

Planning Services  
Ribble Valley Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Church Walk  
Clitheroe  
Lancashire  
BB7 2RA

9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

PWA Ref. 20-936

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESUBMISSION OF APPLICATION REF. 3/2020/0966 FOR THE ERECTION OF GARAGE FOR ANCILLARY USE IN CONNECTION WITH NEW DWELLING APPROVED UNDER 3/2018/0036 AND EXTENSION OF RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGE AT MANOR HOUSE, HOWGILL LANE, RIMINGTON, BB7 4EF**

Please find enclosed a resubmission of planning application ref. 3/2020/0966 for the erection of a garage for ancillary use in connection with a new dwelling approved under application ref. 3/2018/0036 and the extension of residential curtilage at Manor House, Howgill Lane, Rimington, BB7 4EF.

The previous application was refused on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021, with the development considered by the Council to be an over dominant structure which detracted from the character of the former farmstead and surrounding open countryside. This resubmission seeks to overcome these concerns and follows the receipt of further pre-application advice issued on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (Ref: RV/2021/00088). In accordance with the advice received from the Council, the proposals here present a smaller double garage which has a lesser impact on the existing barn and wider countryside.

The following documents are included as part of the application:

- Application Form;
- Drawn information:
  - Location Plan;
  - Existing Floor Plans and Elevations (Drawing no. 5364-01B);
  - Proposed Garage Plans and Elevations (Drawing no. 5364-011 A);
- Bat Scoping Survey;
- Cover Letter (this document).

## Site Description

The application site is in the hamlet of Howgill, to the north of Howgill Lane. This is approximately 700m from the village of Rimington and 2.5km south of the village of Gisburn.

The application site currently comprises two adjoining buildings, a former farmhouse and adjoining barn, which is currently being converted under ref: 3/2018/0036. All pre-commencement conditions have been discharged and the development has commenced. The Applicants are undertaking the work and intend to occupy the barn once it has been converted.

Both the dwellings are of sandstone and rubble elevations under a slate roof. The dwellings, known as Manor House and the adjoining barn, have centred doorways with plain stone surround to windows and doors.

Immediately to the east of the barn being converted is an existing large shed that is used for domestic purposes. The building has timber walls and a metal sheet roof. Due to its age and condition, the building contrasts with the adjacent, more traditional agricultural buildings, as well as those within the immediate surrounding area.

With regards to constraints, the site does not fall within a Conservation Area and there are no known designated heritage assets within the area surrounding the site. Although the application site is in the vicinity of Howgill Beck, it falls within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment is therefore not required in this case.

As seen from the submitted site location plan, the Applicants own and are responsible for the maintenance of further land beyond the existing curtilage, which extends to the north and east. The north-eastern part of the proposed residential curtilage exceeds that which was originally permitted under ref: 3/2018/0036. However, there is uncertainty as exactly where the existing curtilage ends, which this area currently used for keeping chickens. Although it is not part of the existing garden, it is arguable that the land has been in domestic use for well over several decades and should have therefore formed part of the original red-edge for the application to convert the barn.

## Planning History

The site has been subject to several applications relating to the conversion of the barn and erection of a garage/ancillary accommodation. The most relevant applications are listed below:

- 3/2018/0036 – The conversion of the former barn and associated alterations to access | Approved 19/03/2018
- 3/2020/0485 – Discharge of conditions related to the conversion of the barn. | Approved 24/08/2020
- 3/2020/0796 - Variation of condition no 2 (approved plans) from planning permission 3/2018/0036 to allow alterations to fenestration. | Approved 29/10/2020
- 3/2020/0966 – Erection of garage and accommodation for ancillary use in connection with new dwelling approved under 3/2018/0036 and extension of residential curtilage | Refused 25/05/2021

## Pre-Application Advice

Pre-Application advice was sought under reference RV/2021/00088, with advice issued in October 2021. The advice was given in respect to a larger, one and a half-storey garage and home office. While the scheme was noted to be in line with Policy DMG1 by virtue of its similar construction and materials choice, the size and scale of the proposed building was deemed too great for the location and would have been unlikely to be supported. The advice goes on to suggest that no outbuilding should exceed the size of a 7m x 7m double garage. As such, this scheme has been submitted within these size parameters, creating a garage of an appropriate scale with a physical and visual separation from the main dwelling.

As a result of the proposed building's location, the residential curtilage of the of the dwelling would need to be extended slightly to the east to accommodate the construction of the new garage. Under Policy DMH5 of the Core Strategy, residential curtilage extensions in the Open Countryside are generally deemed to be unacceptable. However, it was conceded within the pre-application advice that, if necessary, a trade-off could be made, reducing the curtilage to the north to add to the north-east. Indeed, given that this small section of land is already in a form of residential use for the keeping of chickens, it is arguable that there is in fact no actual conflict with Policy DMH5, particularly is the conversion of the barn under ref: 3/2018/0036 is not yet complete.

## Proposed Development

The proposed development relates to the erection of a double garage to the east of the newly converted barn. The garage will cover an area of 56sqm, being 8 metres in length and 7 metres in width. The total height of the garage is less than 5.3m, with an eaves height of 2.6m.

Whilst the dimensions of the garage are slightly larger than those referred to by the Officer within the recent pre-application advice, the additional 1m will allow for some domestic storage but more importantly the installation of a proposed ground source heating system to serve the main dwelling, which will be housed within the garage along the rear elevation wall. This will require a depth of approximately 1m – 1.5m, taking away from the internal usable floor space. Bearing in mind the wider environmental benefits that this will generate, I consider that the slightly larger size is justified. It will in any event have only a limited harm on the character / setting of the former barn which is to be converted under 3/2018/0036.

The existing building on site is currently a small outbuilding made of timber and sheet metal which serves as a storage area for Manor House. The replacement of this building would be an improvement on the visual quality of the area, with the proposals matching the style of the surrounding buildings, using complementary materials including local sandstone, slate roof and wooden doors. This ensures the proposed development will appear congruent with the local character of the area. Moreover, setting the building back from the existing barn will further help to reduce the impact of the building when seen in context of the older and more traditional structures.

## Policy Considerations

The proposed development has been revised to address the previous application's reasons for refusal and reflect the comments of the pre-application advice issued. Although they are disappointed to have to remove the originally proposed home office space, particularly given the Council's ambitions to help reduce carbon emissions as part of their Climate Change Strategy (August 2021), the removal of the ancillary accommodation and significant reduction in footprint from the previously refused scheme creates a garage of a scale that is of greater subservience to the main property.

### Principle of Development and Design

The principle of erecting a garage within the curtilage of the property is considered acceptable subject to the proposals meeting the requirements of Policy DMG1, with the development being expected to be of good design, respect surrounding amenity and be *"sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials"*. The proposed development meets these requirements, with the setting back of the garage and reduction in footprint to 56sqm ensuring the development will appear subservient to the main property. The design of the proposals utilises appropriate materials in keeping with the neighbouring barn, ensuring the rural character of the area is maintained.

### Heritage

Both Core Strategy Policies DME4 and E5 deal with the aspect of heritage in relation to development and the need to conserve and protect important heritage structure in the borough. As Manor House and the associated barn were considered by the LPA to form a non-designated heritage asset, careful design choices have been made to reflect and enhance the barns status while providing the space sought after through this development.

As stated above, the new building attempts to lessen its impact on the existing barn using complementary building materials, and a diminished presence on the street-scene through a reduced footprint. This means that visual attention continues to be drawn to the historic barn, with the new ancillary building blending in and remaining inconspicuous.

### Residential Curtilage

Policy DMH5 outlines the conditions for which the residential curtilage of site can be extended. PWA consider that the land to the north-east of the site, which is subject to the keeping of chickens, forms part of the existing curtilage of Manor House. Therefore, there is no conflict with the policy. However, the pre-application advice notes that it is acceptable to 'trade-off' some land to the north of the approved curtilage of the barn under ref: 3/2018/0036 if the decision taker-deems otherwise.

The extension of the residential curtilage will also bring the boundary in line with other features found on site, will create a more logical boundary around the property and allows for the garage to be set further back, which helps to reduce prominence in the street scene, promoting the historic value of the barn.

### Environment

Core Strategy Policy DMG1 requires that environmental matters are taken into consideration, so that development proposals maintain biodiversity in the area and protect species that may reside in the local area.

A bat survey has been undertaken to determine the likelihood of their presence. Following this report, no bats were found to have inhabited the structure and as such no biodiversity problems are foreseen to come up with the development. The development is therefore consistent with the 'Environment' section of the Policy.

As discussed above, the slight increase in the dimensions of the building above what is referred to within the recent pre-application advice is also justified in this instance. Whilst harms to the character of the adjacent former barn are limited, the 8m depth will allow for the installation of a ground-source heat pump for the use of the main dwelling permitted under 3/2018/0036. This represents a significant environmental benefit and important material consideration in favour of the design.

## **Summary**

Following the issuing of pre-application advice, the scheme has evolved to provide a high-quality single storey, double garage of a scale deemed appropriate by the LPA. The Applicants are disappointed that they will not be able to benefit from a home office, which was originally proposed in the pre-application drawings. However, the scheme, as proposed is more subservient to the main dwelling than the previous scheme and retains a sympathetic design to the locality.

PWA do not feel that any true extension to the curtilage is needed, as the land to the north-eastern part of the site (which was not included within the red edge under ref: 3/2018/0036) is used for domestic purposes. However, the Applicant would be open to negotiations to compensate for this through a reduction to the curtilage to the north, should the decision-taker perceive otherwise. The garage is therefore considered appropriate development, with no technical considerations precluding the granting of approval. Indeed, the environmental benefits associated with the provision of the ground-source heat pump must be attributed positive material weight in the balance.

Should you require anything further to enable the positive and speedy determination of the application then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**Matthew Walton**

Assistant Planner