



Phone: 01772 531378

John Macholc
Head of Planning Services
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
CLITHEROE
BB7 2RA

Email: Archaeology@lancashire.gov.uk
Your ref: 3/2022/0727 & 0729
Our ref: 3/2022/0727 & 0729/LCCHET
Date: 30th August 2022

FAO Adrian Dowd

Dear Mr Macholc,

Application numbers 3/2022/0727 and 3/2022/0729. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for proposed refurbishment of existing farmhouse, conversion of existing attached and detached barns to create three new dwellings, conversion of outbuildings for associated residential use and external works. Lower Reaps Farm Whinney Lane Mellor BB2 7EL

Thank you for your consultations. The buildings are of considerable interest (reflected in the Grade II designation on the house) with visible evidence for several changes to the buildings during their previous periods of use. As such I would tend to disagree with the statement in the Heritage Statement that "However, the past and rather unsympathetic alteration of the farmhouse has left it but a shell of its former existence and is extremely lacking in 17th century features, fixtures and fittings, with very few now remaining that are of interest, namely the 17th century mullioned windows and the internal chamfered and stopped floor beam. The archaeological interest of the building is largely limited to its exterior, the same also being said of the barn, although former openings are present internally within the main central barn, as well of the king post roof trusses which are of interest."

Experience shows that wall finishes can conceal a significant amount of evidence for previous openings, fixtures and fittings within buildings, up to and including large scale alterations to social spaces and circulation routes through the building which will only be revealed when work on the buildings commence and internal plaster is stripped off. The main barn is also historically significant, demonstrating alterations to the economy of the farm, most likely in response to external changes in the local economy that led to an increase in livestock housing, particularly for dairy cattle, in the latter part of the 19th century rather than the older combination barn which was more prevalent in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

As a result, should the Council be minded to give consent to the application we would advise that a record be made of the buildings in advance of any alterations or

conversion, and that an archaeological watching brief should be maintained on the building works proposed for the interior of the house to enable recording of evidence for changes that are currently concealed beneath wall plaster etc. This proposed work can be secured by a planning condition with the following wording suggested:

Condition: No development, site clearance/preparation, or demolitions shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording and analysis. This must be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme of works should comprise the creation of a record of the house to Level 3 as set out in '*Understanding Historic Buildings*' (Historic England 2016), and the farm buildings to level 2/3 (to include cross sections) as set out in *Understanding Historic Buildings*. It should include full descriptions of the building, inside and out, a drawn plan, elevations and at least one section (which may be derived from checked and corrected architect's drawings), and a full photographic coverage, inside and out. The record should also include a rapid desk-based assessment, putting the building and its features into context. This work should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (www.archaeologists.net). A digital copy of the report and the photographs shall be placed in the Lancashire Historic Environment Record prior to the dwelling consented being first occupied.

Reason: To ensure and safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the buildings/site.

Note: Relevant archaeological standards and lists of potential contractors can be found on the CIIfA web pages: <http://www.archaeologists.net> and the BAJR Directory: <http://www.bajr.org/whoseWho/>. '*Understanding Historic Buildings*' can be accessed online at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/>.

This is in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (MoHCLG 2021) paragraph 205: "*Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible [Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository]*".

Please note that the above comments have been made without the benefit of a site visit.

Yours sincerely,

Peter McCrone

Planning Officer (Archaeology)
Historic Environment Team