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Your ref 3/2012/0210  
Our ref OCE/EVP/ER/3/10/8435/LK  
Date 8 August 2012

Miss Claire Booth  
Ribbles Valley Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Church Walk  
Clitheroe  
Lancashire  
BB7 2RA

Dear Miss Booth

**APPLICATION NUMBER 3/2012/0210**  
**BACK LANE FARM, BACK LANE, CHIPPING, LANCASHIRE, PR3 2QA**  
**GRID REFERENCE 362172 441662**

I refer to your consultation letter concerning the above application and have the following comments to make.

### **Introduction**

A planning application has been submitted by Mr Gary Hoerty of Gary Hoerty Associates on behalf of Mrs Kath Potter for the erection of a general storage agricultural building for livestock housing and general storage. A site inspection was undertaken on 15 April whilst the applicant's son and her agent were present. The information provided at this meeting, together with the written submissions, forms the basis of this appraisal.

### **Agricultural Land**

From the information displayed upon the Rural Payment Agency plans submitted by the applicant, the land situated at the application site extends to 4.5 acres (1.82 hectares) of land, all of which is ring fenced. I was informed that no land is rented by the applicant at the current time.

### **Agricultural Enterprise**

The applicant's son told me that he keeps a flock of 20 breeding ewes which he farms on a part time basis. I understand that the applicant's son is employed on a full time basis as a joiner and undertakes his farm activities during his spare time, although I was told that it is his intention to increase the level of agricultural activities.

**E P G Robertson BSc (Hons) MRICS**  
Senior Assistant Land Agent  
Property Group • PO Box 26  
County Hall • Preston • PR1 • RE

### **Existing Buildings**

The buildings situated at Back Lane Farm consist of the following:-

- 1 Back Lane farmhouse built of stone under a slate roof;
- 2 combined stables and garage, consisting of three box stables and a large garage;
- 3 timber building used as general storage and formerly as a hen cabin;
- 4 timber building, which is proposed to be replaced by the proposed development which is currently used for general storage purposes.

### **Proposed Development**

The proposed development is for the erection of a new general purpose agricultural building for livestock housing and general storage.

The applicant's son told me that he required the building for a number of purposes, including providing a facility for the indoor lambing of his flock, which is currently undertaken outside, in addition to providing a facility to accommodate two breeding sows and their progeny. In addition to livestock accommodation, the applicant's son told me that the building would also provide storage for various agricultural items, including hay, fertiliser, straw and machinery. I was told that currently all of these items are either kept outside or within the garage and/or stable blocks.

The applicant's son felt that a new purpose built facility would provide for all of the above whilst freeing up the existing buildings and replacing a tired and dilapidated building.

### **Assessment**

The proposed development is within an area shown on the Ribble Valley Local Plan as being land outside the main settlement/village boundaries within an area of outstanding natural beauty. Policy G5 of the Local Plan provides guidance for development in land outside of the main settlement/village boundaries and states:

**"outside the main settlement boundaries and the village boundaries planning consent will only be granted for small scale developments which are:**

**ii) needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry .....**"

With reference to this policy, I consider the following matters should be taken into account when assessing this application:

**1. The development is needed for the purposes of agriculture.**

I have been informed by Ribble Valley BC that following their enquiries with a government agency, they were informed that no holding number or livestock are registered to the application site and on this basis, I must assume that no registered livestock are kept by the applicant or her son.

As no livestock are registered to the application site, I do not consider that a building to accommodate such animals can be justified.

Notwithstanding my comments above, should the applicant keep the number of registered breeding ewes that is claimed, then, in my opinion, I do consider that an undercover facility for the lambing, could be necessary.

In regards to the proposal to keep pigs in the building, whilst the proposed development is not unacceptable, there are alternative facilities, such as pig arks, that would meet the accommodation requirements of pigs. I also note that at the present time, no pigs are currently kept by the applicant and therefore, I do not consider that a building for this use is essential in the current circumstances.

In terms of the general storage requirements of the unit, I consider that the needs of the applicant's horses are met by the existing stable block whilst the remaining general storage requirements for a unit of this size and use would, in my opinion, be small and could potentially be met by the existing facilities upon the unit.

Whilst, in my opinion, the keeping of items of machinery undercover is not strictly essential, I acknowledge that the storage of machinery undercover is beneficial from the point of view of security and maintenance and therefore consider that a facility for some items of machinery could be justified.

**2. The design and size is appropriate for the intended use.**

In terms of the size of the proposed development, taking into consideration the above, in addition to the land and existing buildings situated at Back Lane Farm, I am of the opinion that the proposed development is larger than necessary and the building could be reduced significantly whilst still serving the justified needs of the unit. Should the applicant have a registered flock of 20 breeding ewes, I would still consider the proposed development to be significantly larger than necessary.

With reference to those items of machinery that the applicant intends to store, it is my opinion that not all of the items listed, such as a roller, trailer and chain harrow need to be stored undercover and only those items such as the applicant's tractor and loader need to be stored within a building

**3. Siting**

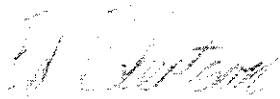
The building is to be situated on the footprint of the existing building, adjacent to the remaining buildings at Back Lane Farm. It is in my opinion that the proposed position of the building is situated in an appropriate position from an operational point of view considering the layout of the buildings at Back Lane Farm.

**Other Comments**

If planning consent is granted, you may consider it appropriate to condition the building so that it can be used for agricultural purposes only and not for any commercial uses.

I would be grateful to receive a copy of your Decision Notice in due course.

Yours sincerely



E P G Robertson BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV  
Senior Assistant Land Agent  
on behalf of the Director of Property