
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 September 2025

by **F Rafiq BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/W/25/3367846

Boadicea Park, Preston Road, Ribchester, Lancashire PR3 3XL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr T Ball (L'Escargotiere (Ribble Valley) Ltd) against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 3/2025/0107.
 - The development proposed is the retention of 2 no. holiday lodges and office building, with associated parking, infrastructure and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The office building which forms part of the appeal proposal was in place at the time of my visit. This reflected the plans before me, although the stone plinth on this building had not been constructed. The office building also had an Air Conditioning unit on its side wall which is not shown on the submitted plans. For clarity, I am dealing with this proposed scheme based on the submitted plans.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - flood risk, and
 - the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Flood risk

4. The office building which forms part of the appeal proposal is situated within Flood Zone 3 and is therefore subject to a high risk of flooding. Although it is not a large building and has been on-site since June 2022, in the absence of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), there is insufficient information before me regarding the risks and effects of flooding at the site and elsewhere.
5. There has been a change in the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning after the planning application that is subject of this appeal was submitted, and the proposed re-location of the holiday lodges has provided a betterment in flood risk terms than a previously approved scheme. It is nevertheless the case that part of the appeal proposal is at high risk of flooding. Without a FRA, it cannot be demonstrated that the development would be safe, without increasing flood risk

elsewhere, and for this same reason, this is not a matter that can be secured by condition.

6. I therefore conclude that there is insufficient information to assess the flood risk posed by the development, and it would therefore be contrary to Policy DME6 of the Core Strategy 2008-2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (Core Strategy) and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), which seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that development will not be permitted where the proposal would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

Character and appearance

7. The appeal site is situated off Preston Road, to the rear of a row of detached properties. It is a generally flat site which is bounded by trees and other vegetation, although there is variation in the surrounding topography. The presence of open areas of land at and around the appeal site provides for a spacious semi-rural character.
8. The proposed development includes an office building, which would be situated to the side of the Boadicea House building. Whilst this would result in additional built form on the site, it would be a modestly sized building, which given its siting adjacent to a larger existing building would not be visually prominent. It would not therefore appear incongruous or result in a harmful encroachment beyond the appeal site into the open countryside.
9. The appeal site has previously had approval for six lodges that would have been broadly sited in a linear arrangement along the access road. The proposed development would see two of the lodges being sited further to the north into an open area of land which would have been retained for soft landscaping. This would bring these two lodges closer to Boadicea House and would reduce the separation with some of the residential properties along Preston Road. The overall quantum of development in relation to the lodges would however remain largely unchanged, with an open space created in the area where lodges 5 and 6 were previously proposed. This element of the proposal would also still retain an appreciable separation of at least 20m from the boundary with the nearest residential properties and have open areas of land around each lodge. As such, the spacious character of the area would not be unduly impacted. The size and design of the lodges are different to the approved scheme, but they would be single storey with simple pitched roofs, and walls finished in natural timber material. Consequently, they would be appropriate in this setting.
10. The proposal includes additional hardstanding areas for parking, but these would be situated close to the respective lodges. As these would be limited in size and be at ground level, they would not detract from the openness and semi-rural character of the area.
11. For these reasons, I conclude that the development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposed development would comply with Policies DMG1, DMG2 and DMB3 of the Core Strategy, which seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that development does not undermine the character, quality or visual amenities of the plan area by virtue of its scale, siting, materials or design. It would also comply with Paragraph 135 of the

Framework, which seeks to ensure development is sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Other Matters

12. Reference has been made to the timing of the Council's decision and the request for a FRA. This matter does not have a bearing on the planning merits of the case, which I can confirm I have dealt with on its own merits.
13. The Council have queried why the office building cannot be accommodated in the main building. Although Core Strategy Policy DMG2 does require new development to be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings where possible, given the modest size of the office building which would be used in connection with the existing business for warehouse quality control and to manage deliveries, I do not find the development to be harmful in this regard.
14. A variety of matters have been raised in third party representations, but these do not have a bearing on the main issues in this appeal.

Conclusion

15. There would be no harm in relation to the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, but this is a neutral matter.
16. The proposed development would be harmful in relation to flood risk and would not accord with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that I should take a different decision other than in accordance with this. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F Rafiq

INSPECTOR