set out the case for the proposed holiday accommodation following positive pre-application advice from the Council. The proposed holiday accommodation with garaging will be a significant improvement on the visual appearance and impact on the visual qualities of the countryside and the setting of the non-designated heritage asset when compared to the existing building. It also has the potential to assist the local economy through the provision of tourism accommodation in an appropriate form and in an appropriate location.
Appendix

Pre-application advice

From: Rachel Horton [mailto:Rachel.Horton@ribblevalley.gov.uk]
Sent: 16 September 2015 14:30
To: Judith Douglas <judith@jdixontownplanners.co.uk>
Cc: Stephen Kilmartin <Stephen.Kilmartin@ribblevalley.gov.uk>

Judith

Following our meeting on the 1st of September it appeared that the intention was to erect a building on the site of the existing single storey domestic outbuilding for the purpose of a holiday-let as opposed to a annex which was initially put forward within the pre-app. I can confirm that the principle of a holiday-let as proposed is acceptable, I also indicated that an annex would be acceptable in principle subject to the building being of an appropriate design and compliant with DMH5 of the Core Strategy.

With regards to the proposed rear extension, I have reviewed the planning history of the site, and on balance, I am of the opinion that the size, design and materials used are appropriate. I did however mention that it was not clear from the plan submitted (4820-SK2) how the ridge height and integration with the existing cill levels would be resolved. This should be made clear if an application is forthcoming and the Authority would not wish to see large lead cut-outs to the roof of the extension to resolve this matter as the proposed roofscape is likely to be appear unsympathetic and detract from the main dwelling.

With regards to the proposed holiday-let I have no objection in principle to the erection of this building subject to its compliance with policies DMG1, DMB1, DMB3, DMG2 and EC3 of the Core Strategy. I would however suggest the following is taken into account:

- I noted from the PROW to the south of 'The River House' (FP4) that the southern elevation of the building lies directly on the site boundary. Your client mentioned that she may intend to incorporate a walkway around the building. It would appear from the proposed site plan that the building is to be located slightly northwards thus leaving space to the rear. Please ensure that the building and any landscaping is kept well within the limits of the properties boundary/residential curtilage.
- I noted that the two large storage buildings on the site as viewed from the main access road and PROW due to the materials used in their construction appear as agricultural buildings which are typical within this locality. I would certainly suggest that the northern, southern, and western elevation are constructed of cedar cladding with natural stone to the base of a colour/texture to
match the main property to maintain their appearance as functional agricultural buildings. With regards to the glazing element to the eastern elevation my colleague Stephen Kilmartin has suggested a design approach and has advised that he can work on some sketches for you to view prior to the submission of a formal application. The file will therefore be passed to Stephen in my absence. With regards to roofing materials a sedum roof was suggested. Following my site visit I consider that a darker material more akin to the existing corrugated roof would be preferable, which again would maintain the former agricultural appearance of the site, and Stephen can advise upon an appropriate material.

Lastly, it is not clear from the plans submitted whether any hard or soft landscaping is proposed. Please ensure that this is clarified within any subsequent application and that any landscaping is kept to a minimal and does not include hard fencing/walls or balconies. In my opinion any domestic paraphernalia such as outdoor furniture, washing lines cannot be controlled and have an urbanising effect which would not be appropriate within this predominantly rural locality. As the eastern elevation is predominantly glazed this would suggest that the preference is for occupants of the holiday-let to enjoy views over the river. This is currently compounded by the fact that a cluster of trees mark the eastern boundary of the site. I would not wish to see the total loss/removal of these trees or the erection of any decking/balcony to this elevation which could potentially harm the visual amenity of the area and result in damage to the root systems of the existing trees. If any are to be removed please ensure that this is made clear within the full Arboricultural Impact Assessment /Tree Constraints Plan. Please be mindful that there is a general presumption against the removal of individual trees other than in exceptional circumstances where satisfactory works of mitigation or enhancement would be achieved, including rebuilding, replanting and landscape management (refer to DME2 of the Core Strategy).

You asked as to whether a Bat Survey would be required. Conservation Officer Dave Hewitt upon inspecting the plans and photos of the site has confirmed that one would be required and as the site is likely to be an active area for bats given the proximity to the river and woodland he did suggest that provisions be made for building dependent species of conservation concern (artificial bird nesting boxes and artificial bat roosting sites). Furthermore, he also advised that as the development is within influencing distance of a cluster of mature and semi-mature trees and shrubs a Full Arboricultural Impact Assessment is required and all trees should be plotted/identified on a scaled plan with the DBH.

The site lies within flood zone 1 and 2. The Authority no longer consult the Environment Agency with regards to pre-app enquiries but refer to their standing advice. I would suggest that you refer to their general standing advice and guidance as to when a FRA is required which can be found via the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/flood-risk-assessment-for-planning-applications

For information your client should be mindful that any attempt in the future to remove a condition restricting the occupancy of the building as a holiday-let so that it could be marketed/occupied as a
separate residential dwelling would be refused due to it being contrary to the Development Strategy of the Borough (refer to DS1 and DMH3 of the Core Strategy).

Lastly, please refer to the e-mail below from LCC highways.

I trust that the above has answered your enquiry and please be mindful of the fact that the above advice has been given on the basis of the level of information submitted as part of the pre-planning enquiry, which sought guidance on the general principle of erecting a holiday-let and single storey rear extension to the main dwelling; the position may be otherwise if there are additional or different material facts. My comments represent officer opinion only, at the time of writing, given without prejudice to the final determination of any application submitted.

Regards

Rachel Horton
Pre-Planning Advice Officer

From: Bloomer, David [mailto:David.Bloomer@lancashire.gov.uk]
Sent: 11 September 2015 13:35
To: Rachel Horton

Afternoon Rachel,

Balderstone Lane is adopted for its full length, I would be unlikely to raise any objection to the proposal as it is for a holiday let and therefore unlikely to generate either a significant level of traffic or movements during the peak hours. I would have concerns if the unit were to change to a residential unit as the likelihood would be a 2 car family unit generating vehicle movements during peak hours.

In terms of design, it is uncommon for holiday lets to benefit from garaged parking. If it is deemed necessary then I would ask that consideration be given to the removal of permitted development rights for the garage space to be converted to a habitable room.

Dave Bloomer

Highways Development Control

Lancashire County Council