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Development Department
Ribble Valley Borough Council
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Your ref:
Our ref: sa/pks/4791

22/06/2017

Dear Sirs

ELMRIDGE FARM, ELMRIDGE LANE, CHIPPING

Planning application 3/2013/0691 was approved by the council on 23/05/2014, granting consent for conversion of 3 barns to 4 dwellings, erection of agricultural building following demolition of existing structures and creation of agricultural access road.

Work associated with relocating the farm unit has been completed, thereby implementing the consent. The remainder of the application site has been marketed and the new owner has commenced work on the conversion of the other barns and this work will be completed by 05/06/2017 in conformity with planning permission 3/2017/0336.

This owner, Taylor Country Homes Ltd, is locally based at Myerscough College Business Centre. They have reappraised the consented development and are keen to make alterations to it which enhance its appearance, make it more commercially attractive to future residents and overall reduce its impact on the countryside.

The revised proposals remove the new access road to the east of the building enclave which served garages located within the extended walled courtyard on the site of the previous farm building. This is achieved by moving the two garages into a new range of garages (including a garage for the farmhouse) within the existing farm courtyard in a building range designed to reflect the appearance of stables. Currently there is a single garage approved in that location. This range provides a visually attractive enclosed courtyard central to all of the dwellings. This improvement is visible to the public using the public right of way through the enclave.

The opportunity of relocating the garages is taken also to reduce the built elements of the proposed walled courtyard and in particular replace an extensive area of proposed paving with soft landscaping. A new garage would be built close to the barn being converted to dwelling 2 accessed from hardstanding opposite the farmhouse.

The farmhouse is in poor structural condition, and it is proposed to replace it with a new dwelling of similar form and design, but with some contemporary features and meeting modern construction standards, including energy efficiency.

To facilitate the new garaging proposals and the reduction of hard development elsewhere on the site, the farmhouse would be moved to the south by about half of its length. This provides space in the courtyard for the range of garages and for longer views from the farmhouse to be retained unobstructed by the proposed garage to dwelling 2. The change in siting of the farmhouse has little adverse visual impact and this is fully mitigated by the reduction in built development on the south-east and north-east sides of the site and the simplification of circulation within the enclave to much as it was as a working farm.

Comparable volumes for the farmhouse are 771m³ in the existing building and 848m³ in the proposed building, a marginal increase in volume of 9.3% which should not result in any planning concerns.

In my planning assessment, I have concluded that the proposed alterations to the scheme are acceptable in planning policy terms and make some significant improvements to the original scheme prepared by the former owners. The benefits of reducing the extent of build development on the eastern side of the site, including recovering the site of the former farm building to soft landscaped amenity space, have significant weight in determining the application. The replacement farmhouse, whilst extending built development slightly to the south, is beneficial given its present condition and structural form and facilitate the other proposed alterations. Overall the application proposals result in a significant improvement to the development in its rural setting and therefore merit approval.

I would be pleased to discuss any of the elements of the scheme with you and provide additional information if you would find this helpful.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. U. Sedgwick". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Paul Sedgwick
Dip TP MRTPI