

Ribble Valley Country and Leisure Park Extension Planning Statement

Park Leisure

July 2021

LICHFIELDS

LICHFIELDS

Lichfields is the pre-eminent planning and development consultancy in the UK

We've been helping create great places
for over 50 years.

lichfields.uk

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
	Purpose of the Statement	1
	Background	1
2.0	Site and Surroundings	2
	Planning History	4
3.0	Proposed Development	6
4.0	Planning Policy Context	7
	Development Plan	7
	National and Local Planning Policy and Guidance	8
5.0	Assessment	10
	Principle of Development	10
	Additional Considerations	12
6.0	Conclusion	16

1.0 Introduction

Purpose of the Statement

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Park Leisure 2000 Limited [Park Leisure] to assist the Council in its consideration of a full planning application on land to the south-east of the existing Ribble Valley Country & Leisure Park, for:

“Change of use of land to form an extension of Ribble Valley Country and Leisure Park to facilitate an additional 95 static caravan pitches (allowing a total of 420 pitches across the park), associated highway works, sewage treatment plant and pumping station, improvements to the existing open space and the creation of additional open space, landscaping, and other associated works”

- 1.2 This Statement considers the proposal’s conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national policy and guidance, as well as any other material considerations having regard to Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70 (2) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

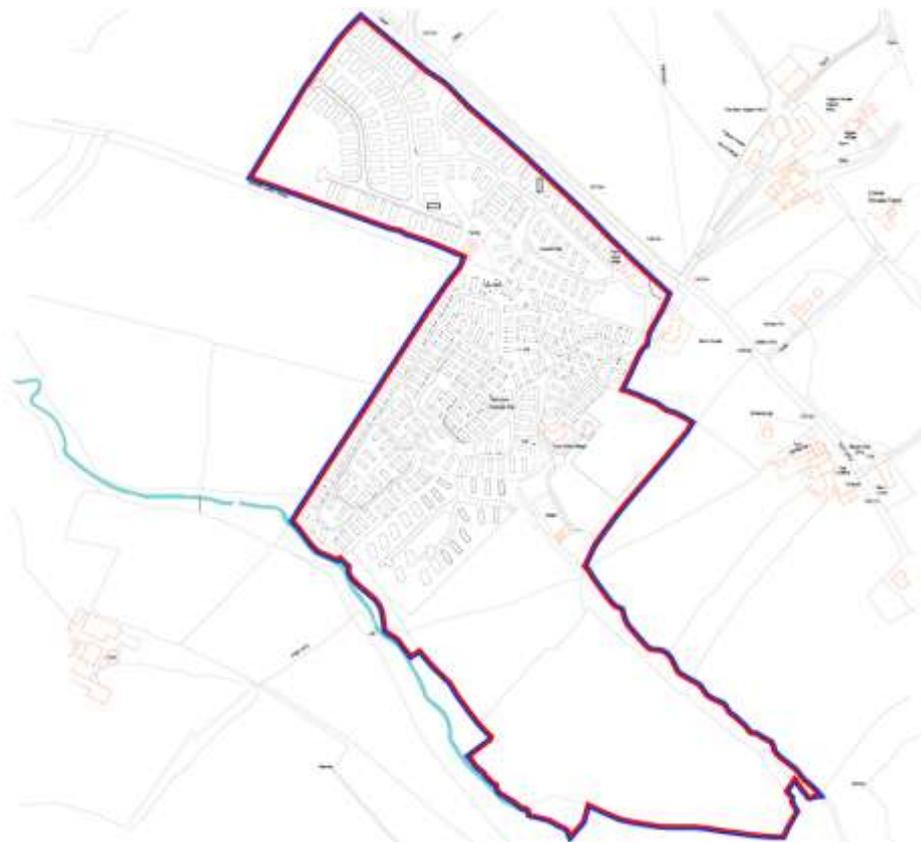
Background

- 1.3 Park Leisure is a tourism and leisure operator who own several holiday parks around the UK including the well-established Ribble Valley Country & Leisure Park [the Park], which currently has planning permission for up to 325 pitches on site.
- 1.4 Demand for UK holiday parks and static pitches in particular has seen significant growth in recent years. This trend which has been intensified by Covid 19 and appears highly likely to continue in the post pandemic recovery period. In response to increasing demand, Park Leisure is looking to expand a number of sites across its portfolio including at the Ribble Valley Country & Leisure Park. The proposed extension is on land that is already owned by Park Leisure as part of their existing land interests at the Park.
- 1.5 It is considered that the proposed development accords with local and national policy and will bring significant benefits to the local economy. These details are set out in this Planning Statement.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The Ribble Valley Country & Leisure Park sits adjacent to the small village of Paythorne, Clitheroe. The wider surroundings of the Park are predominantly rural, comprising of moorland, agricultural land and several farms. The nearest town is Barnoldswick, which is situated circa 7 km to the south-east.
- 2.2 The planning application red edge site boundary extends to 16.8 hectares [Ha] as defined on the Site Location Plan (ref. 4528-100B) submitted with the application and shown below for reference.

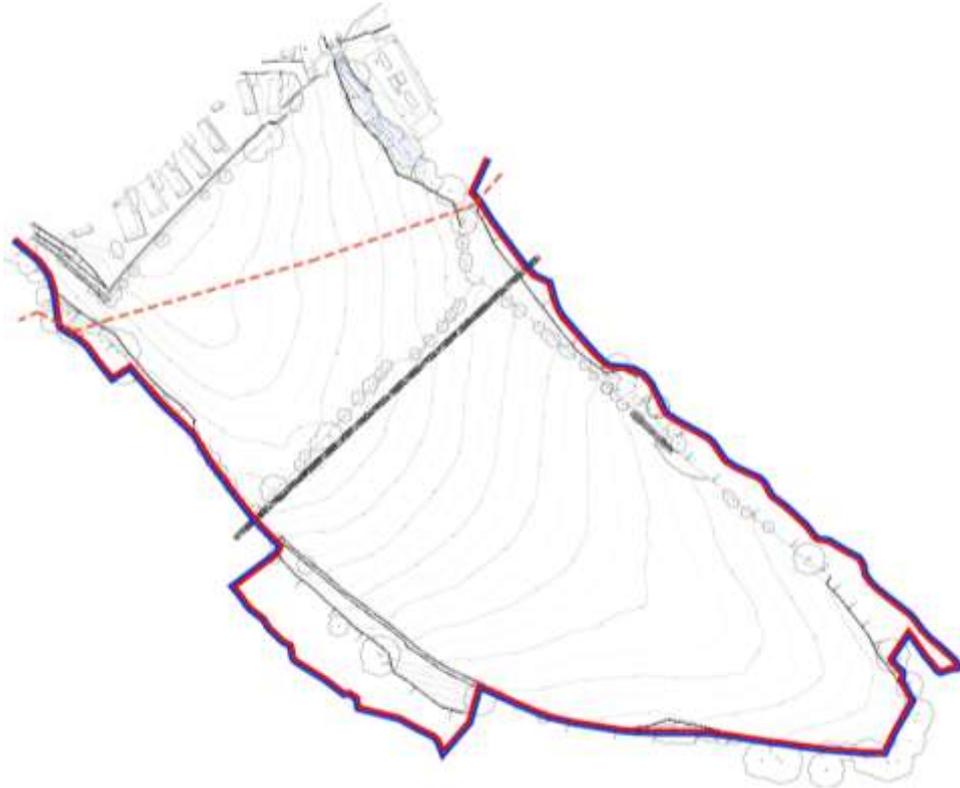
Figure 2.1 Application Site Boundary



- 2.3 This includes 11.1 Ha comprising the core area of the existing Holiday Park which is proposed to be retained, and 5.7 Ha to accommodate the proposed extension. The application seeks the change of use of the extension land from agriculture to facilitate the expansion of the Holiday Park. There is no physical development proposed within the existing Holiday Park as part of this application to the retained site area except the improved open space. This is likely to include the provision of play equipment in the western corner of the existing Park. The existing Holiday Park benefits from an extant permission for that use (a detailed planning history is set out in the following section of this report). The planning application is submitted with the red edge around the entire proposed holiday park to include the proposed open space improvements and so that the operational relationship between the existing Holiday Park and the proposed extension is clear.

- 2.4 The impact of the proposed development is focused in the location of the proposed extension (as shown edged red in Figure 2.2 below) and it is for this reason that this report focuses on this part of the site.

Figure 2.2 Expansion Site



- 2.5 The proposed expansion area comprises two parcels of vacant, greenfield land to the immediate south-east of the existing Park; adjoining its south/south eastern boundary. The immediately adjoining section of the Park is occupied by a cluster of holiday homes which comprise the most recent development at the Park and these parcels of land (i.e. the expansion site) represent the most logical extension to the Park.
- 2.6 The topography of the parcels slope upwards, towards the centre of the site. The parcels are well-contained with mature woodland at the western, eastern and southern boundaries. The existing trees and hedgerow along each of these borders create a strong sense of enclosure. Various trees within these boundaries are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. The combination of the existing vegetation along with the surrounding rolling topography mean from the site there are limited views beyond the parcel boundaries. The application site sits in close proximity to Ancient Woodland and UK BAP Woodland Habitat to the south-east, and the very south east portion of the site falls partially within the 15 m protective buffer zone for this woodland.
- 2.7 The application site sits within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding. Two watercourses, the Twin Gills (also known as the Twyn Ghylls), run along the northern and southern boundaries of the application site, within the areas of mature woodland, broadly reflecting the delineation of the application site boundaries. Both watercourses flow in an easterly direction and converge into a single watercourse to the east of the application site, which goes on to discharge into the River Ribble.

- 2.8 The Twin Gills and associated woodland to the north and south of the application site are identified as a Biological Heritage Site [BHS]. This site is referred to as Twin Gills (ref. 85SW07) and extends to around 2.25ha. There are no national or international designations within the vicinity of the site. It does however lie in the outside impact zone of a number of such features.
- 2.9 There are no statutory designated or locally designated heritage assets within the site. The nearest designated heritage assets are the Paythorne Methodist Church (Grade II Listed: UID 1072083) which is located circa 230 m north of the application site boundary, and Paythorne Bridge (Scheduled and Grade II Listed: UID 1072082) which sits circa 300 m south-east of the site boundary. Given the separation distance and intervening woodland, the application site has very limited inter-visibility with these heritage assets.
- 2.10 A Public Right of Way (reference 3-31-FP-23) passes through the western part of the application site on a broadly east-west orientation, cutting through the areas of woodland on the northern and southern boundaries of the application site.

Planning History

- 2.11 The application site itself comprises undeveloped greenfield land with no identified planning history. Table 1 below sets out the planning history of the adjoining Park.

Table 1 Planning History of Ribble Valley Country and Leisure Park

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
3/2020/0146	Construction of a bulk LPG storage facility	Approve	01/05/2020
3/2016/0305	Discharge of condition(s) 5 (Ecology Management Plan), 6 & 7 (Trees and Hedges), 8 (Caravan Colour Scheme) of planning permission 3/2015/0567.	Conditions 5, 6, 7, 8 discharged	31/05/2016
3/2015/0567	Change of use of land for creation of an extension to the existing caravan site to accommodate 30 additional units, informal recreation space, landscaping and associated engineering works.	Approve	12/02/2016
3/2012/0920	Application to vary condition no. 4 of planning permission 3/2007/0010P, to allow the entire caravan park to be used for 12-month holiday use.	Approve	11/12/2012
3/2007/0010	Change of use of vacant agricultural land to form an extension of Twyn Ghyll Caravan Park consisting of an additional 75 static holiday caravan pitches, associated highway improvements and new sewage treatment plant.	Approve	14/09/2007
3/2004/0800	Replacement of existing store/LPG area.	Approve	23/09/2004
3/2004/0697	Upgrading works to site entrance	Approve	25/08/2004
3/2003/0787	Change of use from vacant agricultural land to form an extension of Twyn Ghyll Holiday Park, consisting of an additional 75 holiday static caravan pitches	Withdrawn	08/03/2004

Source: Ribble Valley Council Planning Register

2.12 To summarise, this site was originally purchased by Park Leisure with permission for 220 pitches. In 2007 Park Leisure secured permission (ref. 3/2007/0010) to add 75 more pitches at the park. In 2012 condition 4 of the 2007 permission was varied to allow the entire site to be used for 12 month holiday use (ref. 3/2012/0920). A further permission (ref. 3/2015/0567) for 30 additional pitches at the park was gained in 2016. A number of conditions attached to permission 3/2015/0567 were discharged in 2016 (ref. 3/2016/0305) and works have since commenced. At present there is planning permission (and a site licence) for 325 pitches with only 316 pitches in situ.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the extension of the existing Ribble Valley Country & Leisure Park, to accommodate 95 additional static pitches together with associated roadways and soft landscaping.
- 3.2 The Proposed Site Layout Plan shows the location of the proposed pitches and their orientation around a large central area of open and green amenity space. This layout has been determined by landscape analysis which has considered the topography and openness of the site.
- 3.3 This central area of open space opens out in the western part of the site to accommodate the existing Public Right of Way which passes through the site.
- 3.4 There is also further planting proposed to strengthen the existing woodland boundaries. This is principally focused in areas where there is reduced planting at present. There have been some issues with Ash Dieback in the vicinity of the site and the proposal would be to provide planting of more appropriate species. This will respond to a few small sections of the site periphery where additional planting will be beneficial, and will reinforce the existing established mature landscape setting of the site. The proposed development would enhance the enclosed nature of the expansion site.
- 3.5 The pitches themselves will accommodate a combination of single and twin units. The pitches have been set back considerably from the application site boundaries. The units are generously spaced and punctuated with breaks the rows to provide a degree of informality and soften the appearance of the development. The pitches will be used only for holiday purposes and none of them would be available for residential use. The static units would meet the definitions set out in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (as amended by the Caravan Sites Act 1968) and would be mobile structures, capable of being removed from the site with ease.
- 3.6 The pitches would be accessed from the existing internal estate road within the site. This will be extended to create a new loop to serve the additional pitches proposed. The access arrangements have been designed and located so as to minimise the extent of the hard-surfaced area while still providing suitable access to each pitch.
- 3.7 Wastewater will be dealt with through the extension and improvement of the existing package treatment plant which will serve the site via a pumping station. As per the existing arrangement this will provide treatment capacity to accommodate the site flows and discharging into the water course via an existing outlet.
- 3.8 There are above ground power lines which cross through the site alongside the existing gappy hedge. It is intended (subject to being able to reach agreement with Electricity North West [ENW]) that this will be rerouted underground. This could be undertaken now using existing permitted development rights, but is another benefit of the scheme.
- 3.9 The design rationale for the development is addressed in further detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement and Landscape Strategy, which have been informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

4.0 **Planning Policy Context**

- 4.1 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 planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 In this instance, the Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 a Local Plan for Ribble Valley [the Core Strategy] (adopted December 2014), as well as the Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document [the DPD] (adopted October 2019).
- 4.3 National guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] and the National Planning Practice Guidance [the Practice Guidance]. Both are material to the consideration and determination of this planning application.

Development Plan

Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 Local Plan for Ribble Valley

- 4.4 The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and forms the central document of the Local Development Framework, establishing the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the area to 2028.
- 4.5 The following policies are considered to be particularly relevant to the proposed development:
- Policy DS2 (Sustainable Development)
 - Policy EN4 (Biodiversity and Geo-Diversity)
 - Policy EC1 (Business and Employment Development) predominantly relates to the allocation of employment land, however EC1 is relevant to the proposals insofar as it supports development which strengthens the wider rural and village economies and promotes town centre vitality and viability.
 - Policy EC2 (Developer of Retail, Shops and Community Facilities and Services) states that development which supports and enhances the vibrancy, consumer choice and vitality of Ribble Valley's important retail and service centres will be supported.
 - Policy EC3 (Visitor Economy) supports proposals which contribute to and strengthen visitor economy of the Ribble Valley area, including the creation of accommodation and tourism facilities.
 - Policy DMG1 (General Considerations)
 - Policy DMG2 (Strategic Considerations) identifies that, within the open countryside, development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area.
 - Policy DME1 (Protecting Trees and Woodlands)
 - Policy DME6 (Water Management)
 - Policy DMB1 (Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy) supports proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy. DMB1 states that the expansion of existing firms and land outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape (having regard to the scale).
 - Policy DMB3 (Recreation and Tourism Development) supports proposals that extend the range of tourism and visitor facilities, subject to a range of criteria being met.

- Policy DMB5 (Footpaths and Bridleways) seeks to retain, maintain and improve existing public rights of way where possible.

Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document

- 4.6 The Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document was adopted in October 2019 and builds on the foundations of the Core Strategy. The DPD sets out the key housing and economic issues including housing and economic land allocations, town centre policies and settlement boundaries. As such the DPD is of less direct relevance to the application proposals (than the Core Strategy), however it remains material consideration in the down determination of this planning application.

National and Local Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.7 The revised National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] was published in February 2019 and sets out the government economic, environmental and social planning policies for England.
- 4.8 The overarching aim of the Framework is to proactively deliver sustainable development to support the government’s economic growth objectives. The Framework [§8] identifies three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. Decision makers should play an active role in guiding development toward sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area [§9].
- 4.9 The Framework emphasises the government’s commitment to ensuring the planning system supports economic growth. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should apply to both plan making and decision taking.
- 4.10 Paragraph 80 of the framework makes clear that policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It states that significant weight should be placed in the need to support economic growth, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 4.11 Paragraph 82 of the Framework states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.
- 4.12 The Framework sets out to support prosperous rural economy; Paragraph 83 states that sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas should be enabled, including sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.
- 4.13 The Framework states that decision makers should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and locations that are not served well by public transport.
- 4.14 The Framework requires that planning should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, *“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it”* [§170].

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.15 On the 6th March 2014, the government launched the Planning Practice Guidance [PPG] and cancelled the majority of previous planning guidance documents. The guidance has been subject to various subsequent updates.
- 4.16 The PPG includes relevant sections on design, determining a planning application, the natural environment, tree preservation orders, the use of planning conditions and water supply, wastewater and water quality, amongst other matters.
- 4.17 Due regard has been had to the PPG in the preparation of this planning application.

5.0 **Assessment**

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The development comprises the expansion of a well-established tourism and leisure facility, in response to market demand. The application site is not allocated for any particular purpose in a Development Plan. Nor is it subject to any restrictive landscape or other designations (such as those identified at footnote 6 to paragraph 11 of the Framework). The site does not fall within a settlement boundary and the proposal therefore comprises development within the open countryside.
- 5.2 Various policies in the Core Strategy are relevant to the principle of development, in particular Policies EC1, EC3, DMB1, DMB3 and DMG3. These policies are generally supportive of the expansion of tourism facilities in the open countryside, subject to meeting various criteria.
- 5.3 There are two broad aspects arising from these criterion which relate to the principal of development. These are the expansion of the existing holiday park business (including the need for the expansion and the associated economic benefits), and development in the open countryside, at this specific location (including the relationship with the existing Park and the assimilation into the surrounding landscape). These aspects are intrinsically linked because the fundamental driver behind rural tourism destinations is their rural location.

Economic Benefits / Need for the Development

- 5.4 Policy DMB1 specifically allows proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy. The policy goes on to support expansion of existing firms on land outside settlements where it is ‘essential to maintain the existing source of employment’.
- 5.5 Policy EC3 supports the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities, where they would strengthen the visitor economy of Ribble Valley and provide employment opportunities.
- 5.6 In addition, Policy EC1 supports development that strengthens the wider rural economy and Policy EC2 supports proposals that enhance the vitality of Ribble Valley’s important service centres.
- 5.7 Thus, the general thrust of the Development Plan is that (notwithstanding other considerations) developments of this nature must demonstrate a need and tangible economic benefits, in order to be considered appropriate.
- 5.8 It is therefore necessary to consider the need and the economic benefits of the proposed expansion. The holiday park sector in the UK has seen strong levels of growth in recent years. The sector has seen a significant increase in demand since the EU referendum in 2016. Market analysis¹ suggests that holidaymakers are opting to have more domestic trips (so called ‘staycations’) rather than go abroad, due to concerns over poor exchange rates, value for money and potential border complications. It is said that this market growth is also fuelled by hotter weather in the UK summertime. Following the pandemic, our client is experiencing a significant surge in demand at the Park. Not only would the development help the Park respond to this market demand (thereby safeguarding the existing source of employment); it would also generate significant economic benefits for the wider rural economy.
- 5.9 The accompanying Economic Assessment highlights that rural tourism is a crucial part of the economy for Ribble Valley. Whilst there is a clear need to encourage all types of tourism, it is apparent that overnight holiday visits by domestic and overseas visitors generates higher levels

¹ Sanderson Weatherall Caravan and Holiday Parks Market Report 2018

of spending per visit. This points to the particular importance of seeking to offer a range of high-quality holiday accommodation that is appropriately varied in terms of type, location and price-point in order to meet the demands of all overnight visitors.

- 5.10 The proposed development, which will deliver an additional 95 static pitches, will play an important role in enhancing the year-round attractiveness of the Park as a holiday destination. It will support the existing jobs that are present at the site, and will generate additional jobs that will have a wider economic benefit. Furthermore, the proposed development will also indirectly support tourism and leisure jobs in the local economy which will be particularly beneficial to the Ribble Valley economy.
- 5.11 the development will secure a capital investment of £2.8m in the local area and will support 19 direct FTE construction jobs, together with 21 indirect and induced FTE construction jobs. The construction process will generate £3.0m additional GVA for the local economy.
- 5.12 In addition, the proposed development will continue to support the 17 existing jobs on the site, and will likely increase employment opportunities available at the site for local residents. It is expected that the site will support three additional jobs when the proposed extension is fully operational.
- 5.13 In terms of the wider economy, the impact of the proposed development can be summarised as follows:
- 1 £1.3m direct expenditure (on and off site) per annum in the immediate local area;
 - 2 £620,000 indirect expenditure per annum;
 - 3 This expenditure could support a total of 36 jobs in the local economy; and,
 - 4 A total of £774,000 GVA per annum being supported by the increased expenditure associated with the additional static caravans;
- 5.14 Ensuring the provision of high-quality accommodation for visitors has always been critical to enhancing the attractiveness of an area as a holiday destination and boosting the value of the tourism industry. The importance of this is now greater than ever before. Although the immediate impact of Covid-19 has been very significant for the tourism industry, it is clear that the future economic recovery will depend on the strength of the local tourism offer. This is particularly the case in Ribble Valley given the importance of the tourism industry to the local economy. The proposed development will play an important role in this regard and will deliver significant economic benefits.
- 5.15 The proposed development will strengthen the visitor economy of the Ribble Valley area, support business growth and the local economy, and will provide employment opportunities whilst safeguarding the existing source of employment at the site. In this context, it is considered that the development accords with the relevant economic criterion of Policies DMB1, EC1, EC2 and EC3.

Relationship with the existing Park and surrounding Landscape

- 5.16 Policy DMG2 (Strategic Considerations) requires that development within the open countryside should be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials landscaping and siting. Similarly, it is also a requirement of policy DMB1 (Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy) that expansions of existing firms in the open countryside can be assimilated within the local landscape, with scale being a consideration. These requirements are also broadly reflected by policy DMB3 (Recreation and Tourism Development). Policy DMB3 also requires that new

tourism development must be well related to an existing group of buildings, and that there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available elsewhere.

5.17 There are no suitable alternative brownfield sites in the vicinity of the Park. The application site comprises two parcels of land which represent the most logical, expansion site which is well-contained, directly adjoins and is physically well related to the existing Park. At 95 pitches, the proposed expansion represents a 41% increase in the overall capacity at the Park. The expansion site represents a 51% percent increase in the Park's footprint; the proportionately larger land take reflects the lower density of the proposed expansion. The scale and siting of the development have been driven by the existing landscape, taking advantage of the existing landscape features, including the mature woodland which runs along the northern and southern boundaries of the application site. The proposed expansion works with, rather than against the existing lay of the land, retaining the overall shape and topography of these parcels of land, and preserving and enhancing these area of woodland. (The effect on trees and ecology is considered in further detail below). In this context, the level of intervention in the landscape is minimal, and the development is largely reversible, should there ever be a need or desire to remove it.

5.18 Due to the mature woodland at the boundaries of the site, views of the site from the surrounding landscape are extremely limited. The site layout has been informed by the topography of the site which slopes upwards towards the central part of the site. As described in the Design and Access Statement, the site layout includes a central area of open space that spans the majority of the application site. This reflects the topography of the site and serves to minimise the extent to which the proposed development can be seen in long-distance views (landscape and visual impact is considered in further detail in the following section of this report). The spacing of the pitches is also at a considerably lower density when compared with the existing Park, retaining a degree of openness within the site. Additionally, the existing woodland boundaries will be bolstered with additional planting in places, to strengthen visual screening.

5.19 Cognisant with the above, despite the scale of the expansion, it is considered that by virtue of its siting and design, the development relates well to the existing Park and assimilates well within the existing landscape. The development therefore accords with Policies EC3, DMB1, DMG2, DMG3, and DMB3.

Summary

5.20 There is a clear market demand for the development and the economic benefits it would generate are significant. The proposal is physically well-related to the existing Park, and its scale, design and siting help it to assimilate into the surrounding landscape. There are no alternative, previously developed, sites in the vicinity of the Park.

5.21 It is therefore considered that the principle of the development is acceptable and is in full accordance with policies EC3 (Visitor Economy), DMB1 (Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy) and DMB3 (Recreation and Tourism Development), as well as paragraphs 80, 82, 83 and 170 of the Framework.

Additional Considerations

Transport

5.22 Policy DMB3 (Recreation and Tourism Development) identifies that proposals should be well related to existing highway network and should not generate additional traffic movements of a scale likely to cause undue problems or disturbance. Where possible the proposal should be well related to the public transport network. In addition, the site should be large enough to accommodate necessary parking and service areas.

5.23 A Transport Statement (prepared by SK Transport) has been submitted with this application; the report examines the impact of expanding the Park to accommodate 95 additional pitches. The proposed development will use the existing vehicular access arrangement, for cars, service and refuse vehicles. Traffic surveys, undertaken as part of the Transport Statement, show that there have been no accidents at the site access on the road immediately adjacent to the site during the five year period assessed. The report demonstrates that the increase in static pitches will not cause undue impact on the highway network. It also shows that opportunities do exist to access the site by sustainable modes of transport, which are appropriate given the use and rural location of the site.

5.24 In this context, the proposed expansion is clearly well related to, and will not cause undue impacts upon the existing highway network and is in full accordance with Policy DMB3 as well as DMI2 (Transport Considerations).

5.25 The Public Right of Way which cuts through the site will be retained as part of the proposed development, in accordance with Policy DMB5 (Footpaths and Bridleways).

Landscape and Visual Impact

5.26 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [LVIA] (prepared by Landscape Planning Partnership) has been submitted with this application. The LVIA identifies that the landscape and visual receptors with the potential to be affected are as follows:

- 1 Topography;
- 2 Land Cover and Vegetation;
- 3 Settlement Form and Pattern;
- 4 Access and Public Rights of Way;
- 5 Landscape Designations;
- 6 Landscape Character;
- 7 Views from Roads; and,
- 8 Views from Public Rights of Way.

5.27 The LVIA conclusions as to the impact upon each of these receptors are set out below:

- The proposed site layout will result in many, but small and localised changes to ground levels, and will not adversely affect the overall landform. The landscape effect on topography is negligible.
- The only trees to be lost will be those required removal due to disease. Only a very short section of hedgerow would be lost, to gain access. The loss will be more than compensated for by the substantial levels of additional planting proposed. The creation of a large ‘natural’ open space in the centre of the site, including the establishment of wildflower meadows and native scrub will result in a moderate beneficial landscape effect on land cover and vegetation.
- There are several other large holiday parks within a few kilometres of the application site, including Ribblesdale Park, Todber, Hard House Farm, Crowtrees Park and Hellafield. The land use and form of a holiday park is established in this locality and the proposed development will result in a neutral landscape effect on settlement form and pattern.
- Footpath 3-31-FP-23 runs through the application site. The existing package grassed and difficult to follow because it is unmarked and so infrequently used as to leave no sign of wear. Signage and access at either end is poor. The proposed development will retain a

broad swathe of open space incorporating landscape infrastructure planting to either side of this footpath route across the site. The LVIA concludes that the potential minor adverse effects caused by the development are mitigated by the embedded mitigation within the site layout.

- Although the eastern edge of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB] is circa 1.32 km from the westernmost part of the site, the AONB is outside of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, and consequently there can be no landscape effect of development on AONB. The only landscape designations identified as having potential for landscape effects were local wildlife sites and listed buildings. Given development provides a buffer of additional hedgerow and landscape infrastructure along the site boundaries, it is concluded that any potential impacts can be adequately mitigated.
- The proposed development would have a neutral effect on landscape character.
- Views of the site from rural roads are rare and there are no views from roads with the potential for important adverse effects on visual amenity.
- The LVIA confirms that all views from public rights of way [PRoW] are almost all restricted by intervening hedgerows, built form or localised topography and only one (The Pennine Bridleway and Ribble Way) has the potential for important views of the development proposals. Views from this PRoW are not adversely affected.

5.28 In summary, the LVIA concludes that the effects on all landscape and visual receptors are either neutral or minor beneficial. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with policies DMG2, DMB3 and DMB5.

Ecology and Arboriculture

5.29 An Ecological Assessment was undertaken by Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. the Assessment identifies that the habitats found within the site are generally common and widespread. The habitats of highest value are the woodland belts to the boundaries of the site, which would be retained and protected throughout the construction and operational stages of the development. The central tree-lined was also found to have potential for bats and birds; this will be retained and protected. The woodland to the south-east of the site is identified as being both deciduous UK BAP woodland habitat, as well as Ancient Woodland Habitat. It is in the south-eastern corner of the site. The package treatment plant has been carefully located so as to sit outside the root protection area of this woodland.

5.30 Apart from a small section of hedgerow which will be removed to create access, the majority of trees (except those which must be removed due to disease) will be retained. The loss of the diseased specimens this will be more than offset by the additional planting proposed. The Arboricultural Assessment concludes that the loss of these trees will be adequately compensated by the proposed planting scheme.

5.31 The Ecological Assessment concludes that the proposed development will create an ecological sensitive holiday park which retains the habitats of highest importance and provides additional habitat enhancements. The proposed development is in full accordance with Policy EC4 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) as well as Policy EN3 (Sustainable Development and Climate Change).

Drainage

5.32 The application site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment [FRA] and Drainage Strategy has been prepared by Hydro International to accompany this application. Surface water run-off at the site will be managed by three

attenuation basins with controlled outflow to the watercourses that adjoin the site (the Twin Gills). These attenuation methods will achieve greenfield run-off rates, in accordance with the interim Code of Practice for SuDs methodology. Foul discharge from the development will be managed by a newly installed package treatment plant, and the effluent from the plant will be pumped back up to and discharged out at the existing outfall.

- 5.33 The FRA concludes that the development is at low risk of flooding from all sources. The development is therefore in accordance with Policies EN3 (Sustainable Development and Climate Change) and DME6 (Water Management).

Residential Amenity

- 5.34 Various residential properties (located at Kiln Road and the private lanes which radiate north) are located between 200 – 250 m away from the proposed extension site. This is not closer to dwellings than the existing area of the Park. Given the level of existing and proposed visual screening, and this separation distance, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable impact upon the amenity of existing residential properties. The proposal therefore accords with Part 3 of Policy DMG1 (General Considerations).

Heritage

- 5.35 There are no statutory designated or locally designated heritage assets within the site. The nearest designated heritage assets are the Paythorne Methodist Church (Grade II Listed: UID 1072083) which is located circa 230 m north of the application site boundary, and Paythorne Bridge (Scheduled and Grade II Listed: UID 1072082) which sits circa 300 m south-east of the site boundary. Given the separation distance and intervening woodland, the application site has very limited inter-visibility with these heritage assets at present. In addition, the proposed landscaping/additional planting will serve to further screen the application site from these heritage assets. It is therefore considered that there would be no impact on the setting or significance of these assets, and that the proposed development accords with Policies EN5 (Heritage Assets), DME4 (Protecting Heritage Assets) as well as Paragraphs 189-192 of the Framework.

Summary

- 5.36 It has been demonstrated that the principle of development is in accordance with the Development Plan and that there are no insurmountable technical constraints or other material considerations which should prevent the development from coming forward. The application proposals therefore represent Sustainable Development in the context of Paragraph 11 of the Framework, and should be approved without delay.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 This Statement and the other documents which accompany the application have demonstrated that the proposals will create a high quality and well-designed expansion to the Ribble Valley Country and Leisure Park.
- 6.2 The proposal comprises the expansion of a well-established rural tourism business, which is appropriate by virtue of its scale, siting and layout.
- 6.3 The accompanying Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment demonstrates that the proposal will have a neutral (and in some cases beneficial) effect on landscape and visual receptors.
- 6.4 The expansion of the park is required to meet an increase in demand at the park and will generate significant economic and social benefits. The principle of the development is therefore in full accordance with the Development Plan.
- 6.5 It has been demonstrated that there are no insurmountable technical constraints or significant adverse impact arising for the proposals that cannot be adequately mitigated. The proposed development will not harm residential amenity or lead to an unacceptable impact on the local highway network.
- 6.6 On the basis of the above and in accordance with the balance of considerations in the Framework, the proposal amounts to sustainable development. The proposals accord with the policies contained within the Development Plan and bearing in mind Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, we consider that planning permission should be granted for the proposed development without delay.

Birmingham
0121 713 1530
birmingham@lichfields.uk

Edinburgh
0131 285 0670
edinburgh@lichfields.uk

Manchester
0161 837 6130
manchester@lichfields.uk

Bristol
0117 403 1980
bristol@lichfields.uk

Leeds
0113 397 1397
leeds@lichfields.uk

Newcastle
0191 261 5685
newcastle@lichfields.uk

Cardiff
029 2043 5880
cardiff@lichfields.uk

London
020 7837 4477
london@lichfields.uk

Thames Valley
0118 334 1920
thamesvalley@lichfields.uk