

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	LE	Date:	31.08.21	Manager:	NH	Date:	01.09.2021
Site Notice displayed	Y	Photos uploaded	Y					

Application Ref: 3/2021/0676
Date Inspected: 16/08/2021
Officer: LE



Ribble Valley
Borough Council
www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:

Decision REFUSE

Development Description: Regularisation of unauthorised outbuilding ancillary to dwelling.
Site Address/Location: Thorneyholme Hall, Newton Road, Dunsop Bridge

CONSULTATIONS: Parish/Town Council
No response

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

CONSULTATIONS: Additional Representations.

Objections have been received from 1 address. In summary the material planning concerns raised relate to:
Unclear and misleading submission
Lighting
Flood risk
Loss of trees
Visual Impact
Residential amenity

Concerns are also raised with regard to unauthorised development at the site, this application seeks to regularise the situation however any enforcement necessary would be a separate issue to the application under consideration.

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:
Policy EN2: Landscape
Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection
Policy DS1: Development Strategy
Policy DS2: Sustainable Development
Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMH5: Residential and Curtilage Extensions

Relevant Planning History:
2020/0797 – Discharge of conditions – Withdrawn

2019/0288 - Change of use from private dwelling (C3) to mixed use of function venue (D2) with ancillary accommodation (C1) including single storey rear extension and change of use of detached garage to cookery school (C2) including single storey extension. - WITHDRAWN

2017/0408 - Change of use of site from residential use (C3) to a cookery school with associated accommodation (C2), including an extension to the existing detached garage building – APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to Thorneyholme Hall in Dunsop Bridge. Thorneyholme Hall is currently a large residential dwelling located within substantial grounds and has previously been used as a Hotel with spa and leisure facilities.

The grounds of Thorneyholme Hall comprises of the large dwelling and the unauthorised building which is on the site of a now demolished detached triple garage to the east. To the south of the dwelling are the attractive garden areas, and in the south west corner is a hard surfaced area and a couple of timber buildings. This hard surfaced area did originally contain a horse ménage and tennis court, however these have been removed and only the hardstanding remains. Along the eastern boundary of the curtilage are a number of trees protected under Tree Preservation Order 3 (ref: 77 - 1986), as well as a separate group of trees protected under Tree Preservation Order 3 (ref: 124 - 1992) to the south of the detached garage.

Access to the Thorneyholme Hall is obtained over Thorneyholme Bridge and via a private access road off Newton Road, with this bridge also providing access to approximately 6-7 other residential properties in the vicinity.

The application site is located within the Open Countryside (outside of the settlement boundary of Dunsop Bridge) and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the surrounding landscape is categorised as the Upper Hodder Wooded Rural Valley within the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Area Appraisal.

All of the site is within flood zone 2 and the majority of the site is within flood zone 3, according to the EA flood zone map.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks consent for the retention of a large unauthorised outbuilding. This building is not in accordance with the plans approved for the cookery school and the use proposed is now domestic.

The application is confusing due to the use of old drawings / documents which have annotations referring to a cookery school. However it is understood that the building is "ancillary" accommodation to the dwelling house to be used as a games / cinema room and the change of use of the Hall and construction of a cookery school is not to be implemented.

The planning officer visited the site and although internal access was not possible the building on site appears to broadly reflect the floor plans and it is in the process of being fitted out with utilities.

The application shall therefore be considered on this basis.

Principle of Development:

In principle applications to provide additional domestic accommodation would not be in direct conflict with the spatial strategy for the borough.

However, this is for a substantial building outside the settlement boundary and also within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Thorneyholme Hall is a substantial building with eight

bedrooms and extensive living accommodation including two lounges and two dining rooms. The footprint of the outbuilding, the subject of this application, is almost the same size of that of the house. Due to its scale and internal layout the new building it is capable of providing substantial primary living accommodation.

It is clad in timber which gives it a striking appearance directly against the stone and render construction of the hall and other nearby properties which are in a traditional style. It is clearly visible in long distance views and this impact will be exacerbated in the winter months when there are no leaves on the trees.

Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy states that *development outside the settlement boundaries must meet at least one of the following considerations:*

- 1. the development should be essential to the local economy or social well being of the area.*
- 2. the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.*
- 3. the development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
- 4. the development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
- 5. the development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*
- 6. the development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.*

Policy EN2 of the core strategy states that in the AONB *'any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced'* with the requirements of EN2 further stipulating that *'the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials'*.

It cannot be reasonably argued that this building meets the criteria within these core strategy policies, whilst the cookery school was granted permission there are material differences from this scheme in that there was justification for the proposal in terms of economic development, recreation and tourism which was considered to outweigh the impact on the landscape. The previously approved scheme also involved utilising and extending an existing building on the site whereas the proposed development is a complete new, large building. There is no justification for this proposal in terms of local need or social and economic wellbeing nor does it preserve or enhance the AONB.

As such it is considered that the proposal is unacceptable in principle however notwithstanding this the other material planning considerations are discussed below.

Residential Amenity:

The building is located to the East of Thorneyholme Hall and is located approx. 25 metres from the boundaries of properties to the East. The scheme also includes a large car park and lighting which seems excessive for a domestic property and the site is subdivided by the centrally located driveway. However as aforementioned the proposal must be taken at face value and if used as described for ancillary accommodation to a single dwelling it is not considered that the proposed building and associated works would be detrimental in terms of the residential amenity considerations of overshadowing, loss of privacy or nuisance.

Visual Amenity:

The proposal is for a large timber clad chalet type structure located adjacent to the Hall. It is visually prominent on the approach even though at the time of the site visit the trees were in full leaf. The choice of materials and scale is not respectful of the vernacular and is considered to be a over dominant feature which could not be considered to be ancillary or subservient to the main dwellinghouse, being capable of independent occupation. It is in conflict with policy DMG1 as it is not sympathetic in terms of scale, style or building materials and it will have a detrimental impact on landscape character.

The scheme also incorporates 21 low level bollard lights along the length of the driveway and around the car park and gardens. The car park is understood to be on the site of a former stable and manege but this amount of hardstanding and lighting is considered excessive and unnecessary for a domestic property if the cookery school proposal is no longer planned.

The submitted lighting assessment concludes that the lights will not result in light spillage outside of the site so as to cause a nuisance to neighbours, and this is not disputed. However, it is still considered that they will be visible and along with the large car park will contribute to the urbanising effect of the development as a whole which will have a detrimental impact on the beauty and tranquillity of the AONB.

Ecology and Trees:

The submitted tree survey confirms that several trees have been removed as part of the previous planning application but no further trees are proposed to be removed. As the application is retrospective it is not possible to impose conditions requiring protection. It is important that remaining tree cover is maintained due to its amenity value.

Highways:

There are no envisaged highway safety implications in relation to the development proposed.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The material planning concerns raised by the objector are discussed in the appraisal, it is noted that there are concerns with regard to the alleged breaches of planning control. It is not an offence to carry out works without first gaining planning permission and applications can only be dealt with at face value based on the merits of the scheme. Notwithstanding this, this application has been submitted to attempt to regularise the situation.

The proposal due to its excessive scale, design, ancillary development and choice of materials is considered to be an over dominant and strident feature in this location in open countryside at odds with the character of the surrounding area. It would be harmful to the intrinsic beauty and tranquillity of the AONB and there is no justification or mitigating circumstances that would outweigh this harm. As such the proposal is considered contrary to policies DMG1, DMG2 and EN2 of the Core Strategy for the Ribble Valley.

RECOMMENDATION:

To refuse planning permission.