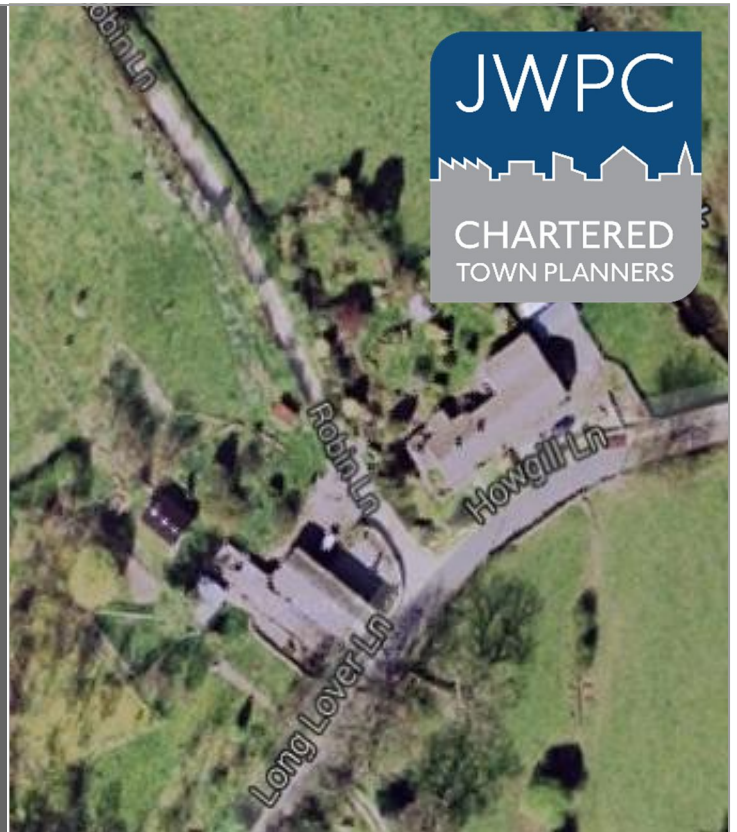


Howgill Barn, Rimington

Erection of a single-storey
extension

The replacement of a
former livestock building
with stabling (retrospective)



Client:
Mr and Mrs Conlon

Planning

Support

Statement

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Support Statement is intended to support two separate planning applications as follows:

1. A 'householder' application for the erection of a single-storey extension to Howgill Barn, and;
2. A full planning application for the replacement of a former livestock building with stabling (retrospective).

Following a pre-application advice request from the applicants to Ribble Valley Borough Council in December 2014, and its response on 3 March 2015, the applicants acquired the property for use as a family home. In light of the advice provided by Rachel Horton at that time, the proposal for the single-storey rear extension has been considerably amended to reflect the officer's concerns and comments, whilst discussions at pre-application stage identified the need to regularise the position of the timber stables that had been erected on the site of a former poultry shed. To facilitate an improved and safer access to this building for vehicles and horses, minor works to an access track are also proposed alongside the reconfiguration of the gates which form the boundary of the site onto Howgill Lane.

1.2 These two applications are supported by full plans and elevations prepared by Cassidy and Ashton architects. In addition, a bat survey has been prepared by Simply Ecology Ltd to identify the presence of bats and recommends mitigation measures accordingly.

2. Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 Howgill Barn is a modest and traditional agricultural building located at the corner of Howgill Lane and Robin Lane, which has been converted and extended following the granting of planning permission in November 1974. The extension itself sought to nearly double the size of the former barn to provide additional living accommodation with an integral garage at ground floor level. It is important to note that the garage opening was designed with the intention to mimic an agricultural opening; however it is lower in height and of a more modern appearance and therefore of little significance to the historic character of the main building.
- 2.2 Whilst the front and side elevations to Robin Lane and Howgill Lane respectively appear as a two-storey structure, the rear elevation is built into the bank as the land rises to the rear and has the appearance of a single-storey structure. In reality, the rear hard standing area is reinforced concrete deck which provides level access to the gardens beyond. Beneath that is a limited amount of additional residential accommodation and storage space.



Fig 1: Front elevation of Howgill Barn

- 2.3 Land to the front of the barn is of a gravel or cobbled surface and used for the parking of vehicles and as a small garden space. More extensive garden space exists to the rear of the property and to the north. The extensive gardens to the rear were enlarged in the 1970s following the conversion of the barn, and have been carefully planted and managed accordingly. Further, the former poultry building to the north-west of the barn has always been used in conjunction with the barn, and whilst there is

no clearly defined curtilage to the barn that differentiates the use of the land on which the former poultry unit sits, it is important to acknowledge the juxtaposition between the two buildings in any considerations in respect of the replacement stables and the access to it. The poultry building has always been ancillary to the barn. The photograph below shows the previously tighter residential boundary from some point in the late 1970's. However, it clearly illustrates the relationship between the poultry shed and the barn. Note the stone path between the two.



Fig 2: Former Poultry Shed



Fig 3: Late 1970's photograph showing barn and former poultry shed.

- 2.4 The nearest dwelling to Howgill Barn lies on the opposite side (east of) Robin Lane and is known as Manor House. The history of this building would appear to be closely linked to Howgill Barn. Indeed, it would appear to be the farmhouse for the wider holding, and whilst it has a combination barn attached to it, Howgill Barn performed an important function as an outlying building within the agricultural holding.
- 2.5 Howgill Barn itself was originally constructed in random-coursed local stone whilst the extension, rather unusually, has been finished in dressed and coursed stonework. The window surrounds for both elements of Howgill Barn are of dressed stone and have clearly been enlarged in the case of the original barn. In short, the 'barn' displays many characteristics of a residential property and through the works carried out in the 1970s, it has lost a degree of its agricultural character. The roof has been finished in diminishing-coursed stone flags punctuated only by a flue and two chimneys.



Fig 4: Rear elevation showing original barn (right) and modern rear and side extension (left)

- 2.6 The grouping of buildings known as Howgill lies approximately two kilometres to the east of Rimington and almost four to the south of Gisburn.

Planning History

- 2.7 Planning permission was originally given for the change of use of Howgill Barn to a dwelling in May 1972 (Ref: BO 1770). Following some amendments to the design including the provision of an extension to it, a further consent was granted in October of the same year (Ref: BO 1870).
- 2.8 The scheme was further amended in November 1974 (Ref: 3/74/0747). This consent included two planning conditions. The first was the standard time limit condition whilst the second reads as follows:

'2. Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes I of Schedule I to the Town and Country Planning (General Development Order) 1973, as amended, any subsequent proposed extensions and alterations to the dwelling shall require the express permission of the Local Planning Authority as to siting, design and external appearance including a schedule of external materials to be used.'

- 2.9 Given that the 1973 GDO – even in amended form was withdrawn many years ago, it is doubtful whether the condition carries any weight. It is therefore submitted that such an extension to Howgill Barn could now fall under Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Nevertheless, whilst there is significant doubt over this, the applicants consider an express grant of planning permission would be the appropriate route to pursue.

3. Application Proposal

- 3.1 This Statement will support two separate planning applications, namely a ‘householder’ application for the extension to the rear of Howgill Barn; and secondly a full planning application for the replacement of an existing poultry building with a timber stables building.
- 3.2 Since their acquisition of Howgill Barn, the applicants have reflected carefully on the pre-application advice provided by the Local Planning Authority and also the existing configuration of the dwelling. In order to provide both additional living accommodation and to allow for the reconfiguration of the internal layout of the house, the ‘householder’ application proposes a modest single-storey extension to the rear of the upper ground floor of the barn. The upper ground floor is effectively seen as the first floor from the front elevation, but from the rear a raised deck area leads straight into that first floor and therefore, externally at least, the extension will appear as a single-storey structure.
- 3.3 The extension will effectively replace a modest single-storey rear extension which currently accommodates a stairwell, a rear porch and a WC. Whilst the extension is modest in scale and projects across approximately one third of the rear elevation, the use of random stone flags in a ‘crazy paving’ style does not make a positive contribution to the character of the barn (See Figure 4 above). Its roof is a simple continuation of the rear-facing roof of the barn, albeit with a slightly shallower pitch in a cat-style roof configuration.
- 3.4 The replacement extension would measure approximately 11 metres by 3.8 metres in depth and would be set in from the north-west-facing gable by approximately 1 metre. The return projection has been designed to terminate short of the large rear window which serves to illuminate the lounge. This will ensure there will be no loss of light into the lounge, which will be opened up so that its full area extends to the dimensions of the original barn itself.
- 3.5 Elsewhere, the internal alternations seek to reconfigure the house so that a new front door is provided, as at present all occupants and visitors have to walk up the external staircase to the north-western corner of the building to the existing rear door. Providing a new front door will offer an architectural focal point to the front of the barn where none exists at present. To facilitate this, the existing kitchen at first floor will be removed and a full-height entrance hall and staircase will be provided with a new kitchen and family room off this to the north-west at first floor. The extension itself will also provide for a small utility and study area, making the dwelling far more conducive to 21st-century living standards.

- 3.6 Externally, the extension will have a dual-pitched roof with ridge and eaves running parallel with the main house. The extension will be finished in random-coursed stone to match the existing barn rather than its extension, whilst its roof will be of stone slate to match the original house. A modest chimney will also be added to the extension, and an existing domestic flue repositioned to facilitate the use of an Aga or similar within the kitchen area.
- 3.7 Other external works to the house, other than those mentioned above, include the boarding-up of the existing integral garage to provide an additional bedroom at ground floor. This will be finished in a vertical timber board and will be partly glazed, ensuring there remains a vertical emphasis to the opening. One further opening is provided within the north-western elevation at ground floor to provide additional illumination to that bedroom (bedroom 1).
- 3.8 The application drawings also show the enlargement of the existing gate opening into the drive for the dwelling, although it should be acknowledged that these works would not constitute a development for which planning permission would be required as they fall under the ambit of Permitted Development.
- 3.9 The full planning application relates to the replacement of a single-storey timber poultry shed and its replacement with a single-storey stable block. This is retrospective in nature, and whilst the applicants have considered how the proposal relates to Class E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the 1995 Order, it is unclear as to whether the building falls within the residential curtilage of Howgill Barn. Whilst the applicants have been informed by the previous owner that the land on which the shed sat has been used as residential curtilage for far more than 10 years, there is no express grant of planning permission to confirm this. Therefore, in order to avoid any uncertainty in the future, the applicants apply here for a full planning application which seeks to regularise the development. As officers will see from a site visit, the stable is of a simple construction with external dimensions of approximately 6 metres by 11 metres, with an overhanging roof to form a modest canopy. It is constructed on a masonry block plinth and faced with horizontal timber boarding beneath a profiled metal-clad roof.



Fig 5: Former Poultry shed and New stable building

- 3.10 The use of the stables is for entirely domestic purposes, i.e for horses owned by immediate family members and with no livery business associated with it. In order to facilitate safe and convenient access to the stables for both horses and vehicles, a new access track has been provided and finished using recycled dark stone. The provision of this access has not required any change to existing land levels or any excavation works of any significance.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 The NPPF reminds local authorities that planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that ‘for the avoidance of doubt’ the NPPF itself is a material consideration in planning decisions. Furthermore, Local Plans published prior to 2004 only carry weight in planning decisions in relation to the degree with which they accorded with the NPPF.
- 4.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which directs council’s to be positive about growth; making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. In relation to planning decisions, the document outlines that this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay, and where the development plan is out of date, granting planning permission unless the negative impacts of approval would significantly outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF.
- 4.3 NPPF requires good design to run throughout all new development. It is a key aspect of sustainable development and is considered to be ‘indivisible from good planning’. Design policies and decisions should seek to avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should not impose architectural styles or particular tastes.
- 4.4 The document also underpins support for a ‘prosperous rural economy’ whilst conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.5 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and provides both strategic policies as well as those for Development Management. Given its adopted status and preparation post NPPF, the policies within it should be afforded full weight.
- 4.5 Policy DMG1 addresses general design considerations. It requires a high standard of design in all new development, relationship to surroundings and other buildings as well as impact on landscape character are important factors. The residential amenity of neighbours should be protected. Sustainable buildings techniques are encouraged whilst the capacity of existing infrastructure must be assessed in any proposal.

- 4.6 Policy DME3 seeks to ensure the conservation of wildlife species protected by law. These include European protected species including all species of bats. Developers are encouraged to incorporate measures that complement priority habitats and species.
- 4.7 Policy DMH5 relates to the extension or alteration of residential buildings and their curtilage. In respect of the former, it states little more than proposals should be consistent with Policy DMG1. In respect of extensions to residential curtilages, it permits such a change in land use within or on the edge of 'settlements' subject to a number of criteria. There is no definition of the term 'settlement'. The criteria refer to the need to follow identifiable boundaries, not create visual harm to landscape and to improve the visual quality of the site.

Planning Considerations

- 5.1 Since Howgill Barn's conversion and extension in the mid-1970s it has remained relatively untouched and is in need of significant improvements to ensure it is commensurate with the expectations associated with 21st Century family accommodation. Whilst those alterations and extension in the 1970s served to erode much of the inherent agricultural character and vernacular of Howgill Barn, it is submitted that the application proposal seeks to sympathetically modernise the Barn. The front elevation will be significantly enhanced through the reinstatement of a front door to the property whilst the unsightly garage door opening will be redesigned in a more contemporary manner.
- 5.2 Following pre-application advice from Ribble Valley Borough Council the applicants have reappraised their requirements for their home and amended the plans accordingly. The previously proposed side extension has been omitted and the rear has been reduced and simplified. Officers previously expressed concerns over the complexity of the three-gabled extension and so a simpler, linear extension is now proposed with its own dual-pitched roof connected to the original pitched roof of the barn via a lead valley. The extension is proposed to be finished in matching stone rather than render; as was the case at pre-application stage. The stonework will be of a random coursed finish rather than the coursed of the main existing extension to the barn.
- 5.3 The simple, linear form of the extension is considered to be consistent with the historic character of its host building and the wider landscape. As such the proposal is compliant with Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The extension would also serve to rid the barn of the incongruous small rear extension, finished in what can be described as an 'idiosyncratic' choice of stone and coursing. The reintroduction of a 'front' door to the building will reconnect visitors to the site with the property in contrast the convoluted pedestrian access arrangement as it presently exists.
- 5.4 The extension to the rear would not have any material impact upon the residential amenity of any neighbours and would not have a material impact upon the nearest tree. The Root Protection Area for that tree has been calculated and shown for ease of reference on the proposed layout drawing. It is clear that the extension and its footings etc would still fall a considerable distance from the RPA of that tree.
- 5.5 A full bat survey was carried out on the site during August and September 2015 and whilst a considerable number of bats were found to be significant potential for bat roosting. The North West gable of the building was the focus for most bat activity along with various exit points along the South

Western aspect of the roof. Thorough mitigation measures have been recommended by the ecologist, the Local Planning Authority will be able to ensure protected species are not harmed. The mitigation measures include:

- In situ retention of roosts
- No modification of existing roosts
- Planning and timing of works to avoid direct impact on bats
- Timing of works to avoid harm to bats, informed by additional dawn/dusk and night surveys
- Roof strip observed by licensed bat handler
- New roost provision within extension

5.6 In consideration of the above factors the proposed extension would be entirely consistent with Policies DMG1, DME3 and DMH5 of the Core Strategy and NPPF.

5.7 The second application is retrospective and relates to the replacement of an existing poultry shed with a stable building. Whilst the Core Strategy includes a suite of Development Management policies, there is little other than policy DMG1 that relates to the replacement of one rural building with another. It would be wrong to state that the poultry shed was agricultural in use as it never related to a wider agricultural holding but was part of a small-holding ran by the residential of Howgill Barn. Therefore, in terms of use, the erection of a stable for equine related used by residential of Howgill Barn only, there is not material difference. The new use remains ancillary as part of the enjoyment of that dwellinghouse. Indeed, the only reason the stable building may need consent would be if the Local Planning Authority considers that it falls beyond the domestic curtilage of Howgill Barn and doesn't benefit from 'Class E' Permitted Development rights.

5.8 The proposed stable block has no additional impact upon the open countryside when considered against the appearance and scale of the former poultry shed. Its dimensions are similar and it is no higher than the former building. In addition, the use of horizontal timber boarding gives a rural character to the building, consistent with the wider area.

5.9 The access track to the stables will facilitate safer access both for horses and vehicles and this is a material planning consideration in favour of the application. The access track follows the existing contours of the land and adjoins the historic residential curtilage close to the gate onto Robin Lane. The latter will be widened to provide safer access to the public highway. The use of loose stone to form the track is entirely within keeping within this rural location.

6 Summary

- 6.1 Howgill Barn is an established barn 'conversion' approved and developed in the 1970's with a significant side extension and alterations. Such changes have sought to erode the agricultural character of the building. However, it remains an attractive building within a stunning setting. Prior to their acquisition of the property, the applicants engaged with the Local Planning Authority when considering a modest extension and alterations to the barn to make it suitable for modern family life. This is the basis for the householder planning application submitted here. In addition, a replacement building for use as stables has been erected in place of a dilapidated former poultry shed.
- 6.2 Taking into account the prevailing policies of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the pre-application advice from RVBC, the 'householder' application proposes a simple single storey rear extension and modest alterations to the front elevation of the barn to provide more accommodation in a contemporary design that will allow areas of the dwelling to be used more efficiently and practically.
- 6.3 The applications have been tested here against Policies DMG1, DME3 and DMH5 of the Core Strategy as well as NPPF. Both applications are consistent with the policies of the Development Plan and there are no other material planning considerations that would lead to any decision other than approval. In order to allow for these improvements to both the fabric of the building and its suitability for family living, the Local Planning Authority is respectfully requested to approve both applications.

JWPC Ltd

November 2015

Appendices

Appendix 1 -