

Ribble Valley Borough Council

DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT - APPROVAL**Ref: CB**

Application No:	3/2015/0158/P
Development Proposed:	Barn conversion to single dwelling in lieu of 2 dwellings under extant planning permission 3/2012/0639
Site Address:	Windy Hills, Twin Brooks Road, Chipping, PR3 2QR

CONSULTATIONS: Parish/Town Council

Bowland with Leagram Parish Council - No objections to this proposal.

CONSULTATIONS: Highway/Water Authority/Other Bodies

Environment Directorate (County Surveyor) - No objections.

CONSULTATIONS: Additional Representations.

No representations have been received.

RELEVANT POLICIES:*Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Adopted Version)*

Key Statement DS1- Settlement Strategy.

Key Statement EN2 – Landscape.

Key Statement EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Key Statement EN5 – Heritage Assets.

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations.

Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations.

Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection.

Policy DME3 – Sites and Species Protection and Conservation.

Policy DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets.

Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB.

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

Policy DMH5 – Residential and Curtilage Extensions.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

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

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

Planning permission to convert a substantial stone barn with a floor area of 186.44m² within the curtilage of Windy Hills on the Leagram Estate to two dwellings was granted on the 10 September 2012 by planning application 3/2012/0639/P. Permission is now sought to convert the barn to one dwelling only.

Windy Hills is located at the end of a long access track, a PROW, on the outskirts of Chipping. A number of PROW's run through and around the site (PROW's nos. 1 and 2 in the Parish of Bowland and Leagram) run past the north-east and south-east elevations of the barn.

Parking areas are proposed to the north-west and south-west gables. The northern parking area, approved by the extant permission, involves a small encroachment in to the adjoining field by approximately 6.5m. A garden area for the dwelling will abut the southwest elevation of the barn and comprises the existing land within the curtilage of the barn and the

farmhouse to which it historically relates.

All of the existing openings on the barn are to be utilised, however an existing forking hole on the northwest elevation will be lowered, albeit its size and orientation will remain the same, a narrow slit opening on the southeast elevation. Also proposed are a total of 5 roof lights which will be installed on a slate roof which will replace the existing corrugated steel sheet roof currently present.

In terms of the principle of development, the conversion of the barn to two residential dwellings has been established by the previous application which, at the time the application was submitted to the LPA was still extant. The necessary pre commencement conditions placed on the 2012 approval have also been formally discharged by application 3/2014/1052/P.

Whilst the location of the new dwelling is contrary to the Council's Development Settlement Strategy which seeks to restrict development of new dwellings in the countryside so that new homes are located near to the more sustainable village and town locations in the borough, as defined by Core Strategy Key Statement DS1, where everyday amenities and services are located close by, it has to be noted that the reduction off the number of dwellings on the site have been reduced from two new dwellings to a single unit. Taking this and the extant permission into account, on this basis, the introduction of only one dwelling in this remote rural location is considered to be far more sustainable in terms of its access to local amenities and services, and thus the conversion of the barn to a single dwelling is considered acceptable on this basis.

Policy DMH4 of the Council's Core Strategy allows for conversion of buildings to dwellings provided they are suitably located and their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with surroundings. The application site is within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The main house and this barn are located in a hollow and are seen as a group when travelling along the adjacent public right of way which offers great views of the historic farmstead and the significant landscape in which it is set.

Structurally a survey has been submitted which considers the barn to be reasonably sound and strongly suggests no rebuilding will be necessary. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy DMH4 of Core Strategy.

In design terms, on the 2012 application the LPA worked with the Agent to secure a positive scheme which was sympathetic to the character and appearance of the barn and the AONB in which it sits. This work was remembered and the only change to the proposals before us is to the barn door openings, which in 2012 were to remain completely open. It is now proposed to glaze and fill these openings. The barn door on the south-west elevation will be set back in to the opening and fully glazed. The treatment to the barn door opening on the north-east elevation will involve the construction of a timber clad wall with six windows being set 700mm into the opening. This will enable three bedrooms to receive secondary light via this opening. This aspect of the scheme is slightly unusual but will provide privacy from Footpath no.1 that runs adjacent to the gable of this elevation.

In order to ensure a high standard of finish, planning conditions will be imposed on any approval requiring details of the proposed roof covering to be submitted. Conditions requiring timber window openings, conservation roof lights, and also removing permitted development rights, will ensure the intrinsic character of the barn and its setting will be retained, and the visual amenities of the AONB will be protected. It is also important to remove permitted development rights for hardstanding and structure so that the substantial trees both within and bordering the site are protected from potentially damaging development.

With regards the impact on protected species, specifically bats and barn owls, a survey dated the 11 June 2012 has been submitted supported by a Bat and Barn Owl Scoping Report dated the 04 February 2015. This updated survey states there is no evidence of the latter (barn owls) using the building. The site is used as a flight path by bats; however, the building to be converted is not used as a roosting site. The survey therefore concludes that the proposed scheme of conversion has a low risk on the favourable status of the bat population. Notwithstanding this, Section 9 of the Framework requires biodiversity enhancement measures to be included in developments wherever possible. The survey recognised that a bat dropping has been found and that the yard area is used as access to other forage areas. The site is located close to woodlands, hedgerows and water courses and is thus in a prime biodiversity habitat area. It is therefore reasonable of the LPA to request biodiversity enhancement measures as part of the scheme. Furthermore, it is noted that the surveys fail to take account of any birds nesting in the barns. This further compounds my view that mitigation/ enhancement measures are necessary.

A new sewage treatment plant is proposed within a field to the west of the existing farmhouse, outside the authorised residential curtilage for the three properties which will exist on site. This sewage treatment plant will be underground and thus once the works have been completed, and the land reinstated, there will be no affect to the visual amenities of the AONB.

In relation to highway safety, the Highway Engineer has raised no objections to the creation of dwelling on the site of Windy Hills, on the basis that the proposal will replace the extant permission for two dwellings on the site (application 3/2012/0639) and consequently result in the likelihood of a reduced trip generation.

For all of the above reasons, I thus recommend that the application be approved subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: That conditional planning permission be granted.