

**Use of Land For Wedding Venue  
Ponderosa Weddings**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is to provide information to support the application for licensing for the use of agricultural land at Ponderosa, Broughton Moor, Cockermouth for the use as a wedding venue. The weddings would be held on a weekend.
- 1.2. As can be seen below, the land lies between Broughton Moor and Little Broughton:



- 1.3 Access is readily available from the adjacent road.
- 1.4 The land is part of a farm unit which is farmed by the applicant for crops and sheep.

## **2. Proposed Use**

- 2.1 The proposed use will allow the venue to be licensed for weddings. The weddings will be held on the land with the opportunity to use a marquee, tent or tipi etc for a more informal setting taking advantage of the views and the natural features on the land including the pond and jetty.
  
- 2.2 It is antiquated that up to 10 weddings could be accommodated in any calendar year for the first five years. The land would be rented out to couples for their celebrations.
  
- 2.3 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 allows for the use of land for any purposes for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year, subsequently planning permission is not required for the use at the current level proposed.

### **3. Benefits of the Proposals**

- 3.1 Farming is central to the rural economy of Cumbria and directly employs over 12,000 in the sector throughout the county. Farming not only contributes to the production of food and crops but also creates the landscape which underpins the visitor economy in the area. Farms are therefore a key element of the success of Cumbria into the future.
  
- 3.2 The uncertainty over the UK's exit from the EU and the impact on the removal of the EU Common Agricultural Policy has resulted in serious consideration having to be given to the financial future of the farm and ensure that the farm retains a future. It is important that farms of various sizes including family run farms such as this one are retained within the overall offer of agriculture as this directly supports the local economy.
  
- 3.3 The proposals have been developed in order to diversify the income streams of the farm. A diversified income stream will help to secure the long term future of the farming business and increase the business' resilience as the uncertainty caused by Brexit increases. Diversification schemes are becoming increasingly critical to support farming with 65% of farms in England now having some diversification scheme in place (Defra stat 2018/19).
  
- 3.4 The ability to hire out the land for weddings and the provision of that use by the erection of temporary structures will ensure that the new use will not prejudice the viable operations on the wider farm whilst supporting the wider agricultural unit. As the use is not permanent it will ensure that the wider farm can continue to operate as normal and secure employment on the farm.

- 3.3 The benefits of providing a wedding venue which is not permanent in relation to buildings on site is that any impacts are temporary on whilst the wedding is ongoing. Following the removal of the temporary structures, there are no further impacts on the landscape or the amenity of other landowners in the vicinity, the impacts are therefore limited and transitory.
- 3.4 The provision of a wedding venue in this stunning location will add to the range of wedding venues throughout Allerdale. It will allow weddings to be bespoke to the couple who are marrying and encourage the use of local services to be provided to the wedding party which will aid in the ongoing support of the local economy, particularly as the economy remains affected by recession and the impacts of Brexit are unclear. This is important for wider suppliers to events and also for accommodation in the area for the wedding guests. The benefit to the wider rural economy therefore is not unsubstantial.
- 3.5 The applicant has noted concerns over noise impacts and has employed a noise specialist to provide a noise management plan. The plan includes mitigation in relation to the levels that music should be played at, orientation of speakers, and timing of music when events are on. It is considered that this will ensure that amenity is protected.
- 3.6 The appointment of the noise consultant underlines the responsible actions which are been taken by then landowners in order to ensure that the business is appropriately run.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The proposed use brings benefits to both the farm by providing it with a diversified income stream and therefore securing its ongoing financial viability and enabling the retention of rural jobs and also the wider local economy through the use of local services for events and local guest accommodation, in addition, it will add to the varied wedding spaces available throughout the local area.