

Applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent.

Amendments to approved scheme to convert outbuildings for ancillary residential purposes as part of scheme to improve former farmhouse & barn (3/2011/0798, 3/2011/0799 and 3/3017/0707), including works of rectification. Erection of oak framed twin car port within range of outbuildings. Replacement of former slurry compound adjacent to residential annex (family accommodation) with stone walled residential garden (extended curtilage). Use of part of former farmyard as paddock, erection of timber stable block within paddock, formation of oak framed, glazed link linking the dwelling with converted outbuildings and installation of small clock tower on garage (converted former barn).

Mulberry Grange, Cross Hill Lane, Rimington, Lancashire, BB7 4EE

for Mr & Mrs Ford

PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement supports the (PP/LBC) application submitted by Mr and Mrs Ford which is intended to address variations from the approved planning and listed building permissions 2011/0798 and 2011/0799 and follows meetings and discussions between the Council's Planning and Enforcement Team and the applicants and their representatives.
- 1.2 In 2008, Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent were granted (2008/0645 & 2008/0646) for the improvement and conversion of former Higher Gazegill Farm, its attached barn and some of the related outbuildings as a new residence for Mr and Mrs Ford. The permissions agreed to the incorporation (following conversion) of the listed barn into the main residence as well as to the conversion of the outbuildings (some of which were listed – as identified in the Heritage Statement submitted at that time) as ancillary residential accommodation. Permission was also granted for the extension of the residential curtilage beyond that previously occupied by the former farmhouse.
- 1.3 In granting permission the Council imposed a series of conditions, two of which (conditions 5 & 6) removed certain permitted development rights.
- 1.4 The permission was not commenced within the three-year statutory period and was subsequently the subject of applications to renew (2011/0798 and 2011/0799) in September 2011. Those permissions were granted in November 2011 and the conversion works commenced thereafter. Conversion works to the main house and barn are now complete, with Mr and Mrs Ford being in residence, and the conversion of the outbuildings is nearing completion.
- 1.5 However, the Council has drawn to Mr and Mrs Ford's attention the fact that some aspects of the works to the former outbuildings, perimeter walling and former farmyard are not in accordance with the approved drawings and require rectification through the submission of this application. As part of the follow-up discussions with the planning team the applicants have agreed to modify some of the work done so as to be in keeping with the main buildings and the rural setting.
- 1.6 This application deals with those adjustments and also to other matters of amended details which the application wish to retain as constructed/undertaken. The adjustments/amendments do not affect the fabric of the listed parts of the former farm complex (as described in the

accompanying Addendum Heritage Statement) but a related listed building application has been submitted in case the planning authority wishes to consider what impact, if any, the changes would make to the setting of the listed building.

- 1.7 A supporting Planning & Design Statement, plus Historic Building Record supported the previous grant of permission. Their contents remain relevant to these new applications, albeit supplemented by an Addendum DAS, a new Heritage Statement and this Planning Support Statement.

2 Matters which are the subject of the current Planning and Listed Building applications:-

Application 1 relating to matters of rectification (as numerically identified on site drawing Ref 4573-04-01)

- a) Outbuildings, ancillary residential accommodation (ref 2 & 10 on plan)
- presently undergoing conversion and to be used by members of the resident family for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling. Conversion previously approved but with different elevation/door detail. Variations as illustrated by detailed drawings 05A, 10 & 10B require planning permission and listed building consent. Drawing 04-10 , confirms that the upper section of the large glazed window to the west elevation will be boarded over to eliminate reflection and reduce area as agreed with the planning officer.
- b) Extended residential (garden) curtilage (ref 4 on plan)
- this area was originally occupied by the farm slurry compound, contained by high concrete walls. The walls have been removed and replaced by lower stone walls more in keeping with the retained farm buildings and rural surroundings. Following removal of the slurry the newly contained area has been landscaped as residential gardens (since its agricultural use was no longer required). The western section of the new stone wall presently contains an arched pedestrian gate which, when viewed externally, is the only feature which suggests that the area contained by the wall is in

residential use. At the site visit it was agreed with the planning officer that the arch would be removed and replaced by matching stone walling (as illustrated by detailed drawings 04 & 11). The internal garden would be retained in its existing form and used by the resident family. No other buildings or structures (otherwise permitted by PD Regulations) would be erected within it.

- c) Pedestrian Gateway to Dancer Lane (ref 6 on plan)
 - this was the original gateway position serving the farmhouse and its garden/house yard. A new primary entrance/access was approved as part of the house conversion plans, leaving the original access to be treated in an appropriate way. This has now been retained as a secondary pedestrian access to the house front with the gate set back from the carriageway edge and set into the new stone wall incorporating a cut stone entrance and wooden door, in keeping with the main house and listed building (as detailed on drawing 05).

- d) Open sided oak framed twin carport (ref 7 on plan)
 - this area was originally intended to be left as a gap (being the original access for farm equipment accessing the Listed barn prior to its conversion) that has now been filled with an oak framed structure in keeping with the buildings on either side and creating an improved sense of enclosure for the main house itself (as detailed on drawing 07).

- e) Retained (pre-existing) farm equipment entrance onto Dancer lane & land to the north (outside residential curtilage)
 - this was the original entrance to the main farmyard, the barns, silage storage area and slurry compound but the yard and the adjacent buildings have now ceased all active agricultural use. However the entrance remains to serve the land (in the applicants' ownership) immediately to the north and the fields beyond as well as the presently concreted yard area between the former slurry compound and the modern barn which remains as well as to access the twin car port (7). It is proposed that the gated entrance and the access way be defined and surfaced in a more appropriate manner that still appropriate to the rural setting and non-residential land use.

Application 2 relating to proposed additional works (as numerically identified on drawing 4573-04-01A)

- f) Creation of glazed link between the house and the outbuildings (swimming pool), (ref 8 on site plan)
- discussions with the planning officer indicate that the principle of forming a 'lightweight', glass sided oak framed porch linking the dwelling to the converted barn would be acceptable, subject to sensitive design. This is intended to provide a convenient link to the ancillary residential space during inclement weather as the pool and home office space will be regularly used on a daily basis, (as detailed on drawing 04-08).
- g) Introduction of enlarged windows into the western elevation of the converted (pool) outbuildings, (ref 9 on the site plan), following demolition of the adjacent modern barn whose bulk and proximity presently prevents any open aspect or significant daylight.
- the larger windows to the west side of the pool/office annex would be designed in the style of the oak framed windows on the east side of the building and will provide improved daylight into the pool and office area, reducing the need for artificial lighting (as detailed on drawings 04-05 and 04-09). No present benefit would be gained by creating windows in this elevation due to the presence of the adjacent large modern barn but the removal of the barn would provide a much improved context for the ancillary residential building. Replacement of the barn by a paddock plus screen landscaping would avoid the window compromising the character of the adjacent countryside.
- h) Replacement of the present large modern former barn by a paddock with adjacent screen hedging and tree planting (ref 05 and 13 on site plan).
- On the site visit the planning officer indicated a preference for the large, unsightly former barn to be demolished and the site grassed over. This would considerably improve the context of the house and listed building and improve the rural setting. It would retain an agricultural land use (not forming part of the domestic curtilage) as well as an agricultural character (as detailed on site plan 01A).

- i) Erection of stable block at the northern side of the paddock, constructed in oak frame in a traditional rural manner, consistent with agricultural vernacular and also with other outbuildings at the premises (Ref 14 on site plan).
 - A timber framed stable block within a paddock, and adjacent to a large rural dwelling would not be inconsistent with traditional rural development nor with other comparable dwellings within Ribble Valley (as detailed on drawings 14 and 15). The construction would not involve extension of the residential curtilage and would retain the agricultural land use, albeit in a 'horsiculture' form.

- j) Construction of a small clock tower at the northern end of the former barn/ converted garage (location, ref 3, indicated on site plan).
 - This would create a point of interest in a traditional 'estate yard' style and would not look out of context nor have an adverse impact upon the setting of the Listed Building (as detailed on drawing 09).

3 Planning Assessment

- 3.1 Ribble Valley is noted for its high quality environment both in terms of its rural landscape and its traditional buildings. Preservation and enhancement of those qualities is a key feature of adopted planning policy. Those same principles are endorsed by the applicants whose sensitive and respectful restoration and alteration of Higher Gazegill Farm has ensured that the Listed farmhouse and attached barn can positively contribute towards the traditional Ribble Valley landscape.

- 3.2 Planning guidelines, issued by central government, emphasise the importance of supporting the sensitive restoration and long-term maintenance of Listed Buildings primarily through securing active occupation, ideally for the use for which the property was originally built. Higher Gazegill Farm (renamed Mulberry Grange following restoration) has been restored in a traditional manner, using traditional materials to provide an extended home for the applicant family.

- 3.3 That restoration has been approved (through both grant of planning permission and Listed Building consent) by the local planning authority. The scheme primarily involved comprehensive repair and respectful alteration of the original farmhouse together with incorporation of the attached barn as additional living space. Sensitive treatment of the adjacent areas to provide extended residential curtilage and incorporation of most of the nearby outbuildings has also been approved - this providing useful ancillary space for the occupants but also ensuring that the contextual setting of the Listed Building was not only retained but guaranteed sound long-term use and therefore good maintenance.
- 3.4 In granting planning permission the local authority chose to remove certain permitted development rights - a not uncommon restriction for sensitive rural schemes. In this case the main purpose was to protect the setting of the Listed Building and ensure that its qualities, together with the character of the adjacent open countryside, were not compromised by insensitive further alterations which might otherwise be undertaken using permitted development rights.
- 3.5 The applicants have no issue with these aims and have every wish to deliver a building improvement scheme which both they and the public at large can appreciate and take pride.
- 3.6 A significant part of the overall project is now complete and occupied, being the conversion and alteration of the former farmhouse and attached barn. Work is continuing on the outbuildings but the Council has drawn the applicant's attention to a number of variations from the approved drawings which require procedural rectification. This is intended to be achieved through this set of applications, the applications also serving to request permission for a small number of additional improvements intended to complement the main dwelling - as listed above.
- 3.7 The works in question primarily relate to the outbuildings and yard area which already form part of the residential curtilage and which, in other circumstances, would enjoy permitted development rights which would normally allow changes of this nature. The applicants recognise that following removal of PD rights, consent must be sought for these and any further material changes but also understand that the Council's decision to remove such rights was not intended as an absolute restriction on any further development for reasons of critical scale or absolute design but, rather, was an endorsement of the broad sensitivity of the building and

setting together with an opportunity for the Council to assess the appropriateness of any further domestic changes prior to their implementation. In other words, the Council has not ruled out additional changes, simply introduced a mechanism for determining whether the nature of those works would materially disfigure the building or its setting or materially harm the amenities of immediate neighbours. In the absence of any immediate neighbours the question of privacy does not apply but the applicants recognise the importance of ensuring that the highest standards of design are required at Mulberry Grange.

- 3.8 In preparing for these applications the applicants and their professional team have engaged in discussion with the planning department and have modified the proposals, together with the rectification intentions, to reflect the advice which they been given. Hopefully, the planning authority will acknowledge that the works undertaken and rectification requests reflect the aims of national and local policy in terms of development within the open countryside together with the protection of local heritage. Whilst the works themselves are variations from the original approved detail they have been approached with the same commitment to high quality design.
- 3.9 Having completed the main part of the scheme, at considerable expense and attention to detail, the applicants wish to create and maintain a high quality setting for the residence as well as for the Listed Building . Through its previous permissions and consents, the Council has already endorsed the transformation of the former farmhouse and barn, plus several outbuildings, to create an outstanding dwelling of character. That followed the cessation of all farming activities at the set of buildings originally comprising Higher Gazegill Farm and whilst most of those buildings have now been converted to residential use, some of the peripheral areas within the original farm yard still remain in non-residential use. But equally they no longer perform an active farming use.
- 3.10 If for no other reason than to complement the setting of the dwelling and the Listed Building those areas should be treated in a sympathetic manner.
- 3.11 The applicants recognise the Council's wish to safeguard the character of the open countryside and also to prevent traditional character becoming compromised by inappropriate curtilage extension where out-of-character residential trappings and garden equipment would look out of

place. In exceptional cases extensions have been allowed where these do not cause visual harm to the landscape and improve the visual quality of the site itself.

- 3.12 One aspect of the present application is for the retention of the walled garden attached to the outbuilding (as extended curtilage), intended to provide ancillary residential space for family members. This area was previously occupied by the concrete walled slurry compound - which, although not necessarily looking out of place in a working farmyard context, was unsightly and inappropriate so close to the improved dwelling and Listed Building.
- 3.13 The concrete walls have been removed and replaced by more traditional stone walling, consistent with other stone walls around the site - this being of sufficient height to screen the garden as well as most of the western elevation of the adjacent converted outbuildings from outside view. The garden interior has been landscaped and is not intended to contain domestic structures or buildings. This, we would suggest, is a significant improvement upon leaving the compound in its original form or simply as an abandoned area serving neither farming nor domestic use.
- 3.14 The applicants' intention would be to leave the remainder of the former farmyard (ie to the west of the converted outbuildings) outside the residential curtilage and therefore still as ancillary agricultural land but in the form of a paddock and orchard. Both those would not be out of context within a farm/large farmhouse setting, especially as the improvements would include the demolition and removal of the modern barn together with the remains of the silage mound which presently exist.
- 3.15 To complement the paddock the applicants propose a small stable block, traditionally designed and constructed to reflect other parts of the dwelling and its outbuildings. The stable would remain outside the residential curtilage and would be accessed via the former farmyard gate and track from Dancer Lane.
- 3.16 The detailed design of the application intentions is explained on the application drawings and in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. Further support is provided in the accompanying Heritage Assessment.

- 3.17 These conclude that the proposals have been carefully designed to reflect the character of the existing building and its Listed setting as well as to avoid any adverse impact upon the character of the adjacent open countryside.
- 3.18 Whilst involving localised changes to the existing collection of buildings we would submit that the proposal will not impact upon the Listed Building nor upon the character of the open countryside in a manner which would be seriously detrimental nor in a way which would make it impossible for the Council to assess other residential applications in rural areas on their individual merits. The merits of this proposal are, we would suggest, consistent with national and local aims to improve the range and quality of housing, to promote high quality design, to protect the quality of the open countryside and to safeguard the future and character of Listed Buildings.