

PLANNING STATEMENT

THE OLD GARAGE, DUNSOP BRIDGE
DUCHY OF LANCASTER





Rural Solutions

PLANNING STATEMENT

LOCATION

THE OLD GARAGE, DUNSOP BRIDGE

PROPOSAL

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD GARAGE SITE TO PROVIDE A NEW BUILDING THAT INCLUDES A CAFÉ, COMMUNITY SHOP, RETAIL UNIT, POST OFFICE, COMMUNITY SPACES, SEPARATE STORE AND PLANTROOM. ST GEORGES CHAPEL WILL BE CONVERTED INTO COMMUNITY THERAPY ROOMS AND COMMUNITY WORKSPACE. THE EXISTING CAFÉ AND POST OFFICE (AT PUDDLEDUCKS) TO REVERT TO RESIDENTIAL USE

APPLICANT

DUCHY OF LANCASTER

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I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1: Rural Solutions has prepared this planning statement to accompany an application for the redevelopment of the Old Garage site at Dunsop Bridge in the Forest of Bowland, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Old Garage building and old corrugated iron structure will be removed and replaced with a new building that includes a café, community shop, small retail unit, post office, community spaces, separate store and plantroom. St Georges Chapel will be converted into community therapy rooms and community workspace. The proposals also include a request for the existing café and post office (at Puddleducks) to revert to residential use once the new building is complete and open to the public.
- 1.2: The site is in the long-term ownership of the applicant, The Duchy of Lancaster. More details on the applicant are provided later in this statement.
- 1.3: Section two of this statement provides further details of the site, designations covering the site and its planning history.
- 1.4: The application has been brought forward following an extensive pre-application engagement, with consultation undertaken with the community and Ribble Valley Borough Council. Details are provided at section three of this statement.
- 1.5: At section four details are provided of the proposed development at the site and the local benefits that will arise from it.
- 1.6: Section five includes an assessment of the extent to which the proposed development complies with the policy requirements of the development plan for Ribble Valley and policy guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as the Management Plan for the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 1.7: Conclusions to the statement are provided at section six.
- 1.8: The application is made up of the following documents, in addition to this planning statement:
- Full plans package (Wright Design Partnership)
 - Design and Access Statement (Wright Design Partnership)
 - Highways statement (PSA Design)
 - Flood Risk Assessment (RAB Consultants Ltd)
 - Contamination Study: Phase I (Meridian Geoscience Ltd)

Applicant and Development Context

- 1.9: The applicant for development is The Duchy of Lancaster. Founded in the 13th century, The Duchy of Lancaster is a unique portfolio of land, property and assets held in trust for the Sovereign in His or Her role as Duke of Lancaster. The site

is on the Duchy of Lancaster's Whitewell Estate which forms part of over 18,000 hectares of land owned by the Duchy across England and Wales.

- 1.10: As a historic landowner the Duchy of Lancaster is the custodian of many areas of outstanding natural beauty and historic structures in rural areas. Its purpose is to protect and preserve these historic assets and, as such, it is able to take a more holistic approach to development than many other commercial developers. The Duchy's overriding objective is to enhance the sustainability and quality of its historic estates for the benefit of the communities living there, both now and for future generations.
- 1.11: The Whitewell Estate is one of the Duchy of Lancaster's flagship rural estates, consisting of around 2,400 hectares of what was the traditional Lordship of Bowland. Today the Estate combines sustainable upland farming with tourism related amenities and a vibrant local community. The Duchy provides 55 homes to residential tenants on the Whitewell Estate. In addition, it supports nine main farm tenancies (four dairy herds and other enterprises including beef and sheep), 468 acres of woodland, 33 commercial and miscellaneous lettings including the multi-award-winning Inn at Whitewell, a village shop, post office, café, two commercial office units and a holiday cottage. This all contributes to employment in the local area, providing facilities to support local businesses and the livelihood of a significant number of people.
- 1.12: There has been significant investment by the Duchy in the Whitewell Estate over the past ten years. This has focused primarily on repairing and improving the standard of its existing properties for residents and local businesses. The Duchy's commitment and financial support to B4RN communication infrastructure will bring super high-speed internet across to Dunsop Village and across the Estate.
- 1.13: The Duchy is acutely aware of the issues affecting rural life, such as lack of local employment, transport and connectivity to services and other built environments as well as a lack of opportunities for young people. Their aim is to try and address some of these issues by investing in sustainable developments supported by the local communities, where possible, that will build on the social wellbeing and contribute to improving the local economy for residents.
- 1.14: The overarching aim is to provide an environment that encourages slow, sustainable growth in the area that benefits the local community without disrupting the fine equilibrium, balance and charm of Dunsop Bridge.
- 1.15: The Duchy of Lancaster has consulted with the community on its concept ideas for the site, as detailed in section three of this statement.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1: The planning application relates to the Old Garage site, St Georges Chapel and Puddleducks Café in the village of Dunsop Bridge.
- 2.2: The Old Garage site sits in a prominent location in the heart of the village. The main garage buildings are past their economic life and of limited architectural merit. The site is within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the implications of which are assessed throughout this report.

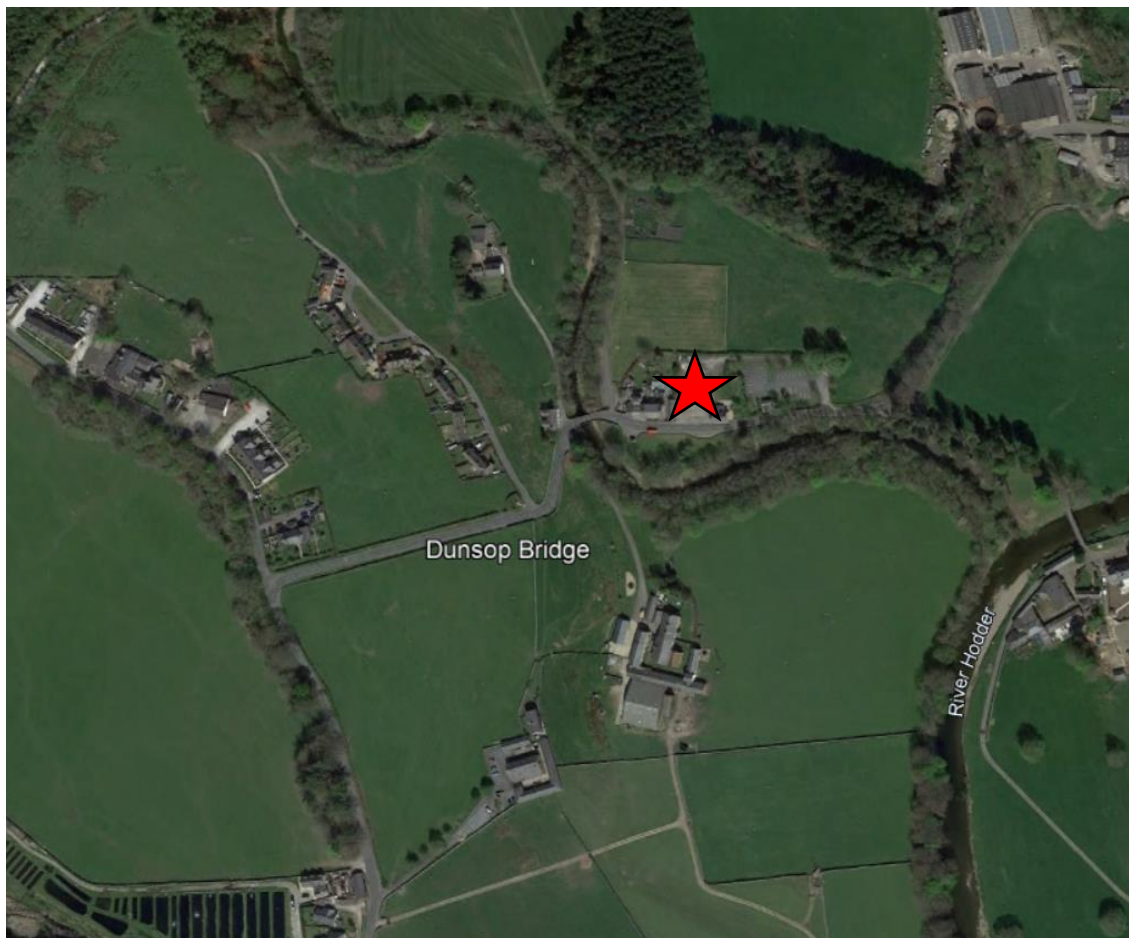
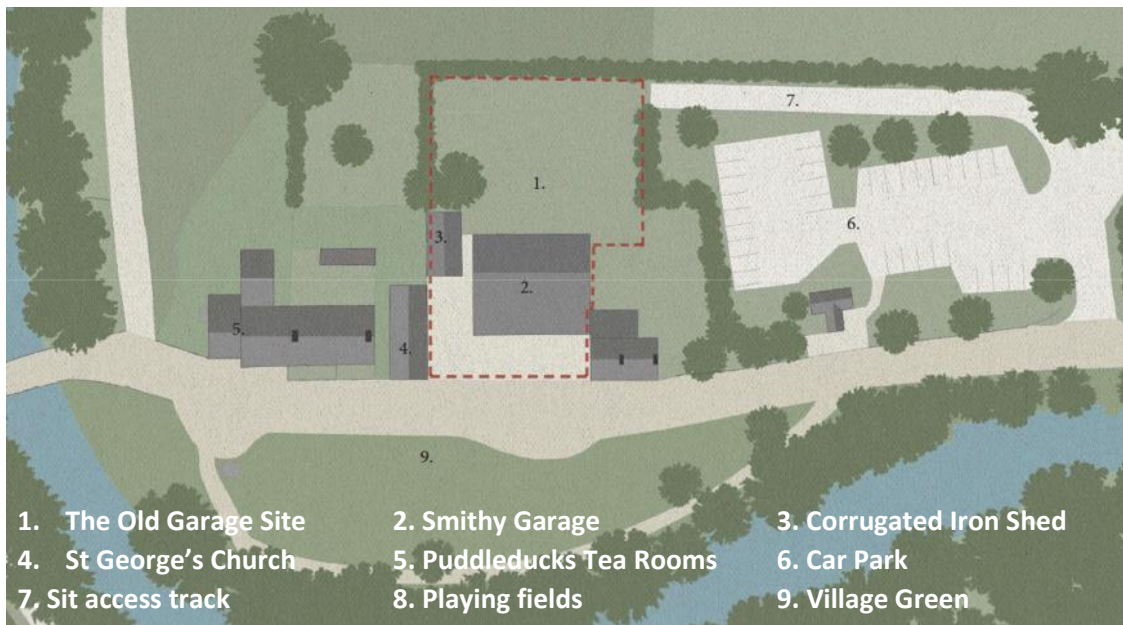


Figure 1: Aerial image of proposed development site (Source: Google Earth)

- 2.3: The site is flanked by built development to the west, including two residential houses and Puddleducks Tea Room and Post Office and a further residential dwelling to the east. To the North East is the existing public car park and to the north of the site are the village playing fields.



Figure 2: Birdseye image of proposed development site



- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. The Old Garage Site | 2. Smithy Garage | 3. Corrugated Iron Shed |
| 4. St George's Church | 5. Puddleducks Tea Rooms | 6. Car Park |
| 7. Sit access track | 8. Playing fields | 9. Village Green |

Figure 3: Current layout Plan of Old Garage Site to assist in identifying the buildings

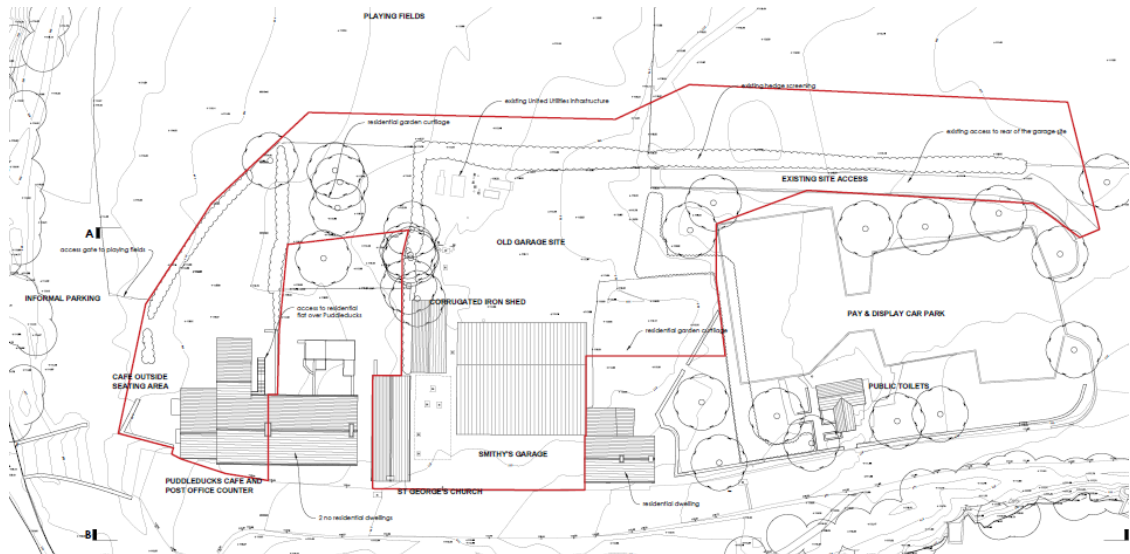


Figure 4: Current layout plan of Old Garage Site

- 2.4: Other than its location within the AONB, the site is not covered by any planning designations. The site is located predominately within Flood Zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency, with some surrounding land within Flood Zone 2. A Flood Risk Assessment report by RAB Consultants Ltd accompanies the application.
- 2.5: As noted, the existing old garage buildings are of no architectural merit. The corrugated iron building is vacant and the main garage building is currently occupied by an e-bike business on a short term lease. The current tenant of St Georges Church has indicated that they are unlikely to occupy the building for no longer and they intend to hand it back to the Duchy in the near future. The Church is not listed nor is it identified as a designated heritage asset.



Figure 5: Existing garage site (Source: Google Earth).

- 2.6: The site benefits from two established accesses: the main access has historically been from the south directly off the public highway; with an additional access to the rear of the site via the existing Public Car Park to the east.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.7: A search of the Ribble Valley Council planning register indicated there are no planning applications for the site dating back to January 2000.

3. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1: The application has been brought forward following an extensive pre-application engagement process as confirmed below.

Engagement with Ribble Valley Borough Council

- 3.2: A pre-application enquiry was submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council and a site meeting with the Head of Planning from Ribble Valley Borough Council subsequently took place on 5th October 2021 to discuss the proposed development in more detail.

- 3.3: The written feedback dated 19th October 2021 confirmed as follows:

Further to our site visit on a very wet day on the 05/10/21 I now confirm the following points.

First of all thank you for using our pre application advice service and the comprehensive documents you included in the submission. It is pleasing to see the commitment of the Duchy of Lancaster to the borough and the desire to work with the borough and the local community.

As indicated there is no objection to the principle as outlined in your brief to redevelop the old garage site including the old chapel and Puddleducks. It is considered that the proposal would support the local community with both employment opportunities and local housing.

In order to retain employment, it is important that the scheme is phased in a way that the proposed residential use at Puddleducks is not implemented until the new Community Hub building has been established thereby retaining and increasing local employment opportunities as well promoting vitality to the local economy.

It is considered that the demolition of the garage and its replacement with new building and subject to the use of appropriate materials would enhance the area and make a positive contribution to the AONB. At this point in time, I would not consider the introduction of a formal overflow car park on the basis of the visual impact but perhaps review that a later date. The introduction of a connecting path to the rear of Puddleducks and the opening up of views to the rear of the Community Hub Building with minor loss to hedgerow is not seen as problematic.

If the Chapel is to be used for Community use such as hairdresser, beautician or an osteopath service that appointments are controlled to minimise highway conflict and the need for excessive parking provision. This would be considered during any subsequent planning application and adequate controls restricting the uses could be imposed.

In our meeting I emphasised that this advice is without the benefit of Lancashire County Council who are the highway authority as they offer their own pre application service but ultimately any planning decision would be made by the Borough Council. Any development of the housing and hub building should make provision for secure cycle provision and electric charging points. Should you consider it necessary to undertake works on the highway it would be prudent to contact LCC direct.

At our meeting we referred to stakeholder engagement and it is clear that the Duchy has engaged on the process fully and it is envisaged that adequate engagement has been carried not to warrant the need for extensive engagement

It is the view that the overall design and concept of scheme is acceptable and the Council continues to look forward to working with the Duchy in achieving an appropriate development.

- 3.4: The points raised in relation to design in this positive pre-application feedback have been considered and have helped revise and steer the plans as proposed in this application.

Engagement with Local Community

- 3.5: As a major long-term landowner in the area the Duchy of Lancaster is keen to ensure that it consults with local communities on any proposed development which would impact them. Two open community consultations exercises have taken place as part of this process and feedback to date have informed the plans now submitted for consideration.
- 3.6: Written concept proposals for the Old Garage site were made available to the public in 2021. This followed an early broader consultation in 2020.
- 3.7: The plans that form part of this application are only just being made available to the community (see www.dunsopbridge.com). Proposals for the site have continually changed over the past months to take cognisance of the pre-app process, feedback from stakeholders, recent survey reports and existing tenancy arrangements.
- 3.8: The plans are now firmed up. Whilst it was the Duchy's intention to allow for further consultation on the actual plans, it was acknowledged that would lead to further delays in the whole process and in order to keep momentum on the project the plans were made available on the website (and the community informed) at the same time as the planning application was formally submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council.
- 3.9: Please note that the Duchy are very keen to continue to accommodate comments from the local community and they feel that there is sufficient time to do this through the planning process.
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- 3.10: The Duchy have been in touch with adjoining tenants directly and will continue to discuss the implications of the proposals with tenants through the planning and development process.
- 3.11: Details of previous consultations can be found at the public website www.dunsopbridge.com. Whilst not invited at the time, a significant number of comments were received on the proposals for the Old Garage site. These comments have helped steer the design to date.
- 3.12: As part of the community consultation in May 2020 it can be confirmed that a total of 116 hard copy community consultation booklets and questionnaires were posted directly to tenants of the Duchy of Lancaster and mail dropped to all known village houses, farms, businesses and key stakeholders in and immediately surrounding the village of Dunsop Bridge.
- 3.13: Posters were displayed in and around the village and the soft copies of the consultation booklet information and downloadable, interactive questionnaires were available on the website www.dunsopbridge.com. Questionnaires could be returned electronically or in prepaid return envelopes.
- 3.14: Follow up telephone calls were undertaken to key stakeholders in the area.
- 3.15: It is not the intention of this statement to summarise the responses of the consultation, as this has been done by the Duchy of Lancaster in a document¹ provided on the website.
- 3.16: It is noted that of the 48 completed questionnaires, the vast majority were positive. Only 4 responded anonymously and 2 negatively.
- 3.17: However, it is noted that questions were raised regarding the 'need' for the development and the appropriateness of access arrangements. The proposed development is policy compliant and therefore 'need' is not a central planning issue. The Duchy are in informal very early stage discussions with potential occupiers. Details are not shared in the application for reasons of confidentiality, without the certainty of a planning permission in place.
- 3.18: In terms of access, the application is supported by a report from a highways consultant which confirms the appropriateness of the access and amount of car parking spaces proposed. In conclusion, the applicant has undertaken a broad-ranging consultation with key stakeholders (local authority, Parish Council, Ward Councillors and the local community), prior to bringing forward this application.
- 3.19: Feedback received has been considered and design amendments and / or additional supporting studies have been produced in order to respond to it. Further feedback from uploading the plans to the website will continue to be considered as the application progresses through planning stages.

¹ <http://www.dunsopbridge.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/20200930-Summary-Results-Community-Consultation-Dunsop-Bridge.pdf>

4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND BENEFITS

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1: The proposed development consists of the redevelopment of the Old Garage site in Dunsop Bridge including St Georges Chapel. The scheme seeks to demolish the old corrugated iron building and the large main garage building and erect a single new community hub building. The building will be linked to St Georges Chapel by a covered walkway.
- 4.2: The use of St Georges Church has eased over the past few years and the current tenant has advised that they no longer need the Church as a place of worship. Covid has played its part in this. As such, the Duchy's proposals request a change of use on St Georges Church for the benefit of the community and creation of some form of community use as detailed in the plans.
- 4.3: The proposals also request internal alterations to the existing café/post office unit to bring the building back into full residential use. This includes internal reconfiguration and raising the floor levels to satisfy requirements of the Flood Risk report. Please note it is the Duchy's intention (as far as possible) to maintain a post office offering at all times. Closure of the existing post office and shop and reversion to residential use would only happen when the new building on the old garage site is complete and open to the public to ensure a continued offering to the village.
- 4.4: As part of the proposals the Duchy have looked at better connectivity and circulation around the buildings and village by introducing a path and safe route from the car parking area to the East of the site through the rear of the site and to the river to the West thus safely avoiding the traffic on the main road. Whilst this is potentially contentious it is done in the interest of improved circulation the village and also allows a suitable location for infrastructure associated with a potential district alternative to fossil fuels for the houses in the strip and up to date treatment system for foul water.
- 4.5: The proposals also open up the hedge to the north of the site to allow better connectivity and use of the playing fields and playground from the rear of the new building. Significant additional hedging is proposed as part of the proposals.
- 4.6: The Duchy of Lancaster's proposals for the main building on the old garage site are designed to deliver appropriate community facilities at the site to meet the needs of local community as well as existing visitors to the centre of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 4.7: As confirmed in section three, the Duchy of Lancaster's indicative proposals are in the public domain (www.dunsopbridge.com) and as a result of community engagement, the responses and discussions with individuals and stakeholders have helped steer the design and proposed use of the community hub.
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4.8: Areas of the existing garage building (290sqm) and corrugated iron building (50sqm) total GEA of 340sqm. The proposed new community hub will have a GEA of 307.5sqm. The building will use traditional materials of stone, timber and glazing to ensure the assimilation with the village setting. It is proposed the site will be host to a café, community shop, retail unit, post office and community spaces, separate store and plantroom. A rear extension to the community hub will have a flat and mono pitched zinc roof to external covered seating area with PV panels fitted above.

4.9: St Georges Church will be converted into community therapy rooms and community library/workspace/meeting room. The proposals also include a request for the existing café and post office (at Puddleducks) to revert to residential use once the new building is complete and open to the public.

Sustainable Design

4.10: The proposals incorporate a number of sustainable design features as listed below:

- The inclusion of solar panels. These are included on the proposed rear extension to the new community hub building. The provision of small scale solar energy generation reflects the Forest of Bowland's Renewable Energy Position Statement (2014) which supports such installations.
- Provision of electric car charging points.
- Provision of e-bike charging points.
- Rooflights and window openings of sufficient scale to allow natural light ingress into buildings, reducing the need for artificial light.
- New trees and c.184sqm of hedgerow will be planted as part of the proposals, as confirmed later in this section of the statement.
- The Duchy are also currently reviewing the use of more sustainable materials in the design, manufacture and delivery of the proposed development.
- Potential to allow for the installation of a more sustainable heating system.

Access

4.11: Highway access details are provided in the attached report from PSA Design which should be consulted separately.

4.12: However, it is noted that the proposals include a drop off area to the front of the community building.

- 4.13: Additional car parking spaces are also proposed to the north east of the site, to the rear of the existing public car park as detailed in the plans and the statement from traffic advisors. The physical area required has been reduced following pre-application feedback provided by the council which raised concern with the perceived visual impact. It is intended that this area will be heavily landscaped to ensure assimilation into the landscape setting.
- 4.14: In addition to vehicular access opportunities, the proposed development includes electric car charging points and bike storage including e-bike charging points and improved safer circulation for pedestrians around the village to the north of the buildings away from the main road (which lacks pavements)
- 4.15: Improved Access onto the community playing fields from the car park and the rear of the new building which will encourage better use.

Landscaping

- 4.16: The proposed landscaping approach to the site is to respect the appearance of a site in the landscape, without overly formal or excessive new landscape planting added.
- 4.17: Approximately 184 sqm of new hedging will be planted across the entire site in lieu of the 53sqm removed to facilitate an extension to the car park. This is an increase of 350%. Hedging will be mixed native species and supplemented with stock proof fencing where appropriate.
- 4.18: In addition, to the western edge of the site some new tree planting will be added in order to provide screening of car parking spaces along the northern and eastern edges of the site.

BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.19: The development will deliver a number of benefits to the local area. The aim of the planning system is to deliver economic, environmental and social objectives, as confirmed by paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.20: The benefits delivered by the redevelopment of the Old Garage site will span these three objectives, as confirmed below:

Economic Benefits

- 4.21: The following economic benefits of development will arise:
- Construction benefits arising from development - A study² by the CBI confirms that: *“Analysis by Oxford Economics shows that every £1 spent on UK construction creates £2.92 of value to the whole economy.”*

² Fine Margins: Delivering financial sustainability in UK construction, 2020 CBI

The proposed development at the Old Garage site will require a construction investment of over a million pounds. This in turn will be multiplied by 2.92 leading to an economic benefit anticipated to be in the region of £3m. Much of this benefit will be realised locally in construction and supply chain businesses.

- Delivery of new community facilities in rural Ribble Valley – the provision of new community facilities at Dunsop Bridge will help to deliver jobs in this part of the Ribble Valley. Temporary construction related jobs will clearly be supported during the construction process.
- Support for local supply chain companies – all businesses operating from the site will have some supply chain requirements. This should benefit local businesses in the areas.

4.22: Improved facilities in the heart of the AONB for visitors to the area & their spend going back into the local area. Wherever possible, every effort will be made to employ local labour and materials. Equally, local businesses will be encouraged to occupy the new commercial spaces where reasonable and practicable

Social Benefits

4.23: The following social benefits of development will arise:

- Delivery of new community facilities in rural Ribble Valley – the provision of new community facilities at Dunsop Bridge will enhance the vitality of the village and surrounding area by providing much needed services.
- Support for a living, working countryside – it has long been identified that without appropriate development rural communities and areas can become unsustainable as services are lost and rural populations decline or age. The Duchy of Lancaster is concerned to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural areas such as Dunsop Bridge, as is clear from its delivery of an affordable housing development in the village, as well as the proposed development at Root Farm (approved by Ribble Valley Borough Council in December 2021).
- The delivery of new community facilities will contribute to the sustainability of the area by allowing those working in the village or surrounding area an opportunity to work in close proximity to where they live. It could also attract people to live in the area on the basis that they can then live and work in the same geographical area.
- Bringing an under-used building back into use in order to meet the requirements of the local community.

- Providing a space to provide information on the Forest of Bowland AONB to visitors. There is currently no specific location that provides such information within the village which is located at the heart of the AONB.
- Proposed change of use of Puddleducks to provide residential flats to rent, providing smaller accommodation / offering to the village.
- Additional car parking facilities to assist/ease congestion and issues of parking on the roads.

Environmental Benefits

4.24: The following environmental benefits of development will arise:

- Biodiversity net gain – the delivery of c184sqm of new hedgerow as well as new tree planting on the site will help to deliver biodiversity net gain. At the same time bat, swallow and owl boxes will have either an enhancement or at least mitigation impact on these species.
- The reuse of a previously developed site – delivery of new development on a site with buildings upon it is considered inherently sustainable.
- The removal of asbestos as part of the redevelopment of the site.
- Clean up of old garage site and removal of redundant tanks from the ground.
- The replacement of existing buildings that are poorly insulated with better insulated buildings.
- Improvements to existing foul drainage from the site, by insertion of a new up to date Klargestar package treatment plant.
- Community use therapy rooms if let and used properly will reduce the need for locals to travel by car to secure the services. Similarly, the introduction of electric charging points and e-bike charging points will encourage and provide for 'green' transportation.

4.25: For the above reasons it is considered that the development will give rise to multiple benefits which will relate to its compliance with local and national planning policy.

5. LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN ASSESSMENT

5.1: The development plan for the area is the:

- The Ribble Valley Adopted Core Strategy 2008-2028; and
- The Ribble Valley Housing and Economic Development DPD 2008-2028

5.2: It is only the policies of the Core Strategy which relate to this proposed development.

5.3: The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024 is also a relevant material consideration. However, the Management Plan is seen to be a document which is focused on strategic initiatives and actions for the AONB team to undertake; it is not a Plan which includes a checklist of policies for development proposals to conform to.

5.4: The Management Plan at Theme 2 seeks to develop 'resilient and sustainable communities'. Objective 2.3 of the Management Plan aims to '**promote and support rural services and the socio-economic development of the area**, particularly where such activity helps to conserve and enhance natural beauty.'

5.5: Furthermore, Action 2.3G states that the AONB Partnership will '**work with estate landowners and local planning authorities to pilot the development of estate-wide masterplans**, to address local housing needs and maintain **or enhance the vitality of the local community.**'

5.6: As confirmed in section three of this statement the application is made following pre-application consultation with both the local planning authority and the local community.

5.7: To date, no concerns have been raised by those consulted in terms of the extent to which the proposals would conform to the adopted planning policies or management plan for the area.

5.8: However, on behalf of the applicant we provide the following assessment.

5.9: The assessment is set out in the form of 'Topic Area' policy analysis, in order that the policies of the development plan, the NPPF and, where relevant policies exist, the AONB Management Plan are considered together.

TOPIC AREA – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

KEY STATEMENT DS2: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The policy states that the Council will apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and works proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

KEY STATEMENT EN3: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Council will seek to ensure that proposals for development are sustainably designed and support efforts to mitigate climate change.

NPPF: Paragraphs 7, 8 and 11

Commentary: The proposals for the Old Garage site have been brought forward following pre-application consultation with the Council and are assessed, in section four, to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

No concerns regarding the principle of development or compliance with the local plan have been identified by the Council and it is anticipated that the applications will therefore be approved, without delay, in accordance with paragraph 11c of the NPPF.

In terms of EN3, the development incorporates a number of sustainable design features, including solar panels, as assessed in section four of this statement. It is therefore considered that this policy is complied with.

TOPIC AREA – LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT

KEY STATEMENT EN2: LANDSCAPE

The policy states that:

“The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.”

Also, that:

“As a principle 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.”

NPPF: Paragraphs 174 and 176

Commentary: The proposals have been brought forward by an applicant and historic landowner experienced in land and building management in, and respectful of, the designated area.

It has undertaken informal pre-application engagement with the local Council in order to ensure that its proposals meet policy requirements.

The development within this designated area can be considered ‘limited in scale’ as anticipated by NPPF Paragraph 176.

The design and materiality of the proposals, including its landscaping and addition of trees and hedgerows, have been carefully considered to ensure sensitivity with the designated area. Materials will be reused from the site where possible and new materials will be appropriate and of the highest quality.

TOPIC AREA – ECONOMY AND BUSINESS

KEY STATEMENT EC1: BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

KEY STATEMENT EC2: DEVELOPMENT OF RETAIL, SHOPS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

POLICY DMBI: SUPPORTING BUSINESS GROWTH AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN: OBJECTIVE 2.3 LOCAL ECONOMY AND RURAL SERVICES

NPPF: PARAGRAPHS 81-85

Commentary: The proposals for the site are intended to deliver benefits to the local economy and to provide community facilities for use by the local residents. These benefits, together with the supportive feedback of the Council on this matter, is confirmed at section four of the report.

As noted, the AONB Management Plan (objective 2.3) states that the AONB Management Team will *‘Promote and support rural services and the socio-economic development of the area, particularly where such activity helps to conserve and enhance natural beauty.’*

The development seeks to promote the socio-economic development of this part of the AONB whilst at the same time helping to enhance natural beauty through regeneration of this previously developed site.

The proposals conform strongly to national policy support for a prosperous rural economy.

TOPIC AREA – TRANSPORT

KEY STATEMENT DMI2: TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS

POLICY DMG3: TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

NPPF: PARAGRAPHS 105 AND 111

Commentary: Key Statement DMI2 states that *“New development should be located to minimise the need to travel. Also, it should incorporate good access by foot and cycle and have convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car.”*

The development is relatively small in scale. It is in a rural area, where some level of development is accepted by policy makers, NPPF Paragraph 105 acknowledges that:

“Opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.”

In this case, the Old Garage site is well-located in relation to Dunsop Bridge and is located adjacent to the existing Public Car Park to the east. This will allow for access on foot by any residents from the village using the site. The designs for the site also include a bike rack area and electric car charging points, meaning that proportionate sustainable travel options are available.

Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”* The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement from PSA Design which does not identify any unacceptable impact on highway safety or severe impact on the road network.

TOPIC AREA – HERITAGE

KEY STATEMENT EN5: HERITAGE ASSETS

NPPF: PARAGRAPH 203

Commentary: As confirmed in section five the site is not contain any designated heritage assets and nor have any been identified as a non-designated heritage asset in any local list.

Nevertheless, regard has been had to the history of the site in creating the development proposals. The scheme will retain St. Georges Church and will ensure it remains in use, preserving the fabric of the building.

Pre-application engagement with the local Council has not raised any heritage concerns with the designs proposed, although wider design amendments have been tabled and accepted to ensure a high quality of development upon this historic site.

- 5.12: For the reasons set out above it can be considered that the requirements of local and national planning policy are met by the proposed development. This is in accordance with the pre-application feedback which confirmed that no concerns in relation to policy compliance were raised at the pre-application stage.

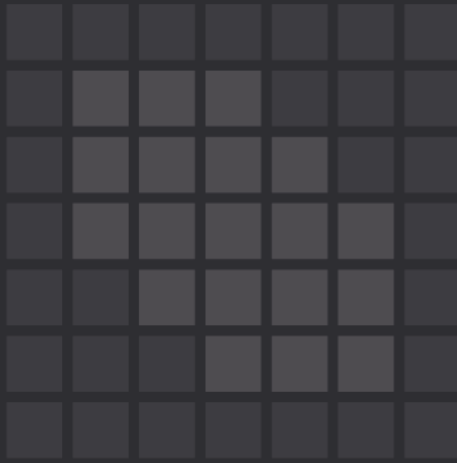
6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1: In conclusion, the proposed redevelopment of the Old Garage site, Dunsop Bridge, has been brought forward by a historic landowner with a unique long term affinity for and interest in the area. The landowner seeks only to deliver high quality development which delivers long-term sustainability benefits for the local area by providing a number of community facilities including café, shop, post office and community spaces.
- 6.2: The proposals are brought following a pre-application engagement process with the local community and local authority
- 6.3: The delivery of new community facilities will help to boost the socio-economic conditions of this rural part of the Ribble Valley and enhance the vitality of the village, in accordance with the AONB Management Plan.
- 6.4: The development will result in multiple economic, social and environmental benefits, as confirmed in section four of this statement.
- 6.5: The proposals are assessed to be compliant with the development plan and national planning policy, and no concerns in this regard have been raised at the pre-application stage.
- 6.6: The applicant looks forward to engaging with Ribble Valley Borough Council in order to deliver the benefits that this development will bring to the village of Dunsop Bridge, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that is the Forest of Bowland and the wider local area for generations to come.

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