

**Note:** This report needs to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

**Ribble Valley Borough Council**

**DATE INSPECTED: 11/05/2015**

## **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT - REFUSAL**

**Ref:** AB

<b>Application No:</b>	3/2015/0245/P
<b>Site:</b>	Wolfen Lodge, Fish House Lane, Chipping, PR3 2GR
<b>Development Proposed:</b>	Proposed side extension
<b>Target:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2015

### **CONSULTATIONS: Town/Parish Council**

Parish Council: None received

### **CONSULTATIONS: Highway/Water Authority/Other Bodies**

RVBC Countryside: Any consent would include an advisory note on bat protection, and there will be a requirement for bat features to be incorporated into the building.

### **CONSULTATIONS: Additional Representations**

No representations have been received

### **RELEVANT POLICIES:**

#### **Ribble Valley Core Strategy**

Policy EN2 - Landscape  
Policy DMG1 – General Considerations  
Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation  
Policy DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets  
Policy DMH5 – Residential and Curtilage Extensions

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 7 – Requiring Good Design  
Section 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment  
Section 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

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

This application seeks consent for the erection of a single storey side extension at Wolfen Lodge, Fish House Lane, Chipping. The building is a former agricultural barn approved for conversion in 1973 and extended with the introduction of a rear catslide roof and front porch in 2003. The application property is a two storey building constructed of natural stone and blue slate roof tiles and has a simple linear plan form which is a common feature of former agricultural buildings. The building is set within a large residential curtilage with a sitting area and pond to the rear. The building is located in the Forest of Bowland AONB and forms part of the small number of buildings based around Wolfen Mill sited around 1.2km north-west of Chipping.

The proposed extension would project from the north gable of the existing building and would measure around 11m x 8.6m. It would have gable roof running parallel with the main roof and would have an eaves height of 2.5m and a ridge height of 5.75m. The addition would provide additional lounge, dining and sitting areas and would include the introduction of an internal flue at the north end of the extension. The proposed development would be to the side of the existing property and would not be visible from long-range. However, it would be visible from Fish House Lane and public footpath no.110 which passes along the front of the site.

The application property is depicted on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, surveyed 1849-1850. Due to the local character and age of the building, it is considered to be a non-designated Heritage Asset (when considered against National Guidance) of historical interest. As such, new development should make a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the building (paragraph 126 of the NPPF). Moreover, in this case the development is proposed on land designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (see policies EN2 and DME2 of the Core Strategy and section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework). The AONB has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. As such, the landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will

be protected, conserved and enhanced. DME2 of the Core Strategy requires development to be in keeping with the landscape area and should reflect local vernacular, scale, style, features and building materials.

Whilst the original appearance of the building is unknown, it appears that the conversion of the barn introduced a number of additional openings. Therefore, whilst the barn is still recognisable as an agricultural building it is considered that some of its character has been eroded by its conversion and subsequent additions. As such, the building still contributes to the rural nature of the area and the landscape character. Farm buildings are operational structures with a functional simplicity which is part of their appeal. It is important that farm buildings are preserved in their original form without alien, urban additions or alterations and to ensure that the simple and uncluttered character of the building is not compromised. In relation to extensions to former agricultural buildings English Heritage's 'Conversion of traditional farm buildings' states '*New extensions, be they a contemporary design or one based on an existing outbuilding, should be subordinate in scale and relate to the character of the farmstead group. They should not compromise the setting, so careful thought needs to be given to their siting (p.29)*'.

In relation to its scale and form, the extension would have lowered eaves and ridge compared to the main building and would be set back from the front and rear walls at the point it joins the gable elevation of Wolfen Lodge. However, the proposed development would have a void over the proposed living area resulting in a height of around 7m at the point it would join the main building and would have a height equivalent to a 1 ½ storey building. Furthermore, the depth of the extension increases to the north to reflect the width of the main building. The extension would increase the length of the property to 28m leading to a significant increase in the scale and mass of the building. It is considered that the proposed extension would not be clearly subservient to the main building and would be a bulky and incongruous addition that would substantially increase the mass of the host property. Additionally, whilst the extension would continue the linear form of the building, it would complicate the simple front elevation of the property and would unbalance the building due to massing to the north side.

Agricultural buildings are characterised by a limited number of window and door openings. Nonetheless, it is noted that the conversion of the agricultural barn has resulted in the creation of a number of additional window and door openings creating a somewhat ordered and symmetrical fenestration of the existing building. The proposed extension seeks to introduce large timber framed glazed elements to the front, rear and gable elevation and a number of roof lights to the front and rear roof slopes. This would be neither in keeping with the original building or the building as it stands today and would not respect the existing ratio between solid wall and window. These proposed openings do not sit comfortably with the building, would not reflect local vernacular or style and devalue the character of the traditional farm building and that of the surrounding environment.

With regards to the potential impact on the residential amenity of the occupiers of nearby dwellings, there are no properties within the immediate vicinity of the application dwelling.

The property lies adjacent to open water and woodland which is ideal bat foraging habitat. The Council's Countryside Officer has stated that the provision of three roosting features within the build of the extension would comply with NPPF and Core Strategy requirements for the net gain of biodiversity. The applicant has submitted details of three Swegler bat tiles on the east and west facing elevations of the extension which are considered acceptable.

In conclusion, the proposed extension, by virtue of its massing and design, would devalue the character of this traditional farm building and that of the surrounding environment. The extension is considered to be wholly insensitive to the original form of this traditional barn and its character, appearance and historic significance. Moreover, if allowed the development would set a dangerous precedent for the acceptance of similar unsympathetic extensions destroying the character and appearance of other barn conversions which would be both contrary to Policies DMG1, EN2, DME4 and DMH5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

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#### **SUMMARY REASONS FOR REFUSAL**

Contrary to Core Strategy policies DMG1, EN2, DME4 and DMH5.

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