

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:

Officer:

*W. Bone*

Date:

*20.03.20*

Manager:

Date:

Application Ref: 3/2019/1036

Date Inspected: 03/12/2019

Officer: RB



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:

APPROVAL

**Development Description:** Conversion and extension of building to create one new dwelling including drainage, landscaping, closure of existing access and construction of new access.

**Site Address/Location:** Betty Barn, Slaidburn Road, Waddington, BB7 3JQ

**CONSULTATIONS:** Parish/Town Council

No comments received in respect of proposed development

**CONSULTATIONS:** Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies

**LCC Highways:**

In terms of highway safety, the County Surveyor does not have any objections in principle on highways grounds. The proposed new shared access would be 5.5m wide at the junction with the first 7 metres surfaced with tarmac and stone chippings thereafter.

The County Surveyor is also satisfied that there is sufficient space within the site for parking and to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

**CONSULTATIONS:** Additional Representations.

Three letters of representation have been received from the same address with the following objections

- Inappropriate encroachment on green belt land.
- Barn is outside of any defined settlement
- Does not contribute to affordable housing or local infrastructure
- Obtrusive lighting will create light pollution of detriment to the AONB
- Heavy localised flooding
- Harmful to bats and barn owls

**RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:**

**Ribble Valley Core Strategy**

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy

Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN2 – Landscape

Key Statement EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Key Statement H1 – Housing Provision

Key Statement H2 – Housing Balance

Key Statement DMI2 – Transport Considerations

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations  
Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility  
Policy DME2 – Landscape and Townscape Protection  
Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation  
Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside & the AONB  
Policy DMH4 – Conversion of Barns and Other Buildings to Dwellings  
Policy DMH5 – Residential and Curtilage Extensions

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**Relevant Planning History:**

None relevant

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application site is approximately 1.2km north of Waddington and is located close to Slaidburn Road. The barn is a two storey agricultural building constructed with random stone rubble and has a pitched roof. The front elevation is adjacent to an existing farm access track and has an open portal wagon door leading into the main barn.

**Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**

The application seeks consent to convert the existing stone barn into one dwelling, including the erection of an extension to the west to provide a shed/store. The application also seeks consent for works relating to drainage, landscaping and closing of existing access and installation of new access off Slaidburn Road.

In order to convert the property the following external alterations would take place:

- Infilling of original cart doorway with glazing in north (front) elevation;
- Widening on first floor ventilation slit to provide window opening in east elevation.
- Infilling ground floor window on west elevation due to extension.
- Installation of one set of double roof lights on front north elevation
- Installation of two sets of double roof lights on rear south elevation and installation of mat black metal flue.

As mentioned above the proposal includes an extension to the west elevation to provide small shed/store that will be faced with horizontal hit and miss boarding.

The application is accompanied by a "Structural Statement" which details the limited structural works required to convert the building into a dwelling and the submitted proposed plan states that all window and door openings would be treated softwood.

The application also proposes the creation of a new access junction to the south to serve the new dwelling house and Hollins Farm.

**Principle of Development:**

Core Strategy Key Statement DS1 seeks to direct the main focus of new housing development to the Strategic Site, the Principal Settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and identified 'Tier 1' villages, which are considered the 'more sustainable' of the 32 defined settlements in the Borough in terms of local services and accessibility. In the remaining 23 'Tier 2' villages development will need to meet proven local needs or deliver regeneration benefits.

Core Strategy Policy DMH3 seeks to resist housing development within areas defined as open countryside or AONB and will be limited to 'the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings providing they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction'.

DMH4 contains more specific thresholds in that conversion will be permitted where:

- The building is not isolated in the landscape
- There need be no unnecessary expenditure by public bodies to provide infrastructure
- There would be no materially damaging effect on landscape quality or nature conservation
- There would be no detrimental impact on the rural economy
- Any impact on biodiversity is suitably assessed and mitigated (where necessary)
- The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for extensive rebuilding or major alteration which would affect the character/appearance of the building
- It is of a sufficient size to provide the necessary living accommodation without the need to extend, which may harm the character of the building
- The building is worthy of retention due to its intrinsic interest or contribution to its setting
- The building has a genuine history of agricultural use or another rural enterprise

The concept of isolation, alongside the local and national policy base, has altered since 1996. On a fundamental point it is considered that the barn is not isolated for the purposes of paragraph 79 of the Framework, accounting for the built form of Chancery Cottage. Although separated from the site by Slaidburn Road, it is less than 50m away to the south east.

Turning to Policies DMH3 and DMH4, the requirement for conversions is that they are "suitably located" and "not isolated in the landscape, i.e. it is within a defined settlement or forms part of an already group of buildings" [sic]. The Council has received recent appeal decisions where this matter has been considered by Inspectors.

At Browns Stables, Hurst Green (Inspectorate Ref - APP/T2350/W/18/3198056) it was found that a barn was isolated for the purposes of the policies, being physically and visually removed from the closest buildings at a distance of 80m. In my view, the key issue here was that the barn formed part of linear development along the highway, resulting in a more pronounced visual separation. The appeal was subsequently refused on this point, highway safety and also due to the visual impact arising from the creation of a curtilage and driveway within the AONB.

At New Ings Farm, Bolton by Bowland (Inspectorate Ref – APP/T2350/W/18/3202661) an Inspector determined that a barn and associated outbuildings, located some 70m from the main farm house was read as a group and also had a historic/functional connection. Therefore the Core Strategy requirements were satisfied with regard to the location of the barn within the landscape.

Taking these findings in to account, it is considered that Betty Barn would not be deemed an isolated feature in the landscape. When travelling north along Slaidburn Road the barn is experienced visually along with Chancery Cottage and also Ravelston House, which although circa 150m away is seen in the same views. The same can be said when travelling south, with the barn and the Chancery cluster located along a brow in the landscape.

In line with Core Strategy Policy DMH4, a structural survey has been provided with the application detailing the works required to convert the barn to residential use, and it is considered that level of works proposed is acceptable.

In view of the above, it is considered that despite the fact that future occupiers of this dwelling are likely to rely upon the use of a private car to access local facilities, the proposal would be 'suitably located' in accordance with Core Strategy Policies DMH3.

In summary the principle of the conversion of this stone barn to residential use is considered to be acceptable in this location.

**Residential Amenity:**

The nearest residential property is known as Chancery Cottage approximately 60 metres away from the development site and therefore it is considered that the development would not have any undue impact upon neighbouring residential amenity through overlooking, overshadowing, loss or daylight or outlook.

**Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**

Policy DMH4 states that barn conversion should “have no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area” and should be “of sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character and appearance of the building”.

The development proposes the erection of a small lean-to extension to the west elevation of the barn to provide a shed/store. It is considered that the proposed extension would not harm the character and appearance of the building as the west elevation is the least prominent elevation and the use of profiled sheeting would contrast with the exterior of the barn.

Historic England guidance ‘Adapting Traditional Farm Building states ‘Maximising the use of these existing openings by planning internal spaces around them and limiting the formation of new ones will help retain character. Where new openings are added or new windows inserted within existing door openings, great care needs to be given to their placing and design’ The guidance then goes onto to state that ‘New doors and windows will inevitably be required for habitable accommodation’ and that ‘The impact of new windows and doorways can also be reduced through the use of shutters or joinery screens.’

The existing building benefits from a number of openings, and these will be retained/re-introduced. The proposal will include 6 no new roof lights and the enlargement of 1 ventilation slit to provide a window. Whilst the guidance states that limiting the number of new openings will help retain character as long as new openings are carefully placed and designed then the insertion of new windows should not harm the character of the barn. The development originally proposed roof lights also serving void areas which have been removed from the proposal. The remaining proposed roof lights are required in order for the first floor of the dwelling to be habitable as such it is considered that conservation style roof lights are acceptable.

To the north elevation the development proposes glazed screen in place of what is considered to be the original cart door entrance. As the glazed screen has been recessed within the aperture of the barn with a simple vertical emphasis it is considered that this alteration will have minimal impact on the external appearance of the barn.

The application states that all window and doors will be timber framed and a condition has been attached to ensure this is the case, along with a condition that requires the velux (roof lights) to be of conservation style.

The application proposes the creation of modest sized residential curtilage that is to be bounded by hedging and post and wire fence. It is considered that the proposed curtilage will have an acceptable impact on the visual amenity of the AONB and would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the barn.

The development proposes the closing of the existing access track to the north of the barn and a new access is proposed to the south. The access will serve the residential dwelling proposed to be converted

and Hollins Farm. The new access will be appropriately tarmacked at the entrance with the track being surfaced with stone chippings with a central grass reservation and post and wire fence. The details of the proposed access track have been amended during the application process as the originally proposed access was considered inappropriate in the AONB. The proposed ribbon driveway is considered less conspicuous and the post and rail fence is in keeping with the location as it has the appearance of an agricultural track. As such it is considered that the proposed access is acceptable.

The development also proposes native copse planting to the south east of the dwelling in the area separating the barn from the road. The copse planting will mainly screen the garden area and private driveway of the proposed dwelling which is considered to enhance the development as the area without these trees is relatively open.

In summary, the proposed alterations to enable the conversion of this barn into residential use would not have a materially damaging effect on the building itself or the landscape qualities of the area in accordance with Policy DMH4.

**Ecology:**

An ecology survey and Assessment dated April 29 was submitted with the application. Indian Balsam, an invasive species, was recorded at the site and should be treated in accordance with section 5.3 of the report. According to the report all trees within the site boundary are to be retained and the site is surrounded by favourable habitats for the attraction and foraging of at least five bat species recorded during surveys.

A bat mitigation strategy will be necessary and the works carried out under an EPSM license. It is advised that use of the barn by barn owls is monitored prior to the commencement of works and if the barn owl begins to use the barn for nesting again mitigation and compensatory measures are considered feasible. Use of the other buildings by nesting birds is a consideration and guidance contained in section 5.2 of the ecology report must be adhered to. Subject to appropriate planning conditions it is considered that the development would not result in any harm to protected species or species of conservation concern.

There would be a requirement to provide biodiversity enhancement in the form of bat and bird nesting/roost features and any external lighting scheme should be designed so as to minimise/mitigate any harm to ecology of important wildlife habitats. Details of the above would be required by condition to have been agreed by the local planning authority. The Council's Countryside Officer has recommended the imposition of a condition requiring that a copy of the EPS License be submitted to the LPA prior to commencement of the development. The EPS License will contain measures to mitigate/compensate for any harm to protected species and their habitats and the applicant would be required to abide strictly by those license conditions.

**Highways:**

In terms of highway safety, the County Surveyor does not have any objections in principle on highway grounds. The proposed new shared access would be 5.5m wide at the junction with the first 7 metres surfaced with tarmac and stone chippings thereafter.

The County Surveyor is also satisfied that there is sufficient space within the site for parking and to allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

**Other Matters:**

It is considered appropriate to remove permitted development rights (parts A,B,C,D,E,F,G and H) relating to the barn in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the barn .

**Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**

In view of all of the above, and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is considered to be acceptable and subsequently recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That planning consent be granted.