

**Erection of Agricultural  
Buildings with Farmhouse**

**Land at Shire Lane,  
Hurst Green,  
Lancashire**

**Planning, Design and Access  
Report**

**APB  
Consultant Building Surveyors**

320210706P

# **Proposed Erection of Agricultural Buildings with Farmhouse on Land at Shire Lane, Hurst Green, Lancashire.**

## **Background**

The applicant has over 80 sheep and lambs and 38 llamas that he breeds and grazes on the land at Shire Lane and on another site.

He wishes to consolidate this farming enterprise through the building of a suite of agricultural buildings at Shire Lane. The site amounts to seven acres. The buildings would be used for animal housing and breeding and for plant and equipment storage. A farmhouse will also be built to allow a 24/7 on-site presence and proper supervision and care of the stock.

The business was started as a 'hobby' farm. It has now grown into a profitable enterprise. This underpins the decision to invest in the operations at Shire Lane, Hurst Green. More detail of the farms finances are set out below.

## **Ribble Valley Core Strategy**

The Core Strategy (RVCS) establishes the vision, objectives and key principles that will guide the development in the area. It was adopted in 2014. The following are policies from the Core Strategy that are relevant in assessing the proposed farm and associated buildings.

- Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy  
Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle.

- Policy EN2: Landscape

The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) must be protected and any development must be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.

- Policy DMI2: Transport Considerations

New development should be located to minimise the need to travel and incorporate good access by foot and cycle.

- Policy DMG1: General Considerations

Amongst other things, new development must be of a high standard of design, be sympathetic to the local landscape and in scale, massing, style, features and building materials. They should be energy efficient, built with sustainable construction techniques and with regard to the Code for Sustainable Homes. Any new access should be safe for the scale and type of traffic involved.

- Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations

In protecting the designated AONB regard will be given to the economic and social well being of the area. Where new build development is permitted it must be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting

- Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection

Development will be refused that would significantly harm important landscapes, including features such as traditional stone walls, ponds, herb rich meadows, woodlands, copses, hedgerows and individual trees.

- Policy DMH3: Dwellings in The Open Countryside & The AONB

Within the AONB residential development will be limited to that essential for the purposes of agriculture.

In addition to the RVCS the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration which sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The latest NPPF was issued in February 2019.

NPPF Section Six highlights the government's commitment to 'supporting a prosperous rural economy' and states (paragraph 83) that planning decisions should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings, and promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

## **Planning History**

In 2013 an application (13/1010) for two log cabins for holiday let use on the site was refused planning permission.

In 2020 an application (3/2020/0567) to change the use of an agricultural building to form a 2 bedroom holiday cottage on the site was

refused permission for two reasons. Firstly because increased usage of the substandard junction between Shire Lane and Longridge Road (B6243) would adversely affect highway safety, and secondly because the proposed external materials, hardstandings and other domestic paraphernalia would adversely affect the landscape of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

These reasons have been fully addressed in the current submission.

## **The Proposal**

The site of the proposed farmhouse and agricultural buildings is a group of fields, seven acres in extent, between Shire Lane and the Longridge Road (B6243) on the west side of the village of Hurst Green. There is a corrugated steel agricultural shed currently on the site that is used for housing the animals grazed there.

Along Shire Lane on this side of Hurst Green there is a significant group of other houses and farm buildings, nearer the village, and Shire Lane House to the west of the site.

The farmhouse and associated buildings would form a linked complex, extending on both sides of the existing building and well set well back from Longridge Road. The group of buildings would present a traditional form and appearance to the road.

## **Agricultural Need**

The applicant has successfully bred a herd of alpacas and sheep on land near Clitheroe. Based on this success he now seeks to expand the enterprise, already a sustainable business, with its consolidation in an integrated set of farm buildings on the land purchased for this purpose at Hurst Green. Additional land has been rented nearby, in an ideal south facing location, for the farming of the animals. It is calculated that there is enough land to produce sufficient own haylage and separate the males and females to facilitate a self-contained, sustainable operation. It is a family enterprise with a son and daughter active with local 'Young Farmers'.

In building the business the breeding of both alpacas and pedigree sheep has been relatively trouble free, but it is the value and interest in the alpacas which now makes the venture standalone viable. Specifically targeting the breeding and sale of females is the chosen business model.

It is possible, by segregating and selecting female sexed semen, to produce the higher value female alpacas for both sale and the growth of the herd. The consolidation of the business at the Hurst Green farm is part of these calculations.

By improving the land purchased at Hurst Green with purpose-built stables and accommodation in keeping with the surrounding farmland in the area the applicant is confident that the business is capable of funding these developments.

The current value of both our alpaca and sheep herds is conservatively just under £100,000 although we would expect to realise perhaps 50% higher than this if sold. A breeding turnover, based on the same number of alpacas alone is expected to net approximately £75,000 in the first year (again this is the lower estimated figure). The pedigree sheep herd also has reasonable value. The viability of the business is demonstrated in the attached table.

The applicant and his family calculate that although considerable investment would be needed to take their enterprise forward in the way they plan it would be a considered and profitable long term family based venture.

| Stock March 2021                   | Number | Value Low | Total         | Value High | Total          |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------|------------|----------------|
| Pedigree Alpacas                   |        |           |               |            |                |
| Female                             | 32     | £2500     | £80000        | £5000      | £160000        |
| Male                               | 6      | £500      | £3000         | £1500      | £9000          |
|                                    |        |           | <b>£83000</b> |            | <b>£169000</b> |
| Projected Female Crias (Sept 2021) | 32     | £2350     | <b>£75200</b> | £2800      | <b>£89600</b>  |
| Pedigree Sheep                     | 50     | £200      | £10000        | £600       | £30000         |
| Lambs                              | 32     | £150      | £4800         | £250       | £8000          |
|                                    |        |           | <b>£14800</b> |            | <b>£38000</b>  |

## **Highway issues**

To avoid the use of Shire Lane, and the potential hazard of additional traffic using the substandard junction with Longridge Road the scheme involves the creation of a new access from the highway network. The new access has been the subject of a pre-application consultation with Lancashire CC Highways Team. The submitted plan incorporates their recommendations.

Longridge Road, the B6243, is subject to a 40mph speed restriction in front of the site. There have been no collisions in the vicinity of the proposed new access in the past 5 years.

The new access would have visibility splays of 2m (set back from edge of carriageway) and 120m in both directions along Longridge Road to the nearside kerb. Everything within the splay will be kept below 1m in height, including the hedge, walls or fences. The applicant would be responsible for maintaining this and would accept such a requirement as part of any conditional planning permission.

Inside the site the driveway would be 5m wide and have a cattle grid set back 10m into the site. The apron between the carriageway and cattle grid would be relatively flat, paved in tarmac and drained to ensure no surface water flows onto the highway. The driveway runs up sloping ground and thus the cattle grid will capture surface water and any loose material running down during heavy rainfall. The access road itself would be paved in a bound material and with a suitable gradient.

This new access and driveway, constructed to the LCC specification, would allow safe entrance to and exit from the site onto Longridge Road. Indeed, by diverting existing traffic visiting the site away from Shire Lane the new access would promote an overall increase in traffic safety on local roads.



The existing access from Shire Lane, to be replaced.

## **Design**

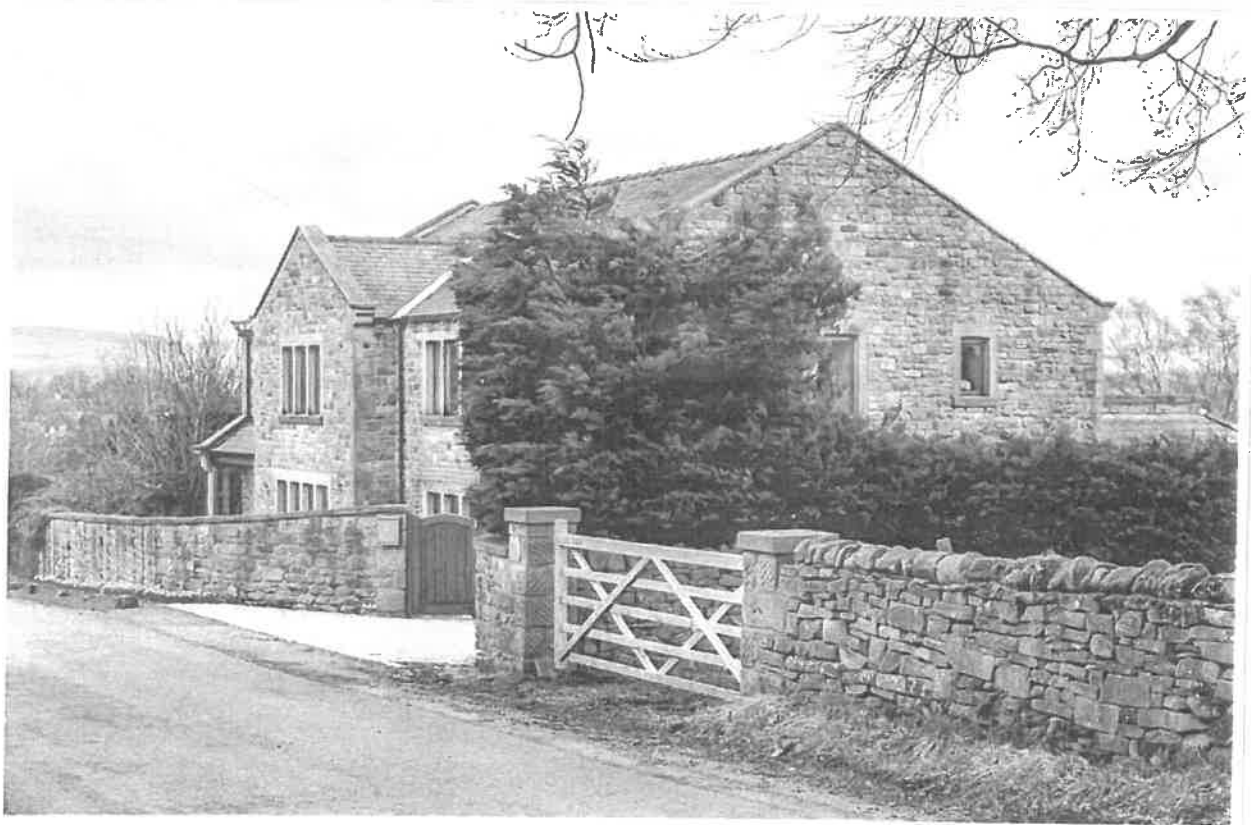
The farm complex proposed would be similar in form, massing and style to other local farm groups, including those along Shire Lane.

There are a number of relatively modern properties along Shire Lane and the new building complex would sit comfortably in this context. The following photographs illustrate some of this existing property.



Shire Lane House





The farmhouse would be attached to the barn/store buildings in a linear arrangement facing Longridge Road. The yard area would be to the west side with a hardstanding/car parking area and fenced animal enclosures. The working buildings would comprise sections for farm plant and equipment storage, animal housing, animal breeding and a fenced pen area. The farmhouse would be two storeys in height with living accommodation on the ground floor and bedrooms above. There would be an office to serve the business.



The site from Longridge Road, showing the existing building and the adjoining group of other property along Shire Lane



Shire Lane, leading into Hurst Green from the site.

The farm buildings would be entirely traditional in form and size. They would be constructed on a base of rendered blockwork with Yorkshire weather boarding above. The farmhouse would be built of sandstone with stone details to quoins and window/door heads, cills and jambs. The roof would be natural Welsh slate.

The proposed development would sit entirely naturally in the local landscape, amongst the hedges and trees, and be seen as part of the group of farm buildings and other properties on this side of Hurst Green.

As such it would not be seen as an extension of built form into hitherto open countryside.

### **Conclusions**

The proposed development is specifically designed to support the growth and development of a locally based agricultural business growth. This will help to promote prosperity in the rural economy and as such directly accord with NPPF and the RVCS Policy DMB1.

The new access has been designed in consultation with LCC, the Highway Authority, and will provide safe access whilst diverting traffic away from Shire Lane, and its substandard junction with Longridge Road. This would be in compliance with RVCS Policy DMG1. Furthermore the combination of house and workplace on one site would minimise the need for travel in accordance with RVCS Policy DM12.

The new development includes a farmhouse that is essential for the effective and efficient running of an agricultural enterprise and would incorporate a high standard of design, sympathetic to the local landscape, including nearby properties, in scale, massing, style, features and building materials.

This would ensure the scheme is in keeping with the character of the local landscape, within the Forest of Bowland AONB. There would be no significant harm to this important landscape or any individual features that contribute to its special nature whilst it would contribute to the economic well being of the area.

For these reasons the development accords with RVCS Policies DMG1, EN2, DMG2, DME2 and DMH3.

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Date: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

## PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

### Location

Land at Shire Lane, Hurst Green, BB7 9QR

### History and description of proposals

The proposal is to develop the existing agricultural unit and provide new animal housing/barn and a new farm house with a new access on Longridge Road.

A planning application has been submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council previously under reference 3/2020/0567 for this proposal with access from Shire Lane. Lancashire County Council raised an objection to the proposal and the application was subsequently refused on two points, the first being the intensification of use of the Shire Lane/Longridge Road (B643) junction on highway safety grounds.

This pre-application enquiry seeks advice on the creation of a new all-purpose access on Longridge Road B643 to serve the development. There are 4 car parking spaces proposed and the existing access will be closed, should the new access be approved except for the collection of waste which will continue on Shire Lane.

### Comments

#### Site access

Longridge Road is classified C643 with 40mph speed limit. There are no collisions in the vicinity of the proposed site access in the previous 5 years.

The site access would require visibility splays of X2m (set back from edge of carriageway) and Y120m in both directions along Longridge Road to the nearside kerb. A scale drawing should be submitted to show the available splays which should lie within land which the applicant controls or within the adopted highway. The splays appear to be short in both directions however you can investigate this further to ensure that this is feasible before submitting the application.

#### Sue Harper

Interim Director of Community Services  
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Everything within the splay will need to be kept below 1m in height, this will include the hedge and any walls/fences. The applicant would be responsible for maintaining this and it would be a condition of any planning permission given.

The access road is proposed at 5m wide with 5m kerbed radii. The apron between the carriageway and cattle grid should be paved in a bound material (tarmac ideally) and drained to ensure no surface water drainage flows onto the highway. The apron should be laid relatively flat 1:40. The cattle grid is set back 10m from the edge of carriageway which is acceptable. If the arrangement is amended to gates, then the gates would need to be set back the same distance.

The access road is on a steeply sloping gradient. The cattle grid will capture the surface water and any loose material which is moved along the access road during heavy rainfall. It is recommended that the access road itself is paved in a bound material and the gradient should not exceed 1:12. Please confirm this.

The site access alterations should be completed under a S278 agreement with Lancashire County Council.

### **Parking and servicing**

The parking standards require 2 spaces for a 2/3 bedroom dwelling and 3 spaces for a 4+ bedroom dwelling. Secure covered cycle parking and an electric vehicle charging point would be required to support sustainable travel. Holidays lets generally require one space per bedroom and secure cycle and EV charging similar to a dwelling.

The refuse will continue to be collected on Shire Lane which is supported. The stopping of a refuse vehicle on Longridge Road to collect waste at this location would not be supported.

### **Advice**

1. Provide scaled plan showing visibility splays X2.4m by Y120m in both directions on Longridge Road with all hedges/walls in splay reduced and maintained below 1m height.
2. Provide secure cycle storage for guests and electric vehicle charging point.

The Council's advice is current on the date it is given. Whilst every attempt will be made to identify reasonably foreseeable future influences the Council cannot guarantee that its advice will take these into account. This may extend to matters such as changes in planning policy or planning precedent. The advice in any event will expire 12 months after the date on which it is given.

Kelly Holt  
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Lancashire County Council