

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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PROPOSED  
CONVERSION OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

FOR MIXED USE  
OFFICE WITH FIRST FLOOR LIVING ACCOMMODATION  
AT  
JACKSONS BARN  
BOLTON-BY-BOWLAND ROAD  
SAWLEY BB7 4RT

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## **CONTEXT OF THE SITE**

### **ASSESSMENT**

1. Jackson's Barn is an isolated traditional barn surrounded by pasture and meadowland, under a grey slate roof, with a modern attached corrugated steel clad building to the Eastern gable elevation. Located 350 metres North outside of the main settlement of Sawley within an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the Forest of Bowland.
2. The Western gable elevation of the building fronts Sawley Road and as the landform which surrounds the barn is a flood plain as defined by the Environmental Agency Designated Flood Risk Zone 2.

### **INVOLVEMENT**

1. S.J. Bialecki Limited's involvement follows refused planning application no. 3/2011/0790 with reference to the case officer's report.
2. The refused application was supported by relevant surveys which form part of this application subject to conditions including
  - (a) Structural appraisal report.  
P.S.A. Design Limited
  - (b) Ecological survey (bats)
  - © Flood Risk Assessment.  
Rural Futures
  - (d) Heritage Statement  
John Metcalfe 2011.

### **STRUCTURAL APPRAISAL REPORT**

- (a) The report excluded notes 2.0.7 and 2.0.8 relating to raising the ground floor.

The statement mentions some minor remedial works are required, the building is a stable structure and more than capable of refurbishment.

#### **(b) Ecological Report**

Circumstances the same therefore no change.

#### **© Flood Risk Assessment**

The report excludes note 5a to 6a relating to mitigation measures which is covered in our

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**(d) Heritage Statement**

The report excludes note 8.2

1. The Barn will be converted into a mixed use dwelling comprising ground floor, kitchen, office and toilet/store area. First floor living (habitable use), one bedroom and open plan lounge/dining area
2. The steel framed building shall be demolished and the land reinstated to its former use.
3. The residential curtilage to the Barn will include the enclosed yard with improved replacement access South of the yard.
4. Referring to our letter to the Environment Agency dated 6<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and forming part of our "Pre-application Advice Statement", we mention the applicant lives with his parents at Hill House Farm, Sawley Road, approximately 1.0 k from the applicant's site.
5. From the farm, within one of the farmyard buildings, the applicant runs a small business in the form of the maintenance and repair of small grass cutting appliances, with the assistance of two helpers.
6. Present circumstances now dictate the opportunity of diversing the use of the applicant's site by converting the barn to an appropriate use to suit his personal needs and requirements.

**Proposed Use**

1. The principal use will be for the applicant to administer his business at ground level and live at first floor level.
2. The Barn is oblong in shape, constructed out of stone under a grey slate (stone flags) roof, with a steel framed and corrugated clad building attached to the Barn's East elevation
3. The South elevation of the Barn is enclosed by a yard with a stone wall separating the highway and insitu concrete to the remaining two walls separating agricultural land East and South respectively. There is also a concrete hard standing area between the steel framed building and adjacent facing insitu concrete wall.
4. A recently erected post and rail fence, North, South and East of the holding, forms the applicant's ownership curtilage consisting 0.132 hectare.

**DESIGN PROPOSAL**

**North Elevation**

1. The existing door opening to the left of the elevation shall be altered into a window using the existing dressed stone lintel and to serve the kitchen.

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2. The existing central blanked doorway shall be brought back into use as a door serving the entrance hall, retaining the existing stone lintel.

### **West Elevation**

1. Existing sand and cement render shall be removed from the stone surface. The elevation shall remain the same.

### **North Elevation**

1. The existing wagon door shall house a hardwood, double glazed window frame with replacement timber lintel and rustic door to enclose the opening.

### **East Elevation**

1. The ground floor door opening may well not be original considering the construction make-up, albeit an existing door opening to be retained as a window.
2. The higher existing window, with original dressed sandstone surround, shall serve first floor living accommodation.

### **Roof**

1. The existing grey slate (stone flags) roof cover shall be reused including replacements to match existing.

### **South Elevation**

1. A 900 x 800 conservation type roof light shall replace an existing light in the same location to serve the first floor bedroom.
2. The two remaining existing lights shall be removed.
3. The area of the new light shall not be greater than the collective area of removed lights.

### **North Elevation**

1. A 800 x 500 conservation type roof light shall replace two existing lights to serve the first floor bathroom.
2. The area of the new light shall have a similar area to the collective area of the two existing lights remounted.

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## CONSTRUCTION DESIGN

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1. Existing dressed sandstone surrounds survive the higher East facing window including heads to the two South facing openings.
2. Dressed sandstone to match existing shall be used to complete the South facing and the lower East facing openings.
3. Existing stone quoins to the North facing wagon door, including new stone quoins to match shall be used to rebuild the wagon door existing vertical reveals insitu.
4. The original oak beam to the wagon door head is suspect and shall be replaced to match existing rustic appearance.
5. Incidental areas of elevation stonework showing settlement gaps shall be "stitched" in accordance with the "Structural Appraisal Report".
6. All elevation stonework joints shall be raked out and re-flush pointed with sand and lime mortar, emulating its original condition and appearance.
7. Subject to a local survey the original third point roof trusses and purlins shall be retained, sandblasted and treated following recommendations.
8. Ridge and rafters (not original) shall be replaced with treated new members
9. The roof cover shall be felt-batten and slate using existing and replacement grey slate to match existing.
10. Existing sandstone ridge tiles shall be reused.
11. Existing lead ventilation slates (2 no. each side) shall be carefully remove and repositioned during renovation works.
12. All window frames, including the wagon door glazed frame and accompanying enclosure doors, including the South facing stable door, shall all be constructed out of "rustic oak". Following construction, design detail as a condition.
13. Existing ground levels surrounding the Barn shall be adjusted, in particular reducing the East facing ground level following demolition of the steel framed building, back to original pasture level.

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14. Rain water goods out of stout section cast-iron.

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### **RELEVANT POLICIES**

Policy G1 - Development Control  
Policy G5 - Settlement Strategy  
Policy ENV1 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Policy H2 - Dwellings in the Open Countryside  
Policy H15 - Building Conversions - Location  
Policy H16 - Building Conversions - Building to be Converted  
Policy H17 - Building Conversions - Design Matters  
PPS1 - Sustainable Development  
PPS3 - Housing  
PPS5 - Planning for the Historic Environment  
PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

1. Our main considerations with this application is the principle of converting the Barn in this location, impact of the conversion upon the visual appearance of the Barn in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and impact upon highway safety and the amenity of neighbouring residents.

2. With regard to the latter, the existing Barn is located in a relatively isolated position with no buildings within its immediate surroundings.

3. The nearest residential property is located over 240 metres South-West of the Barn, therefore, the impact of the development upon the amenity of neighbouring residents is negligible

4. We have also assessed the principle of converting the Barn with residential use against relevant policy G5 of the District-wide Local Plan relating to developments outside the main settlement boundaries. In particular those essential to the local economy or the social work being of the area or other small scale uses appropriate to a rural area.

5. To comply with this policy we have assured the development is appropriate to protect the countryside and in doing so is accepted the countryside is a working area and a source of the applicant's livelihood.

6. Conversion principles are discussed further in this statement

7. Policy H2 relates to dwellings in the open countryside and allows the appropriate development provided they are structurally sound and therefore, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings.

8. In this case we are able to propose a conversion without the need for substantial reconstruction.

### **CONVERSION WORK**

1. Conversion works are covered in the section "Design Proposals" of this statement.

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2. Conversion work relying on the use of existing masonry openings without introducing new openings.
3. Two minimum size conservation type roof lights shall be fitted, one to each slope, replacing existing lights. In principle conservation lights are generally accepted if sensitively used and of an appropriate size. In this instance each light is incidental in proportion to the roof plane area.
4. Under current policy terms, the steel frame building attached to the East gable can only be described as wholly inappropriate development and a blot on the landscape (refer to attached photographs). By demolishing the building previously restricted landscape views will be brought back into focus.
5. Also the East and South walls forming the farm yard to the highway are constructed out of insitu concrete; once again wholly in-appropriate development and a blot on the landscape. Albeit not as prominent as the steel frame building, shall be replaced with traditional dry stone wall

### **RELEVANT POLICIES**

1. Referring to Policy H15 "The location of the building to be converted".
2. The policy recognises inappropriate development for isolated roadside barns
3. In this instance conversion work retains all original features.
4. In particular the Barn wholly retains its original appearance with enhancement of high quality conversion work. The steel frame building is removed, the insitu concrete wall replaced with stone traditional work.
5. Under the circumstances there will be no materially damaging effect on the landscape quality of the area, but on the contrary the proposals shall maintain and enhance the landscape which presently is wholly damaged by the steel frame building. Therefore, the proposal contributes to the natural beauty of the area.

### **Policy H16 "The Building to be converted"**

1. The attached "Structural Appraisal Report" demonstrates the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alterations that would have adversely affected the character and appearance of the building.
2. Similarly the building is of sufficient size to provide minimal accommodation without the need to extend that may have harmed the character or appearance of the building.
3. Also relevant to this policy is the roosting or breeding sites for protected rare species. The attached bat survey covers this issue, including mitigation measures.

### **Policy H17 "Design Matters".**

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1. As previously mentioned in this report, conversion will be of the highest standard and in keeping with local tradition, in particular materials, geometric form, window and door openings. In particular masonry surroundings to existing openings will be made out of sandstone and hand tooled to match existing, in this instance a "raised reeded," effect. Rustic oak wood shall be used for door and windows.

2. Relating to the roof, we appreciate it is the most important exterior appearance feature of a traditional farm building, as it can be seen at a distance which tend to damage elevations. Therefore, we have introduced two small conservation lights which are recessed flush fitting with concealed internal gutters, with the incorporation of non-reflective glass, in accordance with policy recommendations.

3. It is our firm opinion the above roof lights will not have an adverse effect on the character of the roof slopes, however, as an alternative we do have the opportunity of introducing a small suitable window opening to the blank West gable end to supplement light level as advised in this policy.

4. Reiterating issues on materials, the original trusses and purlins shall be retained in order to maintain an authentic condition.

5. Reconstituted stone, aluminium and plastic shall be avoided in conversion work.

6. The cast iron rain water gutters shall be fixed with stirrup brackets thus avoiding fascia boards.

7. Referring to the interior, by removing the shippon's concrete floor and placing a new insulated concrete floor at the same level as the existing South facing door threshold, allows two storey construction without disturbing the existing roof trusses, allowing exposed roof members to retain their character. The ground floor office and and first floor dining/lounge open layout help natural light penetrate from the limited number of openings to assist in illuminating relatively large areas of floor space.

8. The staircase and doors shall be contemporary in design.

## **CURTILAGE AND ACCESS**

### **Existing condition and description**

1. There is an existing post and rail fence, erected approximately two years ago, that identify land ownership from adjacent neighbouring meadow land. This fence shall remain undisturbed.

2. The highway widens significantly South of the farm yard at least 1.50m from the imaginary line to a 2.50m wide grass verge to an existing established hawthorn hedge separating land ownership.

3. The existing farm yard wall East and South legs are constructed out of insitu concrete with a cement render 1.65m high. The wall has settled with substantial vertical cracks, is in a poor state, unsightly and not in keeping with the landscape.

4. There is substantial shrubbery growth over the grass verge bounding the existing corner South and West farm yard wall.

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5. The existing (West) stone wall between the farm yard and highway grass verge has an access gate approximately half way along its length. The section of wall North of the gate is in a complete state of disrepair. The section of wall South of the gate is completely root bound from local hedge and shrubbery with a concrete topping, all in a poor state.

6. Relating to a proposed access, we invited Mr M. Nugent, of Lancashire County Council Highway Department on July 24th 2012 to discuss the merits of access.

7. It was agreed there is the opportunity of creating a new access South of the farm yard by taking advantage of the wide section of grass verge, rebuilding the West stone wall allowing a visibility splay and a vehicular access at the tangent point of the highway bend, a far better option than using the existing access gate.

The proposed was agreed the best option subject to inspection of plans.

### **PROPOSED ACCESS (drawing no. 6007)**

1. The new access involves rebuilding the dilapidated wall, set back at the South end by 1,000 mm and continuous through its length, making the existing access redundant and forming a visibility splay of 2500 mm looking North. The South facing visibility splay is natural.

2. The existing grass verge shall be extended to the new wall, wrapping round against the South facing wall. Creating an access "radii". The existing South grass verge shall be cut away forming the opposite "radii" and vehicular access.

3. The existing hawthorn hedge shall be extended up to the new South wall protected by a post and rail fence during the growth seasons.

4. A five bar gate shall be erected to the entrance.

5. The new access is designed to an appropriate standard, with highway safety of a primary consideration.

6. By extending the existing hawthorn hedge has lent itself to the natural creation of the access.

7. Section A.A of drawing no. 6007 illustrates the visible impact which includes the West face of the new hedge and gate.

8. The access blends naturally with the landscape using materials sympathetic to the character of the area.

9. The planning curtilage includes the Barn and farm yard footprint, including the new vehicular access section.

10. The farm yard will have a new concrete stone surface to its full area and used for entering and leaving the site in forward gear.

11. The farm yard is simple and unfussy without the use of suburban paraphernalia, patio equipment, greenhouses and sheds that may otherwise detract from the agricultural setting.

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12. In general, the curtilage of the converted Barn shall remain open and uncluttered.
13. In summary the boundary treatment reflects the Barn's rural character.
14. It should be noted the parking of cars within the farm yard are hidden and not in view from the highway. Further bolstering the agricultural setting
15. Consideration of our proposal against Policy EMPS relating to "The conversion of barns and other rural buildings for employment use".
16. The general criteria of this policy relating to changes in farming practises reflects the reduced importance of agriculture as a local employer. Partly as a consequence of this the conversion of buildings to uses which will allow the maintenance of employment opportunities is generally encouraged and only where clear disturbance will be caused to neighbours, where the form of the building will be wholly inappropriate, and where development control criteria cannot be met, will such proposal be restricted.
17. The applicant's purchase of the Barn and curtilage is typical of the change in circumstances of the farming industry.
18. As a consequence we can demonstrate all principle criteria will be met relative to this policy.

**In particular:**

- (i) We have demonstrated by its isolation, nuisance will not be caused to neighbours.
- (ii) The building has had a genuine history of agricultural use.
- (iii) We have demonstrated by presentation of the "Structural Appraisal Report" and design conversion characteristics would not adversely affect the character of the building
- (iv) The principle element required for the operation of the building is access, parking and ground floor use of the Barn for administration purposes. Therefore the impact and appearance of the area cannot be compromised or harmed
- (v) Relating to access, we have previously demonstrated the proposed access with support from highways is of a site standard without harming the appearance of the area.
- (vi) We have demonstrated previously in this statement the design of the conversion is of a high standard and in keeping with local tradition in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings.

**ENGLISH HERITAGE**

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1. As an addendum statement to the attached principle Heritage Statement. In their publication "The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings", a guide to good practice states that "Within any conversion or adaptation there is a balance to be struck between incorporating the practical requirements of a new use and protecting the special character and significance of the farm building and its setting. Retention of as much historic fabric as possible is therefore a fundamental part of any good conversion.
2. Under the circumstances we are confident to have presented a design which does not compromise English Heritage policy recommendation, by preserving the original appearance of the Barn and curtilage thus making a positive contribution to the landscape.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

1. The National Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (PPS3) must be considered. It states that where local agricultural cannot demonstrate five year supply of deliverable housing land (which is the current situation in the Ribble Valley) then this application, if successful, would progress to achieving this requirement.
2. We should also follow ministerial advice on development in the countryside contained in rural areas (PPS7) which states that "The Government's policy is to support the reuse of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Criteria for such development should take into account the potential impact on the countryside and wildlife and the need to preserve, or the desirability of preserving buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest or which otherwise contribute to local character.
3. Referring to the above statement the principle criteria is the potential impact on the countryside.
4. Our proposal is a desirability of preserving the Barn which has some historical interest, which in our opinion we have presented an application that complies with local policy, thus satisfying National Policy.
5. We must also refer Policy Statement 5. Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) requires authorities to consider sustaining and the enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and of the consideration of the positive role of heritage assets in place-shaping. Policy H.E 9 1 states that there should be a presumption in favour of the construction of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated asset, the greater the presumption in favour of the construction should be.

### **COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF POLICY PPS5 AND SUMMARY APPRAISAL**

1. The Barn in its present state will continue to deteriorate as the years go by, coupled with the enormous steel framed extension attached to the East elevation and concrete walls to the curtilage seriously undermine this Area of Outstanding National Beauty. The distant views in particular from Sawley Bridge are disturbing

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2. The applicant has the rare opportunity of developing the Barn into a mixed use, administration at ground floor and living accommodation at first floor for his sole use. Albeit the commercial aspect is minor in the sense controlled by the applicant and a part-time assistant, the venture should not be construed as major development.
3. We have assured, by design and position on this prominent building, the intrinsic agricultural character of the building will **NOT** be undermined.
4. It is recognised and appreciated that the Barn is isolated and a traditional feature within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and needs protecting from inappropriate development
5. Taking on board the above statement our proposal will significantly enhance the appearance of the Barn, the development as a whole will protect and conserve the landscape area and add value to the character and appearance of his rural landscape.
6. Following the policy there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets.
7. The applicant is proposing to prevent a lost heritage asset which cannot be replaced and its loss is a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact.

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