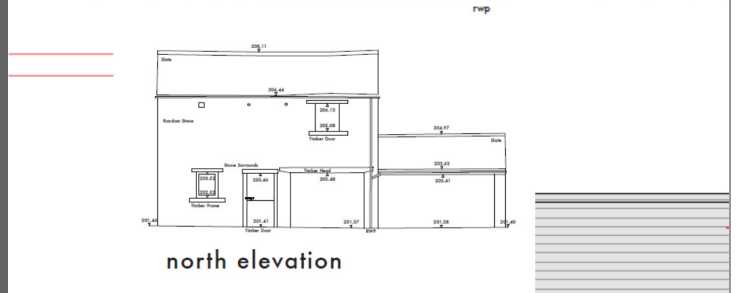
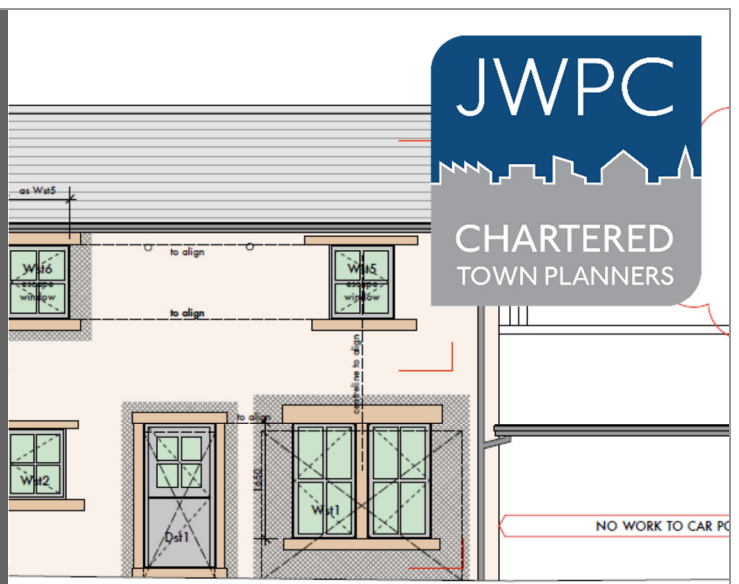


Middle Warble Hey Farm, Long Row, Mellor

Conversion of Existing Outbuilding to Ancillary Residential Accommodation



Client:
Susan Lord

Planning

Support

Statement

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by JWPC Chartered Town Planners on behalf of the applicant Susan Lord, in support of a planning application which seeks retrospective planning permission for the conversion of an existing outbuilding to ancillary residential accommodation. The full extent of the works are described in Chapter 3 of this Statement.
- 1.2 The Statement should be read alongside the submitted application documentation, namely:
- The submitted Application Forms;
 - The submitted plans prepared by Stanton Andrews.
- 1.3 The Statement identifies the associated local planning policies within the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, and national planning policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The chapters that follow will provide a description of the proposed works and their rationale to conclude that the proposal will preserve and enhance the character of the building and the surrounding open countryside and that there is no impact on the openness or permanence of the Green Belt.

2. Site Characteristics

Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site forming the subject of this application is a residential property and associated outbuilding known as Middle Warble Hey Farm. The property is situated at the end of Long Row to the west of Barker Lane. Although the postal address is that of Mellor, the village is approximately one mile to the west. The district boundary with Blackburn with Darwen which forms the edge of the urban area is only a short walk away to the south of the site via Barker Lane.



Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing location of Middle Warble Hey Farm and neighbouring buildings

- 2.2 The site is accessed via the east boundary by Long Row which serves a number of other properties en route to Middle Warble Hey Farm. The application site comprises the existing two-storey dwelling and its associated curtilage. An existing outbuilding and adjacent car port are positioned to the south of the property along the southern boundary directly adjacent to the house. To the north of the site are open agricultural fields rising towards Mellor Lane. A neighbouring property, Middle Warble Hey Bungalow, sits to the south of the site and its rear elevation forms the southern boundary. To the west and rear of the property sits the garden, open agricultural fields and properties fronting Whinney Lane beyond.
- 2.3 The building in question is a stone-under-slate structure with original openings within the north and east elevations. Prior to its recent conversion the outbuilding was used for hay storage and as stables but has long since been utilised for storage of the previous owner's domestic vehicles and other general storage associated with the use of the dwelling. More recently the building has been left disused

and in its unconverted state had become surplus to the needs of the applicant. On entering the site via Long Row there is adequate parking provided within the curtilage of the property including the car port adjacent to the outbuilding.

- 2.4 Although forming one of a group of properties served by Long Row, the site is within designated Open Countryside and within the Green Belt. A public footpath (3-25-FP30) cuts through the site in an east-west direction passing by the north of the property leading from Long Row to the east and towards Whinney Lane to the west. The site is not within any Flood Zone and as such it is not considered necessary to submit a Flood Risk Assessment. It is our understanding that there are no Tree Preservation Orders within the site but nevertheless the proposal is not likely to have any implications to either on- or off-site trees.

3. Application Proposal

- 3.1 The application submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council seeks retrospective planning permission for the conversion of the existing outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation associated with the use of the property known as Middle Warble Hey Farm as a single dwelling. The works to the building have already been carried out on the understanding that they were in fact permitted development. This point is debatable given that the previous use of the building for domestic use and storage associated with the existing property means there would not be a material change of use, but it has been considered that, for the avoidance of doubt and in order to authorise the works, a planning application would be submitted to clarify the situation.
- 3.2 The work has involved the creation of a small lounge and kitchen area at ground floor and two bedrooms and a bathroom above at first floor. This has required the insertion of windows to existing openings but the majority of the work is minor in both scale and level of intervention with the fabric of the original building. The works have been carried out sympathetically and finished to a high standard and the finished appearance complements the character and appearance of the neighbouring buildings and surrounding area.

4. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental; and that these roles are mutually dependent and should be sought simultaneously through the planning system. At the heart of the NPPF is a ***presumption in favour of sustainable development*** (paragraph 14). The following paragraphs of the NPPF are relevant to the preparation and consideration of this proposal:
- 4.2 **Paragraph 17** sets out 12 core land-use planning principles which should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The principles which are relevant to this application state that planning should: be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve places; be supportive of sustainable economic development; seek high-quality design and good standards of amenity; take account of different roles and character of different areas; and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings.
- 4.3 Although not directly relevant, Section 6 (Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes) at **Paragraph 55** in seeking to promote sustainable development in rural areas encourages the re-use of redundant or disused buildings which leads to enhancements of the immediate setting.
- 4.4 Section 7 (Requiring Good Design) at **Paragraphs 56 and 57** state that good design is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people, emphasises the importance of planning positively for the achievement of high-quality and inclusive design for all development. **Paragraph 61** goes on to state that although visual appearance and the architecture of individual building are very important factors, securing high-quality design and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Planning should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.
- 4.5 Section 9 (Protecting Green Belt Land) at **Paragraph 89** suggests that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. One of the identified exceptions to this is the extension or alteration of an existing building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original buildings.

4.6 Section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) at **Paragraphs 131 and 132** requests that local planning authorities to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. **Paragraph 134** states that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014)

4.7 Policy **EN1** (Green Belt) states that the overall extent of the Green Belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment.

4.8 Policy **DMG1** (General Considerations) states that in determining planning applications, all development must have full consideration for design, access, amenity, environment and infrastructure.

4.9 Policy **DME2** (Landscape and Townscape Protection) states that development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape or landscape features.

4.10 Policy **DMH3** (Dwellings in the Open Countryside) states that residential development will be limited to the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings providing they are suitably located and their form/design are in keeping with their surroundings.

4.11 Policy **DMH4** (The Conversion of Barns and other Buildings to Dwellings) states that planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where:

- The building is not isolated in the landscape;
- There would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservation interests;
- There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy;
- The proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area; and
- That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or adequately mitigated.

The building to be converted must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without extension building or alteration; be of sufficient size to accommodate living accommodation without the need for

further extensions; the character and materials are appropriate and the building is worthy of retention because of the contribution to its setting; and the building has a genuine history of agricultural use.

- 4.12 Policy **DMH5** (Residential and Curtilage Extensions) states that proposals to extend or alter existing residential properties must accord with Policy DMG1. Proposals that are for the extension of properties to provide accommodation for elderly/dependent relatives must also be capable of integration into the main dwelling or a use that is ancillary to the use of the main dwelling and would provide only a modest level of accommodation.

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1 The key issue in the consideration of this application is whether the proposed development is compatible with both local and national planning policy in determining whether the proposal will have any impact on the openness and permanence of the Green Belt or the character of the countryside within which it is located.

Impact on the Surrounding Area

- 5.2 The building in its previous form was a disused building which had previously been used as a car port with additional domestic storage and hayloft above. Left alone, the building was costly to maintain and served no useful function other than perhaps for storage of larger, bulky domestic items which could not be stored within the main dwelling. In considering how to make best use of the space within the site, it made sense to utilise the space available within this outbuilding better. Given the position of existing or original openings it was considered that the majority of the original fabric of the existing building could be re-used and converted with little alteration to its character and appearance and as such its charm. Therefore it was considered that converting the existing building into additional ancillary accommodation was the best solution for retaining the building and, through its use, reducing the maintenance of a damp and empty structure. Being unaware of any potential planning requirements, the works to convert the building were carried with the best intentions.
- 5.3 To allow for the conversion, an original window opening within the east side facing elevation has been reinstated and one additional opening has been inserted to the north elevation at first floor level. Other than this there has been very little alteration to the external fabric of the building. The proposed conversion has required only minor alterations to the original fabric and all has been completed within the existing footprint. The development does not propose any further extension to the outbuilding and has not and will not increase the footprint of any part of the building. Therefore in terms of compliance with both local and national planning policy there is no encroachment and there cannot be considered to be any associated impacts arising from the development, either on the open countryside or the openness or permanence of the Green Belt within which it is located.
- 5.4 The NPPF identifies the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt as inappropriate. However it does suggest that the extension or alteration of a building is acceptable – provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Although this section of the NPPF is only partly relevant as this application does not propose the construction of a

new building, the proposal accords with the intentions of this policy to secure and maintain the openness of the Green Belt.

- 5.5 The outbuilding is physically attached to and forms part of the neighbouring dwelling (Middle Warble Hey Bungalow) and associated buildings. The main dwelling at Middle Warble Hey Farm is only a few metres away to the north. Together with neighbouring buildings along Long Row they form a wider group of properties leading towards Barker Lane. The building is clearly not situated within an isolated location and its conversion complements other buildings within the area. As such the proposal is considered to meet with the criteria of the relevant Policy DMH4 of the Core Strategy.
- 5.6 Similarly, the proposal complies with Policy DMH5 which requires that a use such as this which is ancillary to the use of the main dwelling provide only a modest level of accommodation. The use of the outbuilding is intended to be ancillary to the main dwelling and is situated directly adjacent to the main dwelling and within its curtilage forming one planning unit. The site is accessible (both pedestrian and vehicular) only through the curtilage of the main dwelling and parking areas. The applicant would be happy to accept a condition which ties the use of the outbuilding to that of the main dwelling for ancillary purposes.
- 5.7 Through a series of minor and sympathetic alterations to the building the conversion has resulted in a notable improvement to the character and appearance of this previously neglected and disused building. It is envisaged that its finished appearance will complement a number of similar characterful improvements to the main dwelling which will also utilise materials and quality workmanship consistent with that of the converted outbuilding.

Residential Amenity

- 5.8 There is one neighbouring property to the south and east of the application site known as Middle Warble Hey Bungalow. This property is also accessed via Long Row but separately from the application site. The building in question sits along the boundary with this site and as such there is potential for impact on residential amenity. However, as referred to previously, the outbuilding has required very little alteration to facilitate its conversion. The existing elevations to the south and west do not contain any openings and as part of the conversion it has not been necessary to insert any additional openings here. Therefore there is no potential for overlooking or any loss of privacy experienced by the occupants of the neighbouring property. The arrangement is similar to the current situation where Middle Warble Hey Bungalow has similar elevations which form the boundary between the two properties but due to the absence of any windows the relationship is acceptable. The only other neighbouring property to the

east is a reasonable distance away and is not considered to be affected by the conversion. Overall the proposal is not considered to raise any issues or impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Parking

- 5.9 Given that the proposal seeks to convert the building into ancillary accommodation to be used in association with the adjacent dwelling, it is not considered that the proposed works will lead to any significant increase, if any, in the numbers of vehicles using the site. However, to the front of the property is a substantial area of hard standing where there is parking available for a number of the family's cars in addition to any visitors to the property. Similarly there is an access leading towards the rear of the property to its southern elevation. This area could also be used for parking should it be required. There is sufficient space within the site to turn an average family-sized vehicle and exit the site in a forward gear. In this regard there are not considered to be any issues associated with parking at the site.

6 Summary

- 6.1 This Statement has been prepared by JWPC Chartered Town Planners in support of a retrospective application for the conversion of an existing outbuilding to ancillary domestic accommodation. The proposal will bring back into use a redundant building which sits within the established domestic curtilage of the main dwelling house at Middle Warble Hey Farm, with which it is associated. Crucially the buildings within the site and the associated residential curtilage will remain as one planning unit.
- 6.2 The proposed conversion represents an appropriate form of development and would not result in any visual detriment to the surrounding countryside given its sympathetic design and use of appropriate materials, its location amongst an existing group of buildings, and because there would be no need to significantly alter or extend the building in any way. Furthermore given its ancillary function there will be no adverse impact on highway safety.
- 6.3 It is considered that the submitted application is fully compliant with the relevant local planning policies found in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the national planning policies of the NPPF. It is therefore respectfully requested that the proposed applications be supported by the planning authority. Although every effort has been made to provide a full account of the proposed development within this Statement, the applicant would be happy to discuss the proposal with the planning authority, who are positively encouraged to contact the applicant should further information be required which will assist with the consideration of the applications before them.

JWPC Ltd

January 2016