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PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RESPECT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED CONVERSION OF A REDUNDANT AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

AT

**CURTIS HOUSE
CHIPPING ROAD
LONGRIDGE
PRESTON
PR3 2NB**

Prepared by: A J Mitchell BSc Hons (for and on behalf of Gary Hoerty Associates)
Our Client: Messrs M & J Paris
Our Ref: Par/614/1643/AJM
Date: May 2014



Chartered Surveyors ■■■ Planning & Development ■■■ Land Agents
Valuers ■■■ Property Agency ■■■ Property Management



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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.1 Gary Hoerty Associates has been instructed by Messrs M & J Paris to submit a planning application for the conversion of a redundant agricultural building into an unrestricted and open market dwelling which is on land to the side of Curtis House, Chipping Road, Longridge.
- 1.2 Whilst the agricultural use of the building to which this proposal relates is now redundant, the building has not been abandoned and is capable of conversion. The proposal will see the redevelopment of the building with a viable use and will secure its future. The proposal will present the Council with significant benefits and an opportunity to increase the numbers of completed homes within the Borough.
- 1.3 The principle of the proposal as we will demonstrate in this planning statement has widely been deemed as an acceptable form of development within the borough. We will also demonstrate in this statement that the design of the proposed conversion has been well considered and is in keeping with the heritage of the building and the vernacular of the local and wider areas of the borough.
- 1.4 We will consider in this Planning Statement the proposed development in more detail, providing a review of the planning history of the site, outline the development proposal, assess the development site and review the national and local planning policies and guidance and set out why we believe the application conforms to the planning policies, and why we therefore believe that the application should be looked upon favourably.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The following application references are taken from the Ribble Valley Borough Council website.
- Application Reference 3/1998/0833 – convert attached barn to form extended residential accommodation. Construct detached double garage. Approved with conditions. 15.2.1999;
 - Application Reference 3/1996/0431 – change of use of agricultural building to form one dwelling. Withdrawn. 12.09.1996.
- 2.2 A pre-application enquiry has been submitted to the Council requesting a response to and comment on the development put forward by this application. As yet the applicant has not received a response to this enquiry.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The development proposal is the conversion of a redundant agricultural building into a single unrestricted open market dwelling. The proposal will create a viable

use for a traditional building within the borough, and also increase housing numbers within the borough.

- 3.2 The application is in full and as such the proposed plans detail the external and internal arrangements of the proposed conversion.
- 3.3 The proposal will look to retain the existing walls and roof covering, thereby retaining the existing character of the building. The external walls are to be treated and dry lined internally with localised repairs carried out to the existing brickwork. The existing roof covering is to be retained, with the roof upgraded through the insertion of insulation internally in between the existing roof timbers. With reference to the proposed plans the building once converted will provide two double bedrooms and main family bathroom with a single large open plan family room incorporating kitchen, dining and sitting areas all accessed off a main corridor.

4. THE APPLICATION SITE

- 4.1 The application site comprises the building to which this proposal relates and an existing vehicular access track which is connected to the public highway and will serve the completed proposal. The application site extends to an approximate area of 0.13 hectares or thereabouts, and is situated to the southwest of the rear and gable walls of Curtis House. The site is approximately 1 mile from the centre of Longridge village centre. The site is located in an area defined in the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (adopted 1998) as land outside a main settlement/village boundary and is within the open countryside.
- 4.2 The application site is bounded on one side by the public highway which is planted with a hedgerow of approximately 1.8-2m in height and screens the existing building. The application site and the surrounding land are reasonably level and the building to which this proposal relates is set back from the main public highway by approximately 18metres.

5. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 Local planning authorities are required to determine planning applications in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In order for this planning application to be approved it must satisfy as far as possible the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF Adopted March 2012); the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (adopted in 1998) and the relevant policies of the Council's Core Strategy 2008/2028 – A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Regulation 22 Submission Draft. Given that the local plan was adopted in 1998 and is now 16 years old, certain policies contained within it are now out of date. Although the Council

submitted their Core Strategy to the Secretary of State a six month suspension was granted by the Planning Inspectorate to enable the Council to update its evidence base, which will cause a twelve month delay in the adoption of the Core Strategy. The Inspectorate found the Council's evidence for housing, employment land, and retail land and traveller accommodation to be out of date. Although the core strategy regulation 22 submission draft document has not been adopted it is a material consideration when considering planning applications and development proposals must conform to the relevant policies of this document.

5.1.2 The relevant saved policies of the Local Plan are Policy G1 which is a general development policy; Policy G5 which deals with proposals outside main settlement boundaries; Policy ENV3 which deals with proposals located within the Open Countryside and outside the AONB and those areas immediately adjacent to it; Policy ENV7 which is concerned with species protection; Policy H2 which deals with dwellings in the Open Countryside; Policy H15 which deals with the location of buildings to be converted, Policy H16 which deals with the building to be converted and Policy H17 which deals with design matters of buildings being converted.

5.1.3 The Council's Core Strategy Regulation 22 Submission Draft contains a number of key statements and development policies of which the following are relevant to this application; DS2 Sustainable Development, EN5 Heritage Assets, DMG1 General Considerations, DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection, DME3 Site and Species Protection and Conservation, DME4 Protecting heritage assets, DMH3 dwellings in the open countryside and AONB, DMH4 The conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings,.

5.1.4 We set out below extracts from the relevant documents to assess the planning application against all the appropriate policies and guidance.

5.2 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2.1 The adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012 means that it is now the main national planning policy guidance influencing planning decision making and replaces a substantial number of documents previously in place. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, it sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so.

5.2.2 The main thrust of the document is that development which is considered sustainable should go ahead, without delay and that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that planning should be a creative

exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives.

- 5.2.3 Paragraph 9 of the NPPF recognises that pursuing sustainable developments will involve seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. It states amongst other things that the aim is to improve the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure and to widen the choice of high quality homes. This is particularly pertinent to the proposed development put forward, as we are firmly of the opinion that the conversion of the traditional farm building into a single dwelling will provide a new use to a building, whose agricultural use is now redundant and overtime will start to fall into disrepair without conversion. This use will also support the existing local economy.
- 5.2.4 Paragraphs 11 – 16 of the NPPF highlight the presumption in favour of sustainable development confirming that planning law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. It makes clear that proposed development that accords with an up to date local plan should be approved and that proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. It also highlights the desirability of local planning authorities having an up to date local plan in place. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states:

“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

For plan-making this means that:

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*

For decision-taking this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*

• where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

5.2.5 Paragraph 14 clearly spells out the Government’s presumption in favour of allowing sustainable development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would be very significant. The Council’s local plan was adopted in 1998 some sixteen years ago and as a consequence some of the policies will inevitably be out of date, and the NPPF clearly sets out that where a local plan is out of date the policies of the NPPF should take precedence over it. The above extract emphasises the importance given to the promotion of sustainable development, and we set out in this Planning Statement how our clients’ proposal is sustainable in its use of materials in its construction and the location of the application site.

5.2.6 The core principle of allowing sustainable development to proceed in respect of local plans is set out in paragraph 15 which states:

“Policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.”

5.2.7 Sections 1 and 3 of the NPPF set out that planning has an important role to play in ensuring that the local and national level economies are able to grow, in order to create the required jobs and prosperity needed. Paragraph 19 specifically states:

“Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.”

5.2.8 Section 3 of the NPPF specifically looks at developing a prosperous rural economy and states within paragraph 28 that:

“Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.”

5.2.9 Paragraph 28 goes onto state four specific ways in which local authorities can promote a prosperous rural economy, the fourth of which states:

“Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

- 5.2.10 The approval of this application will increase the customer base for local businesses and service providers to serve. It is likely that the works to convert the building will be carried out by local contractors, thereby securing employment for local builders and suppliers.
- 5.2.11 Section 6 of the NPPF states *“Delivering a wider choice of high quality home”*, and sets out the government’s policy in respect of housing delivery.
- 5.2.12 Paragraph 47 highlights a requirement that local planning authorities should boost significantly the supply of housing. The Council have had a shortfall in housing numbers and although the application is for a single dwelling the approval of the application will help the Council to increase the number of new homes approved within the borough, through the redevelopment of existing building stock. Given the nature of the proposed dwelling we would consider that the scheme is deliverable and as already stated, would be an ideal opportunity for a local building contractor to develop.
- 5.2.13 Paragraph 49 reinforces the core aim of the NPPF, and states that housing applications should be considered in the context of sustainable development. We consider that given that our clients’ proposal will see an increase in the level of housing within the borough by utilising the existing building stock that our clients’ proposal is an example of sustainable development. The policy goes on to say that relevant policies for the supply of housing should be considered out of date if local Councils can’t demonstrate a five year supply of housing. The recent survey figures and reporting confirm that Ribble Valley Borough Council is unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply.
- 5.2.14 Paragraph 55 is concerned with securing sustainable housing developments within rural areas. It gives clear examples as to different types of housing developments within rural areas which are acceptable to which we make reference to below and states that development within these areas should *“enhance or maintain the vitality or rural communities”*:
- *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;*
 - *Where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.*
- 5.2.15 With reference to the above the scheme as put forward by this application represents a sympathetic scheme to the heritage of the existing building and to the

buildings surrounding the site. The scheme proposes no new fenestration or extensions to the building minimising the overall impact on the development.

5.2.16 Section 7 of the NPPF identifies that development proposals should be of a high standard of design. Paragraph 58 sets out a number of different aims to ensure that high standards of design are achieved and of these the following have been considered within the design and detailing of our clients' proposal.

- *Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.*
- *Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.*

5.2.17 Our clients' proposal has been designed sympathetically with consideration given to the external appearance and the relationship of the proposal to the local area but also to the existing property of Curtis House. This has been balanced by the need to create a functional space for the completed dwelling. The existing landscaping and screening along the public highway edge has been deemed sufficient to mitigate the effects of the proposal.

5.2.18 We consider that the proposal represents sustainable development and therefore the National Planning Policy Framework fully supports the approval of the proposed development.

5.3 Local Planning Guidance - Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan

5.3.1 The Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan was adopted in 1998. The application site is shown on the local plan proposals map as being located within the Open Countryside and is outside of the main settlement boundaries.

Policy G1

5.3.2 Policy G1 sets out the general considerations for all development proposals. It states that:

“Development proposals will be expected to provide a high standard of building design and landscape quality. Development which does so will be permitted unless it adversely affects the amenities of the surrounding area.”

5.3.3 The Policy contains a number of criteria which planning applications will be determined against, and we set this criteria out below, together with justification as to why we consider the proposed development conforms to each of this criterion.

- (a) Developments should be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature.*
- 5.3.4 We are firmly of the opinion that the level of development proposed is appropriate in terms of its size, intensity and nature. The proposal will see no extension in building footprint or raising of the walls or roof. The principle of the development as we have demonstrated in this supporting statement with reference to similar developments approved within the Borough has been established and is accepted as appropriate.
- (b) The likely scale and type of traffic generation will be assessed in relationship to the highway infrastructure and the proposed and existing public transport network. This will include safety, operational efficiency, amenity and environmental considerations.*
- 5.3.5 The existing highway infrastructure serving the site is capable of handling the additional vehicle journeys. The existing access onto the highway also has good visibility splays ensuring that vehicle movements on and off the highway are safe.
- (c) Developments should make adequate arrangements for car parking (see policy G7).*
- 5.3.6 The proposal makes adequate arrangements for car parking in line with local and national parking standards.
- (d) A safe access should be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*
- 5.3.7 As stated the proposal will utilise an existing vehicular access off the public highway which is capable of serving a development of the scale put forward by this proposal, without substantial alteration. The existing access has sufficient visibility along the public highway ensuring safe movement of vehicles on and off the highway.
- (e) The density, layout and relationship between buildings is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and relationship to surroundings as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*
- 5.3.8 The proposal will see no change in the density and layout of buildings on the application site and will therefore see no change in relationship with any surrounding buildings. In this regard the proposal will also see no extension to the buildings footprint and no increase in the height of the building. There will be little alteration to the exterior of the building as the existing roof and walls are to be retained, with localised repairs being made to poor and defective brickwork. It

is our firmly held belief that the proposal will only benefit local amenities by providing an increased customer base on which to serve.

(f) Developments should provide adequate arrangements for servicing public utilities.

5.3.9 The existing property of Curtis House is served with mains supplied electricity and water and connections to these existing supplies can be easily made without the need for large scale infrastructure costs. The proposal will be serviced by private foul and surface water drainage and heating systems.

(g) Developments should provide adequate day lighting and privacy.

5.3.10 The proposal will have no negative impact onto daylighting or privacy issues of neighbouring properties. There are no window and door openings within the gable wall to the existing building which faces the building to be converted as part of this proposal. The existing building is well served with door and openings allowing means of access and natural light into the building, without the need to insert new openings.

(h) Materials used should be sympathetic to the character of the area.

5.3.11 The proposed materials to be used in the development will be sympathetic to the character of the building and its immediate local area. The existing external fabric is to be retained, with matching reclaimed red brick and natural blue slates to be used to replace defective sections of roof slates and brick wall. Windows and doors are to be timber framed with a light oak colour and formed with natural stone heads and sills.

(i) Developments should not result in the loss of important open space, including public and private playing fields.

5.3.12 The application site has not been identified as an important open space and the proposal will therefore see no loss of such space.

(j) Developments should not damage SSSIs, County Heritage Sites, Local Nature Reserves or other sites of nature conservation importance.

5.3.13 The application site has not been designated with any of the conservation measures mentioned above and as such will have no negative impact or impact onto any such area.

(k) Development should not require culverting, artificial channelling or destruction of a water course. Wherever possible water courses should be maintained within a reasonable corridor of native vegetation.

5.3.14 The development will require no culverting or diversion of any natural water courses.

(l) Developments should be economic in the use of land, water and aggregates and should not prejudice future developments which would provide significant environmental and amenity improvements.

5.3.15 The proposal is economic in its use of land and resources and will not overdevelop the application site. There will be no prejudice caused to any future development as a result of the proposal.

(m) Where it is the intention to rely upon a private water supply, developments should provide an adequate means of water supply, which will not derogate existing users.

5.3.16 Mains water supply serves the adjacent property of Curtis House and the proposal will not rely on a private water supply.

Policy G5

5.3.17 Policy G5 identifies the type of small scale development that will be permitted outside the main settlement boundaries and village boundaries. The main policy consideration is that proposals are small in scale, as this is needed to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. The policy sets out five criteria to which development outside a main settlement will be granted and of this list our client's proposal conforms to the following:

- *Other small scale uses appropriate to a rural area which conform to the policies of this plan.*

5.3.18 With reference to section 6 of this supporting statement we firmly believe that the general principle of the development is accepted as appropriate and referencing the above should be viewed as a small scale use appropriate to the local area.

5.3.19 Below the wording of policy G5 are explanatory notes with regard to the reasons for the restrictive nature of the policy, these state:

"This policy recognizes the need to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. In doing so it must be accepted that the countryside is a working area and a source of many Ribble Valley residents' livelihoods. As such it is subject to and to development pressures; if properly managed these can be accommodated without harming the basic character of the area."

5.3.20 Clearly this highlights the fact that development is restricted in order to protect the countryside from inappropriate development and therefore development that may have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the countryside. However

the development that is proposed by this application will have a minimal visual impact onto the local area as the application puts forward no extension to the original building or increase in building volume.

Policy ENV3

- 5.3.21 Policy ENV3 deals with development in the Open Countryside outside the AONB and areas immediately adjacent to it. The policy states that:

“Development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape area and should reflect local vernacular, scale, style, features and building materials. Proposals to conserve, renew and enhance landscape features will be permitted, providing regard has been given for the characteristic landscape features of the area”.

- 5.3.22 Our client’s proposal conforms to the above as the development proposes very few changes to the exterior of the building and the proposal therefore retains the buildings existing character and form. There will be negligible change in scale to speak of. Any proposed materials will be of traditional type and be in keeping to the existing building and the vernacular of the area. The main landscape feature to the is the hedgerow planted along the highway edge and our client’s proposal looks to retain this, which will provide screening to the converted building.

Policy ENV7

- 5.3.23 Policy ENV7 is concerned with the protection of protected species by law. Prior to the submission of the application a protected species survey has been carried out to assess for the presence of wildlife protected by law. Copies of this report have been included with the application, which concludes that there is a low level risk to protected species and no follow on survey work is required.

Policy H2

- 5.3.24 Policy H2 is the Council’s adopted policy with regard to dwellings in the Open Countryside and it sets out a limited number of circumstances when planning consent will be granted for residential development in the Open Countryside. Of these criteria our client’s proposal strongly conforms to the following:

“The appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings, provided they are suitably located and their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must also be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.”

- 5.3.25 The development will have no significant visual impact given that there is no increase in built form as a result of the proposal and the screening provided by the existing hedgerow along the highway edge. The building affected by this proposal is suitably located in a location which is not in an isolated location, with

residential land use immediately adjacent to the building. The existing form, bulk and design of the building will be relatively unchanged by this proposal. The building is capable of being converted without substantive demolition and re-building.

Policy H15

5.3.26 The above policy is concerned with the location of buildings being converted. The policy sets out a number of situations where planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings into dwellings and of these criteria, our clients' proposal strongly conforms to the following:

- *There need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure;*
- *There would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area;*
- *There would be no unacceptable harm to nature conservation interests;*
- *There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy.*

5.3.27 Our clients proposal will see no significant expenditure by public authorities or utility companies. The existing property of Curtis House is served with mains supplied electricity and water which the converted building will be able to connect to with ease. The existing property is also served with local authority services such as bin collections which could be easily extended to serve the dwelling to be created by this proposal. The proposal will have little negative impact onto the landscape qualities of the area or any wildlife species protected by law. It is our firmly held belief that the proposal can only benefit the local economy as the creation of a dwelling will increase the customer base to which local businesses are able to serve and also the work to convert the building will provide work opportunity for a local trade's person.

5.3.28 The building effected by this proposal is not in an isolated location and is in close proximity to an existing residential property, and should be viewed as a part of an established group of buildings. The application site is also close to the village centre of Longridge, therefore reinforcing our belief that the application site is a sustainable location for the development.

Policy H16

5.3.29 Policy H16 is concerned the conversion of buildings to dwellings and states that the aim of the policy is to enhance and protect the natural beauty of the Borough. It sets out a number of criteria that if conformed to will allow the permission of applications for the conversion of buildings into the dwellings:

- *the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major*

alterations which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building, the Council will require a structural survey is submitted with all planning applications. This should include plans of any rebuilding which is proposed;

- *the building is of sufficient size to provide for minimal living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building;*
- *the character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building is worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting;*
- *the building, if provided under permitted development rights, has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise.*

5.3.30 The building effected by this proposal is capable of being converted without the need for substantive re-building or major alteration. Enclosed is a copy of a conversion methodology appraisal outlining how the proposed works will be carried out, which also assesses the structural condition of the building. The existing building is of sufficient size to provide an appropriate level of accommodation without the need for extensions. The building is constructed with traditional materials which are appropriate to the immediate locality and is worthy of retention. The building has a genuine historic agricultural use which is now redundant.

Policy H17

5.3.31 The above policy is concerned with design matters involving the conversion of buildings and states that planning permission will be granted were by:

- (a) the design of the conversion is of a high standard and is in keeping with local tradition, particularly in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings;*
- (b) the impact of the development or the effects of the creation of a garden area, together with any garaging or car parking facilities or other additions, will not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated;*
- (c) the access to the site should be to a safe standard, or should be capable of being improved to a safe standard without harming the appearance of the area.*

5.3.32 Our client's proposal conforms to the above as the design put forward is of a high standard. The design proposes limited change to the external appearance resulting in a completed proposal which is in keeping with the buildings history and character. The external wall and roofing materials are to be retained with any replacement sections of matching materials. The existing access which is to be utilised as part of the development is of an appropriate size to service the proposal and has sufficient visibility splays. The proposal will also see no garages constructed and other domesticated features minimising any domestic features within the countryside. In this context any such features would not look out of

place or have a negative impact in this regard given the close proximity of the building affected by the proposal to the existing domestic property.

- 5.3.33 There is further guidance in respect of roofs, window openings, materials, extensions and additions, rainwater goods, interiors, cartilages and access provided in relation to Policy H17 as follows:

(a) Roofs

The single most important external feature of a traditional farm building is the roof, seen at a distance, they tend to dominate elevations. Large unbroken roof slopes are a characteristic within the Borough which should be respected. Dormers are not usually found on agricultural buildings and even small roof lights catch the eye by reflecting open sky or sunlight. An alternative may be a suitable opening in the gable end to supplement light level.

Normal roof lights have the disadvantage of an upstand which visually jars with the roof profile. Flush fitting roof lights with concealed integral gutters are now available. Also, it is now possible to obtain special non-reflective glass to fit into the roof light. Single storey farm buildings should remain single storey accommodation

- 5.3.34 The proposal will see little alteration of the existing roof, with the existing shape and form retained. The proposal will see no raising of the roof or the introduction of any non-traditional features such as dormers. A number of roof lights are to be introduced, with 3 on one elevation and 2 on another; however both slopes of the roof will by enlarge remain unbroken slopes. The existing roof covering of natural blue slate is to be retained with any replacement slates to match in size, colour and profile.

(b) New Openings in Walls

Agricultural buildings are characterised by a limited number of window and door openings. Conversion to a single dwelling-house is generally preferable to the creation of more than one dwelling, since this will easily involve fewer new window and door openings. Apart from the wagon door openings, windows and doors are commonly small and insignificant on agricultural buildings. In conversions, the type, proportion and detail of existing openings should be observed; the proportion and size of existing openings should also be taken into account, when determining the accommodation to be provided within the building. Any additional doors and windows should copy existing patterns. Large wagon door openings should be used to provide the majority of internal natural light by constructing an inconspicuous frame set back into the building. The use of leaded light windows should be avoided.

5.3.35 The building effected by this proposal features a number of existing window and door openings which are to be retained and incorporated as part of the proposal. The proposal puts forward no new window or door openings. In line with the above extract the proposal will convert the building into a single residential dwelling. The size and proportion of the existing openings retained will be relatively unaffected by this proposal.

(c) Materials

With any conversion, as much of the original fabric should be retained as possible. Where rebuilding is unavoidable, then existing materials should be used. When modern materials are used for repair or rebuilding, they are invariably obvious and immediately noticeable. In order to maintain converted farm buildings in an authentic condition, new work should blend harmoniously with old; reproduction slates and tiles, reconstituted stone, concrete and aluminium and plastic are generally unacceptable materials.

5.3.36 The existing fabric is to be retained with any demolition kept to a minimum with an emphasis on repair. Any defective bricks are to be replaced with reclaimed brick work to match. The existing roof covering is to be retained with broken slates replaced with matching slates of similar colour, profile and size. This will ensure that the new materials will blend in with the existing.

(d) Extensions and Additions

Farm buildings are operational structures with a functional simplicity which is part of their appeal. Changes to the roof slope, amendments to the eaves line, addition of porches and chimney stacks will contribute to complexity and a loss of original character. It is important that farm buildings are preserved in their original form without alien, urban additions or alterations.

5.3.37 The proposal will see no extension or alteration of the existing structure that would cause harm to the original form and character of the building.

(e) Rainwater Goods

Rain is often allowed to run off the eaves of farm buildings without a roof drainage system. Therefore any new rainwater gutters and downpipes should be discreet and mounted if possible using stirrup brackets rather than a fascia board. Rainwater downpipes should be as few as possible and position on the less prominent elevations wherever possible and made of metal in a traditional design.

5.3.38 The proposal will see a new above ground surface water drainage system installed. The number of down pipes will be kept to a minimum with one on either principal elevation and will be of a traditional design.

(f) Interiors

Design solutions should be found which avoid disturbing the existing roof timbers and which do not require raising external walls. Traditional farm buildings will most effectively retain their character if the interior is left open, at least in part, to give an impression of the pre-converted space. Open layouts help natural light penetrate from a limited number of openings to illuminate a relatively large area of floorspace. Internal divisions should be kept to a minimum in sympathy with the structural main divisions of the building. Staircases and doors should be contemporary in design.

- 5.3.39 The layout of the building makes use of the existing window and door openings and incorporates a main living space which is in an open plan arrangement to maximize the amount of natural light let into the space and further reduce the reliance on new openings.

(g) Curtilages

Traditional farm buildings are generally associated with yards or open field locations. In order to maintain the agricultural character of converted buildings in their new use, they should retain their open setting. Farm buildings are simple and unfussy. Suburban paraphernalia, patio equipment, interwoven fencing, greenhouses, swimming pools and sheds can detract from their agricultural setting. The curtilage of a converted farm building should remain open and uncluttered. The treatment of boundaries should reflect the buildings rural character; post and rail fences, timber gates of the five bar type will be encouraged.

- 5.3.40 The proposal will retain the open setting of the site and proposes no out buildings or ancillary structures. The curtilage of the building is to be unchanged with no extensions with any boundary treatments to be as specified above.

(h) Access

Proposals should normally involve the use of an existing access whenever practical. If a new access is created it should be designed to an appropriate standard as determined by the appropriate highway authority (Highways Agency regarding trunk roads, County Surveyor regarding others). Highway safety will be a primary consideration, however, the Council will also require careful design and landscaping. Materials used must be sympathetic to the character of the area. New access tracks should not be significantly longer than existing. Where a new access is created the existing access should be blocked up and the track removed.

5.3.4) An existing vehicular access is to be used as part of this proposal to serve the converted barn, therefore removing the need to create a new access onto and off the public highway.

5.4 Council's Core Strategy Regulation 22 Submission Draft

Key Statement DS2: Presumption in favour of sustainable developments

5.4.1 Key Statement DS2 identifies that the Council will follow the positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and states that planning applications which accord to the policies of the Local Plan will be approved.

5.4.2 We consider that our client's proposal represents sustainable development that is supported by the NPPF and should therefore be supported by the Council. As demonstrated above the proposal also conforms to the relevant parts of the adopted local plan and to the emerging core strategy. The core strategy states that where local plan policies are out of date; Councils should approve development unless the adverse impacts on doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF. We are able to show compliance with both the local plan and the NPPF and given that the local plan was adopted in 1998 it can be argued that the policies of this are out of date.

5.4.3 We believe that our client's proposal is sustainable and delivers on economic, social and environmental aspects, all of which are critical to achieving sustainable development.

Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets

5.4.4 Key Statement EN5 seeks to ensure that the historic environment and its heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value, important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.

5.4.5 In view of the above it is our opinion that whilst the building to which this proposal relates is a traditional agricultural building, we would argue that the building has little significance and value due to the size of the structure and its relatively recent construction in regard to heritage assets. The building is of a simple form and detail with few architectural features and detailing. We believe therefore that the building has little significant impact on the local character of the area. The proposal will enhance the building by securing its future through the conversion and the proposal will grant a viable use to a building which is now redundant and has started to fall into disrepair. The building also has no listing or protected status.

- 5.4.6 A copy of a heritage asset statement outlining this has been enclosed with the planning application which sets out the building's history and why we believe that this proposal should be supported.

Policy DMG 1: General considerations

- 5.4.7 Policy DMG1 sets out a schedule of criteria against which development proposals within the borough will be assessed and we consider each of these criteria in detail below and provide justification for our client's proposal against each of the criteria.
- *Be of a high standard of building design which considers the eight building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage Building on Context Tool Kit).*
- 5.4.8 The proposed development is considered to be of a high standard of building design, being constructed of traditional local materials which are appropriate for the intended use of the building and site. In line with the eight principles referred to above the building to which the proposal relates is worthy of retention. As we have identified above the works will respect the heritage and character of the building and application site and will be appropriate to its end use. The proposal will see little change to the exterior of the building meaning that the end building will sit well with the surrounding site and buildings adjacent to the application site. The proposal will have little impact on to important long distance views. There will be no change in scale of the building and any materials used in the proposal will respect those used in the construction of the existing building.
- *Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
- 5.4.9 The development is sympathetic to the existing land and buildings surrounding the application site as it will see no increase in the size, scale and massing of the building. The existing fabric is to be retained.
- *Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
- 5.4.10 The property is provided with sufficient private parking space appropriate for the size of the property to be created. We consider that the negligible increase in traffic volume would have no adverse impact on local traffic.
- *Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*
- 5.4.11 The property created by this proposal is served by an existing access onto the public highway which is capable of dealing with the traffic generated by this

proposal. The access track is in a good condition which has sufficient visibility along the public highway.

- *Consider adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*

5.4.12 The existing building has a number of window and door openings which are to be retained as part of this proposal which allow sufficient natural daylight to enter the converted building. The conversion of the building will have little adverse impact onto privacy distances and amenity space of the neighbouring property.

- *Consider the environmental implications such as SSSIs, County Heritage sites, local nature reserves, biodiversity action plan (BAP), habitats and species, special areas of conservation and special protected areas, protected species, green corridors and other sites of nature conservation.*

5.4.13 The application site is not within any of the environmentally restricted areas mentioned above and therefore has no negative impact on any such area. The protected species survey has been undertaken which confirms that the proposal will have no impact onto species protected by law.

- *Consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.*

5.4.14 There is no public right of way impacted by this development.

- *All development must protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.*

5.4.15 There is no damage or loss of any heritage assets as a result of this proposal.

- *With regard to possible effects upon the natural environment the Council propose that principles of the mitigation hierarchy code. This gives sequential preference to the following:*

1. *Enhance environment.*
2. *Avoid the impact.*
3. *Minimise the impact.*
4. *Restore the damage.*
5. *Compensate for the damage.*
6. *Offset the damage.*

5.4.16 There will be little negative impact on the natural environment. The building created by this proposal will have high levels of thermal insulation which will minimise the carbon footprint of the completed building.

- *All new development proposals will be required to take into account the risk arising from former coal mining and, where necessary, incorporate suitable mitigation measures to address them.*

5.4.17 There are no mining issues on the site.

- *Achieve sufficient land use and the re-use of remediation of previously developed sites where possible.*

5.4.18 The scheme should be regarded as efficient as it will provide the Council with the opportunity to increase the housing numbers within the Borough, through the use of an existing building.

- *Have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*

5.4.19 There are no adverse effects with regard to public safety as a consequence of the development.

- *Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on the visual appearance and the relationship to surrounding, including impact on landscape and character as well as the effects of the development on the existing amenities.*

5.4.20 There will be no negative impact on the density and relationship with surrounding buildings. There will be little change to the exterior of the existing building and therefore little change to the appearance of the building. The proposal can only benefit the existing amenities of the area by increasing the customer base on which they serve.

- *Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*

5.4.21 The development will have no adverse affect on the amenities of the surrounding area.

- *Not prejudice future development which would provide significant environmental and amenity improvements.*

5.4.22 There will be no prejudiced future development which would provide significant environmental and amenity improvements.

- *Not result in the net loss of important open space, public and private playing fields without a robust assessment that the sites are surplus to need.*

5.4.23 There will be no loss of open space as a consequence of this development.

- *The use of sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*

5.4.24 The development will incorporate sustainable construction techniques and will comply with the current building regulations with regard to thermal insulation and air permeability. A mandatory requirement of the building regulations will be to carry out design and as built stage SAP assessments to demonstrate that the dwelling complies with the thermal efficiency as part of the building regulations. The regulations will also require a set of design and as built stage water usage calculations, which will demonstrate that the amount of water used in the dwelling meet the requirements of the building regulations. To achieve this, low flush volume WC and low capacity baths will be incorporated into the scheme. Sustainable surface and foul water drainage systems are proposed.

- *Consider air quality and mitigate adverse impact wherever possible.*

5.4.25 The proposal will have no adverse impact on air quality.

- *The code for sustainable homes and life time homes should be incorporated into schemes.*

5.4.26 The principles of both the code for sustainable homes and life time homes will be incorporated into the detailed design of the dwelling and aspects of both will be enforced through the building regulations application process.

- *Have regard to the availability to key infrastructure with capacity, where key infrastructure with capacity is not available it may be necessary to phase development to allow infrastructure enhancement to take place.*

5.4.27 There is sufficient infrastructure to allow the development to proceed. Where infrastructure is not in place private means of heating and drainage systems are to be provided.

- *Consider the potential impact on social infrastructure provision.*

5.4.28 There will be no adverse impact on social infrastructure provision.

Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape protection

5.4.29 The policy states that:

“Development proposals which damage and cause significant harm to important landscape features which include townscape elements such as the scale, form and materials of a development that can contribute to the characteristic townscape of the site will be refused.”

5.4.30 Our client’s proposal will have no negative impact on the natural landscape features.

Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the open countryside and AONB

5.4.31 The policy states that in the open countryside development will be limited to a number of instances and of these criteria our client's proposal conforms to the following:

- *The appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings providing they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings.*
- *Buildings must be structurally sound, capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.*

5.4.32 The main aim of the policy is to protect the open countryside and AONB from sporadic and visually harmful development. The building to which this proposal relates is suitably located with residential land use immediately adjacent, therefore establishing the use of the application site for residential use as appropriate. The proposal puts forward very little change to the exterior of the building and will therefore ultimately have little impact onto the existing surroundings. The building is capable of conversion without significant rebuilding and a copy of a conversion appraisal/methodology report is included with this application.

Policy DMH4: The conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings.

5.4.33 The policy outlines that the re-use of existing rural buildings can provide an important opportunity to preserve buildings that contribute to the area's character and setting, which can usefully provide a housing resource and promote sustainability. It states that the conversion of buildings should be of a high standard and in keeping with local tradition and any impact of the development including the creation of garden areas and car parking facilities should not harm the appearance or function of the area. The policy identifies that access to the site should be to a safe standard and be capable of being improved to a safe standard without harming the appearance of the area.

5.4.34 Paragraph 10.21 of the policy states that planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings in a number of instances which are clearly set out in the policy, to which our client's proposal conforms to the following:

- *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,*
- *there would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservation interests,*
- *there would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy,*

- *the proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.*

5.4.35 The building to which this proposal relates is not in an isolated location with existing residential properties immediately adjacent to the building in question, and the buildings will be seen as a defined group of buildings. There will be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utility companies, as set out above in this supporting statement. There would be no damaging effect onto the landscape qualities of the area or any nature conservation interests. As stated earlier in this supporting statement the proposal can only benefit the local rural economy by providing an increase customer base for local services to serve and also providing opportunity for local tradespersons to carry out the conversion works. The proposals have little negative impact on to the conservation and natural beauty of the area.

5.4.36 The policy goes on to state that buildings being converted must conform to a further set of criteria, all of which must be adhered to. These criteria are as follows:

- *Be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for expensive 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 re-building that is proposed,*
- *be of sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building,*
- *the character of the building and its materials are appropriate to the 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.*

5.4.37 The building to which this proposal relates is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantive rebuilding. As mentioned earlier in this supporting statement we have enclosed with this application copies of a conversion appraisal report outlining how the building can be converted without substantive rebuilding. As can be seen on the proposed plans that accompany the planning application the building is of an appropriate size to provide the level of accommodation applied for without the need for extending the existing structure. The existing structure is built with traditional details and in materials which are appropriate and worthy of retention. The building is not of a modern portal frame structure but is of a traditional masonry wall construction with a pitched roof clad in natural slate. Whilst we would argue that the building has little heritage significance due to the limited age of the structure (constructed circa 1950s/early

1960s) the building is relatively small in scale and does not dominate any surrounding views or aspects. The building has a genuine use of agriculture and was formerly used as a livestock building which is now redundant.

6. SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT APPROVED WITHIN THE BOROUGH

- 6.1 In support of the above application we make reference to relevant planning applications approved by the Council to provide further justification and support for this proposal. It should be noted that residential land use is approved and established within the immediate locality, by the property known as Curtis House.
- 6.2 The first application referred to is application reference 3/2012/0048/P which saw the approval of a scheme to convert a barn into a single residential dwelling. The proposal also saw the creation of a new garage, and the creation of garden and parking areas. The application site is within the open countryside and is within the AONB and the building affected by the above proposal is a redundant agricultural building in close proximity to an existing residential dwelling.
- 6.3 There are a number of similarities between this application and the proposal put forward by our clients and as a consequence, we firmly believe that our clients' proposal should be looked upon favourably.
- 6.4 In the first instance the approval of the above clearly establishes the general principle of the development put forward by our clients as acceptable and is an example of sustainable development.
- 6.5 As with our client's proposal, the building affected by the above is closely related to existing buildings used for residential purposes and it was deemed in this case, that the conversion into a dwelling had no negative impact onto the residential amenity of the existing dwelling. In this regard we do not consider that there will be any negative impact onto the amenity of the existing dwelling at Curtis House, and in comparison our client's proposal is for a smaller scale conversion scheme, which would have less impact on the existing dwelling than that of the referenced application.
- 6.6 It was deemed that the approved application also had little negative impact onto wildlife or highway safety. We firmly believe that in similarity to the approved, our client's proposal will have little impact onto wildlife as confirmed by the protected species report, and that the creation of one dwelling will have little impact on the public highway.
- 6.7 The site of the approved application is outside the main settlements and in the delegated report the planning officer quotes from Policy H2 of the Local Plan, which confirms that it is appropriate for the conversion of redundant buildings into residential use outside settlements as long as the criteria mentioned in the policy are met.

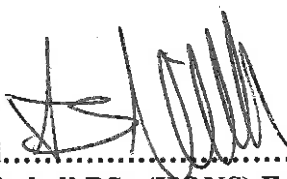
- 6.8 It was deemed that the approved application in regard to policy H2, and as a consequence our clients proposal should be viewed accordingly, that the conversion of the barn is appropriate. It is clear from the delegated report concerning the above that of paramount importance in determining conversion schemes against policy H2 is that the building affected should be capable of conversion without substantive rebuilding. The building affected by our clients' proposal is structurally sound and can be converted without substantive rebuilding.
- 6.9 The delegated report goes on to discuss the impact of the proposal onto a building identified as a non-designated heritage asset. The report sets out the Council's general policies and stance in terms of this and concludes, with particular reference to our clients' proposal, that the development put forward is appropriate and is considered acceptable in light of the following:
- *The location of the building adjacent to the main dwelling at Bay Gate Farm;*
 - *That the structural survey provided with the application notes it is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial reconstruction (only 12% of the existing stone walls are to be rebuilt.);*
 - *There is an existing access into the site;*
 - *That given the significant number of openings already within the building the design proposed for the conversion is considered acceptable.*
- 6.10 The above have clear similarities to our clients' proposal and we firmly believe that with this in mind our clients' proposal should be approved.
- 6.11 The application site, as stated, is within the open countryside and AONB and is within an area of higher environmental protection in planning terms than our client's site. We believe that this coupled with the construction of a new build garage and creation of parking and garden areas, results in a scheme which is more controversial than that put forward by our clients, which is not within the AONB and will see no garaging created.
- 6.12 Within the delegated report concerning the approved application the planning officer stated that the scheme put forward was sensitive and respected the heritage of the building, as no new openings were to be installed. The approved scheme also saw no extension to the footprint or volume of the building in question and ultimately there is very little change to the exterior of the building, therefore having little impact onto the existing street scene. The scheme put forward by our clients will see no extension or increase in volume and proposes no new openings and should be viewed as an example of a sympathetic conversion.
- 6.13 The second application referred to is application reference 3/2013/0625 which saw the conversion of a barn into three open market dwellings at New Barn, Stoneyhurst, Clitheroe.

- 6.14 In the delegated report concerning this application the planning officer sets out that the NPPF requires local planning authorities to consider applications which put forward residential use, in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date, if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites. The delegated report identifies that the Council does have a five year supply and identifies that on this basis the requirements of the local plan take precedence over the NPPF.
- 6.15 However the report identifies that notwithstanding the above, paragraph 55 of the NPPF is a material consideration as this considers development in rural areas and which states housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It identifies that schemes should re-use redundant and disused buildings and non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.16 In line with this and in terms of our clients' proposal, our clients' proposal is sustainable and is not isolated and is well linked to the public highway and transport network. Notwithstanding whether the Council have a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, the application should be assessed against paragraph 55, and our client's proposal conforms to the criteria set out in this paragraph. The proposal looks to create a single residential dwelling in a rural area by reusing a redundant and disused former agricultural building.
- 6.17 With reference to the above two applications we firmly believe that our clients' proposal is in line with the policies of the local plan and the NPPF and is an example of sustainable development and should be approved accordingly without delay.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 7.1 We consider that we have demonstrated within this report that the proposed development conforms to both the national planning policy guidance and the relevant local plan policies.
- 7.2 The proposed conversion of the traditional agricultural building into a single unrestricted and open market dwelling will see the main character of the existing building retained. The proposal will retain much of the existing fabric and does not seek to extend or alter the scale and mass of the existing structure. As a consequence the final converted building will pay respect to the existing character of the surrounding area and existing buildings adjacent to the building affected by this proposal.
- 7.3 The proposal will create a new alternative use for the building as the agricultural use of the building has ceased. It will also utilise the existing buildings stock within the borough to increase housing numbers within the borough.

- 7.4 In line with local planning policy the existing building is capable of conversion without substantive rebuilding works needed. The creation of a dwelling will also have a beneficial effect on local businesses and amenities by increasing the customer base on which they serve. A protected species survey has been undertaken which confirms that the proposal will have little impact on any protected species.
- 7.5 The application site is not in an isolated location and is in a sustainable location and located close to the village centre of Longridge. The proposal will utilise an existing vehicular access and therefore proposes no new access points onto the public highway.
- 7.6 With reference to two recently approved planning applications for proposals of a similar type and nature within the immediate locality clearly establish the principle of the development as being acceptable and that the visual impact on the character of the building affected by the proposal and the visual impact onto the local and surrounding area and also the impact onto neighbour amenity and highway safety are all established as acceptable with reference to the similar developments approved within the borough.
- 7.8 We have provided reasoned justification within this planning statement explaining how the proposed development conforms to the relevant saved and emerging local plan policies and the NPPF. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that in deciding planning applications:
- “Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.”*
- 7.9 We firmly believe that the proposal should therefore be looked upon favourably.

Signed..........Date.....13/5/2014.....
A J Mitchell BSc (HONS) For and on behalf of Gary Hoerty Associates