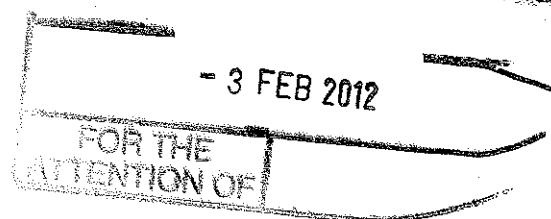


3/2011/0896

Director of Development Services
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe BB7 2RA

Martin Nugent
01254 828060
D3/11/0896



Drafted 27 January 2012

Dear Sir

**Planning Application, Ribble Valley District
3-09-0532 Old Methodist Chapel, Lower Chapel Lane, Grindleton**

I refer to your letter of 28 November 2011 concerning the above application.

I am recommending refusal of this application on highway safety grounds as it does not provide satisfactory off street parking provisions and the approaches to the site demand safety improvements that cannot be achieved from within land under the Applicant's control.

Access for vehicular traffic to this site at the junction of Lower Chapel Lane and Back Lane, Grindleton is not ideal due to the narrow width of the approach from Main Street, the limited manoeuvring space to the four off street car parking spaces identified on the site plan and the limited parking available on the adjacent unadopted roads in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Lower Chapel Lane already serves as the principle access for a number of residential properties and a working farm. There is minimal visibility for vehicles exiting Lower Chapel Lane onto Main Street due to the alignment of the junction and the proximity of an adjacent boundary wall. There is no prospect of securing a physical improvement at this location that would change this situation significantly. The introduction of two new properties to Lower Chapel Lane with their associated vehicle movements without the provision of appropriate highway safety measures would have a potentially negative impact on highway safety in this vicinity.

However, from my observations of vehicular activity, the number of movements is low and there are few opportunities for conflict between vehicles entering and exiting the road. I am satisfied that the introduction of the additional traffic generated by the proposed residential development will have a marginal impact on the number and frequency of vehicles moving to/from Lower Chapel Lane.

By establishing the proposed residential use it will be possible to anticipate with a strong degree of confidence the level of subsequent pedestrian and vehicular activity from the site. This contrasts with the extant legitimate uses for the site and the potential levels of traffic generation that could follow on the basis of existing permitted uses.

My concern, therefore, relates to the viability of the four car parking spaces being proposed, as the present arrangement does not appear to secure four accessible spaces.

Considering these spaces, working west to east, the first and second spaces will require the motorists to reverse either to or from these spaces, with the likelihood being that the vehicle will be reversed to/from Back Lane or will travel further up the lane to turn at a field gate. This is not a satisfactory means of safely accessing these spaces. Furthermore, Back Lane

is an unadopted road in a poor state of repair that also serves as a significant pedestrian route for residents.

The third space is of substandard dimensions, certainly below the 5.0m minimum length and would result in a family saloon overhanging the carriageway to the detriment of the safe movement of passing traffic.

The fourth space, like the first and second, would require motorists to carry out an unsatisfactory manoeuvre to gain access.

I would be grateful if the applicant would reconsider the proposed parking arrangements and provide a layout that complies with some basic criteria for the creation of safe parking spaces.

For example, all of the car parking spaces along the length of the frontage should comply with a standard parking module of 2.4m by 4.8m, while end-on parking should have a minimum depth of 5.0m. The spaces provided must insure that all vehicles can park fully off the highway, without the potential for vehicles overhanging the footway and causing a hazard to pedestrians and other road users.

The layout of the four spaces should satisfy the basic requirement that vehicles can enter and exit in a forward gear. There is a potential hazard where any vehicle has to reverse onto the highway and this is heightened in this instance due to the lack of any adjacent footway, which results in an additional hazard for pedestrians.

The creation of a small parking area on farm land immediately to the east of the existing building and served by an existing field gate would provide a reasonable solution. Similarly, the use of part of the land fronting the church could allow the creation of a suitable manoeuvring area.

Either of these provisions would minimise highway safety concerns by reducing the potential manoeuvring and subsequent conflict at the front of the site and provide for vehicular access in a forward gear, to and from the site.

Martin Nugent

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