

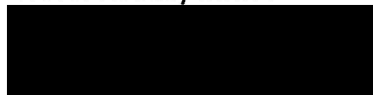
Conversion of two
agricultural buildings to 2
dwellings; Land off Whittle
Hall Farm, Moor Lane,
Langho.

Prior Notification/Approval
application submitted under
the provisions of class Q –

Planning Supporting Statement

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This statement is made in support of a detailed planning submission to Ribble Valley Borough Council and made under the provisions of class Q of the TCPA GPDO 2021 as amended. This prior approval application is for the conversion of two agricultural buildings into 2 private dwellings at Whittle Hall Farm, Moor Lane, Langho.

1 Site Location

- 1.1 The proposal relates to the conversion of two redundant agricultural buildings into 2 dwellings. The buildings are located off Moor Lane, Langho and set down below an established woodland area.
- 1.2 The whole of the site sits with The Green Belt; it lies outside the established settlement boundary as defined in the Core Strategy.

2 Planning History

- 2.1 Whittle Hall Farm is a long established farming enterprise; the main house and farm buildings are located approximately 1 Kilometre from the site the subject of the proposed conversion works. Previously, the buildings were used for the wintering of livestock before being taken down to the main farm complex. The current owner of Whittle Hall Farm has recently taken full ownership of Moor End Head the farm (located less than one mile from the redundant farm buildings) following the death of his father; as part of a major overall of farming operations, he has recently secured planning consent for the erection of new, purpose built, farm buildings within the main complex and this has resulted in the barns/agricultural buildings at the application site becoming wholly redundant to the needs of modern farming at Whittle Hall Farm.
- 2.2 Peter Hitchen Architects Ltd [PHA] have produced detailed plans together with a supporting brief which clearly identifies the exact nature of the conversions, the dimensions, scale, extent of existing and long established curtilage. All these details are material and relevant in consideration of the proposal under the provisions of Class Q of the GPDO.
- 2.3 To add further weight to the claims made in this application, there is also a statement provided by the Owner of Whittle Hall Farm with regard to the farming enterprise in its totality and the length of time that such activity has been undertaken.

3 Class Q–GPDO 2021

3.1 *Permitted development–Class Q*

Q. Development consisting of:

(a) a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use as an agricultural building to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order; and

(b) building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule.

Development not permitted

Q.1 Development is not permitted by Class Q if—

(a) the site was not used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established agricultural unit—

(i) on 20th March 2013, or

(ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use, or

(iii) in the case of a site which was brought into use after 20th March 2013, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

(b) the cumulative floor space of the existing building or buildings changing use under Class Q within an established agricultural unit exceeds ~~46550~~ square metres;

(c) the cumulative number of separate dwellinghouses developed under Class Q within an established agricultural unit exceeds 3;

(d) the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained;

(e) less than 1 year before the date development begins—

(i) an agricultural tenancy over the site has been terminated, and

(ii) the termination was for the purpose of carrying out development under Class Q, unless both the landlord and the tenant have agreed in writing that the site is no longer required for agricultural use;

(f) development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of this Schedule (agricultural buildings and operations) has been carried out on the established agricultural unit—

(i) since 20th March 2013; or

(ii) where development under Class Q begins after 20th March 2023, during the period which is 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

(g) the development would result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point;

(h) the development under Class Q (together with any previous development under Class Q) would result in a building or buildings having more than 450 square metres of floor space having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order;

(i) the development under Class Q(b) would consist of building operations other than—

(i) the installation or replacement of—

(aa) windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or

(bb) water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services, to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse; and

(ii) partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(i)(i);

(j) the site is on article 2(3) land;

(k) the site is, or forms part of—

(i) a site of special scientific interest;

(ii) a safety hazard area;

(iii) a military explosives storage area;

(l) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument; or

(m) the building is a listed building.

Conditions

Q.2—(1) Where the development proposed is development under Class Q(a) together with development under Class Q(b), development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

(a) transport and highways impacts of the development,

(b) noise impacts of the development,

(c) contamination risks on the site,

(d) flooding risks on the site,

(e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, and

(f) the design or external appearance of the building,

and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to that application.

(2) Where the development proposed is development under Class Q(a) only, development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the items referred to in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) to (e) and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to that application.

(3) Development under Class Q is permitted subject to the condition that development under Class Q(a), and under Class Q(b), if any, must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date.

Compliance with Class Q

As a matter of fact, the proposal must comply with the requirements of Class Q (a) a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use as an agricultural building to a use falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order; and

(b) building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) of that Schedule.

- The agricultural buildings have formed part of Whittle Hall Farm, an agricultural unit as so defined, ~~until as recently as 2020~~ since 2009.
- It is proposed to create two residential units only
- The floor area of each residential unit so created falls well within the permitted tolerances
- The site lies within Green Belt which is a designation outside those areas where the GPDO [Class Q] places restrictions.

4 The Development Plan

- 4.1 For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of clarity and transparency, reference is made to the relevant policies in the Development Plan including those in the Adopted Core Strategy. Current Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework has also been considered. It is respectfully submitted that the following Development Plans and policies are the most relevant against which to assess the merits of the proposal:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

Key Statement DS1 Development Strategy

Key Statement DS2 Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN1 Green Belt

Policy DMG1 General Considerations

Policy DMG2 Strategic Considerations

Policy DMG3 Transport and Mobility

Policy DME1 Protecting Trees & Woodland

Policy DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 2 achieving sustainable development

Chapter 8 promoting healthy communities

Chapter 9 promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 11 making effective use of land

Chapter 12 achieving well designed places

Chapter 13 Protecting Green Belt Land

Chapter 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5 Development Strategy/Sustainable Development

A Key Statement EN1 Green Belt (RV Core Strategy)

Chapter 13 Protecting Green Belt Land (NPPF)

- 5.1 The site lies within the Green Belt; Core Strategy policy does not impose an embargo per se on development within the green belt; however, any new development within the green belt is limited to pre-determined forms of development that preserve the essential character of the green belt, its openness, and does not conflict with the purposes of the green belt. Indeed, Core Strategy policy states “*the overall extent of the green belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt, and which do not conflict with the purposes of this designation.*”
- 5.2 In regard to Green Belt policy at the national level, The Framework is very clear and unequivocal; Chapter 13 sets the whole context and this is effectively

replicated in the Core Strategy policy statement EN1. Paragraph 138 of The Framework indicates the 5 purposes of the Green Belt. Paragraph 149 states that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, at paragraph 149 a series of exceptions are set down and listed subsections A – G. Of material significance and relevance to the planning application now before the LPA for consideration is paragraph 149(d) which states, “*the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.*”. In the context of both this policy and the Core Strategy Key Statement EN1, both are silent on the issue of what is considered to be “materially different” in terms of size/footprint. It is noted in the pre-application response that the case officer states, inter alia, “.....there is no specific definition of what is “materially larger” but a generally accepted figure would be anything above a volume increase of 30% over the dwelling as originally built....” It is respectfully considered that there is no evidential base or policy ground for making such an assumption and it is necessary and essential for each proposal to be considered on its individual merits. The test must surely be an assessment as to whether or not the proposal materially affects the openness of the Green Belt and if the overall footprint of the proposed new dwelling does exceed that of the original dwelling, what factors in mitigation are offered in terms of lessening the impact, if any, on openness.

5.3 In dealing very specifically with this issue of impact upon openness, Peter Hitchen Architects (PHA) have produced a detailed analysis in the form of a statement which includes plans and graphics which sets the whole context of the development in terms of volume, scale, footprint, long distance views into and from the site. This statement/assessment is a material consideration in the determination of the planning application.

5.4 In dealing specifically with the Green Belt policy at both national and local level, it is respectfully submitted that the proposal meets the tests set down for conversion of the agricultural buildings in the Green Belt.

B [Key Statement DS1 Development Strategy](#)

[Key Statement DS2 Sustainable Development](#)

[Policy DMG1](#)

[General Considerations](#)

- 5.5 The proposed application site is situated on Moor Lane, Langho; for the purposes of the Core Strategy it lies outside any established settlement boundary. However, for the purposes of Class Q, the two agricultural buildings are surplus to requirements at Whittle Hall Farm; further, the buildings are structurally sound and capable of conversion as they stand [structural survey forms part of the submission]. The submitted plans very clearly demonstrate that the conversions sit well within the parameters set down in class Q. The curtilage included with the conversions is as it is now, is clearly identified both on the submitted plan and also on google earth. That curtilage will remain, it has not been, nor will it be, extended in any way from the existing.
- 5.6 The built form of the proposed conversions is proportionate in terms of scale, size and footprint. This is complimented by the use of appropriate materials. Peter Hitchen Architects Ltd has produced a design brief which forms a material part of the submission. This detailed brief outlines all the key matters relating to the relevant policies in order to demonstrate full design compliance in terms of the conversions.
- 5.7 Whilst it is clearly evident that the site has, to a limited degree, an open frontage affording long distance views, appropriate mitigation measures in the form of landscaping and respecting the topography of the site can be implemented and this will ensure that the conversions will sit comfortably within the landscape without being prominent or intrusive. Indeed, it will be noted from the submitted plans and graphics prepared by PHA, that the conversions will not be prominent within the landscape. The site is set down from Moor Lane and located behind a substantial and long established woodland belt making the development extremely well screened from long distance views and effectively reducing to a minimum any impact upon the openness of the green belt.
- 5.8 Utility services are already located within the site which is also served by an existing and established access directly from the existing highway.
- 5.9 It is respectfully submitted that the Core Strategy supports the proposal in terms of its development strategy and sustainable development policies and objectives.

C Policy DME1 Protecting Trees & Woodland

Policy DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection

- 5.10 The proposal relates to existing structures and they will sit comfortably within the existing and established curtilage; there are already in place extensive areas of established landscaping; a planning condition can be imposed that safeguards the integrity of these landscaped areas. It will also be noted that, no landscape features of any not are being removed or are adversely affected by the proposal. It is respectfully submitted that the Core Strategy supports the proposal in terms of its development strategy insofar as it relates to landscape and townscape protection and the protection of trees and woodland.

D National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 2 achieving sustainable development

Chapter 11 Making effective use of land

Chapter 12 achieving well designed places

Chapter 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 5.11 The proposal is very clearly sustainable development and there is, therefore, a presumption that the planning application should be approved. The development is making effective use of land in that the proposal relates to the conversions of two existing and redundant farm buildings capable of conversion as they stand. The design and external appearance of the conversions are entirely appropriate for the site and surrounding area. The proposal will not cause harm to the natural environment; existing landscaping is not adversely affected and areas of new planting are proposed.
- 5.12 In the context of the site being within the Green Belt both the NPPF and the Core Strategy are in harmony (section 5A above refers). In the context of this policy, it is respectfully submitted that the proposal meets the established test for appropriate development within the green belt. The proposal is for a conversion of agricultural buildings that are surplus to such needs and they have always formed part of the farming enterprise at Whittle Hall Farm.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 This proposal is submitted under the provisions of the GPDO Class Q; notwithstanding this, it is demonstrably clear that the development meets all

the trust of national and local planning policy for a sustainable development within the Green Belt.

Trevor Hobday MRTPI

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