

Ribble Valley Borough Council

DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT - APPROVAL

Ref: CB

Application No:	3/2013/0538/P
Development Proposed:	Proposed conversion of Cocklick End Farmhouse and the adjoining barn to provide a single residential unit together with minor alterations to the building and associated works including improvement of the access track (alternative to refused application 3/2012/0984P) at Cocklick End Farm, School Lane, Slaidburn.

CONSULTATIONS: Parish/Town Council

Slaidburn and Easington Parish Council - No objections to this proposal.

CONSULTATIONS: Highway/Water Authority/Other Bodies

RVBC Environmental Health – No objections.

LCC Highways – No objections.

LCC Archaeology – The buildings are of sufficient interest to merit an archaeological record prior to conversion, and such works are secured by means of a relevant condition.

Environment Agency – Do not wish to comment and refer the LPA to the Non-Mains Drainage comments in the EA Local Planning Guidance document.

CONSULTATIONS: Additional Representations.

No representations have been received.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan

Policy G1 - Development Control.

Policy G5 - Settlement Strategy.

Policy ENV1 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy ENV7 – Protected Species.

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.

Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 – a Local Plan for Ribble Valley Regulation 22 Submission Draft

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations.

Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations.

Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection.

Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation.

Policy DME4 – Protecting heritage Assets.

Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB.

Policy DMH4 – The Conversion of Barns and Other Buildings to Dwellings.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Achieving Sustainable Development.

Section 6 – Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes.

Section 7 – Requiring Good Design.

Other National Planning Policies

English Heritage – the Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings Best Practice Guide.

COMMENTS/ENVIRONMENTAL/AONB/HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES/RECOMMENDATION:

This application relates to an isolated field barn and former farmhouse owned by United Utilities and situated within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is located off School Lane in Slaidburn. The building is accessed via a field track leading from the access lane leading to Halstead's Farm and Old Ing.

Permission is sought to reinstate the former residential use of the farmhouse and extend the dwelling in to the attached barn. This will create a 4-bed residential dwelling. The works would involve some minor alterations to the external fabric of the barn including two first floor windows on the eastern gable and a couple of rooflights. A parking area will be created alongside the eastern gable of the barn.

The previous application, 3/2012/0984P, was refused for several reasons, including:

- 1 The proposed development, due to the isolated location of the site outside any settlement and distance 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 Districtwide 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 Districtwide 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 Districtwide 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 presents insufficient information to demonstrate that there would not be a detrimental impact on the favorable 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 Districtwide Local Plan, Policy DME3 of the Regulation 22 Submission Draft Core Strategy and Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The main matters for consideration are therefore whether this proposal addresses those previous reasons for refusal.

In looking at the first reason for refusal, the LPA considered the residential use of the farmhouse had been abandoned and thus based its decision on the basis that a new dwelling would be created in this isolated location. This application has sought to address this reason by researching when the building was last occupied and also providing photos of the internals of the dwelling showing a kitchen and meat hooks still in existence and the Bowland Archivist advises that the last record they have of the property being in occupation was in 1932 and a photograph has been submitted which is stated as being from the 1950s but is more likely to be from the 1940s. Having looked at relevant Case Law the issue of abandonment is extremely difficult to judge and is based on the balance of probability. In this instance, the retention of the domestic internal appearance of the farmhouse, as well as its domestic external appearance, and the fact that it was occupied in the 1930s probably in to the 1940s, lead the LPA to consider the residential use of the farmhouse is still authorised. On this basis, the extension in to the barn is acceptable in principle, subject to the other DC criteria.

Within the submitted Heritage Statement, it is noted within paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9 that *"the combination barn is of particular interest for its size, layout and design, as well as its good state of preservation. Few alterations have been made to the external or internal walls, and the roof survived in its original form. The survival of original cattle pens and haylofts are also rare. Relatively few buildings dating from the 18th century survive within the area in their original setting, and the combination of the early house and its fine inscribed and dated lintel, and the early 19th century model barn gives the building considerably architectural and historic value."*

Further on in the report in paragraph 5.7 Peter De Figueiredo states that:

"The English Heritage Designation Listing Selection Guide: Agricultural Buildings (2011) contains further criteria that suggests Cocklick End may warrant listing, including the fact that where agricultural buildings are clearly dated (whether by date stone, documentation or tree ring dating) that this is likely to add to their interest."

Add Archeology response

In looking at the design of the alterations proposed to the farmhouse and its adjoining barn, this has been significantly changed since the previous application. Rather than the large extent of glazing on the rear roof slope shown on the rear roof slope of the barn and the three roof lights proposed on the dwelling on the same elevation, now only two rooflights are proposed; one would be on the original dwelling, the other on the adjoining barn.

Policy H17 of the Local Plan which makes reference to the roofs being often the most dominant feature of a traditional building. The English Heritage Best Practice Guide on the conversion of farm buildings also notes that the roof of traditional buildings are often their most important feature which should be conserved. The two roof lights proposed would not significantly detract from this unadorned roofscape nor the historic character and significance of this combination barn and house and I therefore find them acceptable.

Two first floor windows are proposed in the south west facing side elevation of the barn which will provide light to bedrooms 2 and 4. These windows are of a size and proportion, which would not dominate this elevation, and in this instance I consider them to be acceptable.

The treatment of the window and door openings would be in timber as opposed to the black upvc previously proposed. This is far more appropriate to the character and appearance of the farmhouse and barn. Also proposed is the use of cast iron for the gutters and drainpipes and again this is considered the most sympathetic treatment available. On the previous application some windows required replacement lintels and it was stated within the previous application that these would be replaced with stone or concrete. No reference of this has been made in this submission. and for the avoidance of doubt, and in the interests of

protecting this heritage asset, this aspect will be subject to a condition requiring stone to be used.

The existing defined curtilage for the house and barn is contained from the open fields surrounding by a traditional stone boundary walls. Although no footpaths run in close proximity to the property, the character and appearance of the application site contributes significantly to the intrinsic character of the AONB in which it is set. With regards the proposed parking area, this has been altered from the previous application and would now be adjacent to the south west gable of the farmhouse. This will involve the removal of part of the stone boundary wall but at least the encroachment of its domesticated use will not encroach into the surrounding rural landscape. The car parking area would be under the crown cover of a substantial Sycamore, which makes a positive contribution to the landscape quality of the locality. To protect this tree as much as possible from the adverse effects of development, the Council's Countryside Officers have stated that any surface should be permeable and laid on a geo-grid load bearing system.

Add Owl info
In relation to protected species a bat and barn owl survey has been submitted. It is clearly evident within this statement that barn owls use this property for breeding purposes and that bats are present using the barn. Mitigation measures are suggested within this survey and details are annotated on the submitted drawings and mitigation/ compensatory measures have been stated in the Design and Access Statement. Natural England licences are required for the proposed works as they will affect the favourable status of these protected species and species of concern. The mitigation measures identified within the submission need to be adhered to and therefore appropriate conditions will be used. *Add details of Sycamore*

As the residential use of Cocklick End Farmhouse has been established, and the alterations to allow the barn to be used as part of the property are acceptable, I thus recommend the application be approved subject to conditions protecting the bats and barn owl, the intrinsic character of the property, and the landscape.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR APPROVAL:

The proposal has no significant detrimental impact on nearby residential amenity nor would it have an adverse visual impact.

RECOMMENDATION: That conditional planning permission be granted.