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Lancashire

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

Your ref 3/2012/0396
Our ref PG/LAWS/3/35/8457
Date: 20 July 2012

24 JUL 2012

Dear Miss Booth

APPLICATION NO. 3/2012/0396
LAND ADJACENT TO MANOR CROFT, GLEN AVENUE, KNOWLE GREEN,
LANCASHIRE, PR3 2ZQ
GRID REFERENCE 363637 - 437964

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 Roger Treacher of Hughes Treacher on behalf of Mr and Mrs McLaughlin for the erection of an agricultural building for alpacas and the storage of hay and agricultural implements and associated hardstanding. An inspection was made on 3 July 2012 whilst the applicants and their agent were present. The information provided at this meeting, together with the written submissions, forms the basis of this appraisal.

Background Information and Previous Applications

Lancashire County Council Property Group commented on an earlier application at the site, being application number 3/2009/0735. This was an application for a wooden agricultural storage shed for the storage of hay and straw and machinery. Our report dated 6 October 2012 is attached in appendix 1 and provides useful background information.

Current Situation

The area of land owned by the applicants remains unchanged, with approximately one acre of woodland having been planted.

I understand that the applicants have now taken the land back in hand and no longer rent any land out to other farmers for grazing. The applicants acquired

Wayne Selway MRICS FAAV
Land Agent
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some alpacas approximately two years ago and currently have 6 head, which consist of 1 male, four breeding females and 1 female cria. Mr McLaughlin explained that it is their intention to increase the number of female alpacas to 16.

In addition to the alpacas, the applicant has three ouessant sheep.

Proposed Development

It is proposed to erect a three bay building measuring approximately 18.62m x 7.62m with an eaves height of 2.7m. Details of the proposed building are shown on drawing number 1213/04. The building would be constructed with block walls with Yorkshire boarding above and a fibre cement roof.

The building would be used for storing hay, feed, implements and housing the alpacas and sheep.

Assessment

The site is shown on the Ribble Valley Local Plan as open countryside outside the area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) and guidance is provided at Policies G5 and ENV 3. These policies state amongst other things that

'Planning consent will only be granted for small scale developments which are needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry'

In addition they also state

'in the open countryside outside the AONB and areas immediately adjacent to it, development will be required to be in-keeping with the character of the landscape area and should reflect local vernacular, scale, style, features and building materials'

In relation to the above, I have the following comments to make:

The applicants have now taken the land back in hand and I was told it was no longer let out to other farmers. The applicants have their own business outside of agriculture and the activities carried out are akin to a hobby activity. The applicants have acquired some alpacas and sheep and I was told that they intend to make their own hay.

Whilst the activities carried out are of a hobby type nature, the area of land at the application site is reasonable, and in my opinion a single undercover facility to provide both a storage and housing facility is reasonably necessary.

Whilst I consider a facility is required, in my opinion, taking into account the scale and type of activities carried out, I am of the view that the size of the building is larger than necessary, with a building in the region of 100 square metres being

Miss Claire Booth

20 July 2012

adequate. This could be achieved by removing a bay or keeping three bays and reducing them to 4.5m bays.

In addition to the proposed floor area, I also do not consider a brick built building to be essential, with timber walling being suitable for the intended use. I would also comment that the doorways to the livestock area appear to be narrow (1.2m) and in my opinion a wider opening more akin to the sliding doors would be beneficial, particularly if the area is to be used as a shelter allowing animals to come and go.

In respect of siting, in my opinion, as there are no other buildings on site, then any siting should be determined by other planning matters as opposed to operational aspects. I would however comment that the site as proposed is some distance from the field access. This means that a reasonable length of track is required, which would be avoided should a site closer to the existing access (such as where the existing container is situated) be used.

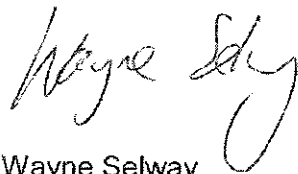
Conclusion

Whilst I consider that an undercover facility can be justified, I consider the proposed floor area to be greater than necessary and that the design could be improved.

Please note if planning consent is granted, then the existing structures, which the building is to replace, should be removed.

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

Yours sincerely



Wayne Selway
Land Agent

Appendix 1

Ms R Horton
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
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BB7 2RA

(01772) 536871
(01772) 533165
david.ensor@lancashire.gov.uk

Your ref 3/2009/0735
Our ref PG/LA/DE/3/35/7856
Date: 6 October 2009

Dear Ms Horton

APPLICATION NO. 3/2009/0735
LAND ADJACENT TO MANOR CROFT, GLEN AVENUE, KNOWLE GREEN,
LANCASHIRE, PR3 2ZQ
GRID REFERENCE 363637 - 437964

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 A McLaughlin for the erection of a wooden shed for the storage of a tractor and hay/straw. An inspection was made on 2 October 2009 whilst the applicant was present. The information provided at this meeting, together with the written submissions, forms the basis of this appraisal.

Background Information

The applicant informed me that the land adjoining his house was purchased by his pension fund in October 2007. Mr McLaughlin works outside of agriculture, and bought the land primarily to protect the view from his house. The property and buildings at the application site are used for personal use, storage and equipment. The proposal is to erect a timber building to store a compact tractor and some hay and straw.

Agricultural Land & Enterprises

It is my understanding that the applicant owns approximately 8.9 acres (3.6 hectares) of land. The applicant informed that the majority of this land is let out on a yearly license to a local farmer, and that this has been the case ever since Mr McLaughlin took possession of the land in 2007. The farmer uses the land for grazing sheep and to provide winter fodder in the form of silage. Mr McLaughlin has fenced off an area, along the south-western edge of the field, and planted some 'Christmas Trees'.

I was informed that the applicant's daughter has a 22 year old pony, which is stabled at a nearby farm. Mr McLaughlin buys hay and straw from a local farmer in batches of 30, with 20 bales of hay and 10 bales of straw each time. This hay and straw is stored in a horse trailer on the property, and used solely for use by the applicant's daughter's pony. Mr McLaughlin applicant informed me that this trailer is in a dilapidated state.

Buildings

The buildings currently on the holding are the residence of Mr McLaughlin and family, and a car port, which is located next to his house. This car port is currently used to store the compact tractor, and for general storage purposes.

Proposal

The proposal is to erect a timber frame building measuring approximately 5.5m x 3.7m (18' x 12'). The building would have an eaves height of 2.1m (6' 11") and a ridge height of 2.7m (8' 10"). It would be clad in timber, with a green felt roof and a concrete floor.

The building would be used for storing hay and straw for use by Mr McLaughlin's daughter's pony, which is stabled just down the road from Manor Croft. The building would also be used to store the applicant's compact tractor, mower and trailer, which are for use on the land. The applicant informed me that the building would also be used for general storage purposes.

Access to the building would be through an existing gateway in the northwest corner of the field, off Glen Avenue. Access into the building would be through a set of double doors on the Northern gable end.

Assessment

The site is shown on the Ribble Valley Local Plan as open countryside outside the area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) and guidance is provided at Policies G5 and ENV 3. These policies state amongst other things that

"Planning consent will only granted for small scale developments which are needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry"

In addition they also state

"in the open countryside outside the AONB and areas immediately adjacent to it, development will be required to be in-keeping with the character of the landscape area and should reflect local vernacular, scale, style, features and building materials".

I therefore consider it appropriate to assess the application with respect of the agricultural need for the development, the design and siting

The applicant undertakes no agricultural enterprises on the holding other than that of growing trees on a small area.

Hay and straw are bought-in from a local farmer and at present stored in the horse trailer. The applicant does not intend to use the land for his own purposes and there is no intention of stabling or grazing the pony on the application site.

Whilst I appreciate that hay and straw is needed for the pony, I consider that it would be more appropriate for this to be stored close to the pony's stables rather than at the application site.

In addition, the tractor and associated implements are currently stored at the applicant's property. The tractor and implements are used for managing the land on which the trees are grown.

Taking into account the hobby type of activity being undertaken and that the tractor and implements are currently able to be stored at the applicant's dwelling, I am of the opinion that there is no need for a building to house this machinery.

Notwithstanding the above, I consider that the design of the building is not typical of an agricultural building. Storing hay and straw would be better designed to be open fronted to provide access for loading and to provide ventilation. In addition, one bay of the building could be used for the storage of the applicant's machinery. I consider the proposed siting of the building to be acceptable it being close to the field gate with access from Glen View.

Conclusion

Whilst I appreciate the applicant's desire to accommodate hay and straw, and machinery, in one building, taking into account the small scale nature of the enterprise and the fact that the pony is stabled elsewhere, I consider that there is no agricultural need or justification for a building on this site.

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

Yours sincerely

David Ensor
Senior Assistant Land Agent
On behalf of the Director of Property