

**Erection of Agricultural  
Buildings**

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

**Planning, Design and Access  
Report**

**APB  
Consultant Building Surveyors**

## **Proposed Erection of Agricultural Buildings 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.

The business was started as a 'hobby' farm but is now a profitable enterprise. This underpins the decision to invest in new buildings at Shire Lane, Hurst Green.

### **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 agricultural 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 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.

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).

In 2022 planning permission was refused for the development of an existing agricultural unit and building into a working farm unit for breeding livestock with additional staff accommodation. The Council

found that the staff accommodation was not justified or essential by scale of the activity.

This new application proposes agricultural buildings only. Other reasons for refusal relating to the storage of manure and the new access have been addressed as detailed below.

### **Summary of proposal**

The site 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. The corrugated steel agricultural shed on the site is used for housing the animals grazed there.

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

### **Agricultural Need**

The applicant keeps a herd of alpacas and sheep on land near Clitheroe. He now seeks to expand the enterprise in a set of farm buildings on the land 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 breeding operation.

### **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 that incorporates the recommendations of a pre-application consultation with Lancashire CC Highways Team.

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. The existing hedge along the road frontage would be in part removed to accommodate the new access and the sight lines. A new hedge would be planted to compensate and this would maintain the landscape and ecological value of the hedgerow.

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 would allow safe entrance to and exit from the site onto Longridge Road. By diverting traffic from Shire Lane the new access would promote an overall increase in traffic safety.



The existing poor access from Shire Lane, to be replaced.

## Design

The farm complex proposed would be similar in form, massing and style to other nearby groups of agricultural buildings. The barn/store buildings would sit in a linear arrangement facing Longridge Road. A yard area



would be to the west side with a hardstanding/car parking area and fenced animal enclosures. The buildings would include sections for farm plant and equipment storage, animal housing, animal breeding and a fenced pen area.



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

The buildings would be entirely traditional in form and size. They would be constructed on a base of rendered blockwork with Yorkshire weather boarding above and a roof in part profiled sheets and part Welsh slate. The animal pens would cover 430sm and the farm buildings 300sm.

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.

In response to concerns that the storage of manure might be unreasonably close to property on Shire Lane it is proposed that any waste be stored in trailers to allow its regular removal to facilities where

it can be used for garden fertiliser. It is noted in this respect that no objections were submitted regarding this issue on previous applications and some agricultural smells are a regular and inevitable feature of rural areas.

## **Conclusions**

The proposed development is specifically designed to support the development of a locally based agricultural enterprise. 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 scheme would be 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 DMB1, DMG1 and DMG2, EN2 and DME2.