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PROPOSED
CONVERSION OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
TO PROVIDE HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION
AND ACTIVITIES FOR TOURISM USE
AT
JACKSON BARN
BOLTON BY BOWLAND
SAWLEY
BB7 4RT

40 15/04/13

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ASSESSMENT

Jackson 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.

The western gable elevation of the building fronts Sawley Road and as the landforms which surrounds the barn is a flood plain as defined by the Environmental Agency Designated Flood Risk Zone 2.

S.J. Bialecki Limited involvement follows refused App No 3/2011/0780 for a dwelling, submitted by others, and more recently refused App No 3/2012/0735 for a mixed use. The refused applications are 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)
- c) Flood Risk Assessment
Rural Futures
- d) Heritage Statement
John Metcalfe 2011

STRUCTURAL APPRAISAL REPORT

The report excludes 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.

ECOLOGICAL REPORT

Circumstances the same therefore no change

8/8 15/04/13

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

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The report excludes note 5a to 6a relating to mitigation measures which is covered in our addendum Flood Risk Report.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

The report excludes note 8.2

The barn will be converted into a holiday let comprising ground floor, kitchen, and toilet/store area. First floor living (habitable use) , one bedroom and open plan lounge/dining area.

The steel framed building shall be demolished and the land reinstated to its former use.

The residential curtilage to the barn will include the enclosed yard with improved replacement access south of the yard.

Referring to our letter to the Environmental Agency dated 6th 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 1.0k from the applicants site.

From the farm, within one of the farmyard buildings, the applicant runs a small business in the form of maintenance and repair of small grass cutting appliances with the assistance of two helpers.

Present circumstances now dictate the opportunity of diversing the use of the applicants site by converting the barn to an appropriate use in the form of a Holiday Let.

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 East elevation.

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.

A recently erected post and rail fence, north, south and east of the holding, forms the applicants ownership curtilage consisting 0.132 hectare.

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PLANNING HISTORY

The first application No (3/2011/0790/P) sought permission to demolish the existing converted agricultural building to the eastern gable of the building and convert the main barn into a 3 bedroom residential dwelling. The most significant proposed alteration to the main barn was to increase the ridge height by 1.60m resulting in a new ridge height of 8.60m. These alterations relate to the supporting "Flood Risk Assessment" in relation to the Environmental Agencies Flood Zone 2 designation. The application did not meet criteria for sustainable development in Rural Areas. Therefore in both instances did not comply with policy demands and refused.

The Environment Directorate (county surveyor) had no objection in principle to the application on highway safety grounds. The site layout scheme as presented was deemed acceptable.

The recent application (3/2012/0735/P) sought permission to demolish the same existing corrugated agricultural building to the eastern gable of the building and convert the main barn for mixed use. Ground floor office with first floor residential use.

The Environment Agency had no objections in principle to the proposed development subject to an appropriate condition. The condition should state that the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved F.R.A. and the following mitigation measures detailed within the F.R.A..

United Utilities' had no objection to the proposed development.

Although the application as presented has all the ticks in the correct boxes in terms of consultations. The buildings location appears to be of concern and as such the development of a business use at this site does not constitute sustainable development. It was therefore considered the application be refused.

Following the two planning refusals, circumstances dictate the applicant is committed to pursue a "Change of Use" of the building to preserve its future structural integrity and asset.

Having reviewed the present situation, with further research and advice the most appropriate way forward is to take the tourist route.

We made enquiries through Ribble Valley Tourism and Marketing Lancashire and made aware there is a demand for small scale holiday accommodation essential to promote and sustain tourism within the Ribble Valley

8/13 15/04/13

3 2 0 1 3 0 4 2 1 P

In recent years there has been a marked increase in leisure activities , with tourism becoming a major growth area in the economy of the Ribble Valley .

This growth has significantly increased because of the currency exchange rates. It is predicted local tourism to significantly increase in lieu of package holidays for the long term future.

The applicant is in a position to diverse the use of the barn to promote and sustain tourism.

PROPOSALS

It is proposed to convert the barn into small scale holiday accomodation which would be ideal for families to stay in the open countryside and enjoy outdoor sustainable activities including :-

- a) Fishing :- stocks reservoir , River Ribble, River Calder. With the provision of appropriate fishing tackle and organisation of appropriate permits.
- b) Mountain Biking :- The Forest of Bowland have specific tracks for this purpose, which are safe and very popular for all age groups .Bikes and safety helmets would be provided.
- c) Cycle rides :- The open country side and side roads, Cycles and safety helmets would be provided.
- d) Mapping :- Mapping and hiking is very popular for all age groups with the Forest of Bowland and surrounding area, providing many public footpaths for this purpose. Public Houses for breaks etc., specific routes and maps would be provided.
- e) Ground floor accommodation provides a sauna , shower and toilet facilities following a days activities.

Proposals also relate to the promotion of sustainable on site energy sources and to Minimise the carbon footprint of the development.

 15/04/13

3 2 0 1 3 0 4 2 1 P

In particular ground source heating and rainwater harvesting.

- a) A sustainable ground source heating and pump system would be installed to provide under floor heating inside the barn . The underground heat collecting pipework would be installed in the enclosed land east of the barn. The proposed system would significantly reduce fuel consumption and assist to minimise the carbon footprint and running costs.
- b) A small bin and waste recycling area shall be provided as shown on the proposed site layout plan and screened by a timber fence and gate.
- c) An underground rainwater harvesting tank shall be installed to collect and store roof surface water and reused to flush the water closets, to minimise the need to use the on site water supply source.

RELEVANT POLICY R.T.1. DEMANDS

The proposal is well related to Sawley village , the existing highway and public transport network.

The sits provides necessary car parking and will not generate additional traffic movement of a scale and type likely to cause undue problems or disturbance.

The barn sits comfortably within the area it is located and is sufficiently distant not to create environmental problems or disrupt the amenity space of nearby residents. Thus to accord with this policy.

RELEVANT POLICY R.T.3 DEMANDS

This policy acknowledges the importance of design quality of the rural environment generally. In this instance the proposed conversion is sympathetic to the local land scape using existing openings without introducing new openings, or other elements , allowing the proper operation of the building without harming the appearance of the area in which it is situated.

The access to the site is of a safe standard with the introduction of an improved access area, that does not harm the appearance of the area.

Thus to accord with this policy.

8B 15/04/13

DESIGN PROPOSALS

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NORTH ELEVATION

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.

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

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

NORTH ELEVATION

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

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.

The higher existing window , with original dressed sandstone surround, shall serve first floor living accommodation.

ROOF

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

SOUTH ELEVATION

A 900 x 800 conservation type roof light shall replace an existing light in the same location to serve the first floor bedroom

The two remaining existing lights shall be removed

The area of the new light shall not be greater than the collective area of removed lights.

 15/04/13

3 2 0 1 3 0 4 2 1 P

NORTH ELEVATION

A 800 x 500 conservation type roof light shall replace two existing lights to serve the first floor bathroom

The area of the new light shall have a similar area to the collective area of the two existing lights remounted

8/13 15/04/13

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.

SR 15/04/13

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

3 20130421 P

RELEVANT POLICIES (ADDITIONAL TO R.T.1. & R.T.3.)

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.

8/13 15/04/13

3 2 0 1 3 0 4 2 1 P

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".

8/12
15/04/13

3 2 0 1 3 0 4 2 1 P

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.

80 15/01/13

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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.

15/04/12

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

AB 15/04/12

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

JB 15/04/13

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We have assured , by design and position on the prominent building , the intrinsic agricultural character of the building will NOT be undermined.

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.

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.

Following the policy there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets.

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.

In relation to NPPF advise on Economic Development in rural area that the development of tourism use at this will constitute sustainable development.

15/04/13