

3. No detail of the proposed gallops, concerns over damage to archaeological fabric of the original main approach.
4. Concern over future management of park and "horticulture".
5. As regards the walled garden, development here would have a visual impact for the park.
6. A domestic conversion of the Orangery will necessitate a range of developments not subject to control

ENGLISH HERITAGE:

A summary of comments to date.

1. The amended plans address some of the concerns set out in my previous letters in relation to the access and the setting of the Grade II Orangery. Also in relation to the recommendations made by Doctor Crosby in his report on behalf of the Developer.
2. There are some outstanding matters, for example the impact of the racing stables and the new garages on the landscape on which I would strongly recommend that your Authority considers the advice from the Garden History Society.
3. A proper historical analysis of the site is essential and this should include some map based assessment of the site.
4. I am pleased that arrangements are now being made for English Heritage's Structural Engineer to visit the site. This should clarify outstanding concerns about the condition of the shell of the Hall and enable an agreement to be reached on appropriate options for any remedial work.
5. In relation to English Heritage advice on enabling development your Authority will need to be satisfied that all the 7 criteria in the Guidance is met. The independent financial assessment that your Authority is seeking will be essential. I assume all the information will be forwarded to the Government Office at the referral stage including a draft 106 Agreement to cover the restoration of the landscape and its long term management.
6. The current approach for rebuilding to the rear of the Hall is more sympathetic to the architecture of the Hall. Suggest full set of working details of stone, coursing, roofing etc.
7. There is a need to obtain details of the horse exercise tracks and more details on development proposals in the historic landscape.

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8. I agree that some progress has been made and I recognise that there is a willingness on the part of the Developer to provide the required information. There is potential for this scheme to be successful provided that the outstanding matters can be addressed.

NATIONAL TRUST:

We wish to register a strong objection to this application. Were not consulted at outset (was done 15 October by letter) and personally by applicant's representative. A summary of their initial objections are as follows:

1. The intensity of the development is more than the minimum needed to restore the Hall.
2. The proposed development does not, in reality, involve any restoration of the Hall in spite of the description on the application. What is proposed is a rebuilding. Nor is there any restoration to the park.
3. No surveys have been undertaken of the Hall or the park on which the proposals are based.
4. The quality and details of the drawings and proposed works are inadequate to allow proper consideration of the proposals.
5. The proposed houses within the lower garden, the new stables and exercise track would all be very intrusive in the landscape.
6. The proposals do not provide any public benefit, there is no provision for access to the Hall or park.
7. The proposals, if implemented, and given the intention of the developer the sell off individual elements would result in loss of integrity of the Hall and park as a unit.
8. No provision is made in the proposals for long term restoration and maintenance of the Listed park or for long term maintenance of the Listed Hall.

With regard to the above points raised by the National Trust a copy of the landscape history assessment has been forwarded to them in consideration of the concerns they raised.

CPRE - RIBBLE VALLEY
DISTRICT GROUP

Our District Group have been following the debate regarding proposed development at Woodfold Farm, Mellor and although we do not wish to oppose the development of this site, we are very concerned that any approval given does not become the doorway for further development and modifications. We believe that rigid conditions should be applied and enforced and wondered what assurances you can give in this matter.

NEARBY RESIDENTS:

Eight letters of objection have been received expressing concerns, these can be summarised as follows:

1. The revised plans indicate an excessive increase in the amount of residential development.
2. Together with the above the racehorse facility will generate an excessive amount of traffic.
3. Entrance to Preston New Road will be made worse even with proposed modifications.
4. Further Lane at the moment is full of natural interest and is used by local people and farm vehicles.
5. Proposals will make safety hazards worse, not better.
6. Scheme will have a detrimental impact on the local environment.
7. The proposal will, in effect, be housing development in the Green Belt.
8. Even with proposed improvement to lane they will still not be able to handle large vehicles associated with horse transportation.
9. Concern that the racehorse training facility does not, in the future, develop into a large project such as a gymkhana facility. Suggest condition restricting future use.
10. Objection to conversion of Orangery to residential purposes. Such a conversion will spoil the ambience and completeness of the garden.
11. An equestrian centre will bring disturbance and traffic at unsocial hours, ie early mornings/weekends.
12. Further Lane is a dangerous, unsuitable and narrow road.
13. The access road which passes the Huntsman's Cottages is totally unsuitable for the necessary construction traffic, equestrian vehicles and the resulting cars from 40 plus housing units in Woodfold Park.
14. All three cottages have young children under the age of 10 and the risk of accident/serious injury would be considerably increased.
15. Alternative access to the above site/development and construction vehicles must be a priority.

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Proposal

The above application incorporates a "package" of proposals which include the following:

- Restoration/conversion of Woodfold Hall, a Grade II Listed Building dating from 1798 for residential use; this includes for the rebuilding of the rear wings.
- Rebuilding of the old stable block to the rear of Woodfold Hall.
- Associated garaging.
- Restoration and conversion of the Orangery to a single residential unit.
- Restoration and conversion of the Old Deerhouse to a single residential unit.
- Restoration and conversion, plus five new units, at Woodfold Hall Farm.
- Five new residential units within walled garden/old boiler house site.
- Development of a new horse racing stables and gallops within the parkland.
- In total there will be 42 new residential units.
- The scheme also incorporates some associated off-site highway improvements including modification to the junction with Preston New Road.

Site Location

Woodfold Hall, which is a Grade 2 Listed Building, is located in the far southwest corner of the Borough. The site is reached from an existing access off Further Lane, which leads from the A677 in Mellor. Further Lane also passes through Nabs Head Village and rejoins the A677 opposite Samlesbury Hall. Almost all the site appears on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens as compiled by English Heritage. The landscape is described as improved grassland and abuts a Lancashire County Biological Heritage Site (Woodfold and Jeffrey Wood).

Relevant History

3/87/0607/P – Proposed creation of golf club facilities using the existing remains of the Hall.

3/87/0808/P – Proposed golf course and ancillary facilities.

Planning Committee on 17 March 1989 (resolved to approve these applications subject to satisfactory conditions and the resolution of a Section 52 Agreement [now Section 106] to secure highway improvements and the restoration of Woodfold Hall).

3/00/0159/P – Woodfold Hall Farm – extend complex to provide nine units and garaging. Planning Committee minded to approve application called in by Secretary of State. Withdrawn 17 September 2001.

3/00/0186/P – The Deerhouse, Woodfold Hall Park – restoration of building to two residential units. Withdrawn 12 September 2001.

3/00/0187/P & 3/00/0188 (Listed Building Consent) – Proposed refurbishment of existing partly derelict structure to form a new golf club house, residences and 18 hole golf course and alterations to existing access road at Woodfold Hall, Woodfold Park, Further Lane, Mellor.

Committee minded to approve application, called in by Secretary of State. Withdrawn 17 September 2001.

Relevant Policies

Policy G1 - Development Control.

Policy ENV4 - Green Belt.

Policy ENV21 - Historic Parks and Gardens.

Policy ENV19 - Listed Buildings.

Policy H15 - Building Conversions - Location.

Policy 4 – Development in Green Belt – Lancashire Structure Plan 1991 – 2006 “Greening the Red Rose County”.

Environmental, Human Rights and Other Issues

In relation to this application there are a number of issues to be considered, principally these are as follows.

The general policy implications raised by Lancashire County Council, are the proposed renovation of the Listed buildings and the impact of the proposals on the historic garden and landscaping, the ecological implications and safeguards, the highway issues raised by the County Surveyor and the residents living along Further Lane. Some of these issues are, of course, inter-connected and overlap each other.

Historical Planning Context

The history of this site extends back to the late 1980s when a scheme for the restoration of the Hall and provision of a golf course with associated residential development was approved subject to a Section 106 Agreement being entered into. A further scheme for a golf course and associated residential development was again submitted in 2000 when the Planning and Development Committee was minded to approve. Following a “calling” by the Secretary of State the application was subsequently withdrawn.

The form of this current submission has been changed and is now for the restoration/conversion of the historic buildings on site within the existing footprints and the development of a racehorse training facility with gallops through the parkland, together with associated off-site highway works.

Alterations to proposal following submission of current applications.

Following consultation with the requisite statutory bodies the application has been amended to take account of the observations made to date. In particular the applicant has commissioned a “landscape history assessment” which has looked at the application site and based on the findings has recommended a number of amendments to the proposals and detailed the principal historic features which should be taken account of.

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In brief, the main amendments which are detailed on the amended plans are as follows:

- a plan detailing the findings of the 'landscape history assessments';
- changes to the architectural detailing on Woodfold Hall Farm;
- repositioning of the five residential units in the walled garden;
- repositioning of the garage and access to the rear of the Orangery to protect its open aspect to the parkland;
- restoration of the formal estate fencing to the front of the Hall;
- realignment of the proposed gallops and addition of a 'return' mown grass track;
- the historical report also details the proposed restorations that will be needed for the pathways, walls, railings and steps within the park area. These it is proposed would be detailed in any management plan for the site and be incorporated in a Section 106 Agreement.

Historical Significance

The Hall and Orangery at Woodfold are Grade II Listed. They have considerable historical significance within the area. The park and area in which they stand are now on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, Grade II Listed. The Hall itself dates from 1798 with the Orangery and surrounding pleasure gardens a few years later. It was originally built by Henry Sudell, a cotton manufacturer from Blackburn, who occupied the dwelling until 1827. The architect was a Charles McNiven from Manchester. Throughout its history it has had numerous owners, perhaps the most notable being Robert Daniel Thwaites, brewer from Blackburn who took over ownership in 1877. From this time the building has been occupied by relatives and descendants of this family until the end of the 1930s. The Hall was last occupied in the Second World War by elderly women evacuees from Liverpool.

The house is an example of a Georgian Mansion built in stone with the main elevations in ashlar, little altered from its original design. Testament to its quality is that following some 40 years plus without a roof on the main house is still standing as is the front portico with the four stone columns. Some examples of the original joinery remain, notably the window frames. Records of the original building survive which was surveyed by the National Building Record in 1957.

Murray's Lancashire Architectural Guide 1955 describes the Hall and grounds as follows:

"An Adamesque" house of stone with a pedimented portico stands on high ground facing south over undulating plantations, house and park together forming a perfect example of late 18th Century landscape design, probably the best and largest now surviving in Lancashire."

Detailed photographic records exist for the exterior elevations of the Hall which will provide a basis for its restoration.

Structural Condition

As part of the original submission for the previous golf course development the applicant had commissioned a structural survey of the Hall.

In summary this concluded that:

"The majority of the external and internal walls to the main house structure are considered to be in a reasonably sound structural condition and we believe that they are capable of refurbishment and utilisation within the remodernised property.

With the lapse of time since this initial survey was undertaken, English Heritage has now suggested that their structural engineer should inspect the site to give an opinion on the current situation.

A report following this site visit is awaited.

The Hall, Orangery, walled garden and parkland – historical background and proposed restoration

The Hall

On the restoration of the Hall it is proposed that the main front section of the house will be restored with the rear area being rebuilt on the original footprint based on the historical research, utilising the original stonework where possible.

The wings will be restored to match the original form as built in the 18th Century, using the same materials as the main hall. The replication will incorporate the important features of the original building. These include differing fenestration on the external elevations of the east and west wings.

Internally the proposals will seek to retain the general layout of the accommodation. The entrance corridor will open out into a grand hall from which individual residences can be accessed. The previous pattern of rooms will largely be replicated with the majority of internal walls being rebuilt in their original locations and the former yards being laid out with a courtyard appearance.

To the rear of the Hall originally stood a coach house and stable block. Although there is documented evidence that this was still standing in 1951, it was completely demolished some time later.

The proposed design for this building draws strongly upon the original block which has now been demolished. The development will follow the footprint of the original building and replicate its turret and porthole windows. Although the centre of this building respects its original coach house appearance the design for it is drawn from elements of the main Hall itself.

The final aspect of development in this part of the overall site is the provision of garages to service the 25 dwellings in the main hall and coach house/stable block. One garage per dwelling will be provided, and these will be located in four small blocks to the west of the coach house/stable block. Although close to the main Hall, the garages will be interspaced between a number of existing specimen trees and it is felt, therefore, that they will not have a significant impact on the setting of the Listed building. The garages will be constructed of dressed stone with natural slate roofs.

The Orangery

The Orangery was originally stone built with iron framing to the glass roof complete with a lantern detail. The proposals to restore this building on its original site involve the retention of its footprint of seven bays long by four wide, with the three centre bays being bowed forward in a curve. Although the form and design will match the original, the proposed use of the Orangery will be as a dwelling. Although observations have been made by the Georgian Society as to what may have been the original design for the roof, photographic evidence exists as to the present profile and this would appear to be the most reliable design to follow. It is therefore proposed to provide a profile copper roof to the structure, to the same design as the original glazed panels. Internally, the ground floor of the building will be open plan to