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COCKLICK END FARMHOUSE, SLAIDBURN

(ALTERNATIVE TO PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE 3/2012/0984)

PLANNING STATEMENT

on behalf of United Utilities

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1 Introduction, the Context and the Development Proposals

1.1 This Planning Statement supports a resubmitted planning application for the conversion of Cocklick End Farmhouse and the contiguous barn to provide a single residential unit (Figure 1.1).

1.2 A previous planning application (reference 3/2012/0984/P) for similar development was refused by the Council on 20 December 2012.

1.3 There are four reasons for refusal:

1 The proposed development, due to the isolated location of the site outside any settlement and distant from any services, does not represent sustainable development as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and would therefore form an unjustified dwelling within the open countryside to the detriment of the appearance and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is thus considered contrary to Policies ENV1, G5 and H2 of the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan, Policies DMG1, DMG2 and DMH3 of the Regulation 22 Submission Draft Core Strategy and Section 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 The proposed works are considered contrary to Policies G1, ENV1 and H17 of the District-wide Local Plan and Policies DMG1, DME2 and DMH4 of the Regulation 22 Submission Draft Core Strategy and Sections 11 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in that they would have a detrimental impact on the original character of this traditional building, a heritage asset and visual qualities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which it is set.

3 The proposal is contrary to Policies ENV1, H15 and H17 of the adopted Ribble Valley District-wide Local Plan and Policies EN2, DME2, DME4, DMH3, DMH4 and DMG1 of the Regulation 22 Submission Draft Core Strategy and Sections 11 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in that the development would lead to conditions to the detriment of the visual amenities of the landscape caused by the creation of a curtilage and parking area with its associated domestic/employment paraphernalia.

4 Based on Natural England Standing Advice the application represents insufficient information to demonstrate that there would not be a detrimental impact on the favourable status of the bat and owl species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and under the Conservation (Natural Habitats Regulations) 2010 and as such is contrary to Policy ENV7 of the Ribble Valley District-wide Local Plan, Policy DME3 of the Regulation 22 Submission Draft Core Strategy and Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.4 We firmly believe that these reasons for refusal can be addressed in a positive way. This resubmitted planning application has been informed by the concerns expressed by the Council in its reasons for refusal. This Planning Statement will show that the weight of planning argument is in favour of the development.

1.5 In brief, and by way of introduction, we will demonstrate that:

1 National planning policy recognises that there are instances where isolated houses in the countryside are acceptable in land use planning terms. We will show that the development is consistent with national planning policy and many key aspects of planning policy at the local level. Where appropriate, we will also highlight where either Local Plan or Draft Core Strategy policies are inconsistent with advice in the National Planning Policy Framework and where advice in the Framework should prevail.

2 The design approach for conversion works has been reconsidered and amended (and informed by the Heritage Statement) to overcome the concerns of the Council about the 'impact on the original character of this traditional building' and the 'visual qualities of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'.

3 The design of external spaces has been amended to minimise any impacts. The landscape appraisal has been expanded to show that the degree of visual intrusion in the landscape when viewed from points of pubic vantage is almost imperceptible.

4 Information is provided as part of the planning application to show that there will be no detrimental impact on the favourable status of the bat and owl species.

1.6 In addition we have carried out additional consultation in advance of the re-submission of the planning application. The consultees are:

- Elliot Lorimer – Principal AONB Officer – Lancashire County Council
- Helen Wallbank – Neighbour and Bowland Archivist
- Councillor Rosemary Elms
- Slaidburn and Easington Parish Council.

The outcome from these consultations is given in Appendix 2. The feedback has been positive with recognition that the conversion of the building in the way proposed will be a positive attribute in the AONB and to the character and economy of the countryside.

Background and Context

1.7 Cocklick End farmhouse dates from the early eighteenth century. The barn is a nineteenth century addition. The farmhouse has not been occupied for a considerable time but the barn has been used until recently for agricultural purposes by a local tenant farmer. The barn, however, has now been released from the tenancy as it was deemed to be unsuitable for modern agricultural practices. From external inspection, there is evidence of progressive deterioration of the building fabric although the essential structure of the building is sound.

1.8 The Council has recognised (not least in the reasons for refusal No 2 – see paragraph 1.3 of this Statement) that Cocklick End Farmhouse is a non-designated heritage asset. In the 'Delegated Item File Report' for the previous planning application (3/2012/0984/P) it is stated:

'Whilst the Local Planning Authority recognises that this building is of significant historic interest……'

1.9 The building falls in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is positioned in reasonably open landscape but public views of the building are limited by virtue of the fact that it is partially surrounded by the plantation woodland of the Gisburn Forest (south, west and east). The building is visible from the public footpath which runs to the north (towards Old Ing and Halsteads Farm) but these are distant views and the building sits at a lower level than the footpath.

1.10 Access is gained by an unmade track which leads from the minor highway which bisects Gisburn Forest. The intersection of the track and the minor road coincides with the hard surfaced lane leading towards Old Ing and Halsteads Farm (the public right of way). The junction at this point is wide and sight lines are reasonable in both directions. Lancashire County Council, as the local highway authority, has confirmed in its observations on application reference 3/2012/0984/P that there are no highway objections (there is potential for the improvement to sight lines through the minor repositioning of the boundary wall to the north of the access).

1.11 There is a stone wall around the perimeter of the farmhouse and barn. This defines the immediate curtilage and provides separation from the adjacent fields. There is also a small open area on the approach to the farmhouse which is again defined by a stone wall. This open area falls within the demise of the property. (Figure 1).



Curtilage of the farmhouse and barn defined by a stone wall



Access to the farmhouse at the point where the track intersects with the minor road

The Proposed Development

1.12 The form of the development and the rationale for design decisions is described in the companion Design Statement.

1.13 In short, the proposed development involves the amalgamation of the farmhouse and barn to form a single, four bedroom residential unit. Use is made of the existing openings in the farmhouse and barn. As a consequence, the essential appearance and character of the building is little changed. Traditional materials are used in the works, consistent with the heritage value of the building.

1.14 The private area around the building is defined by the existing stone perimeter wall. This gives a tightly defined curtilage. The tight curtilage, and the fact that the proposed changes to the external fabric of the building will be minimal, mean that there will be no material impact on the character and appearance of the countryside. The open area on the approach to the farmhouse (defined by a stone wall) is conveniently located to form a parking area. This parking area will be screened by new lengths of walls and planting (see landscape general arrangement drawing). There will be no material visual impact.

The Planning Application Package

1.15 In order to address these key planning considerations a series of companion documents have been drafted to support the planning application. These companion documents should be read alongside the Planning Statement. They are:

- Heritage Statement
- Structural Survey
- Bat and Barn Owl Survey
- Design and Access Statement
- Utilities Statement.

1.15 These documents should be considered alongside the submitted plans for building conversion works and the general arrangement plan for landscape works.

2 Relevant Planning Policy Context

2.1 In the context of this planning application the relevant planning policy is to be found in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (RVLP) and the Draft Core Strategy Local Plan 2008 - 2028. There is an inter-relationship between these documents. Given that the RVLP is an 'old style' development plan its policies can only be given weight according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (Paragraph 215 of NPPF). The same applies to the emerging Core Strategy.

2.2 Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date planning permission should be granted unless adverse impacts would outweigh the benefits (Paragraph 14 of NPPF). This derives from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

National Planning Policy Context (March 2012)

2.3 The NPPF puts in place a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are economic, social and environmental dimensions to sustainable development. The objectives of environmental sustainability can be met by protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment. This is clear in Paragraph 7 of NPPF where the environmental dimension of sustainability is seen as including the contribution to protecting and enhancing our 'natural, built and historic environment'.

2.4 NPPF gives specific advice on 'new isolated homes in the countryside' (Paragraph 55). Special circumstances to justify these homes includes situations where the development represents the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or where it would lead to the re-use of redundant or disused buildings and lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting.

2.5 NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that must be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (Paragraph 126). In this respect it recognises the need to put heritage assets into viable uses consistent with their conservation (Paragraph 137).

2.6 For developments such as that proposed at Cocklick End farmhouse, NPPF advises that consideration of the impacts arising from any change should, above all, account for the asset's conservation (Paragraph 131). This is in recognition of the fact that the significance of a heritage asset can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction.

2.7 NPPF also recognises the need to conserve and enhance the natural environment. This includes protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (Paragraph 109). This is particularly the case when it comes to National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Paragraph 115).

2.8 Other aspects of the NPPF which have a bearing on this planning application include improving the quality of the built, natural and historic environment to, amongst other things, widen the choice of high quality homes (paragraph 9); the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (paragraph 17); encouragement for local planning authorities to bring back empty housing and buildings into residential use (paragraph 51); the enhancement of biodiversity through taking opportunities to incorporate appropriate measures in or around development should be encouraged (paragraph 118); the need to take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation and recognising the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefit that conservation of the historic environment can bring (paragraph 126).

Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (RVLP) (1998)

2.9 The RVLP was adopted in 1998. Whilst it is the statutory plan for the borough it is in many respects out of date. Where policies in the RVLP are inconsistent with the NPPF it is the latter which takes priority. Bearing in mind the nature of the proposed development, there are three particular aspects of the RVLP which are of relevance:

(1) The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

(2) Rural dwellings.

(3) Conversion of rural buildings.

2.10 Policy ENV1 of the RVLP aims to conserve and enhance the AONB. The impact of development on the particular landscape qualities of the area will need to be given special consideration. Policy H2 relates to dwellings in the open countryside. It supports appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings in certain circumstances.

2.11 There is guidance in the RVLP on the location of buildings in the countryside proposed for conversion to alternative uses. Policy H15 is relevant. It requires compliance with criteria before proposals for conversion can be considered favourably. These include:

(1) There is no need for unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities in the provision of infrastructure.

(2) There will be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area.

(3) There will be no unacceptable harm to nature conservation interests.

(4) There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy.

(5) Within the AONB the proposal should be consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.

Appropriate buildings in settlements or which form part of a group of buildings could be converted but there is more circumspection about isolated buildings in the landscape such as barns when these are proposed for conversion. This Policy H15 of the RVLP is not consistent with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF where one 'test' for new isolated homes in the countryside is 'where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets'. Advice in the NPPF prevails over the guidance in the RVLP.

2.12 Policy H16 relates directly to the building to be converted. It requires the building to be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive rebuilding or major alterations which would affect the character and appearance of the building. It also requires the building to be of sufficient size to provide minimal living accommodation without the need for extension and the building to be worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or its contribution to its setting.

2.13 Policy H17 requires high design standards, consistent with tradition in terms of materials, geometric form and openings. External spaces and their use should not harm the appearance and function of the locality. Access should be to a safe standard.

2.14 Other policies that have been mentioned by the Council in the reasons for refusal for the previous planning application are:

Policy G1: Sets out criteria to ensure that development design will be of a high quality

Policy G5: Limits developments outside settlement boundaries to certain small scale purposes.

Policy ENV1: Aims to protect the particular qualities of the Forest of Bowland AONB.

Policy ENV7: Secures the future of wildlife species protected by law.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 (Submission Draft)

2.15 The Core Strategy is at an advanced stage of preparation. A public examination of the Core Strategy is anticipated in July 2013. Relevant policies in emerging plans can be given weight in accordance with the stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections and the degree of consistency with NPPF (Paragraph 216 of NPPF).

2.16 General policy DMG1 relates to the determination of all planning applications and refers to matters such as the standard of building design, traffic and access implications, environmental and heritage issues. Policy DMG2 is supportive of development outside of defined settlement areas where, for instance, it is for small scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated. Moreover, it recognises that:

'Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings which in most cases is more appropriate than new build'.

This is especially the case in the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape is important but must always be considered alongside the economic and social well-being of the designated area.

In addition, the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside can make a contribution to the overall supply of new homes. This is particularly important in the Borough of Ribble Valley where there is considerable pressure on open land around main settlements for residential development due to a weakness in the deliverable five year supply of housing land.

2.17 Policy DMH3 allows for the conversion of buildings in the countryside to dwellings provided they are suitably located, their form and design in in keeping with their surroundings and that they are structurally sound/capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.

2.18 Policy DMH4 provides a higher level of guidance on the conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings as follows:

'Policy DMH4: The Conversion of Barns and Other Buildings to Dwellings

Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where:

- *The building is not isolated in the landscape, is within a defined settlement or forms part of an already defined group of buildings, and*
- *There need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure, and*
- *There would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservation interests, and*
- *There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy, and*
- *The proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area*
- *That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or, if this is not possible, then any loss adequately mitigated.*

The building to be converted must:

- *Be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alteration, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building. The Council will require a structural survey to be submitted with all planning applications of this nature. This should include plans of any rebuilding that is proposed.*

- *Be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building, and*
- *The character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting, and*
- *The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise'.*

2.19 The first two aspects of Policy DMH4 (which place restrictions on isolated buildings and makes reference to infrastructure) are at odds with guidance in Paragraph 55 of NPPF which relates to circumstances where new isolated homes in the countryside can be permitted. This is a draft Policy which is not supported by the NPPF. At this stage it cannot be given weight in decision making. This, amongst other policies, will be tested at the public examination of the Core Strategy. Consistency between this policy and paragraph 55 of the NPPF will be a key consideration in the assessment of the submission Core Strategy.

3 The Principle of the Development

3.1 NPPF is a material consideration. Where policies in the adopted Local Plan or the emerging Core Strategy are inconsistent with the guidance in NPPF it is the latter which must be given priority. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that can be given (paragraph 215, NPPF).

3.2 NPPF gives support to the general principle of sustainable development in rural areas. One important aspect of sustainable development is environmental. This includes protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment (Paragraph 14 of NPPF). The NPPF also recognises that there will be circumstances where new isolated homes in the countryside are justified (Paragraph 55). These circumstances include:

(1) Where the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets.

The Heritage Statement confirms the 'heritage asset' status of Cocklick End Farmhouse. In the reasons for refusal the Council recognises that the building is a heritage asset (see Paragraph 1.3 of this Planning Statement). Reason 2 states "…. on the original character of this building, a heritage asset".

The conversion of this heritage asset to a dwelling represents its optimal viable use. The evidence for this is to be found in the viability assessment (Appendix 1). It finds that a residential use is the only viable option. No other use of this building is commercially viable. Only a residential conversion will lead to the preservation and enhancement of this building as a heritage asset.

(2) Where development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

This development involves the re-use of redundant or disused buildings. It will lead to the general enhancement of the setting of the building in a way that does not detract from the landscape and character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It will also lead to biodiversity benefits through the provisions that are to be made for protected and other wildlife.

3.3 Local policies are more restrictive but they still provide for the conversion of buildings in the countryside to residential use. There is, however, a contradiction in draft Policy DMH4 of the emerging Core Strategy in that it supports the conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings where *'the building is not isolated in the landscape, is within a defined settlement or forms part of an already defined group of buildings'*. This is in clear conflict with the advice in NPPF which supports isolated homes in the countryside in certain circumstances (Paragraph 55). A blanket restriction would be inconsistent with NPPF. It is the NPPF which must take priority over the emerging planning policy. This aspect of emerging policy cannot be given weight because it is inconsistent with NPPF (NPPF paragraph 215).

3.4 Other aspects of emerging Policy DMH4 (and Policy DMH3) are satisfied. There is also consistency with Policies G1, ENV1, ENV7, H2, H17 and H15 of the RVLP. In brief:

- Infrastructure to the building (see the companion Utilities Statement) can be secured without unnecessary expenditure by public authorities (despite the fact that this is not a factor that appears in the NPPF).
- The landscape qualities of the area would not be materially damaged (a point which is further explored later in this Statement).
- There will be no detrimental effect on the rural economy.
- The proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area (again this is explored later in this Statement).

- Nature conservation interests are adequately protected. This is demonstrated in the other material which supports the planning application.
- The building is structurally sound and is of a scale which is capable of conversion without the need for extensive building or alteration.
- There is no need to extend the building to achieve a high quality of residential accommodation. The footprint of the building remains unchanged.
- This is acknowledged by the Council as a heritage asset. Materials and building form are appropriate to its surroundings. It is worthy of retention because it has intrinsic heritage interest and it contributes to the particular character of the countryside. The long term integrity of the building can only be secured through a conversion to residential use.
- The building has been genuinely associated with agriculture in the past. The Farmhouse provided accommodation for agricultural workers at one time and the barn has been clearly used for agriculture. The buildings were not originally built with a future aim of conversion. This is confirmed by reference to the companion Heritage Statement.
- The conversion of the building will provide a housing resource which is an important aspect of the economic and social sustainability of the countryside. It will contribute to meeting the five year housing land supply in the Ribble Valley.
- Access to the building is already provided.

3.5 Overall, the land use principle which is engaged by this planning application is given support by key aspects of planning policy, and guidance, particularly the NPPF which is a material consideration which can override locally based policies where these policies are out-of-date or are inconsistent with NPPF. The heritage asset status of this building justifies its retention and re-use for housing in accordance with Paragraph 55 of NPPF. Any aspects of local policy which are inconsistent with this cannot be given weight in the determination of this planning application.

The Issue of Sustainability

3.6 The NPPF provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are three dimensions to sustainable development that need to be considered together – the economic role, the social role and the environmental role. It is the environmental role which is especially important as this planning application is founded on preserving and enhancing a heritage asset.

3.7 In this instance it is self-evident that the house to be created will be in the countryside and some distance from amenities and services. This fact alone, however, does not mean that it is unacceptable in terms of sustainability. There are provisions in NPPF (Paragraph 55) that support *'isolated homes in the countryside'* which include *'where such would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets'* and *'where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting'*.

3.8 Indeed, there are many ways that the proposed development will contribute towards the overriding goal of sustainable development:

Economic sustainability: The development will channel investment into a heritage asset to give it a beneficial and secure future. Infrastructure to serve the development either exists or can be provided without the need for upgrading or reinforcement by public utility companies. In addition, the building is of sufficient scale to deliver home office facilities. There is potential for a live-work function which, in itself, lessens the propensity to travel. A home office would be of some benefit to rural enterprise. It will allow occupiers to live and work in the countryside.

Social sustainability: This development will provide much needed housing in the district of Ribble Valley. It will lead to an increase in the rural population to give it added strength and diversity. It is also consistent with Paragraph 5.13 of the RVLP which recognises that the conversion of rural dwellings to houses *'adds to the number of homes to be provided in the Borough over the plan period. This helps to safeguard undeveloped greenfield sites from development'*.

Environmental sustainability: The development will make a significant contribution towards protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment. The viability assessment (Appendix 1) demonstrates that conversion to housing is the only viable use for this non-designated heritage asset. The conversion to a single residential unit represents the type of 'special circumstances' envisaged by Paragraph 55 of the NPPF. In addition, the development is entirely consistent with specific guidance in NPPF on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 126 requires weight to be given to *'sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation'*. This development will sustain a heritage asset. Residential use is entirely consistent with the conservation of the building (the major part of the building has a long history of use as a farmhouse) and, in any event, it is the only viable use. The proposed development represents the only viable method of conserving this heritage asset.

3.9 In this case a narrow interpretation of sustainability based on accessibility to services and facilities is not appropriate. A broader examination of the sustainability credentials of the development shows that there are many ways that this development can meet the objectives of sustainability.

4 Implications for the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Preservation of the Building as a Heritage Asset

4.1 The AONB covers around 70% of the Borough of Ribble Valley. Within this designation the main purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural environment of the area.

4.2 Whilst the emphasis in the AONB is on the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, there is a recognition in the RVLP that some development will be permitted – *'Where possible new development will be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build'* (Paragraph 4.2.6). This sentiment is repeated in Policy DMG2 of the emerging strategy.

4.3 The landscape assessment (which forms an appendix to the RVLP) goes further. In describing the 'Upland Fringe Farmland' it states:

'Most of the older buildings, both in settlements and isolated dwellings are often of gritstone and are built in the local vernacular tradition, contributing, strongly to the identity and aesthetic qualities of the landscape'. (Appendix 2, Paragraph 4.4.3).

It then goes on to say that:

'Dry stone walls in particular make a significant contribution to the landscape character in some areas'. (Appendix 2, Paragraph 4.4.4).

And then:

'Positive landscape elements of the upland fringe farmland are: The wealth of historic stone farmhouses, barns, bridges, etc.; Strong fields pattern and well maintained walls and hedges ….'. (Appendix 2, Paragraph 4.4.8).

4.4 This all points to a recognition that traditional buildings in the AONB make a positive contribution to the special character of the designated area. They are positive features in the landscape which need to be conserved and enhanced. Cocklick End farmhouse is a good example of such a traditional building. This is clearly borne out by the companion Heritage Statement. There is an obligation on the planning system to ensure that assets such as this building are preserved and enhanced for future generations.

4.5 Of course the detail of how traditional buildings in the AONB are conserved and enhanced is important. In this respect it is opportune to examine how the detail of the reinstatement and conversion works at Cocklick End farmhouse will impact on both the AONB and its heritage value.

4.6 Guidance on the conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings is given in the RVLP (Paragraph 5.13) (and Policy DMH4 of the emerging Core Strategy). It recognises that traditionally constructed buildings are very much a part of the Ribble Valley's character and heritage and that:

'The objective of allowing conversions or alternative uses is to keep these buildings well maintained and protect them as a feature in the landscape for future generations. In addition, the conversion of properties to dwellings adds to the number of homes to be provided in the Borough over the plan period. This helps to safeguard undeveloped greenfield sites from development'. (Paragraph 5.13.2).

4.7 This guidance is permissive: it encourages the conversion of traditional buildings located within the countryside.

4.8 However, the benefits of conversion, including the conservation of heritage assets, should not be lost through lack of reference to those features which make the building an important and interesting part of the Borough. In the case of Cocklick End farmhouse the detail of reinstatement and conversion works has recognised these features. Consistent with the guidance in the RVLP the objective has been to respect the simple and robust character of the building with minimal change to the external fabric of the building. To a great extent this has been facilitated by the fact that a significant part of the development involves the reinstatement of a house.

Roof: There will be little change to the large, unbroken roof slopes.

Openings: Existing openings in walls are used to maximum advantage. There is little need for new openings.

Materials: When repair is needed, traditional materials are to be used.

Extensions: No additions or extensions are needed. The building is a sufficient size to provide good quality accommodation. The simple form of the range of buildings will not be compromised.

Interiors: The space planning has been arranged so as to avoid disturbance of roof timbers. There is no need to raise the height of external walls. There is an openness to the internal layout which is resonant of the existing character of the barn.

Curtilage: The curtilage around the farmhouse is well defined by drystone walls. These in themselves are an important feature of the landscape. The walls will give containment to the domestic curtilage. The walls tightly enclose the building. This eliminates the possibility of evidence of domestic life spilling beyond the immediate confines of the new dwelling. The open and uncluttered character of the countryside around the building will remain. The implementation of a comprehensive scheme of landscape will ensure that domestic features such as clothes drying lines or waste bins will be hidden from wider/public views.

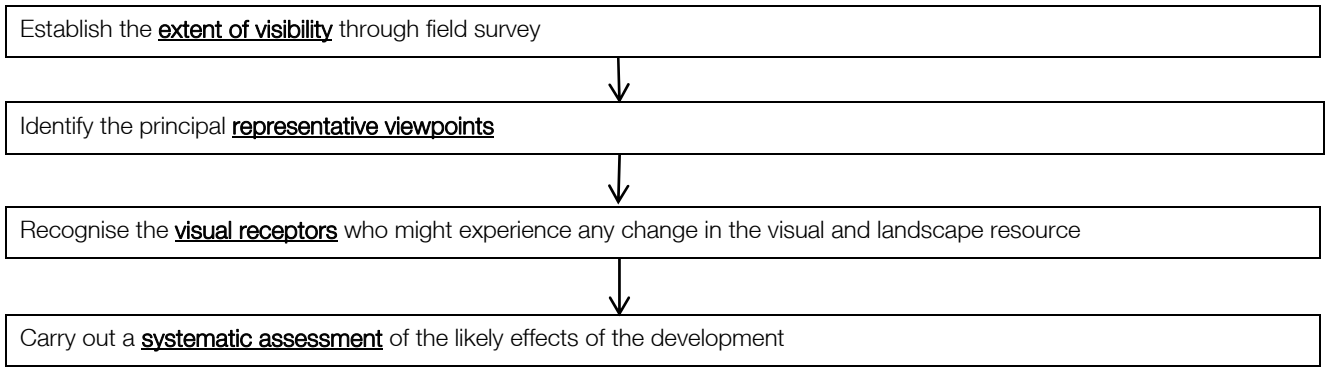
Access: The highway authority has confirmed that highway safety will not be compromised. The track leading to the building will need improvement but the detail of improvement will be consistent with the rural setting. At the termination of the track, adjacent to the farmhouse, there is a small area enclosed by drystone walls which will be used for car parking. This is a sheltered and hidden area largely surrounded by the plantation woodland of Gisburn Forest. Cars parked at this location will not be obvious in the landscape. They will not be seen from the public highway and they will be barely visible from the public right of way which runs to the north of the building, as demonstrated in the photographs at figure 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4.

Visual Impact on the Character and Landscape Quality of the AONB

4.9 A landscape and visual assessment has been carried out to determine, in an objective way, the degree and magnitude of impact on the AONB arising from the conversion of the building to residential use.

4.10 The existing character of the AONB is described in the RBLP. As recognised in Paragraph 4.3 of this statement, older buildings of the local vernacular tradition contribute strongly to this character. Cocklick End Farmhouse and barn are built in the local vernacular – the walls are of gritstone rubble, roughly laid to courses using random size stone and the roof is of stone slates. It is typical of the rural buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the countryside around Gisburn Forest. The beneficial reuse of this building and its conservation will have a positive and long term effect on the particular character of the AONB.

4.11 We have used a straightforward visual assessment methodology to ascertain the magnitude and relevance of change on the landscape resource. The methodology is as follows:



4.12 The outcome of the process of visual and landscape assessment is shown in the following figures:

Figure 4.1 Representative Viewpoints

Through a field survey, which has involved walking public footpaths and bridleways, representative viewpoints have been established. Due to the sheltered location of the building and its proximity to Gisburn Forest (largely softwood plantation) the only representative viewpoints are from the public right of way to the north of the building. There are no clear viewpoints from the footpaths or bridleways which run through Gisburn Forest to the east or south of the building and it cannot be viewed from the public highway to the west. There are no views of the building from private property. Three representative viewpoints have been selected. These are at intervals along the public right of way to the north. The nearest viewpoint is around 55 metres from the building. The visual receptors in this instance are the users of the public right of way – principally recreational walkers and those gaining access along this route to Halsteads Farm.

Figures 4.2 and 4.4 Existing and Proposed Views from Three Viewpoints

The assessment of the likely effects of the proposed development has been guided by the photomontage exercise shown in Figures 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. This exercise shows the degree of change likely to be experienced by the visual receptors from the representative viewpoints. In each viewpoint it is clear that the degree of visual change to the building is not significant. Indeed, the degree of change is so limited it will not be perceived from this distance. In terms of widely accepted definitions of the magnitude or degree of effect on visual amenity it can be concluded that the impact on the visual and landscape resource is none.

None = No part of the development is discernible.

4.13 There is the ancillary question of activities associated with the proposed development. This might be private use as a garden of the curtilage area around the building or the parking of vehicles in the enclosure to the west of the building. Most activity in the curtilage will take place on the larger, south facing frontage of the building. This is totally screened from representative viewpoints. The small parking area is recessed into an enclosure with the immediate backdrop of Gisburn Forest. From the representative viewpoints parked vehicles will be hardly discernible. Overall, the degree and magnitude of activities on the landscape and visual resource associated with the domestic use of the building is predicted to be slight.

Slight = The activity constitutes only a minor component in the wider view which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. Awareness of the activity would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the landscape or the visual resource.

4.14 Overall, the systematic assessment of the effect on the landscape and the visual resource is shown to be none or, at worst, slight. This needs to be balanced against the fact that the conservation of the building will have a positive impact on the character of the landscape and the qualities of the AONB. The social, environmental and economic benefits arising from the conversion of the building to residential use will clearly outweigh the almost imperceptible impact on the landscape or visual resource.

5 Conclusions on the Significance of the Heritage Asset, the Benefits to be Derived from its Preservation and the Impact on the Wider Area

5.1 This Planning Statement, when read in association with the companion documents which support the planning application, has established a number of important facts:

- Cocklick End farmhouse is a non-designated heritage asset. The Council has acknowledged this is clearly worthy of preservation.
- The landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB is richly characterised by traditional buildings which make an important contribution to the special qualities of the designated environment.
- The heritage asset can be converted to form high quality unique, accommodation in a way that does not compromise the simple and robust character of the building and in a way that does not significantly alter the open, rural character of its locality. There are no material changes to the external fabric of the building.
- The development will add to the stock of housing in the countryside, giving choice in the range of available housing and contributing to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area.

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages the conservation of heritage assets, in recognition of the fact that they are an irreplaceable resource. They must be put to viable uses consistent with their conservation. The viability appraisal (in Appendix 1) has established that the only viable use which will lead to the conservation of Cocklick End farmhouse is for residential purposes. The Heritage Statement establishes that it is a heritage asset which is in urgent need of conservation. The Council recognises this imperative.

5.3 NPPF also gives advice on new isolated homes in the countryside. It advises that these are justified in particular circumstances such as where the development represents the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or will lead to the re-use of redundant or derelict buildings. The proposed development satisfies both circumstances – it represents the optimal (and only) viable use of this heritage asset and it will bring a redundant building in the countryside back into beneficial use. If permission for conversion to a dwelling is not given then the building will deteriorate further and soon the opportunity to save this heritage asset will be lost.

5.4 NPPF takes priority in the realm of policy guidance given the age of the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (RVLP). Notwithstanding this, there is important guidance in the RVLP and the emerging Draft Core Strategy which is still of relevance. The conversion works are consistent with Local Plan and Draft Core Strategy policies with the exception of Policy DMH4 of the Draft Core Strategy which places a restriction on the conversion of buildings which are isolated in the landscape. This is clearly at odds with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF and so emerging Policy DMH4 cannot be given weight in the context of this planning application.

5.5 The building is in an isolated location in the countryside but such isolated and traditional buildings are characteristic of the Upland Fringe Farmland of the AONB. Indeed, the building makes a positive contribution to the AONB landscape. It should be conserved as an important feature of the AONB and a good example of a traditional building.

5.6 The building can be reinstated and converted to form good quality residential accommodation in a way that has negligible impact on the character of the area. As the proposal involves the reinstatement of a farmhouse, there is no need for any significant alteration to the external appearance. The simple and robust form of the building will be maintained. The associated impacts of domestic use will be well contained by the drystone walls which enclose the building and give it a well-defined curtilage. A visual and landscape appraisal has systematically demonstrated that the changes to the building will be of only negligible impact from representative viewpoints whilst the effects associated with the use of the building as a house will be only slight. There will be no significant or discernible impact on the landscape of the AONB.

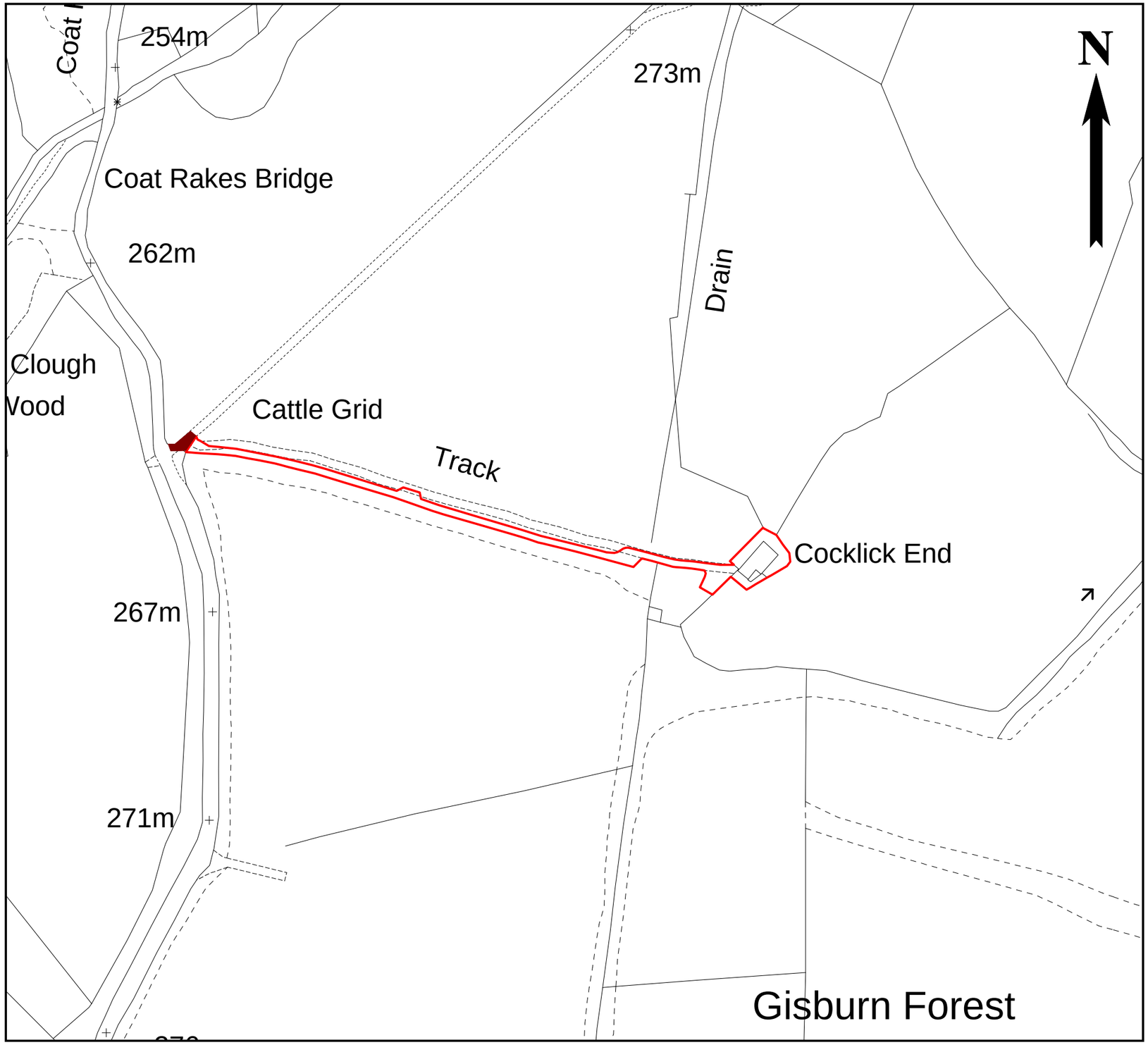
5.7 In the balance of planning arguments there is a clear outcome. This is a heritage asset which is worthy of conservation. Residential use is the only viable option and reinstatement and conversion to a new home can be achieved in a way that actually enhances the character of the AONB through the conservation of a traditional vernacular building. This is a development with sustainability credentials, especially as it leads to the preservation and enhancement of a heritage asset (Paragraph 7 of NPPF). There is an obligation to ensure that this asset is preserved for future generations. It should, accordingly, be given full support by the Council.

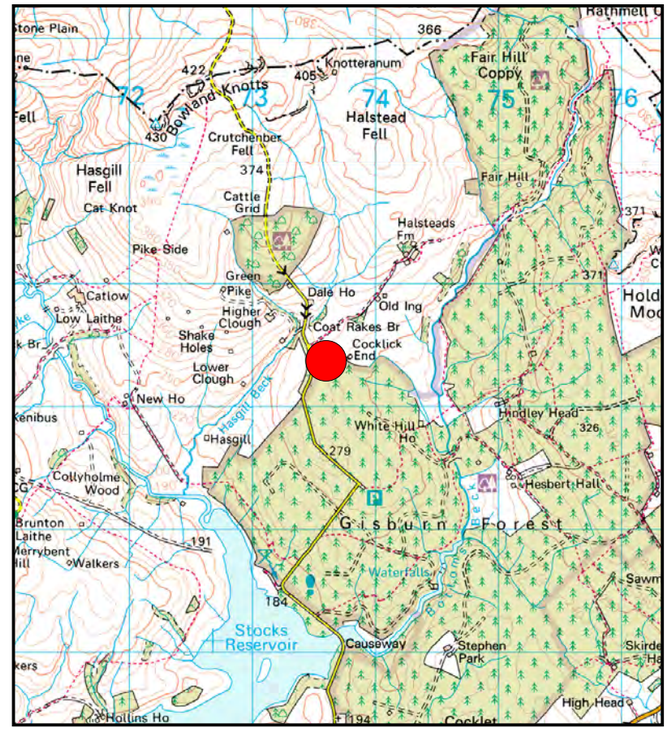
5.8 In addition, some recognition must be given to the Government's recent changes to permitted development rights. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013 allows for the change of use in certain circumstances, of agricultural buildings to a flexible use including shops, professional or financial services, restaurants and cafes, business, storage or distribution, hotels and assembly/leisure. This is a clear signal that the Government attaches importance to rural enterprise and the more diverse use of buildings in the countryside. Change of use to residential is not included but the thrust of legislative change in favour of attracting economic activity to rural areas has some significance. The conversion of Cocklick End Farmhouse and barn to a single residential unit will bring investment and vitality to the countryside in a way which secures the future of a heritage asset.

FIGURES

Figure 1.1
Location Plan and Curtilage of Property

COCKLICK END





Location Plan **Scale 1:50,000**

Legend

- **Location of Property**
- **Site Boundaries**
- **Right of Way**

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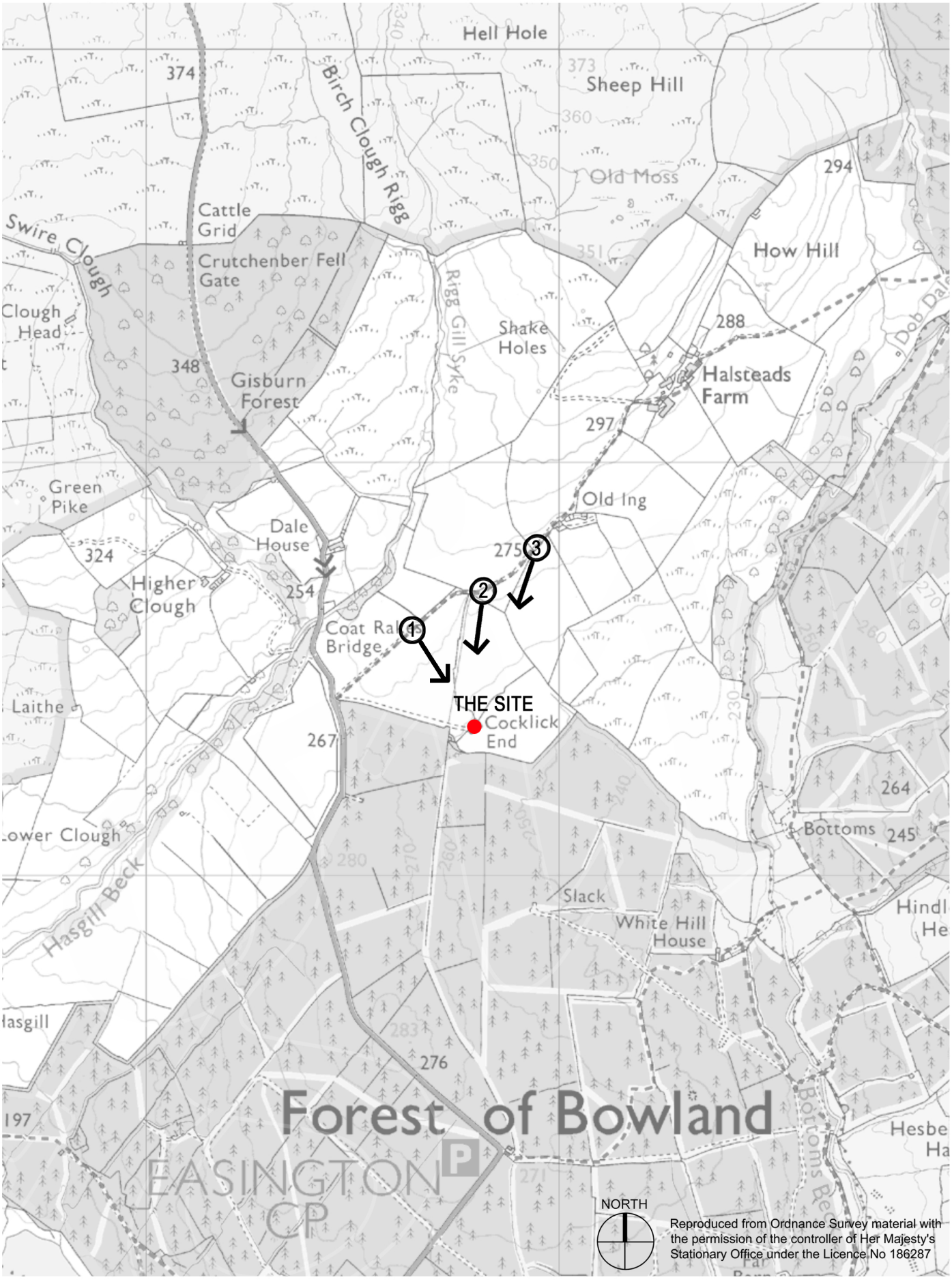
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United Utilities

NGR: SD 737 583

Scale: 1:2,500



Nearest points of public vantage

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drawing title
Representative Viewpoints

UNITED UTILITIES PROPERTY SOLUTIONS LTD
COCKLICK END FARMHOUSE AND BARN,
NEAR SLAIDBURN

scale 1:12,500@A4
date 18.02.13
drn BC

Figure 4.1

EXISTING PHOTO



PHOTOMONTAGE



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drawing title
Viewpoint 1:
Existing and Proposed View

UNITED UTILITIES PROPERTY SOLUTIONS LTD
COCKLICK END FARMHOUSE AND BARN,
NEAR SLAIDBURN

scale NTS
date 18.02.13
drn BC

Figure 4.2

EXISTING PHOTO



PHOTOMONTAGE



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drawing title
Viewpoint 2:
Existing and Proposed View

UNITED UTILITIES PROPERTY SOLUTIONS LTD
COCKLICK END FARMHOUSE AND BARN,
NEAR SLAIDBURN

scale NTS
date 18.02.13
drn BC

Figure 4.3

EXISTING PHOTO



PHOTOMONTAGE



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UNITED UTILITIES PROPERTY SOLUTIONS LTD
COCKLICK END FARMHOUSE AND BARN,
NEAR SLAIDBURN

drawing title
Viewpoint 3:
Existing and Proposed View

scale NTS
date 18.02.13
drn BC

Figure 4.4

APPENDIX 1

VIABILITY ASSESSMENT

ECONOMIC VIABILITY REPORT

IN RESPECT OF THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS
COCKLICK END FARMHOUSE AND BARN,
DALEHEAD,
SLAIDBURN,
CLITHEROE,
BB7 4TS

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
UNITED UTILITIES PROPERTY SERVICES
GRASMERE HOUSE,
LINGLEY MERE BUSINESS PARK
LINGLEY GREEN AVENUE,
WARRINGTON
WA5 3LP

PREPARED AS AT
17th September 2012

Armitstead Barnett
59 Liverpool Road North
Burscough
Lancashire
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1 INSTRUCTIONS

We have been instructed by United Utilities Property Services by email during September 2012. We have been asked to prepare an economic viability valuation report in conjunction with a prospective application for planning consent in respect of the subject property.

The aim of the application is to reinstate the residential use of the property but at the same time incorporate the adjacent barn within the design to create one house.

1.1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to assess the commercial viability of a development scheme for the subject property. We are to consider residential, holiday let and commercial uses. In order to do this we will consider the value of the property with the potential of redevelopment for either residential, commercial or holiday accommodation. It is understood that the local planning authority require the report in order to consider the viability of alternative types of planning application.

1.2 FEES AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We can confirm that we have no conflict of interest in providing this report. We can confirm that we have been instructed on a fixed fee basis and that the receipt of our fees are not dependent upon the outcome of any planning application.

1.3 INSPECTION

The property was inspected by David C Cowburn BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV on the 6th September 2012.

1.4 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information in respect of the preparation of this report has been gained by inspecting the property as well as by asking questions of United Utilities Property Services department. In addition we have been furnished with the following:

a. Elevations and floorplans of the subject property as proposed and as existing.
b. Site plan of the property including proposed leasehold garden area for residential use.

In addition to all of the above we have then relied upon the following sources of information.

i. Land measurements and sizes – Promap
ii. Comparable evidence – a variety of sources including other agents as well as information of sites such as Rightmove Plus.
iii. Halifax House Price Index
iv. Zoopla – various comparable evidence
v. Various property particulars sourced from estate agents, chartered surveyors and the internet.

1.5 PUBLICATION AND CAVEATS

The report on the subject property is required in connection with a planning application which will be submitted to the local planning authority. The report may not be used by any third party in connection with any future sale, purchase, lending or redevelopment of the subject property and no other liabilities provided to any third party. The report has been prepared in connection with a proposed planning application for conversion to a residential use. This report does not comply with the requirements of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Red Book that provides an appraisal on potential future uses based upon assumed circumstances. This is not a formal valuation for any other purpose.

2.0 PROPERTY

Cocklick End Farmhouse and Barn, Dalehead, Slaidburn, Clitheroe, BB7 4TS

2.1 LOCATION

The subject property occupies a rural position within the Forest of Bowland area of outstanding natural beauty. The property sits just to the north of Gisburn Forest close to Stocks Reservoir in an area of important water catchment. The nearest services (limited services) to the property are approximately 5 miles away in the nearby village of Slaidburn. The town of Clitheroe is approximately 14 miles away to the south. To the north east is the settlement of Settle. The location plan to the rear of this report in Appendix One displays the location of the subject property by way of a red circle.

2.2 PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property is owned by United Utilities. It extends to a total site area of approximately 1800 sq ms (0.44 acres) including the area directly surrounding the property and a small area to the west that would be included if the property were made into a residence to allow some garden. Please note that this measurement does exclude the access road to the property.

The plot for the property without the additional area would be 718 sq ms (0.18 acres). This is relatively small.

The limited site size is due to the area being water catchment and the need for United Utilities to retain control. This allows them to meet one of their statutory duties which include the provision of drinking water. The site overall comprises a boarded up stone built farmhouse with attached barn, to which access is available.

A plan showing the site of the subject property is attached to the rear of this report at Appendix Two whilst coloured photographs are contained to the rear of this report at Appendix Three.

In terms of the size of the subject property we have been provided with the details below by MCK Associates over 2 storeys where appropriate.

BUILDING	SQ M	SQ FT
Farmhouse and Barn	293 sq m	3162 sq ft

In terms of previous uses the farmhouse has been utilised as a residential unit whilst the barn has been utilised for agricultural purposes although in our opinion it is now no longer suited to agricultural purposes as the property does not have the benefit of any agricultural land or any buildings that are of a modern nature. The subject barn was suitable for agricultural purposes previously until advances had been made within the farming industry.

2.3 TENURE

We understand that the subject property is available on a vacant possession basis and that it is owned freehold.

2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

We have not been made aware of any environmental audit or any environmental investigation or soil survey that may have been carried out in respect of this property.

Should it be established that any contamination does exist at the property or any neighbouring land then this may have an effect upon our valuation calculations.

We are aware that due to the property being contained within the boundaries of the United Utilities water catchment area for Stocks Reservoir, that very strict controls will need to be put in place to protect this important water source.

2.5 SERVICES

We understand that the property has the benefit of no services that are of use at present. A connection will need to be made to the electricity main. We understand that a water main is relatively close to the property which the owner of the property can connect to alternatively a bore hole could be sunk on site. We also understand that persimmon has been granted to install a biodisk on site. At present there is no heating to the building.

2.6 COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS

It is understand that the subject property, once occupied for any use, will be restricted by way of covenant or long leasehold sale in order to protect water catchment.

3.0 ALTERNATIVE USE OPTIONS

Within the scope of this report we have been instructed to consider the commercial viability of three main uses and the implications of the site value. These options are as follows:

i. Commercial
ii. Holiday Lets
iii. Residential

As mentioned previously within this report the existing use should also be considered and this is agricultural however we have ruled our agricultural due to the lack of land available with the subject property. The age and scale of the building is also inappropriate for modern day farming practices and therefore the barn is considered redundant, for agricultural purposes.

We consider each of the following use options as follows:

3.1 COMMERCIAL

Commercial activity within the subject property has been considered as an alternative to residential accommodation. In terms of commercial usage there are various options including retail, storage and distribution, restaurant/licenced premises, commercial workshops, craft type workshop and similar or office accommodation.

Many of the above mentioned uses would not be acceptable in terms of both access as well as in terms of the limited exterior space. In addition some of the above mentioned uses would cause issues in terms of water catchment. Furthermore new businesses rely upon people attending or passing their premises which is certainly limited in this location.

Of the above mentioned options there is perhaps only office accommodation that may be worthy of consideration due to location. The property is very remote and even settlements such as Slaidburn nearby struggle to support anything other than residential accommodation.

At the time of writing the commercial property market offers a wide range of commercial property within town centre and business park locations. There are many units available at low rents however we still feel it would be appropriate to consider the property for office accommodation.

Based upon the assessment from the architect it could be possible to create around 293sq ms (3162 sq ft) of accommodation within the subject property, accommodation within office premises is usually calculated on the usable office space and there will be areas to be taken out such as the stairwell, kitchen, toilet facilities and other common areas. We believe that this would give a net usable office area for rental calculations of around 80% of the overall floor space thus creating a usable area of 234 sq ms (2518 sq ft).

In terms of car parking this could be an issue. In addition we need to assess the accessibility along the existing track and the works that would be required to improve the existing access way.

Poor mobile phone reception could also be an issue as could the number of vehicles visiting site and the associated knock on effect on water catchment.

Overall the reuse of farm buildings for office accommodation is something that we are experienced in. We often see that it might be the dream of the business owner/potential occupier to work from a remote setting such as this however once the process of due diligence commences the prospective occupier soon realise that they will be distant from other professionals and services, may not have the benefit of a good mobile phone reception and also may struggle to maintain a fast broadband connection. These are big issues.

Overall in terms of office accommodation we do feel that we need to carry out an assessment of the financial viability but in terms of other uses as previously mentioned we feel that the viability of this use is drastically affected by the property's location.

In terms of traffic, office accommodation would in our opinion create a certain amount of traffic above and beyond that of a residential unit.

3.2 HOLIDAY LETS

The area in which the subject property sits is an area of outstanding natural beauty. Tourists do enjoy coming to the area and although overall the property is quite remote there would be a limited market for parties wishing to be more isolated.

Holiday accommodation in barn conversion style dwellings is often constructed and run by the land owner. The reason behind this is that the purchase of the land and building would often be at too a low a level to make it worthwhile an outsider progressing.

It is important however to assess this matter more fully and we have progressed to assess this within our report.

3.3 RESIDENTIAL

The subject property sits in a relatively sought after residential area. Although the property's location is limiting some parties due to its isolation we do find in our experience as rural practice chartered surveyors that there are often specialist purchasers, such as the purchaser of Merrybent Cottage, Catlow Road, Slaidburn BB7 3AQ which we marketed earlier this year. This successfully sold. Purchasers like this are more than happy to have the benefit of "splendid isolation" of such living arrangements.

A residential usage in this area will not impact greatly in terms of traffic flow in the area. We would imagine that the property would appeal to a professional couple or a family. The number of bedrooms would point to a maximum number of occupiers of 4. Vehicular journeys would be needed to service the property but these would in our opinion be far lower than any other alternative use, if they were practical.

The property would be able to be suitable to offer 3 or 4 bedroom accommodation over 2 floors. This would create a character dwelling that we believe would be sought after.

We have given consideration to creating two dwellings upon site however due to the size of the plot at present we feel that although this would be possible, that the most sensible way of progressing is with one individual user. One residence has previously existed upon site and this is part of our reasoning.

4.0 VALUATION COMMENTARY – ALTERNATIVE USE PROPOSALS.

We have considered each of the potential uses below and our aim is to provide commentary as to how we have reached each of the valuation figures.

4.1 COMMERCIAL

Looking at the existing property as a potential commercial site for say office accommodation as previously discussed we need to look at comparable evidence.

The architects in respect of this project have indicated that the total net internal area of the building would be 293 sq ms (3162 sq ft) which warrants taking an 80% to allow for common areas, kitchens, w.c's and so on would drop to 234 sq ms (2518 sq ft).

We have considered various parcels of comparable evidence (although it is limited in this area) and these have been on both leasehold and freehold basis, and these are as follows:

a. A 3 storey town centre retail shop with 2 bedroom living accommodation in the centre of Clitheroe, currently let on a 7 year lease from the 1st November 2010 at a rent of £12,500 with rent review in November 2012 has gone under offer with a guide price of £130,000. We are aware that this property has had to take a lower bid but we are not able to ascertain the exact position of this. Even if we assumed a relatively high bid of £125,000 this equates to a gross return on investment of 10%.

b. Lane House Barns in Kirkby Lonsdale comprises a total site area of 1.03 acres with a range of traditional agricultural buildings upon it. Detailed planning consent has been granted for conversion to business use or demolition and rebuild. The existing building has potential to provide 3730 sq ft (346.5 sq ms) of office space plus a caretakers flat. If demolished and rebuilt the proposed sale room, auction facilities would extend to 8396 sq ft (780 sq ms) plus first floor offices at 1680 sq ft (156 sq ms). The property is currently on the market at a level of £250,000 however there has been no major interest. This is a good example of a site that has potential and planning consent being unable to be sold. The current asking price based upon the potential square footage is £67 per sq ft. This is a very high price and having spoken with the agents they feel that this is completely unobtainable. We understand that the property has been on the market now for some considerable time and we would consider this as a perfect example of how values are often over stated for this type of opportunity.

c. The offices at Bank House in Milnthorpe currently comprise some 1720 sq ft of accommodation over 2 floors. The property is on the market at a price of £140,000 subject to a 6 year lease in place from 1st November 2012 subject to rent reviews every third year on a full repairing and insuring basis of £8,000 per annum. Basically this is about to potentially become vacant or renegotiated. This points to a rent per sq ft of £4.65 that was agreed in far better market times and we would imagine would be subject to a downward rent review. The asking price appears to be high on the basis that there has been some interest shown in the property but no offers made.

Generally speaking we are aware of rural office developments in the county of the Lancashire general achieving between £3.50 and £5.00 per sq ft and potentially slightly more in South Cumbria.

Based upon the relatively limited comparable evidence but also upon our experience as rural practice chartered surveyors we feel that the subject property would be capable of achieving a rent figure of around £4.25 per sq ft. Based upon the usable area of 2518sq ft this would equate to an annual income of £10,700 . I think it is true to say that we have already shown that a yield in a popular market town such as Clitheroe 10% is achievable and therefore investors would in our opinion be looking at a higher yield of 12-15% in the subject property's location.

It is this investment return (yield) that we utilise to assess capital value by looking through an investors eyes. In this case the uniqueness of the location would potentially be classed as risky by an investor and therefore a higher yield would be sought.

Based upon the above this gives us a capital value (once converted and fully let) of £89.166 (say £90,000) even assuming a yield of only 12%. .

From this capital value once completed we must deduct the cost of conversion of the property to an acceptable standard that is ready to occupy. We feel that in this instance the figure for conversion of the property would be similar for commercial or indeed residential use and we have applied the figures quoted in Appendix Four of this report.

Once we take the cost of conversion in the sum of £400,000 away from the capital value once completed we can see that there is an issue with a deficit.

During our peer review in the office it was felt that a slight premium may be paid by somebody who was wishing to occupy the building for themselves in a specialist one off location but even allowing for a premium of 20%, on capital value meaning a value of £112,500 we would still find a huge deficit.

4.2 HOLIDAY LETS

With regard to holiday accommodation there is a reasonable supply within the rural areas of Lancashire both self-catering and bed and breakfast accommodation. Many buildings have been converted by owners to create income from underutilised assets and this is generally done on the basis that is previously mentioned within Section 3.2 of this report in that they already own the building and do not incur the purchase cost. Financially there is actually little appetite for people to buy sites, spend a great deal of money developing them and then spend a number of years creating a business that might be successful.

In terms of accommodation in the wider area prices appear to range as follows:

a. Higher Croasdale Farmhouse sleeps 6 - £340 - £960 per week.
b. Laythams Farm, Near Slaidburn – sleeps 10 - £340 - £839 per week
c. Laythams Farm Cottage – sleeps 5 - £223 -£523 per week
d. Hodgson Barn – sleeps 4 - £324 - £583 per week
e. Lower Croasdale Farmhouse – sleeps 8 - £392 - £1275 per week
f. Woodhouse Gate Farm Cottage, Slaidburn – sleeps 8 - £310 - £615 per week

(Please note prices for these obtained on the 18th September 2012).

We believe that the key issue with converting the barn into a holiday cottage style unit is firstly its inability to be converted by the owner and therefore the distance it would therefore be from the owner that would be running it. Things such as changeover day and indeed being on site for occupiers that are not used to being in such an isolated position would usually be key and therefore an issue if not possible.

We would imagine that the subject property would sleep either 6 or 8 people. You will find in Appendix Six an appraisal of the final capital value for the holiday lets, when they have been converted and are fully occupied.

We have estimated the potential income from the site as a holiday let on quite a high basis. We have also estimated the annual costs to a level of £22,500. Please note that there has been no figure shown for the owner drawing any share of the profit. Bearing in mind the minimal surplus of £3,505 we do not feel that the property could be economically viable and therefore the value, bearing in mind the conversion costs are £400,000, the valuation would be a negative figure.

4.3 RESIDENTIAL.

In terms of residential planning consent we can firstly assess barns that have planning consent for residential or a run-down house similar to Cocklick End. We are aware from our own dealings with rural barns with planning consent for conversion that they have a market value. There are no actual comparables for barns with planning permission for conversion in recent times in this area but we are experienced in dealing with an exceptionally run down Grade II listed farmhouse with planning consent and listed building consent for a 4 bedroom property providing 2850 sq ft of accommodation. This property was set in 0.5 acres and subject to similar restrictions in terms of water catchment. The property was again in the Forest of Bowland area of outstanding natural beauty and close to Stocks Reservoir. The subject property is Merrybent Cottage, Catlow Road, Slaidburn. This property provided a dilapidated farmhouse with permission to extend into the attached barn. The property would offer 2850 sq ft of accommodation with additional garages and workshops totalling 700 sq ft. This property was sold by public auction achieving a figure in the sum of £375,000. This equates to a rate of £131 per sq ft ignoring the garage and workshop accommodation.

If we are to assess the property that is subject to this report and compare we would feel that the house at Cocklick End Farm must be in a poorer condition than the property at Merrybent Cottage. This is purely because we have not been able to gain access to the property at Cocklick End Farmhouse for health and safety reasons although we have seen the report from a structural engineer.

If we were to therefore take a slightly lower rate per sq ft for the existing building of say £110 per sq ft this would then equate to a figure of £347,000.

Moving now on to prices for the property once converted and completed we firstly considered the price indexes for the area. If we look at the average price for properties in BB7 then the Zoopla Zed-Index for detached properties is currently standing at £361,715 whilst the average price of a detached property in the UK is £317,794 (according to the BBC News channel – last updated in May 2012).

The housing market has been in a particularly poor state and finance has been hard to find. We do however find that properties that are sensibly and realistically priced will sell and be successfully disposed of. In terms of recent evidence this is particularly limited however we are aware of The Old Brew House on Gisburn Road in Bolton by Bowland which sold in July 2011 in the sum of £559,950. This was a 3 bedroom detached residence which we understand was sat in pleasant grounds and in good condition.

We dealt with the sale of The Croft in Eaves Hall Lane, West Bradford which was a similarly rural property. This sold in the sum of £380,000 but was sat in a more substantial plot with a couple of outbuildings. The property enjoyed wide ranging views and provided only 2 bedrooms with accommodation over approximately 1250 sq ft. If we make an allowance of the land and buildings of say £50,000 this would give a selling price of £330,000 which equates to a rate of £264 per sq ft.

We have then considered Austin House on Slaidburn Road which sold on the 11th June 2012 as a 4 bedroom detached residence covering what the EPC tells us was 144 sq ms (1500 sq ft) equating to a rate of £238 per sq ft.

On Settle Road, Newsholme a property known as Nettlebed sold in October 2009 in the sum of £550,000. According to the EPC this property comprised 238 sq ms (2561 sq ft). This equates to a rate of £214 per sq ft.

Overall there are particularly few comparables. This is due not only to the low number of transactions in the market but also the low level of property numbers in the area.

Based upon the above we have taken the size of the property once completed at 3162 sq ft. We assessed a sensible rate for a new build property that has all up to date construction techniques and the benefit of every single part of the property being in good condition, to be at a level of £225 per sq ft giving an overall capital value of £711,450, say £700,000.

Once then having deducted the conversion costs of £400,000 this gives a residue to share between profit/comfort and purchase price of £300,000 From this we would assess that any residential purchaser may wish to have a margin of 15 % of gross development value which equates to say £100,000 and once this is deducted from the residue (£300,000) leaves a potential value of £200,000

5.0 VALUATION BASIS AND OVERALL CONCLUSION

5.1 COMMERCIAL

The value of the property for a commercial venture has been assessed with reference to the assumed rental value which allows us to therefore identify the completed capital value based upon an assessed risk (yield) that an investor would consider. In addition we have considered a construction cost on a pro rata basis. The valuation has been determined in Section 4.1 above.

The valuation of the site for commercial use as office accommodation is hereby assessed in the sum of Minus £237,500 (Minus Two Hundred and Thirty Seven Thousand, Five Hundred Pounds), say therefore:

£ NIL (Zero Pounds)

5.2 HOLIDAY LETS

The capital value of the holiday accommodation has been assessed by reference to annual income and costs. The basis of this assessment does not however allow for owners salary (or profit) or any interest on purchase and conversion costs. The businesses like these take a long time to get off the ground and become successful but regardless of this the property is still shown in negative value.

The value for the property for use of holiday accommodation is hereby assessed in the sum of Minus £350,000 (Minus Three Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds), say therefore:

£ NIL (Zero Pounds)

5.3 RESIDENTIAL

In order to assess the suitability of the property for residential usage we have been able to utilise comparable evidence from residential property including property that is already utilised as a residential property, barns that are yet to be converted and even properties that are part way between the two. The residual valuation is as shown in Section 4.3.

The value of the property for use as residential accommodation is hereby assessed in the sum of:

£200,000 (Two Hundred Thousand Pounds)

5.4 OVERALL OPINION

Overall it is clear that the holiday and let schemes would generate a significant capital loss and therefore are unable to be seen as commercially viable.

This is mainly based around the rental return as being insufficiently high to merit the investment risk and also due to the time that it would take such a development to start to pay back. Even if a purchaser was found the chances of them finding finance in today's economic climate is exceptionally limited.

Based upon all of the above we consider that a scheme for residential conversion of the subject property, which actually represents creation of a previously occupied residence and a barn

attached, converted into one single house is the only solution which is likely to provide an acceptable level of development risk and viability. This would then allow the building to be protected whilst still protecting the local environment and location.

Equally importantly the use of the property from a residential perspective, controlled by United Utilities to protect the water catchment, will actually protect the water catchment. Commercial users are more likely to potentially create pollution with employees based upon site in the same way that holiday accommodation occupiers could mistakenly create some sort of issue without being fully aware.

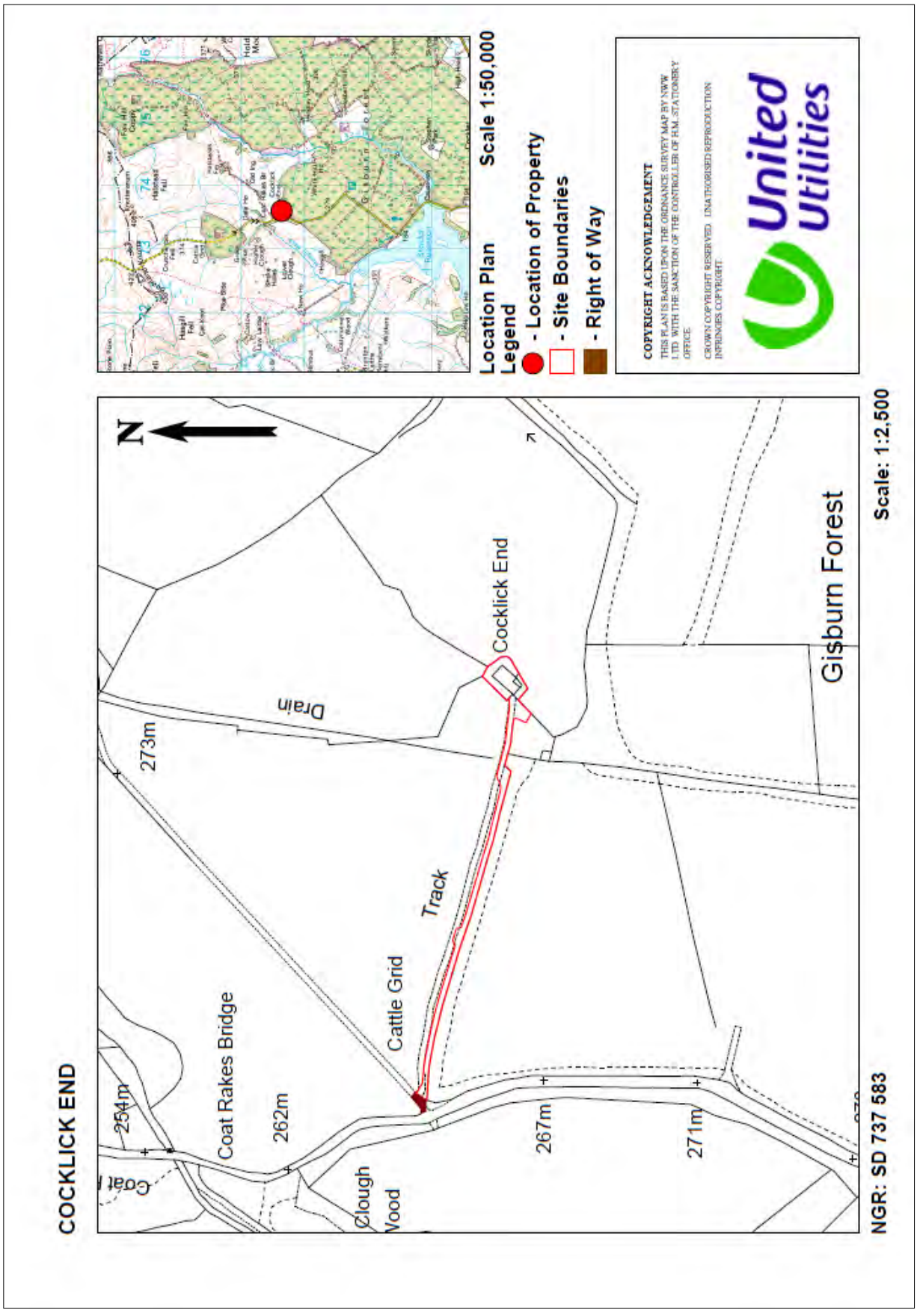
This report prepared the 17th day of September 2012.

David D Cowburn BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV
Armitstead Barnett
Market Place
Garstang
Preston
PR3 1ZA

APPENDIX 1 - LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX 2 - SITE PLAN



APPENDIX 3 - PHOTOGRAPHS











APPENDIX 4 – CALCULATION OF CONVERSION COSTS

In terms of the calculation of conversion costs we have utilised industry standard figures. We have also had to make assumptions in respect of access, provision of services and landscaping as a full scheme has not yet been prepared.

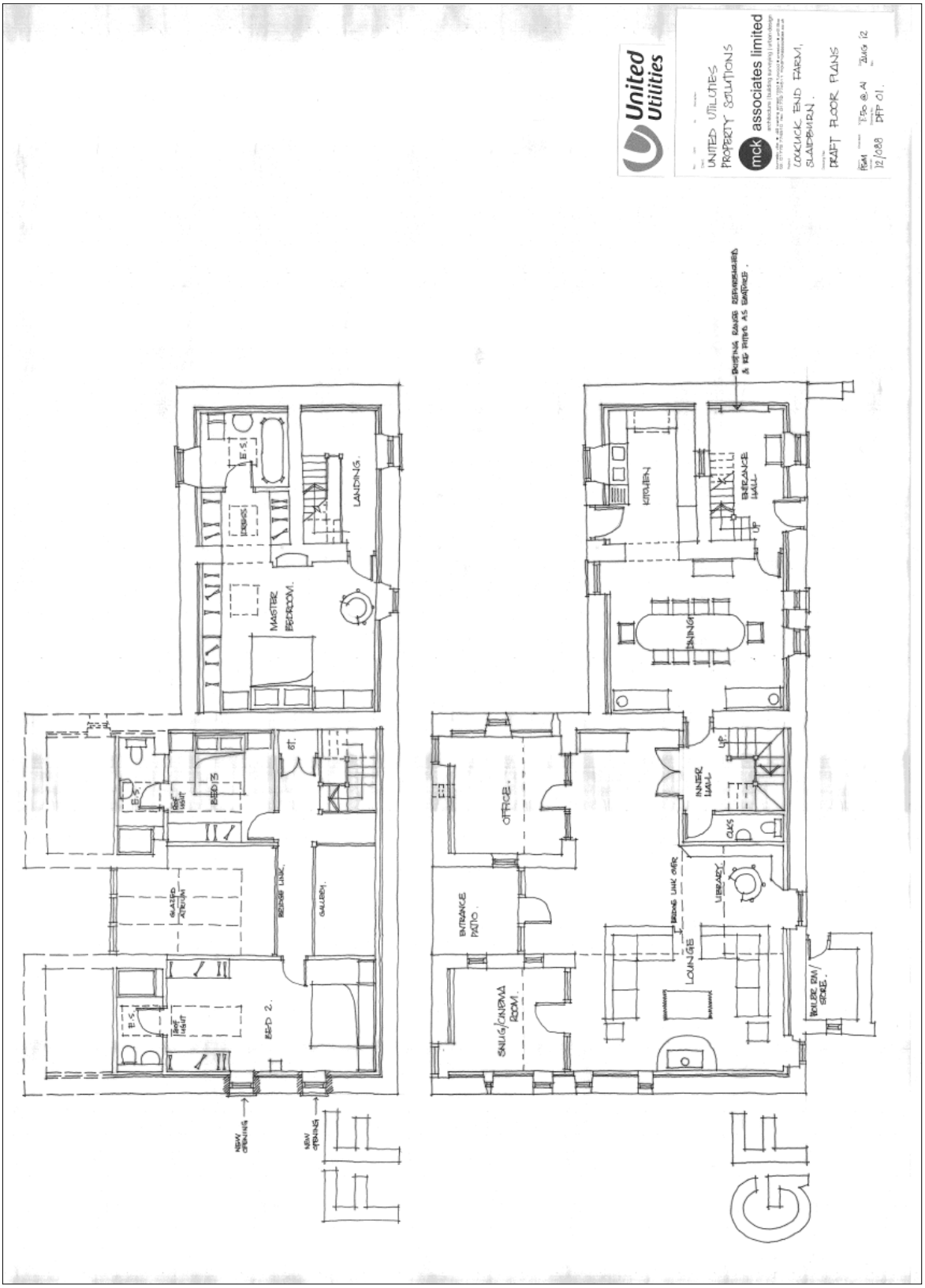
We are experienced in dealing with developers and builders in respect of conversions and renovations and we feel confident as to the figures reported below.

The figure shown below is relevant for all potential uses including residential, commercial and holiday accommodation.

Item	**Costs**
Access	£20,000
Provision of services and septic tank	£60,000
Conversion of building at £85 per ft over 3162 sq ft	£268,770
Landscaping	£10,000
Sub total	**£358,770**
Architects Fees at 7%	£25,114
Sub Total	**£383,884**
Finance at 7% with assumed timescale of 6 months for the full amount to allow for periodic drawdown	£13,436
Sub Total	**£397,320**
Grand Total allowing for contingency and rounding up	**£400,000**

APPENDIX 5 – PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DRAWINGS
(These drawings are shown with a 3 bedroom layout, however we are aware from the architects that a 4 bedroom layout would work and these plans are available upon request)

United Utilities
UNITED UTILITIES
PROPERTY SOLUTIONS
mck associates limited
COCKLICK END FARM,
SLAIDBURN.
DRAFT ELEVATIONS
1:100 @ A1
12/088 DE 01.
SIDE ELEVATION
FRONT ELEVATION
SIDE ELEVATION.
REAR ELEVATION.
PROPOSED SECTION. 1:100
GALLERY
LOUNGE.
ENTRANCE


United Utilities
UNITED UTILITIES
PROPERTY SOLUTIONS
mck associates limited
COCKLICK END FARM,
SLAIDBURN.
DRAFT FLOOR PLANS
1:50 @ A1
12/08
PFP 01
EXISTING BARN REFURBISHED & RE-PITCH AS SHOWN.
KITCHEN
ENTRANCE HALL
DINING
UP
OFFICE.
INNER HALL
CLKS
BEAM UNIT OVER
LIBRARY
ENTRANCE PATIO
LOUNGE
SNUG/CINEMA ROOM.
BOILER RM/ STORE.
MASTER BEDROOM.
LANDING.
DOWN
E.S.
BEDRM 3
ROOF LIGHT
GLAZED ATRIUM
BEDRM UNIT
GALLERY.
BED 2.
NEW OPENING
NEW OPENING

APPENDIX 6 – APPRAISAL OF CAPITAL VALUE FOR HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

i. Description of Proposed Conversion

The proposed conversion of the property for holiday accommodation would be very similar to the residential conversion say that there would be additional works undertake to comply, for example with regard to fire safety, health and safety issues, specific to holidays lettings and generally. There have been no drawings prepared specifically for this use but as mentioned we feel that the proposed layout would be very similar to that shown in Appendix Five.

ii. Valuation Description

In terms of comparable evidence we have utilised the higher figures from Lower Croasdale Farmhouse although looking at Woodhouse Gate Farm Cottage in Slaidburn we may be being potentially optimistic however utilising the conversion cost for the residence this will be a high standard let which we feel is important and indeed would be necessary in order to attract people to such a location.

Potential Income

Weekly Rental	6 Months x £1275 per week (peak)	6 months x £392 per week (off Peak)	
	£33,150	£10,192	
Occupancy Rate	60%	60%	
Net Income Per	£19,890	£6,115	
Total Annual Income			**£26,005**

Potential Expenses

From income received the following items of expenditure will be incurred:

Capital costs of establishing the business (e.g. furniture, fittings, etc) to be depreciated over the lifecycle of items
Utility charges
Marketing charges
Commission to agents
Replacement of furniture, fittings, etc.
Building maintenance
Cleaning charges
Staff (to cover holidays, antisocial hours, busy periods)
Non-domestic rates
Insurance – buildings and third party liability
Office admin expenses (telephone, IT, internet, stationery, etc.)
Consumables
Interest on set up charges

	Monthly	Annual
Capital costs of establishing the business (e.g. furniture, fittings, etc) to be depreciated over the lifecycle of items	£150	£1,800
Utility charges	£150	£1,800
Marketing charges	£100	£1,200
Commission to agents	£100	£1,200
Replacement of furniture, fittings, etc.	£125	£1,500
Building maintenance	£125	£1,500
Cleaning charges	£150	£1,800
Staff (to cover holidays, antisocial hours, busy periods)	£100	£1,200
Non-domestic rates	£175	£2,100
Insurance – buildings and third party liability	£400	£4,800
Office admin expenses (telephone, IT, internet, stationery, etc.)	£150	£1,800
Consumables	£150	£1,800
Interest on set up charges		£0
	£1,875	**£22,500**

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF THE PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATIONS

Summary of Pre-application Consultation

Meetings:

Wednesday 27th March 2013

i) Elliot Lorimer - Principle AONB Officer, Lancashire County Council;
ii) Helen Wallbank – Neighbour and Bowland Archivist.

Thursday 25th April 2013

i) Rosemary Elms – Ward Councillor

Monday 3rd May 2013

i) Slaidburn and Easington Parish Council

Points Discussed:

- Planning History for the site, original application and reasons for refusal;
- Revised proposals and amendments to reflect the changes required to address the reasons for refusal;
- Visual Impact Assessment and landscape scheme and how the proposed conversion has no impact on the AONB;
- Design elements to incorporate the protection of the bats and barn owl;
- Summary of materials to be used on the conversion;
- Sustainability and the overriding need to protect the heritage asset from further decline.

Summary of Feedback:

The feedback from all groups was positive and included comments such as:

- *'changes in the new proposals have improved the scheme'*
- *'The conversion does not have a detrimental impact on the AONB as the design is sympathetic to its surroundings and alterations are minimal'*
- *'Pleased to see something happening with the building'*
- *'it is a traditional building with heritage value that forms part of the local history'*
- *'agrees that the proposal has no impact on the landscape'*
- '*it would be a shame to see the building fall into ruin'*
- *'this is an opportunity to increase the population of the local community'*
- *'fully supportive of the scheme'*