

PLANNING STATEMENT

SITE: 1 LOWER BARN COTTAGES, 2 LOWER BARN COTTAGES AND LOWER BARN FARM, RIVERSIDE, RIBCHESTER PR3 3XS

PROPOSAL: GARAGE AT 1 LOWER BARN COTTAGES, GARAGE AT 2 LOWER BARN COTTAGES WITH NEW VEHICLE ACCESS, DEMOLITION OF DOMESTIC OUTBUILDING AT LOWER BARN FARM AND RECONFIGURATION OF RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGES.

1 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises three dwellings Lower Barn Farm, 1 and 2 Lower Barn Cottages and part of the adjacent field. The group is located to the south west of the village of Ribchester. Vehicle access is along the unadopted road leading from Church Street through Lower Alston Farm, which passes to the south of Lower Barn Farm towards Boat House. This road is also a public bridleway BW62. A public footpath FP60 leaves the bridleway on the east side of Lower Barn Farm and heads in a northeast direction towards the village with a footbridge crossing the brook which runs south to the River Ribble.
- 1.2 Lower Barn Farm is the original farmhouse within the group with the former barn now two cottages immediately and close by to the north. The former barn stands at a slightly higher level. Lower Barn Farm has a detached garage on its eastern side next to the vehicle access to 1 and 2 Lower Barn Cottages. The driveway to 1 and 2 Lower Barn Cottages passes along the eastern side of the garage and sweeps round the perimeter of the garden on the northern side to allow parking in front of 2 Lower Barn Cottages. The garden areas to 1 and 2 Lower barn Cottages are separated from the fields to the north by a post and wire fence and a low hedge.
- 1.3 The barn was converted to two dwellings in the 1990's. Before the conversion took place there were a number of agricultural buildings and structures to the north of the group (now demolished). This influenced the location of the garden areas to the Cottages. The ground level for the pre-existing agricultural buildings had been modified and this is still evident from the slight build-up of ground to the garden from the field on the north east side see photograph 1 and 2. This means that the northern part of the garden is particularly visible in the landscape when viewed from the public footpath. The garden area to Lower Barn Farm is to west at the rear of the dwelling. There are a number of small outbuildings in the garden and a larger former agricultural building to the west used for domestic storage.
- 1.4 Lower Barn Farm and 1 and 2 Lower Barn Cottage are constructed out of natural stone with a blue slate roof and are of a traditional design common to former agricultural farmsteads. The detached garage to Lower Barn Farm is also built of



1 and 2. View from the public footpath north east looking south west showing the artificially raised ground next to the northern edge of the garden.



stone and slate. The outbuilding to the west of Lower Barn Farm has a mono-pitched roof and is clad in timber.

2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The drawings submitted with this application are:

2733 010C Location plans and Overall site plan

2733 015A Proposed elevation in context

2733 020 Existing site plan

2733 030B Proposed site plan 2 Lower Barn Cottages

2733 040 Proposed plans, elevations and typical section 2 Lower Barn Cottages

2733 050 Proposed plans, elevations and typical section 1 Lower Barn Cottages

2733 060 Existing site plan 1 Lower Barn Cottages

2733 070B Proposed site plan 1 Lower Barn Cottages.

2.2 This application seeks permission to build a garage for 1 Lower Barn Cottages, and remove the length of potentially redundant driveway leading to 2 Lower Barn Cottages. The garage measures 7.62m by 6.74m and is 3.95m to the ridge the garage is able to accommodate two cars, gardening equipment and bicycles etc. The main garage doors face south towards the vehicle access and a turning area is provided to the rear of the existing garage to Lower Barn Farm. The proposed materials are natural slate roofing and vertical timber boarding.

2.3 A similar garage is proposed for 2 Lower Barn Cottages. The garage measures 7.62m by 6.74m and is 3.97m to the ridge. The garage is able to accommodate two cars, gardening equipment and bicycles etc. A turning area is proposed in front of the garage and the new access is to be divided from the field by a new hedge. The new vehicle access is proposed from the road/bridleway at western end of the garden to Lower Barn Farm adjacent to the existing field access. Starting at the road, the new access will pass through part of the existing garden to Lower Barn Farm and the site of the existing domestic storage building which is to be demolished. It then emerges into the corner of the field within is immediately adjacent to the residential curtilages of Lower Barn Farm and 2 Lower Barn Cottages. This extension of the residential curtilage is in exchange for the reduction of the residential curtilage of 1 and 2 Lower Barn Cottages on the northern side and relinquishing the extant permission for the siting of garages under planning permission 3/97/0558P. The additional area of agricultural land required is 278m² and the area of garden to be returned to agriculture is 361m². The overall gardens areas will be reduced by 83m².

3 ASSESSMENT

3.1 The following Core Strategy Policies are relevant to this application:

EN2- Landscape

DMG1- General Considerations

DME2-Landscape and Townscape protection.

DME3-Site and species protection and conservation

DMH5-Residential and curtilage extensions

4 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 3/94/0180 Rebuilding of existing detached dwelling. Lower Barn Farm Church Street Ribchester approved

4.2 3/97/0558 Conversion of existing redundant barn to form two dwellings, erection of three double garages and incorporation of part of agricultural land into residential curtilage. Approved. 6th January 1998.

4.3 The application to convert the barn to two dwellings includes in the description of the development "*erection of three double garages*". On the approved plan the position of three garages are shown but only the garage for Lower Barn Farm has been constructed. The garages for 1 and 2 Lower Barn Cottages have not yet been built but as the development has commenced the garages could be built under this permission. The garages were positioned at the extreme north end of the garden projecting into the field. The access drive and turning areas shown on the approved drawing have been constructed.

4.4 The Committee Report to the application under the section entitled "Issues" states "*The proposed garaging for the barn is to be situated at the far end of the existing farm yard and are to replace some existing dilapidated agricultural buildings. Thus the area will benefit some visual improvement over the existing proposals. The proposed garaging for the existing house is close to the barn but it is at a lower level than the barn and will not detract from the building. The majority of the two curtilages covered the existing yard area of the farm and will be screened from the road by the barn itself. Upon the eastern side of the existing yard this will involve some curtilage extension to incorporate the access and drive to the yard, but it follows the existing line of and existing slurry lagoon and stone mounting block. I believe therefore that this element of the proposal accords with Policy H13 of the Plan as the proposal follows existing identifiable features and there is no environmental harm upon the landscape.*"¹ See appendix

¹ Appendix Committee Report 38/97/0558P

- 4.5 The permission 3/97/0558 includes a condition which removed permitted development rights.
- 4.6 3/2015/0623 Lawful development certificate issued confirming the lawful use of the garden area and outbuilding to the west of Lower Barn Farm.

5 INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 Pre-application advice was sought from the Council and received from Pre-Planning Advice Officer Rachel Horton on the 2nd February 2015. This was for a more extensive scheme proposing larger garages and stables. Rachel Horton raised concerns in relation to the size of the proposed garages and stables, she queried whether the garden to Lower Barn Farm and the domestic outbuilding were in use lawfully and whether the exchange of the areas of residential curtilage were compliant with the inherent principles of policy DMH5.
- 5.2 We have reviewed that proposal and have reduced the size of the proposed garages positioning them close to the existing buildings. A lawful use certificate has been issued in relation to the existing use of the garden and outbuilding at Lower Barn Farm so that the extent of the lawful domestic curtilages is now no longer in doubt. The extension of the curtilage onto agricultural land required for the new access and garaging in relation to 2 Lower Barn Cottages has been substantially reduced and is more than compensated for in the reduction in the residential curtilage being put back to agricultural use to the north of the barn conversion.
- 5.3 We have had a follow up meeting with Senior Planning Officer Colin Sharpe where the current proposal was discussed. Colin Sharpe confirmed that the scale of the proposed garages are now acceptable. He noted that the lawful development certificate had been granted and that the proposed exchange in the position of the residential curtilage enables the garages to be more appropriately closely group with the existing buildings. In his view the exchange in the areas of the residential curtilage were acceptable.

6 EVALUATION

- 6.1 The main issue to be considered in this application is the overall impact of the proposed development on the character of the landscape. The application site includes all the three dwellings because the overall scheme involves the domestic curtilages of each of the dwellings. Whilst the scheme includes an extension of the curtilage on the western side of the group and the introduction of new buildings it also includes the demolition of an existing domestic outbuilding and the relinquishment of an extant permission to build garages at the site. Crucially is also involves the return of domestic curtilage to agricultural use. We will demonstrate that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the visual qualities of this area of

open countryside and that the development is in scale with the existing development at the site.

- 6.2 The proposed garage to 1 Lower Barn Cottages is within the existing curtilage of that property and it is grouped closely with the former barn with the ridge of the garage being parallel to the barn. Drawing 70 B. The garage as approved in 1998 reference 3/97/0558P is positioned at the far end of the garden necessitating a long access drive. The location of that garage was quite disassociated with the existing group of buildings and positioned on land which is high in relation to the surrounding fields especially when viewed from the nearby public footpath (See photograph 1 and 2) or from the North West see photograph 3. The proposed garage in contrast when viewed from the public footpath will be seen against the backdrop of the barn conversion the garage to the house and the house behind. See photograph 4. In siting the garage closer to 1 Lower Barn Cottage the driveway around the northern perimeter of the garden is no longer necessary. See photographs 5 and 6. Drawing the driveway and garage nearer to the dwelling provides a softer transition between the buildings and the surrounding fields and reduces the current and potential impact on the landscape if the approved garage was to be built. There is also a significant improvement to the residential amenities of 1 Lower barn Cottages through the removal of vehicles and pedestrians passing through the garden area to gain access to 2 Lower Barn Cottages.



3 The approved garages would appear very prominent in the landscape when viewed from the northwest.

- 6.3 The development at 2 Lower Barn Cottages has been reduced to garaging only and no longer includes stables. The proposed garage has been reduced in size and is now closely grouped with the existing barn conversion. The proposed garage will be seen against the backdrop of the gable of the barn conversion. See drawing 040. The revised position of the garage reflects more closely the pattern of agricultural buildings in the area and is far more appropriate than the location approved under 3/97/0558P. The introduction of the new garage will necessitate the demolition of the existing domestic outbuilding see photographs 7, 8 and 9.



- 4 The proposed garage to 1 Lower Barn Cottages would be seen against the group of buildings.
- 6.4 The proposed vehicles access from the lane runs through the existing garden curtilage of Lower Barn Farm and the position of the current outbuilding. An improvement to the current impact on the landscape of vehicles using the driveway along the northern perimeter of the garden, and the potential impact of the approved garage if constructed, would occur if the proposed garage is positioned to the west of 2 Lower Barn Cottages. See photograph 10. The majority of the existing driveway in the garden of 2 Lower Barn Cottages would be returned to agricultural use and the remainder grasses over.



5 The existing driveway around the grassed area and along the northern edge of the garden would no longer be required.



6 This area of driveway would be removed and returned to the field.



7 Outbuilding to be demolished



8 Outbuilding



9 Outbuilding



10. View of 2 Lower Barn Cottages from the North West indicating the location of the new garage close to the building rather than projecting out into the field.

- 6.5 The combined curtilages of the three dwellings presently form and inverted L shape see drawing 010B. The curtilages to the barn conversions are biased towards 1 Lower Barn Cottages and the curtilage to Lower Barn Farm extends westwards parallel with the road. The exchange in the position of the residential curtilage, drawing it in from the north and extending it to the west enables the new garages to be more appropriately positioned. In total the development will result in a reduction in the residential curtilage overall by 83m². The impact on the landscape of that part of the proposed garage and hard standing associated with it which is outside the current residential curtilage is balanced out by bringing the access through the existing domestic curtilage, demolishing the domestic outbuilding, relinquishing the right to build the garage under 3/97/0558 and reducing the extent of the current residential curtilage on the northern edge.
- 6.6 An extension to the curtilage of a dwelling in the countryside is not normally considered appropriate. Policy DMH5 residential and curtilage extensions is drafted specifically to protect visual amenity. **An extension to the curtilage is not proposed** as part of this application rather **the proposal is to exchange one area of curtilage for another**. The net impact on the visual qualities of the landscape as a result of this exchange will be positive. The proposal is not contrary to policy DMH5.
- 6.7 The proposed garages will appear subservient to the barn conversion and the dwelling within the group see drawing 015A. The proposed materials are timber cladding, with a blue slate roof. These materials are all commonly used on agricultural buildings and dwellings in the area.

Protected Species

- 6.8 The existing domestic outbuilding is constructed with a single sheet roof and walling constructed out of Yorkshire boarding and sleepers laid on top of each other with open verges. The applicant has not encountered bats using the building. The construction of the building appears unsuitable for bats referring to the guidance in the Council's website. The development complies with the requirements of policy DME3-Site and species protection and conservation.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed development will enhance the visual impact of this group of buildings by removing an existing mono-pitched domestic outbuilding and by relinquishing an extant permission for two double garages on the northern part of the garden in a very prominent position and replacing these with well-designed garages which are better located closer to the existing building and which in their form and orientation relate better to the group. The exchange in the location of the residential curtilage will not harm the character of the landscape as it is well related to the existing group of

buildings. The proposal complies with policies EN2, DMG1, DME2, and DMH5 of the emerging core strategy.

Appendix Committee Report 3/97/0558P

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January 2016