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Design & Access/Planning Statement

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF A REDUNDANT FIELD BARN (BROOK WOOD) INTO A SINGLE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING.

Applicant
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This statement has been structured with reference to CABE best practice guidance; **Design & Access Statements – how to write read and use them. CABE 2006**. The document also includes an assessment of the development proposal in relation to national, regional and local planning policies.

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SECTION 1**BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** Rural Futures have been commissioned by Mr Thornber to submit a planning application for the conversion of a redundant agricultural barn to a single residential dwelling. This statement should be read in conjunction with the attached planning application forms, accompanying survey reports, heritage statement and business appraisal.
- 1.2** Brook Wood is a free standing stone barn adjoining Cherry Tree Farm. It is located within an area of Open Countryside, with an existing access onto Chipping Road and the site is within the Forest of Bowland AONB. The barn is no longer fit for purpose as an agricultural barn as it is not accessible with modern machinery and does not offer sufficient ventilation for livestock. The total site area extends to 0.11ha. The barn is located 130 metres from the farmyard.
- 1.3** The original building was subdivided into a residential space adjoining the barn which was used to house livestock and to store hay. It is understood that the accommodation has not been inhabited since the early 1900's. The building is constructed of stone with a cement fibre sheet roof. The site area includes the original hard core access to Chipping Road, an area of hardstanding to the north east of the building and an enclosed grazing pasture to the south west which would form a garden area.
- 1.4** The barn will be converted into a single residential dwelling comprising of ground floor living and kitchen areas with four bedrooms on the first floor. Externally the existing hard core area will allow for two cars to be parked and turned easily within the site. The residential curtilage will include the enclosed area to the south west which will provide a small garden area. The site is not connected to the mains sewer so this area will also accommodate the onsite waste treatment plant.

SECTION 2 CONTEXT OF SITE

Assessment

2.1 Brook Wood lies in open countryside, approximately 130 metres North West of Cherry Tree Farm. The property benefits from direct access onto Chipping Road. The next nearest property is Wood Top Farm which is 230 metres to the west of Brook Wood.

2.2 Brook Wood is a redundant agricultural building. The building is constructed of stone with a corrugated sheet roof. The barn is no longer fit for agricultural use as it is not accessible with modern tractors and machines. The building does not offer sufficient ventilation to accommodate livestock throughout the winter period. Without the conversion to a new use the barn will deteriorate and will be lost to future generations as it is not financially viable to maintain this traditional barn in this location.

2.3 The site lies within the Forest Of Bowland AONB. Brook Wood is 3.0 kilometres from the village of Chipping.

Involvement

2.4 A pre-application enquiry was made in 2013 prior to the adoption of the new Core Strategy. The response raised concerns regarding the sustainability of a new dwelling in this location.

2.5 A structural survey has been carried out to assess the condition of the building and it's suitability for conversion. A bat and barn owl survey has also been undertaken.

Evaluation

2.6 The two principle conflicts within the proposal are based around the sustainability of the location for a residential property and the landscape impact of the development. In addition the site must comply with a number of policy considerations associated with structural integrity of the existing building and the wider impact of the development on biodiversity. Finally the design will aim to reduce the CO₂ footprint of the development without conflicting with the vernacular qualities of the existing structure.

2.7 A structural survey has been undertaken by Davis Consultants to assess the condition of the building. Although some remedial works are required, the building is a stable structure and capable of conversion.

2.8 The bat and barn owl survey shows that there is no evidence of bats being present in the building. However there is a nesting barn owl so provision for an alternative nesting site will be essential. The ecologist has suggested allowing a space in the roof void in the lean to on the south elevation and also to offer a barn owl box in nearby trees as an alternative.

Design

- 2.9** The principle design issues are based around compliance with local planning policy in terms of reuse of buildings of landscape value, especially those within the AONB. In this case it is proposed to use all the existing openings and to include four conservation roof lights where there are no window openings for the bedrooms.
- 2.10** The conversion has been designed to ensure the development has the least possible impact on the surrounding countryside and in particular the AONB.
- 2.11** One final design consideration was associated with the reduction in CO2 emissions from the site. Again these requirements lead to a potential conflict with the landscape and vernacular heritage considerations. It is considered that the visual impact of both wind energy and solar energy would be too great in this location. It is therefore considered that the inclusion of a ground source heat pump or biomass boiler operating on wood pellet would be the most appropriate location at this site. This would provide sufficient heat and hot water for the building without a visual impact.

SECTION 3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES & CONCEPTS

Use

- 3.1** The conversion will create a high quality residential unit located within close proximity to the village of Chipping.
- 3.2** The new dwelling will have four bedrooms located on the first floor with living areas on the ground floor. The site provides adequate parking provision for two cars on the existing hard core to the north east of the site and there will be an integral garage within the building.

Amount

- 3.3** The existing total ground floor area of the building is 157m². The majority of the building will be converted to create two floors with the exception of the lean to on the south west elevation.
- 3.4** Internally the building will consist of a living and kitchen area on the ground floor along with a garage, study, utility room, washroom and boiler room. There will be four bedrooms on the first floor, the master having an en suite and dressing room, bedroom 1 will also have an en suite and there will be a family bathroom.

Layout

- 3.5** The layout of the building is restricted to the original stone footprint. Parking areas are restricted to the existing areas of hard surface. No new structures are proposed as this would compromise the openness of the site in terms of its landscape impact

within the AONB. The small field to the south west of the barn will provide adequate garden space.

- 3.6** Existing openings will be retained throughout the building and no new ones will be added. Existing openings include windows and doors on all but the northwest gable end. Four conservation roof lights will be required, two on each roof elevation. These will provide light to the master bedroom and en suite, to bedroom three and to the family bathroom.

Scale

- 3.7** The proposed development uses the barn as it stands with no additions or external changes. The curtilage will remain unchanged as there is sufficient space for parking within the existing site.

Landscaping

- 3.8** No additional landscaping is proposed as there are already a number of mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries.

Appearance

- 3.9** Overall the site's visual appearance will improve as the cement fibre roof sheets will be replaced with slates. The stone structure will remain unaltered but the reconstruction of the part of the gable end which is damaged will ensure the security of this traditional building. This will provide a landscape improvement within the AONB. The proposal will ensure the retention of this traditional barn within the landscape.
- 3.10** All windows and doors will be in timber and will utilise existing openings. The large barn door opening on the north east elevation will be retained. The design will maintain the vernacular style of the local area and is sympathetic to the existing structure.
- 3.11** The new roof lights will be conservation roof lights that lie flush to the slates.
- 3.12** The foul water will be treated through a package treatment plant. Treated water and surface water will be discharged through the existing field drain to the south west of the barn. The route of discharge is highlighted on the location plan and site plan.
- 3.14** The openness of the countryside and character of the area will not be compromised. There will be a potential improvement in the appearance of the site as a result of the improvements made to the building. The external appearance of the barn will be changed very little with the only external change being the addition of the conservation roof lights.

SECTION 4 ACCESS

An Accessible Environment

- 4.1** The proposed development maintains an accessible environment.
- 4.2** There is adequate parking for 2 vehicles as well as enough existing hard standing to allow vehicles to turn within the site.

Vehicular and Transport Links

- 4.3** The property provides excellent access to the highway network. The site is accessed directly off Chipping Rd with good sight lines in both directions.

Access and Movement Patterns

- 4.5** Based on normal residential use of a three bed house it is anticipated that daily vehicle movements are unlikely to exceed four car movements per day.

Emergency Services Access

- 4.6** Access for emergency services is good and will not be affected by the development.

Commitment to Design & Access Process

- 4.7** The Design and Access Statement will be seen as a working document and will be maintained through the planning and development stages.

SECTION 5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Planning History

- 5.1** As far as we are aware there is no planning history associated with this building.

Planning Policy Framework

- 5.2** Relevant planning policy and guidance in the determination of this application can be identified as being contained within The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and the Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley.

- 5.3** National Planning Policy Framework.

National Planning guidance is now provided within the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF).

The new NPPF has sustainable development as its key principle. The document states that *'there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:*

● **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

● **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

● **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.'

The conversion of Brook Wood Barn represents an economic development in a rural location as it will raise the funding required to enable the family business at Cherry Tree Farm to pay out the required inheritance and to continue trading as a small rural business.

The conversion to a residential property will inevitably lead to an increase in car use but this can readily be offset by the carbon savings of converting an existing building rather than a new build and also by the inclusion of a renewable source of heat for the property.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

28. 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. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and
- 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.

This proposal will support a small rural business and enable the farming partnership to continue trading into the next generation.

Delivering a wide choice of quality homes

55. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:

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- *the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside; or*
 - *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; or*
 - *where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or*
 - *the exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling.*

Such a design should:

- *be truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas;*
- *reflect the highest standards in architecture;*
- *significantly enhance its immediate setting; and*
- *be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

Whilst the location of this dwelling does not meet all the criteria for a sustainable location it is definitely the optimal viable use for this heritage asset and would ensure the barn is preserved within the AONB for future generations.

Requiring good design

56. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

The proposed design ensures that the barn offers a modern living space without altering the external appearance and setting of the building. The inclusion of a renewable heating system ensures a reduction in the carbon footprint of a dwelling in this location.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

95. To support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should:

- *plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions;*
- *actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; and*
- *when setting any local requirement for a building's sustainability, do so in a way consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards.*

The re-use of this historic building represents the creation of a dwelling with very little carbon output. The inclusion of a heating system using renewable energy will offset the carbon produced from the car use.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

109. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- *minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- *preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and*
- *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.*

115. *Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.*

125. *By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*

The building does provide a nesting site for a pair of barn owls. The ecology report recommends two options for the provision of alternative nesting sites as part of the mitigation.

There will be minimal impact on the wider area of the AONB and the conversion will ensure that this barn is maintained as feature in the landscape. External lighting will be kept to a minimum and will be low energy to minimise the impact on the surrounding countryside.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

126. *Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

127. *When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.*

128. *In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

129. *Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

131. *In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

135. *The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

This proposal involves the protection and reuse of a heritage asset within the AONB. Linear barns are an important part of the landscape and without the conversion to a new use this barn will continue to deteriorate until it cannot be converted to an alternative use. It will then be lost to future generations and will have a negative impact on the landscape of the AONB.

5.4 Local Planning Policy Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley

Key statement DS2: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- *any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

Although not considered a sustainable location the carbon emissions from the expected car use will be offset by including a renewable heating system within the dwelling.

Key statement EN2: Landscape

The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.

The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced.

As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.

The barn will be converted to ensure that the landscape character of the building and its surroundings is protected. This is a distinctive barn in the landscape and conversion would ensure it is preserved.

Key statement EN3: Sustainable development and climate change

The Council will seek to ensure that all development meets an appropriate recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so, in order to address both the causes and consequences of climate change. In particular, all development will be required to demonstrate how it will contribute towards reducing the Borough's carbon footprint.

The Council will assess applications against the current Code of Sustainable Homes, Lifetime Homes and Buildings for Life and BREEAM standards, or any subsequent nationally recognised standards. Proposals for the development of new renewable energy generation facilities, including onshore wind turbine technologies, will be considered. This will require the consideration of many factors including the need to reduce the area's carbon footprint whilst also recognising its exceptional environmental and landscape context. In adapting to the effects of climate change it is expected that proposals for development will demonstrate how sustainable development principles and sustainable construction methods, such as the use of sustainable drainage systems, will be incorporated.

New development in vulnerable areas should ensure that risks can be managed through suitable measures, including through the conservation of biodiversity, improvement of ecological networks and the provision of green infrastructure.

All development should optimise energy efficiency by using new technologies and minimising the use of energy through appropriate design, layout, material and landscaping and address any potential issues relating to flood risk.

Ribble Valley Borough Council will liaise with the County Council over development within Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) in both proposing future site allocations and in determining planning applications. This liaison will include consideration of the issue of preventing the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources within MSAs and, where feasible and practicable, the prior extraction of mineral resources.

On larger schemes, planning permission will only be granted for developments on sites that deliver a proportion of renewable or low carbon energy on site based on targets elaborated within the relevant Development Management policy and also incorporate recycled or reclaimed materials or minimise the use of energy by using energy efficiency solutions and technologies. Where developments fail to achieve any of these, it must be demonstrated why this cannot be achieved.

The location of the barn will mean that occupants are reliant on car use but the reuse of the building and the installation of a renewable heating system will offset the carbon emissions of car use.

Key statement EN5: Heritage assets

There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. 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; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.

This will be achieved through:

- *Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.*
- *Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.*
- *Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.*
- *Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.*
- *The consideration of Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights where the exercise of such rights would harm the historic environment.*

The conversion has been designed to ensure that the building is conserved without having any detrimental impact on its setting and the surrounding landscape.

Policy DMG1: General considerations

In determining planning applications, all development must:

Design

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/english heritage building in context toolkit).*
- 2. 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.*
- 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*
- 4. Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy DME5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*
- 5. The code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.*

Access

- 1. Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
- 2. Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.*
- 3. Consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.*

Amenity

- 1. Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
- 2. Provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
- 3. Have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
- 4. Consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible.*

Environment

1. Consider the environmental implications such as SSSI's, 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.

2. With regards to possible effects upon the natural environment, the council propose

That the principles of the mitigation hierarchy be followed. This gives sequential

Preference to the following:

- 1) enhance the environment
- 2) avoid the impact
- 3) minimise the impact
- 4) restore the damage
- 5) compensate for the damage
- 6) offset the damage.

3. All development must protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

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

5. Achieve efficient land use and the reuse and remediation of previously developed sites where possible. Previously developed sites should always be used instead of

Greenfield sites where possible

Infrastructure

1. Not result in the net loss of important open space, including public and private playing fields without a robust assessment that the sites are surplus to need. In assessing this, regard must be had to the level of provision and standard of public open space in the area, the importance of playing fields and the need to protect school playing fields to meet future needs. Regard will also be had to the landscape or townscape of an area and the importance the open space has on this.

2. 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 enhancements to take place.

3. Consider the potential impact on social infrastructure provision.

Other

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

This proposal is designed to high standards to protect this heritage asset and to protect the surrounding environment of the AONB. The design ensures the building is in keeping with its surroundings.

Policy DMG2: Strategic considerations

Development should be in accordance with the core strategy development strategy and should support the spatial vision.

1. Development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement.

Within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas development must meet at least one of the following considerations:

1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area.
2. The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.

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3. *The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
 4. *The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
 5. *The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*
 6. *The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.*

Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. In protecting the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the council will have regard to the economic and social well-being of the area.

However the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area, avoiding where possible habitat fragmentation. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. Development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting. The AONB management plan should be considered and will be used by the council in determining planning applications.

For the purposes of this policy the term settlement is defined in the glossary. Current settlement boundaries will be updated in subsequent DPDs.

The above policy supports the reuse of buildings in the ONAB where appropriate and where the scale and design does not have an impact on the AONB.

This proposal is of an appropriate scale in this location as it utilises the existing footprint of the barn with no additions.

Policy DME2: Landscape and townscape protection

Development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape or landscape features including:

1. *Traditional stone walls.*
2. *Ponds.*
3. *Characteristic herb rich meadows and pastures.*
4. *Woodlands.*
5. *Copses.*
6. *Hedgerows and individual trees (other than in exceptional circumstances where satisfactory works of mitigation or enhancement would be achieved, including rebuilding, replanting and landscape management).*
7. *Townscape elements such as the scale, form, and materials that contribute to the characteristic townscapes of the area.*
8. *Upland landscapes and associated habitats such as blanket bog.*
9. *Botanically rich roadside verges (that are worthy of protection).*

The proposal does not have any impact on hedges, trees or any other landscape features.

Policy DME4: Protecting heritage assets

In considering development proposals the council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings.

1. Conservation areas

Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance.

This should include considerations as to whether it conserves and enhances the special architectural and historic character of the area as set out in the relevant conservation area appraisal.

Development which makes a positive contribution and conserves and enhances the character, appearance and significance of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials and existing buildings, structures, trees and open spaces will be supported.

In the conservation areas there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of elements that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

2. Listed buildings and other buildings of significant heritage interest

Alterations or extensions to listed buildings or buildings of local heritage interest, or development proposals on sites within their setting which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported.

Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist.

The proposal will conserve and protect this important heritage feature within the landscape of the AONB. The proposed design will not affect the setting of the barn or how it sits in the landscape.

Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the open countryside and AONB

Within areas defined as open countryside or AONB on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to:

1. Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied.

2. 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 and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.

3. The rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings subject to the following criteria:

☑the residential use of the property should not have been abandoned.

☑there being no adverse impact on the landscape in relation to the new dwelling.

☑the need to extend an existing curtilage.

This is an appropriate conversion of a building to a dwelling. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion. The proposal will preserve the bar for future generations

Policy DMH4: the conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings

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

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

The building to be converted must:

- 1. Be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alternation, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building. The council will require a structural survey to be submitted with all planning application of this nature. This should include plans of any rebuilding that is proposed;*
- 2. Be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building, and*
- 3. The character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting, and*
- 4. The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise.*

The re-use of existing rural buildings provides an important opportunity to preserve buildings that contribute to the areas character and setting, can usefully provide a housing resource and promote sustainability. It is important however in an

Area such as Ribble valley that this is carefully managed through the development management process and that clear guidance is offered.

The conversion of buildings should be of a high standard and in keeping with local tradition. The impact of the development, including the creation of garden area and car parking facilities (or other additions) should not harm the appearance or function of the area in which it is situated. 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.

Proposals will also be determined having regard to the historic environment local management (HELM) good practice guidance on the conversion of traditional farm buildings.

The building is capable of conversion and the proposal retains all the important features of this historic building. The attached heritage statement describes the importance of these buildings within the landscape of the AONB.

Whilst the barn is not situated adjacent to other buildings it is of a sufficient size to be converted without any additions. It could provide a house without the need for any infrastructure improvements.

SECTION 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1** Although this is an isolated field barn it is located in a highly accessible location and is suitable for conversion to residential use. The building is redundant for agricultural purposes and unsuitable for work space due to the lack of parking. As such it has little sustainable future other than through sensitive conversion to residential use. The landscape impact of the development will improve the existing views within the AONB as the barn will be prevented from further deterioration.

- 6.2** The design evaluation required that this heritage asset be sensitively converted to preserve its vernacular design and maintain its setting within the AONB.

- 6.3** The proposal is for a sensitively designed structure that meets policy in terms of housing, landscape and environmental impact. As such we hope that the planning authority will grant planning permission for the proposed residential use.