

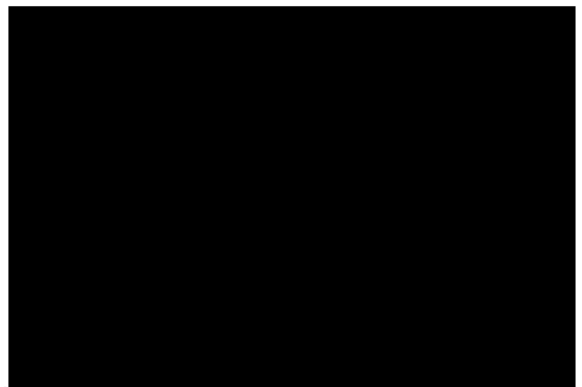
PLANNING STATEMENT

**IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR THE ERECTION OF A NEW DWELLING
AND DEMOLITION OF EQUESTRIAN DEVELOPMENT
ON LAND TO THE SOUTH OF FURTHER LANE,
WOODFOLD PARK, MELLOR**

**PREPARED ON BEHALF OF
SHAW & JAGGER ARCHITECTS**



**Providing
direction since
2010**



1 November 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Directions Planning Consultancy Ltd has been instructed by Shaw & Jagger Architects to prepare a planning statement in support of a full planning application for the erection of a new dwelling and demolition of existing equestrian related development on land to the south of Further Lane, Woodfold Park, Mellor.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement sets out the planning policy considerations in respect of local and national planning policy and guidance.

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is located on the south side of Further Lane and incorporates a series of paddocks and a manège, along with buildings in equestrian use to the south west and stables to the north east.
- 2.2 Further Lane forms the northern boundary to the site where a hedgerow follows the length of the site along the road into which the two access points are set. The south western boundary is defined by a post and rail fence beyond which is woodland. The southern boundary to the site is formed by a post and rail fence that separates the pastureland from the properties at Woodfold Hall and a driveway serving two residential properties set within the walled garden to Woodfold Hall to the south west of the application site. To the east is a belt of tree planting beyond which is a driveway serving Huntsman's Cottages, Woodfold Park Farm and Woodfold Hall.
- 2.3 Access into the site is currently provided from two access points off Further Lane. The first access is through a recently-constructed field gate, which is intended to provide access to the proposed dwelling. The second access serves the equestrian development to the south of the site through a gateway constructed of stone that includes a secure electronic gate.
- 2.4 Further Lane provides access to the west to Samlesbury Bottom and eastwards, Further Lane leads to the A677. In turn, the A677 provides access to Preston to the west and Blackburn to the east. The site is located approximately 1.6km southwest of Mellor and 3.9km northwest of Blackburn. Samlesbury Aerodrome is located approximately 1.5km to the northwest.
- 2.5 Woodfold Hall, along with Woodfold Park Farm, historically formed part of the Woodfold Park Estate, which is now listed in Historic England's register of parks and gardens. Several of the buildings within the registered grounds are registered listed buildings.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The red line of the application site identifies the land and buildings to which the full planning application relates for the erection of a new dwelling. The proposed detached dwelling is to incorporate an integrated garage within a basement, living accommodation at ground floor and six ensuite bedrooms at first floor. Incidental uses, such as a gym, games room, cinema and swimming pool are to be included within the accommodation provided by the dwelling at basement and ground floor level.

The proposed dwelling is to be set within landscaped grounds that are intended to provide parking and amenity space to serve the detached house.

- 3.2 The application also involves the demolition of stables to allow for the erection of the dwelling. The demolition of further equestrian buildings, along with the removal of a manège is to form part of the application as well. An existing access onto Further Lane to the south west of the site is also to be closed off. The area of land currently occupied by the equestrian related development is simply to become part of the wider landscaping to the proposed dwelling.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

- 4.1 As the site is greater than 1 hectare, it appears that the development falls under Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the Regulations').
- 4.2 Part 3 of the Regulations makes clear how this planning application can be treated as the request for a screening opinion. Consequently, the Council is required to assess the proposal with reference to Regulation 6. In order to allow the necessary assessment to be made, given that this is a comprehensive full application for a single dwelling, we believe the application contains the information required. However, please do not hesitate to request further information if it would assist consideration of the proposal in light of Regulation 6.
- 4.3 Having regard to the selection criteria contained in Schedule 3 of the Regulations, it is not considered, given the scale and nature of the development, that the proposal will have significant effects on the environment in the context of the Regulations. Consequently, it is not considered that the development constitutes EIA development.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 The Council's online planning record lists a number of planning applications associated with the application site.

Ref. No.	Description of Development	Outcome
3/2020/0474	Discharge of condition 6 - landscaping of planning permission 3/2020/0011	Approved
3/2020/0011	Erection of a 6.19m x 30.48m steel portal frame equestrian building and one temporary equine workers dwelling for three years.	Approved
3/2019/0483	Temporary equine workers dwelling (Resubmission of application 3/2019/0229).	Refused
3/2019/0482	Application for the extension to a steel portal framed building for the stabling and work area for existing business. (Resubmission of application 3/2019/0222)	Refused
3/2019/0229	Temporary equine workers dwelling.	Withdrawn
3/2019/0222	Application for a steel portal framed building for the stabling and work area for existing business.	Refused
3/2018/0262	Retention of existing, unauthorised stable building and proposed new access off Further Lane.	Approved
3/2015/0360	For the retention of the existing stable building, access track and manege to be used as a remedial farrier business	Approved

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3/2014/1127	Discharge of condition 3 - materials of planning consent 3/2012/0359	Withdrawn
3/2015/0005	Variation of condition 7 of planning consent 3/2012/0359 to read 'The stable building and manege hereby permitted shall be for commercial use limited to a remedial farrier (and shall not be used in connection with livery stables or riding school'.	Withdrawn
3/2012/0359	Proposed construction of agricultural building for stables and a 40m x 20m manege. Close off the existing field gate and construct a new field access, gravel track and 6no. parking spaces.	Approved
3/2008/0674	Proposed alterations to listed boundary wall including the creation of a new access point and track to serve stud farm.	Appeal dismissed
3/2009/0389	Alterations to and rebuilding of existing boundary wall.	Approved
3/2008/0675	Proposed alterations to listed boundary wall including the creation of a new access point and track to serve stud farm	Appeal dismissed

Table One: Planning History for the Application Site

6.0 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

6.1 The proposed scheme, as submitted, has been informed by various discussions and consultations in advance of the drawings being finalised and the submission of the applications.

6.2 Pre-Application Enquiry to Ribble Valley

6.2.1 Directions Planning Consultancy submitted a pre-application enquiry to Ribble Valley in June 2021 with a view to seeking an initial opinion in respect of the principle of a new dwelling on the northern portion of the application site.

6.2.2 The pre-application enquiry focused upon the principle of a new dwelling. The intention being to ensure the design team had identified the right design cues and opportunities for enhancement, particularly, as the site is located adjacent to Woodfold Park, a designated heritage asset. The idea being that the Council's response would inform the final design in respect of scale, layout and appearance on the basis that agreement had been reached in relation to the relevant contextual considerations.

6.2.3 The pre-application enquiry was accompanied by a Landscape Visual Appraisal, Character Definition Study and a Design Concept Brochure to explain the landscape and historic context for the site, and the initial design cues that had been identified following analysis of the landscape and heritage context.

6.2.4 The Council's response states that the proposal site makes an important contribution to the setting of Woodfold Park due to the open land affording views with little distraction to Woodfold Park. As such, the proposed development would be harmful to the development history of Woodfold Park. However, reference is made to Woodfold Park in general, but the Council's response does not identify the specific historic elements considered worthy of protection. Additionally, the response simply focuses upon general principles of developing within the context of a heritage asset that is located in open countryside and subject to green belt policy.

6.2.5 The lack of detail in the Council's response and the focus on high level matters was consequently seen as an opportunity to continue with the proposal with a view to identifying

detailed constraints in respect of the setting of Woodfold Park and providing an appropriate response in respect of layout, landscaping and appearance.

6.3 Traditional Architecture Group Peer Review

6.3.1 The Traditional Architecture Group (TAG) were first invited to review the proposal in May 2022. The review involved a site visit and opportunity to consider the pre-application enquiry pack of information, along with drafts of the drawings.

6.3.2 The initial feedback was that the context of the site provides an opportunity for a new dwelling, even within the historic context of Woodfold Park. This is on the basis that *"The panel were very pleased to have available in the Design Statement and through the other consultants' reports a detailed and thorough analysis of the site and the process of an evolving design. The proposals are well supported by both analytical information and precedent for the design concept."*

6.3.3 The panel raised a number of detailed comments where changes to some of the detailing in the design were suggested. The feedback concluded *"This is more than competent restrained design that should be able to achieve the requirements as set out in the paragraph 80e clause. In the next iterations and with the additional information suggested there should be no barrier to achieving this."*

6.3.4 The comments offered by the panel subsequently informed alterations to the detailing of the design, and an updated scheme was submitted to the panel for further comment in September 2022. This time, the panel concluded that *"the overall is an exceptionally competent new neo-classical villa... It will be a great asset to the surrounding area (including the historic context) and a marker of how acceptable rural development can proceed in the future."*

"As previously set out, this is a design that reflects the highest standards of architecture and will fulfil the goals stated in NPPF Paragraph 80e for a project of exceptional quality."

"The proposal harmonises with the topography and wider setting to produce an exemplar example of its building type and, in its context, reflects the highest standards of architecture."

6.3.5 Through the peer review, the TAG has clearly offered unequivocal endorsement for the proposal taking into consideration the historic and landscape context of the site.

6.4 Special Design Review by Jeremy Musson

6.4.1 Jeremy Musson is a notable architectural historian who is an authority in British country houses and architecture. As such, he is qualified to undertake a design review of the proposal in respect of determining whether the proposed dwelling is of exceptional quality with reference to the design tests set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

6.4.2 Having visited the site and reviewed the drawings, Mr Musson concludes that *"the design is 'of exceptional quality, in that it is truly outstanding, 'reflecting the highest standards in architecture', and would 'help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas'."* This is on the basis that "Mr Shaw has taken a deeply researched approach and has developed a

'narrative' which sets out the idea for the proposal, which gives confidence in this elegant design.

"The traditional rules of classical design and proportion inform this contemporary neo-classical design. Both elevation and plan form, echo the finest traditions of country house design, as realised in the original 1790s Woodfold Hall, and other works of James Wyatt, and his nephew Jeffry Wyatt, later known as Wyatville."

- 6.4.3 Mr Musson concluding remark is that *"I would commend this project for approval."* Given Mr Musson is an expert in the design of country houses then receiving such a high commendation evidences the exceptional quality of the proposal. His comments are independent to those of the Traditional Architecture Group, and so offer further support for the proposal.

6.5 Counsel Advice

- 6.6 Given the planning policy context for the application, and in light of the Council's pre-application response, Counsel opinion was sought to identify whether there are any legal or policy barriers to taking forward the proposal. The opinion sets out the material considerations for the determination of the application based on case law. It also makes clear how the proposal satisfies the requirements of paragraph 80 where the supporting information provides a strong case for the scheme to be approved.

7.0 PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The development plan in this instance consists of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014) and the Housing and Economic Development DPD (October 2019). The proposals map shows the application site to be located within the general extent of the green belt and a mineral safeguarding area. On this basis, the following national and local planning policies are considered to be of particular pertinence in the determination of the application.

7.2 National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.2.1 The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') was published on 20 July 2021 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Framework makes clear that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the Framework is such a material consideration.

- 7.2.2 The relevant policies of the Framework will be referred to as appropriate in this Statement, and in particular those policies in sections 2 (Achieving sustainable development); 5 (Delivering as sufficient supply of homes); 11 (Making effective use of land); 12 (Achieving well-designed places); 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land and 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment).

7.3 Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014)

- 7.3.1 Having reviewed the Core Strategy, the following policies are considered to be pertinent in the determination of the application:
DS1 Development Strategy
EN1 Green Belt

EN4 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
EN5 Heritage Assets
DMG1 General Considerations
DME4 Protecting Heritage Assets

7.4 Housing and Economic Development DPD (October 2019)

- 7.4.1 Having reviewed the DPD, there are no policies within the document that are relevant to the consideration of the application.

8.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The introduction to this statement makes clear that the application is for the demolition and removal of various equestrian related buildings and structures, and for the erection of one dwelling. On this basis, a number of key policy matters and material considerations are pertinent to the determination of this planning application. Each is addressed in turn below.

8.2 Principle of Development

- 8.2.1 The development strategy set out in the Core Strategy is to concentrate development within the principal settlements and a number of named villages, as stated under policy DS1. Policy DMG2 then states that within open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area. Additionally, the policy suggests that the re-use of existing buildings will in most cases be more appropriate than new build. As such, the Core Strategy does not preclude development outside of existing villages as it does not explicitly state that new dwellings outside of existing settlements will be considered inappropriate. Also, the Core Strategy does not provide any criteria for determining applications involving new dwellings outside of existing settlements. Instead, the Core Strategy is silent on the matter, which means it is necessary to determine the application with reference to other planning policies governing the location of development.
- 8.2.2 In turning to national policy, the NPPF sets out under paragraph 80 how planning decisions should avoid development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more circumstances listed applies. Under criterion (e) to paragraph 80, the Framework makes clear that one of the circumstances in which an isolated home might be considered acceptable is where *"the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
- *is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - *would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area."*
- 8.2.3 In considering paragraph 80(e), there are clearly a number of considerations to address, which are dealt with in turn below. We have however, reordered the considerations so they are presented with reference to the thought process in determining whether a proposal constitutes exceptional quality. The point being is that it is usual to consider the characteristics of an area and opportunities for enhancement with a view to gaining an appreciation of the context for a proposal. It is only once the context can be appreciated that thought can be given to an appropriate design response that might raise the standards of design more generally in the rural area. Just as, it is only possible to understand whether the design is truly outstanding once the

scheme as a whole can be reviewed. As such, whether a scheme is of exceptional quality is the overall assessment of the proposal.

- 8.2.4 Following the logical thought process associated with consideration of paragraph 80(e) house is why a pre-application enquiry was submitted to Ribble Valley at the start of the design process. Also, why TAG were asked to comment on an early version of the scheme before the drawings were finalised. The intention being to ensure the thought process behind the design of the house was robust and correct.

8.3 Isolated Home in the Countryside

- 8.3.1 Since the NPPF was first published in 2012, there have been a number of High Court Judgements and also Inspector's decisions concerning planning appeals that have attempted to provide explanation and clarity to the meaning of 'isolated' within the context of paragraph 80 and its predecessors. Despite the various iterations of paragraph 80 through previous versions of the NPPF the essence of national planning policy has remained unchanged in relation to providing the context for considering proposals concerning isolated new homes within the countryside.
- 8.3.2 Our understanding of how 'isolated' should be treated within the context of paragraph 80, is best explained with reference to the High Court Judgement concerning *Braintree District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Others* [2018]. The Judgement found that *"the word 'isolated' in the phrase 'isolated homes in the countryside' simply connotes a dwelling that is physically separate or remote from a settlement."* Whilst this judgement was issued with reference to the 2018 version of the NPPF there has been no change of wording to the NPPF or further High Court Judgements to suggest a different interpretation should now be attributed to the consideration of how to define 'isolated' in relation to paragraph 80.
- 8.3.3 With this in mind, the application is clearly located away from any existing settlements and in countryside that is characterised by scattered farmsteads and small clusters of development. Whilst there are other dwellings at Huntsman's Cottages and Woodfold Hall, these are some distance from the application site. The separation distance between is such that whilst it is possible to view the other properties within the same vista as the application site, it cannot be argued that the properties are immediate neighbours or of sufficient density to constitute a hamlet or other type of settlement. Our understanding is confirmed by the Counsel's opinion that accompanies the application, which explains in more detail how 'isolation' is to be interpreted in reference to paragraph 80.

8.4 Sensitive to the Defining Characteristics of the Local Area

- 8.4.1 For the design of a dwelling to be considered exceptional, paragraph 80 of the NPPF requires it to be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. In order to understand the defining characteristics of the local area, DRaW Ltd were instructed to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). The methodology of the LVA process is intended to identify and outline the key characteristics of the site and surrounding landscape, as well as to identify any important visual receptors or constraints. Assessing the significance of the surrounding landscape is intended to provide direction to the development of the proposal to ensure the

design will respond positively to the landscape context. The full findings are set out in the accompanying LVA.

- 8.4.2 In brief, the LVA sets out how the general character of the landscape has been heavily influenced by the development of industry in the area, so areas of countryside are fragmented by towns and scattered development. Within the countryside there are also a considerable number of country houses and parklands, where the designed landscape is evidence of the developing industrial enterprises and increasing wealth that being apparent between the 16th and 19th centuries.
- 8.4.3 The landscape to the north of the site is recorded as being defined by pastoral farmland with frequent urban influences, including the A677, prominent settlements and the presence of the BEA development and Airfield at Samlesbury Aerodrome. To the south of the site, the landscape is characterised by Woodfold Park, including both its buildings and parklands.
- 8.4.4 Woodfold Park is understood to have been subject to extensive redevelopment of its various buildings over the last twenty years, including through both conversion and new build development. Recent redevelopment of Woodfold Park is considered to have caused visual intrusions within the landscape and presence of development that is out of character to the original parkland. Namely, Woodfold Park Farm, Woodfold Park Stud and The Walled Garden where these properties have clearly been designed in recent years and are visible from both short and long distance vantage points. The parkland itself is no longer actively managed and is instead mostly in some form of agricultural use. Areas of planted woodland and other features introduced into the landscape as part of the purposeful design are also not subject to active management or plans for succession planting.
- 8.4.5 In the pre-application response, the Council suggests that the site offers views with little distraction to Woodfold Park. However, the pre-app response does not identify specific views that require protection in order to preserve the setting of Woodfold Park. Equally, the pre-application response does not provide any explanation as to what element of the view requires protection. Analysis of the area suggests the only views of Woodfold Park over the application site are of the rear to Woodfold Hall and the new houses within the Walled Garden from Further Lane. Views are therefore limited due to distance and the height of the hedge, along with the ability to only see the rear elevation and top section of Woodfold Hall or the new houses within the Walled Garden. The rear to Woodfold Hall consists of only modern extensions where none of the original Hall is evident, whilst the houses within the Walled Garden are also of recent times. As such, the views of Woodfold Hall over the application site do not reveal the significance of the heritage asset, as it simply presents itself as a late 21st Century housing development. Instead, the significance is limited to the relationship between the application site and Woodfold Park, and the way in which the application site provides a contextual setting to the parkland beyond.
- 8.4.6 Due to the harm that has succumbed Woodfold Park, the LVA concludes the location of the site on the edge of Woodfold Park provides an opportunity to improve the damage to the heritage asset. In particular, development of the proposal site creates an opportunity to establish new tree planting to screen some of the recent redevelopments across Woodfold Park from public

vantage points. This includes, introducing planting along the southern boundary of the proposal site to screen the redevelopment of Woodfold Hall and the associated domestic paraphernalia from Further Lane and other public vantage points to the north of the parkland.

- 8.4.7 The LVA found there to be no notable landscape or visual constraint that might prevent development of a dwelling of exceptional quality because the site itself is visually well contained. Any public views are gained from the limits of the immediate area, especially as the woodland along the southern boundary screens views of the site from the wider area.
- 8.4.8 Given the significance of Woodfold Park to the context of the proposal site and its influence on the appearance of the wider landscape, a Character Study was undertaken in addition to the LVA. The purpose of the Character Study was intended to understand the history to the design of the landscape and its significance on the character of the area today. If development is to be located within the setting of Woodfold Park, which is a recognised heritage asset, then the historic value provides an important perspective and influence to the design of the proposal.
- 8.4.9 The Character Study outlines how the landscape of Woodfold Park is by Charles McNiven in the style of Humphrey Repton. Woodfold Hall is understood to have been designed by James Wyatt, along with Geoffrey Wyatt his nephew.
- 8.4.10 Historic maps of the site and its surroundings reveal the way in which the landscape matured as development progressed in the form of scattered farmsteads and the implementation of the vision for Woodfold Park. The available historic maps for the area also suggest that the original vision for Woodfold Park was not ultimately realised, which can be discerned from a series of physical changes within the landscape notations. It also appears that the vision involved wider changes whereby the original Shorrocks Green Hall was demolished and the avenue of trees that led to the building (and originally crossed the application site) were removed to make way for Huntsman's Cottage and the creation of Further Lane. Overlaying an existing landscape with a new landscape meant that the application site has a different character to the wider parkland.
- 8.4.11 Also, the wall surrounding the extent of the Estate is incomplete, as there is no wall defining the northern boundary to the parkland, particularly in proximity to the proposal site. It appears changes of landownership may have influenced the development of the Estate and explain why the wall is incomplete and early landscape features changed. Especially, as the proposal site appears to have originally formed part of the extent of the Estate, but later became detached through a change of ownership.
- 8.4.12 The Character Study concludes that the proposal site provides the opportunity to repair some of the harm caused to Woodfold Park and also further explain the significance of the heritage asset. In particular, the relationship of the proposal site with Woodfold Park could be reinstated with appropriate development and landscaping.
- 8.4.13 In the initial TAG Peer Review, the panel agree with the findings of the Character Study that the application site historically formed part of the original Estate, but that it was not part of the

parkland. Their understanding is that the application site is located adjacent to the service entrance to Woodfold Hall, which would have originally been accessed from the south.

- 8.4.14 In order to respond to the historic context of Woodfold Park and to assist with repairing the historic landscape, the panel encouraged the idea of the application incorporating the land associated with the equestrian development to the west of the initial extent of the pre-application enquiry site. The purpose being to remove the visually intrusive equestrian development from the immediate context of Woodfold Park; to allow the hedge along Further Lane to be enhanced; to create a seamless flow between the proposed dwelling and its context; and to create a suitable sized landscape for the dwelling. The applicant listened to the panel and the purchase of the adjacent land has been agreed with a view to removing the equestrian development, which includes a manège, gate posts and buildings, from the setting of Woodfold Park.
- 8.4.15 Having reviewed the various assessments of the historic and landscape context for the application site, and gained an understanding of how historic events have led to the current equestrian use of the site, it would appear that the appearance of the site detracts from the setting of Woodfold Park. If history had played out as first planned, then the application site would have been maintained as part of the setting to Woodfold Hall, either through subsequent phases of development or simply being used in a more sympathetic manner. However, the sale of the land and its subsequent subdivision and strengthening of character for equestrian use serves to visually sever the land from Woodfold Park and cause further harm to the setting of the heritage assets. Coupled with the harm caused to the historic significance of the Hall and Walled Garden through redevelopment, including the subdivision of the immediate grounds into gardens and introduction of extensions then we believe the situation creates opportunities to address the harm by altering the layout, introducing landscaping and reinstating the relationship between the application site and Woodfold Park.
- 8.4.16 Subsequently, the Design and Access Statement explains how *"there are reasonable grounds for the accepting creation of new dwelling as a positive contribution to the development of Woodfold Park. The Hall has lost its significance as the principal residence by being made derelict and converted to apartments. The clutter of new buildings around the hall, with no reference to its historic plan, have also diminished its significance. The studies outline a route to creating a sympathetic Reptonian influenced landscape as base for siting a new Hall. The proposed Hall should follow Repton's design ethos in siting and layout. As part of this narrative the typology of various housing/lodge types have been highlighted as suitable for the site."*

8.5 Significantly Enhance its Immediate Setting

- 8.5.1 One of the considerations set out under paragraph 80 of the Framework is how the proposal should "significantly enhance its immediate setting." Typically, it is understood the expectation is that a scheme will further improve the quality or value of the immediate setting to the proposal.
- 8.5.2 In this instance, the site forms a series of paddocks that are currently within equestrian use and used for the grazing of horses. As such, the paddocks are identified within the ecology report and LVA to be neutral grasslands with no UK priority habitats recorded. The site also contains a number of buildings and structures, including a manège associated with the equestrian use

of the land. The location of the application site adjacent to Woodfold Park means that it forms part of the setting to various heritage assets.

- 8.5.3 The reports accompanying the application identify a number of opportunities to enhance the immediate setting to the proposal, which predominantly relate to extending or creating new habitats through the introduction of additional planting and bodies of water. The reports identify how there are opportunities to enhance the setting of the heritage assets and also the ecological value of the site.
- 8.5.4 A drawing is included within the application pack to illustrate the proposed landscaping scheme. An explanation of the principles for the landscaping is set out from page 146 of the Design and Access Statement, which has been informed by the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal and the Character Assessment.
- 8.5.5 The Preliminary Ecology Appraisal sets out a number of recommendations in respect of enhancing the ecological value of the site with a view to providing additional habitat for the various protected species that are evident within the local area. The various opportunities for enhancement are set out in the ecology section of this statement below.
- 8.5.6 Whilst the reinstatement of meadowland, with the reinforcement of the boundary tree planting and new lengths of new hedge planting will enhance the ecological value of the site, it will also serve to repair the setting of the Woodfold Park so the relationship of the site with the parkland and Hall would be reinstated through a change in character to the site. This is on the basis that equestrian development currently serves as a visual detractor to Woodfold Park because the various equestrian buildings and structures, plus the subdivision of the application site into smaller paddocks have appeared in recent times and are also not typically found on the edge of historic parkland. It also needs to be kept in mind that there are further applications that have been granted for additional development associated with Woodfold Stud Farm. The proposal will therefore prevent those permissions from being implemented that would only serve to cause further harm. The proposal therefore intends to secure the replacement of the currently unsympathetic use of the land and to prevent further harm with more appropriate development to the setting of the heritage assets.
- 8.5.7 Of particular interest is how the landscaping will create a continuous flow of planting across the entire site, whilst also extending the screening to some of the more undesirable aspects of the recent redevelopment of Woodfold Hall when viewed from Further Lane. The result will be that the application site will appear to be a component part of Woodfold Park, thereby restoring the historic association of the site with the wider park so it once again appears to form part of the same landownership.
- 8.5.8 The proposal also provides the opportunity to enhance the visual quality of the boundary of the site by reinforcing and repairing the existing hedgerow following removal of current disruptions in its length. Along Further Lane, there is a second existing access that currently serves the equestrian use of the western portion of the application site, which is known as Woodfold Park Stud. This access is to be removed and a new fence coupled with hedgerow planting is to be introduced in order to fill the resulting gap. Removing the existing access is

considered to provide a visual improvement to Further Lane, due to the current 'urban' appearance of the gate posts and sliding gate that are alien to the rural character of the area. The gates also currently detract from the setting to Woodfold Hall, which can be viewed within the same vista from Further Lane.

- 8.5.9 The opportunities to enhance the ecological value of the site, along with enhancing the setting of heritage assets are considered to accord with policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy. Additionally, the proposal clearly meets the criteria set out under paragraph 80 of the NPPF, which weighs in favour of the proposal.

8.6 Raise Standards of Design More Generally in Rural Areas

- 8.6.1 Having reviewed the landscape and heritage setting for the site, it is apparent that the heavily visible influence of purposeful landscaping and buildings placement has had on the character of the surrounding landscape provides an important influential role. The landscape associated with Woodfold Park was purposefully designed on the basis of principles defined by Repton, who was a notable landscape architect of his time. The historic association of the proposal site with Woodfold Park and the proximity of the proposal site to the historic country house and parklands would therefore suggest it is appropriate to adopt traditional techniques in the design of the recreational landscapes associated with country houses for the development of the proposal site. The proposal site feels to be an appropriate opportunity to celebrate traditional architectural design and landscape design principles.
- 8.6.2 The Design and Access Statement explains how the concept for the proposal have evolved through several iterations that led to the submitted scheme. Originally derived directly from the principles used in the design of Woodfold Park, which is based in design geometry using 'squaring the circle'. However, further historic research and queries raised by the pre-application peer review process led to a reappraisal of not just the design of the villa, but also the extent of the site.
- 8.6.3 The accompanying Design and Access Statement explains the development of the principles and various iterations behind the design of the proposed new dwelling and accompanying landscaping scheme, which is based on the principles of a traditional villa.
- 8.6.4 In particular, how it was typical for country homes of the scale experienced at Woodfold Park to incorporate a hierarchy of houses and entertainment spaces, including the principal residence, the villa, the hunting box, and the ornamental cottage. In respect of Woodfold Park, the hierarchy and range of buildings is incomplete, as it appears there is only the main Woodfold Hall and an Orangery. As such, Woodfold Park lacks the diversity of houses and entertainment spaces that might have been expected of an Estate set on the outskirts of an urban area and built for the enjoyment of a wealthy family in the Regency Era. Especially, given the size of the parkland itself. The history of the Estate also suggests Woodfold Park was not completed given the documentation available and as parts were sold.
- 8.6.5 The Design and Access Statement provides examples of similar country houses and their parklands, as well as setting out illustrations of how villas are designed of the appropriate time period to which the proposal now refers. This is in terms of the technical requirements for the

proportions and scale of such country residences, which would have an irregular floorplan and incorporate an 'antiquated' style.

- 8.6.6 The Design and Access Statement also builds upon the Character Study and peer reviews by illustrating how the site might be laid out with reference to landscape features and opportunities for enhancement. In particular, the importance of providing grounds of sufficient scale to create an appropriate context to the dwelling, whilst re-establishing the former relationship of the application site with Woodfold Hall.
- 8.6.7 It should be noted on this matter that the tradition in 18th century landscape design, as evident in the approach to Woodfold Park, was to create a series of landscapes within a more comprehensive landscape. The intention was for each part of the landscape, where some landscape cells contained or framed buildings, to create a series of separate pictures. Each picture was then intended to fit together to create the whole historic holding. The intention of the proposal is the same, whereby the dwelling is to be located within its own landscaped cell that contributed to the setting of Woodfold Park as a whole.
- 8.6.8 In terms of raising the quality of design within rural areas generally, the proposed dwelling and landscaping scheme are based on design principles from one of the key influential periods in landscape history. Without doubt, the proposal clearly improves upon the visual quality of the site as existing and therefore the contribution the site makes to the wider landscape. Removing equestrian development to make way for classical design will, quite simply, improve the appearance of the area. As such, the proposal accords with paragraph 80 of the NPPF, which provides support of the proposal.
- 8.7 Truly Outstanding**
- 8.7.1 The design rationale for the new dwelling is set out in detail in the Design and Access Statement, which accompanies this application and so it does not need to be repeated in full. The term 'outstanding' can be a subjective one, but with the latest design having gone through a thorough and robust design process, with influence and input from a spectrum of specialists, it is considered that the resulting design will deliver a dwelling that can be classed as truly outstanding.
- 8.7.2 This is evident from the peer review process whereby the design has been subject to the consideration of the Traditional Architectural Group and Jeremy Musson. The Traditional Architectural Group includes a number of notable architects who are recognised widely as being authorities on architectural design. As an individual, Jeremy Musson is also recognised as an expert in architecture. Both TAG and Mr Musson are in agreement that the proposal is truly outstanding.
- 8.7.3 Given the outstanding quality of the proposal then it is considered that the policy requirements set out under policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy are satisfied in respect of design and the spatial qualities of the proposal. As such, the application scheme has been endorsed and found to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

8.8 Reflecting the Highest Standards in Architecture

- 8.8.1 Given paragraph 80 expects the design to be of exceptional quality where it reflects the highest standards in architecture. The applicant has, therefore, engaged an architect of notable reputation with regards to achieving the highest standards of architecture. It is understood that each of the architects within Shaw and Jagger has designed at least one 'paragraph 80 dwelling' where planning permission has been granted.
- 8.8.2 The Practice is also well versed with designing schemes involving heritage assets, including scheduled ancient monuments. The development of the proposal has therefore been based on a significant level of academic knowledge and appropriate experience that is also recognised by various National accolades.
- 8.8.3 The high standards of Shaw and Jagger's work is also evident in various comments set out within the peer reviews that accompany this application.

8.9 Exceptional Quality

- 8.9.1 Overall, it is believed the proposal site offers a unique opportunity to repair harm and enhance the setting of various heritage assets found across Woodfold Park by employing classical architectural design techniques in terms of both the design of the house and also its grounds.
- 8.9.2 The intention is not to create a pastiche, but actually employ the traditional architectural rules associated with designing a new villa in celebration of Woodfold Park and the original vision for the Estate. As Mr Musson states *"There have been few neo-classical houses of this design ambition realised in the later twentieth and early twenty-first century, and an exemplary project should be a reference point for new domestic work in a traditional style."*
- 8.9.3 Given the original vision for Woodfold Park failed to be realised, the proposal site offers an opportunity to seek to complete the vision and bring the application site back into the Estate, as originally envisaged. This includes through extensions to the parkland through new landscaping, which would secure visual improvements to the site by removing the current equestrian development, and also enhancing the ecological value of the otherwise single species grassland.
- 8.9.4 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that significant weight should be given to outstanding design, as long as it fits in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. Given the understanding of the context for the proposal and how the knowledge has influenced the proposal then it is considered that paragraph 134 is engaged and significant weight is to be given in support of the proposal.

8.10 Impact on Significance of Heritage Assets

- 8.10.1 The Character Study accompanying the application identifies the heritage significance associated with the site in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF. In this instance, the application site is located adjacent to Woodfold Park, which is a registered park and garden, whilst several buildings within the vicinity are listed, including Woodfold Hall and The Orangery. The proposal site is not within the curtilage of any of the listings, but it is considered to be within the setting of Woodfold Park due to proximity.

- 8.10.2 The Design and Access Statement, Character Study and LVA, along with the peer review by the Traditional Architecture Group all identify how the value of the heritage assets has been harmed by changes in ownership and development over the years within the parkland and also involving the listed buildings. Additionally, the change to equestrian use associated with the application site itself is also considered to have caused harm to the setting of the heritage assets by virtue of the character associated with equestrian development in contrast the character of the historic parkland and wider agricultural land.
- 8.10.3 Consequently, the proposal is considered to provide an opportunity to address the existing harm and also to better reveal the significance of the heritage asset. In respect of addressing harm, views of Woodfold Park from the application site and across it from Further Lane reveal the rear of Woodfold Hall. The view reveals the extent of recent extensions to the Hall, which enabled its conversion to a series of residential properties, as well as the new dwellings within the Walled Garden. The significance of the original Hall is simply not visible because the main elevation to Woodfold Hall faces southwards and in the opposite direction to the application site.
- 8.10.4 At the same time, the equestrian use of the site bears no relation to the adjacent parkland. It also acts to sever the parkland from the wider agricultural use of surrounding land that was originally the context for parkland and formed part of the original use of the wider Estate. Recent planning permission allows for the erection of further equestrian development, including a temporary new dwelling. The development associated with Woodfold Stud Farm and the use of the land therefore have the potential to cause additional visual harm as a result of intensification of the equestrian use of the land.
- 8.10.5 It is therefore considered that the proposal, which includes a new dwelling and landscaping of the land between the parkland and Further Lane will act to remedy some of the harm created by previous changes and recent development. This is in so far as the landscaping and proposed dwelling will act as a signpost to the heritage assets and offer a more appropriate context to the historic parkland through the creation of a landscape based on principles of traditional parkland landscaping.
- 8.10.6 Consequently, the proposal is considered to better reveal the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with paragraph 206 of the NPPF. Furthermore, the improvements offered to the setting of the heritage assets are considered to deliver benefits sought by policy EN5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. At the same time, the proposal is considered to conform with policy DME4 of the Core Strategy because it will not cause harm or loss to the significance of the heritage asset.

8.11 Addressing Climate Change

- 8.11.1 Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy requires all development to optimise energy efficiency by using new technologies and minimising the use of energy through appropriate design, layout, material and landscaping.

8.11.2 To this end, the Design and Access Statement explains on page 145 how the proposal adopts a fabric first approach in accordance with the requirements of current Building Regulations. The fabric first approach advocates levels of insulation and particular construction details with a view to achieving a low U value. The highly insulated nature of the construction means that the structure will reduce energy demand.

8.11.3 Heat into the property is expected to be provided via renewable means, as the primary heating source is to be with the use of a geothermal borehole ground source heat pump.

8.11.4 Consequently, the proposal satisfies the requirements of policy EN3 and DMG1 of the Core Strategy, and paragraph 157 of the NPPF. This is on the basis that the proposal will assist with reducing carbon emissions by limiting energy demand.

8.12 Access and Parking

8.12.1 Access to serve the proposed dwelling is to be gained through the existing field entrance into the northern eastern paddock. As the access is existing then it is considered to be appropriate to serve the proposal.

8.12.2 Within the site, there are five parking spaces to be provided within an integrated underground garage. The basement garage is to also provide storage for cycles. Further parking is to be provided on the northside of the proposed dwelling. The proposed parking access arrangements are considered to accord with policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.

8.12.3 Further to the west, along Further Lane, there is a second existing access that serves the equestrian use of the western portion of the application site. This access is to be removed and the fence plus hedgerow planting is to be extended in order to fill the resulting gap. Removing the existing access is considered to provide a visual improvement to Further Lane, due to the current 'urban' appearance of the gate posts and sliding gate that are alien to the rural character of the area. The gates also currently detract from the setting to Woodfold Hall, which can be viewed within the same vista from Further Lane.

8.12.4 The proposed removal of the access is consequently supported by policy DME4 of the Core Strategy and the visual benefit of establishing a continuous field boundary accords with the principles set out in paragraph 197 of the NPPF. Paragraph 206 of the NPPF also provides support for the proposal in respect of removing the existing gates with a view to better revealing the significance of the setting to a heritage asset by reinstating a continuous hedge to the application site to be viewed as part of the setting to Woodfold Hall beyond.

8.13 Residential Amenity

8.13.1 The proposed dwelling is set sufficient distance from other dwellings so that no issues will arise in respect of overlooking, overbearing and overshadowing. Additionally, there are no neighbouring land uses that might conflict with the proposed residential use of the site. As such, residential amenity will be upheld.

8.14 Flood Risk and Drainage

8.14.1 The site is located within flood risk zone one, as made clear by the plan included under Appendix One to this statement. The site is, therefore, not at risk of flooding.

8.14.2 In terms of surface water drainage, the expectation is that surface water will be dealt with via soakaway incorporating a SUDs system. A pond is included as part of the landscaping scheme, which is expected to be incorporated into the SUDs system to provide on-site attenuation. The final design is expected to be conditioned.

8.14.3 In respect of foul, a connection is to be made into the existing system.

8.14.4 On this basis, the proposal satisfies the requirements of policy EN3 and the policy provisions within the NPPF in respect of addressing the impact of climate change on the risk of flooding.

8.15 Trees

8.15.1 The proposal includes the planting of trees, as both specimens within and to create new belts of woodland planting. Additionally, new lengths of hedgerow are to be planted along sections of the site boundary.

8.15.2 The planting is intended to provide an appropriate response to the findings of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and LVA that accompanies the application. This is in terms of enhancing the ecological value of the site, increasing the visual interest and to provide screening.

8.15.3 Policy DME1 of the Core Strategy makes clear how the visual, botanical and historical value of trees is an important factor when determining applications. The additional tree and hedgerow planting is therefore considered to be a significant benefit of the proposal. Especially, when considered in light of existing circumstances. There is already a belt of tree planting to the east and south of the site, along the length of the driveway to Woodfold Hall. The belt of tree planting is not, however, subject to a formal management plan and the trees appear to be from a similar timeframe. This means that the long term retention of the tree belt is questionable, due to the lack of succession planting.

8.15.4 The proposal therefore offers an opportunity to provide additional woodland planting along the existing lengths of woodland that will act to reinforce the presence of planting for the future. The additional depth to the planting will also reinforce the visual screening role of the woodland, as well as enhance the foraging and breeding function of the woodland planting by extending the habitat.

8.15.5 The proposed planting scheme, which is illustrated on a landscaping drawing and explained further in a document dated May 2022, is therefore considered to accord with policy DME1 of the Core Strategy, and consequently, the benefits are supported by paragraphs 174 and 180 of the NPPF. The benefits of the tree and hedgerow planting weigh heavily in favour of the development.

8.16 Ecology

- 8.16.1 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal found that the site is itself of poor ecological value due to the lack of biodiversity, but that a number of opportunities exist to enhance the biodiversity value of the site in support of the wider ecological value of the area. In particular, there are a number of protected species within the area where the application site could assist with extending existing habitats or creating new habitats to support the protected species.
- 8.16.2 Within the surrounding area to the site, a badger sett was found within 30m and a pond supporting great crested newts lies within 2km of the application site. Breeding birds are evident within the site, including a barn owl, and there are also bats within the general area and hedgehogs.
- 8.16.2 The landscaping proposal for the site consequently offers opportunities to enhance the biodiversity with a view to supporting the local populations of protected species. As such, the landscaping proposal includes extensive tree and hedgerow planting to extend and reinforce corridors that will create new foraging and breeding areas for bats and birds. The tree planting to the east and south is intended to deepen the existing tree planting in order to reinforce the presence of a dark corridor for bats.
- 8.16.3 A pond is proposed to extend the existing network of ponds in support of the wider great crested newt population that will also increase the biodiversity value of the site. Planting of a wider range of grasses, shrubs and flowers will also make a positive contribution to the biodiversity of the site by introducing new habitats.
- 8.16.4 To provide protection to existing species during construction, including the badgers and breeding birds, it is expected that conditions will be required.
- 8.16.5 Further conditions would then be reasonable in respect of securing the provision of new bat and bird boxes as part of the ecological enhancements.
- 8.16.6 Policy EN4 of the Core Strategy makes clear how the Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity and to avoid the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats and help develop green corridors. The proposed landscaping scheme therefore accords with the objective of the policy given it will develop green corridors and serve to enhance the biodiversity of the area in which the application site is located.
- 8.16.7 Overall, the proposal will result in significant net benefits when compared to the existing situation in accordance with paragraph 174 of the NPPF. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF therefore lends support for the proposal given the opportunity to integrate improvements to the biodiversity in and around the development. The enhancements proposed are tangible benefits which weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

8.17 Contamination

- 8.17.1 The site is currently in equestrian use, and prior to its current use, the land was in agricultural use. There is, therefore, no reason to suspect contamination will be present given the historic land use.

- 8.17.2 If necessary, a condition can be attached to any permission to seek submission of information and a remediation strategy if contamination were to be found during construction.

8.18 Green Belt

- 8.18.1 The Proposals Map shows the application site to be located within the general extent of the green belt. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF makes clear that the construction of new buildings is to be considered inappropriate in the green belt. This is with a view to upholding the fundamental aim of green belt policy which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, as explained under paragraph 137. Paragraph 147 then sets out how inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the green belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 explains that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the green belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 8.18.2 Following the High Court's judgement in [Samuel Smith v NYCC], where Lindblom J agreed with an earlier judgement in [Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government], it is clear that visual impact, as well as spatial impact, is part the consideration of 'greater impact' on openness. Lindblom J found that *"To exclude visual impact, as a matter of principle, from a consideration of the likely effects of development on the openness of the Green Belt would be artificial and unrealistic" and that "A realistic assessment will often have to include the likely perceived effects on openness, if any, as well as the spatial effects."*
- 8.18.3 In this instance, the potential harm to the green belt is in respect of building a new dwelling within open countryside, where new dwellings are generally considered inappropriate. This is because the physical presence of a new structure will create a physical interruption in otherwise open land. As such, the impact on openness is a consideration in respect of determining whether the potential for harm to openness is outweighed by other considerations. This is why this matter has been left until last, as it requires an overall assessment of the impacts of the proposal.
- 8.18.4 In terms of spatial considerations in respect of openness, there is already sporadic development present within the same vista, where the presence of existing buildings lends itself to part of the character of the area. The area, is therefore, not completely open and there are views of different built forms within both short and long distance views. Spatially, development therefore has a role to play within the character of the landscape. The introduction of a further dwelling will not detract from the general character given the scale is not sufficient to conflict with the purposes of green belt policy, as listed under paragraph 138 of the NPPF.
- 8.18.5 At the same time as a dwelling is proposed, the proposal also incorporates the demolition of several largescale buildings to the west of the application site. The proposal will also prevent a temporary new dwelling from being erected that was granted under reference 3/2020/0011. It can, therefore, be argued that the proposal will actually result in a reduction of built form within the green belt. As such, the proposal will secure a greater degree of spatial openness given the reduction in footprint and scale of buildings within the green belt.

- 8.18.6 Public views of the site are generally short in nature due to topography and the presence of existing land features, such as woodland. The proposal will, therefore, have limited opportunity to impact on openness in respect of visual impacts. This means that the potential visual impact of the dwelling on the wider character of the area is restricted to Further Lane, which lies immediately adjacent to the site. Any visual impacts on the openness of the green belt will, therefore be limited in terms of significance by virtue of the existing land features that already determine the potential to gain views of the application site.
- 8.18.7 Of particular significance is the fact that the proposed dwelling is to be located against a backdrop of mature woodland planting, which already interrupt views beyond. The presence of existing trees and the intension to extend the woodland planting will further limit views and increasingly restrict the potential impact of the dwelling on the openness of the countryside.
- 8.18.8 In this instance, the exceptional quality of the proposal and the removal of harm to the heritage asset is of sufficient weight to outweigh any potential harm to the green belt. Especially when coupled with the tangible benefits of the proposal in respect of ecological and landscape enhancements, removing the current equestrian development and as all other technical matters can be dealt with satisfactorily. Subsequently, very special circumstances existing in favour of the proposal with reference to paragraph 147 and 148 of the NPPF given that the potential for harm is clearly outweighed by all other considerations.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Paragraph 148 of the NPPF requires an assessment to be made as to whether the potential harm to green belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The purpose being that very special circumstances will only exist where the potential for harm is outweighed by other considerations. This statement addresses the various considerations pertinent to determining the potential impacts of the proposal with a view to assessing whether very special circumstances exist.
- 9.2 In this instance, a dwelling is proposed that is considered to be of exceptional quality with reference to paragraph 80 of the NPPF. This has been demonstrated through the level of analysis in respect of the defining characteristics of the local area and the opportunities that have been identified to enhance the immediate setting. The resulting design of the dwelling has been commended by a number of peers that are more than qualified to determine that the architecture is of the highest standards and truly outstanding. Consequently, the proposal will help to raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas by virtue of its exceptional quality. As such, paragraph 134 of the NPPF is engaged and exceptional quality of the proposal is to be given significant weight.
- 9.3 The proposal is located within the setting of a heritage asset, which includes listed buildings and a registered park and garden. The heritage assets have been harmed following a number of alterations and extensions, which means that their significance has been undermined. The proposal will act to repair some of the harm and secure a number of enhancements by establishing a new dwelling as part of the collection hierarchy of dwellings and buildings that constitute Woodfold Park. Additionally, the proposed landscaping will serve to reinforce the

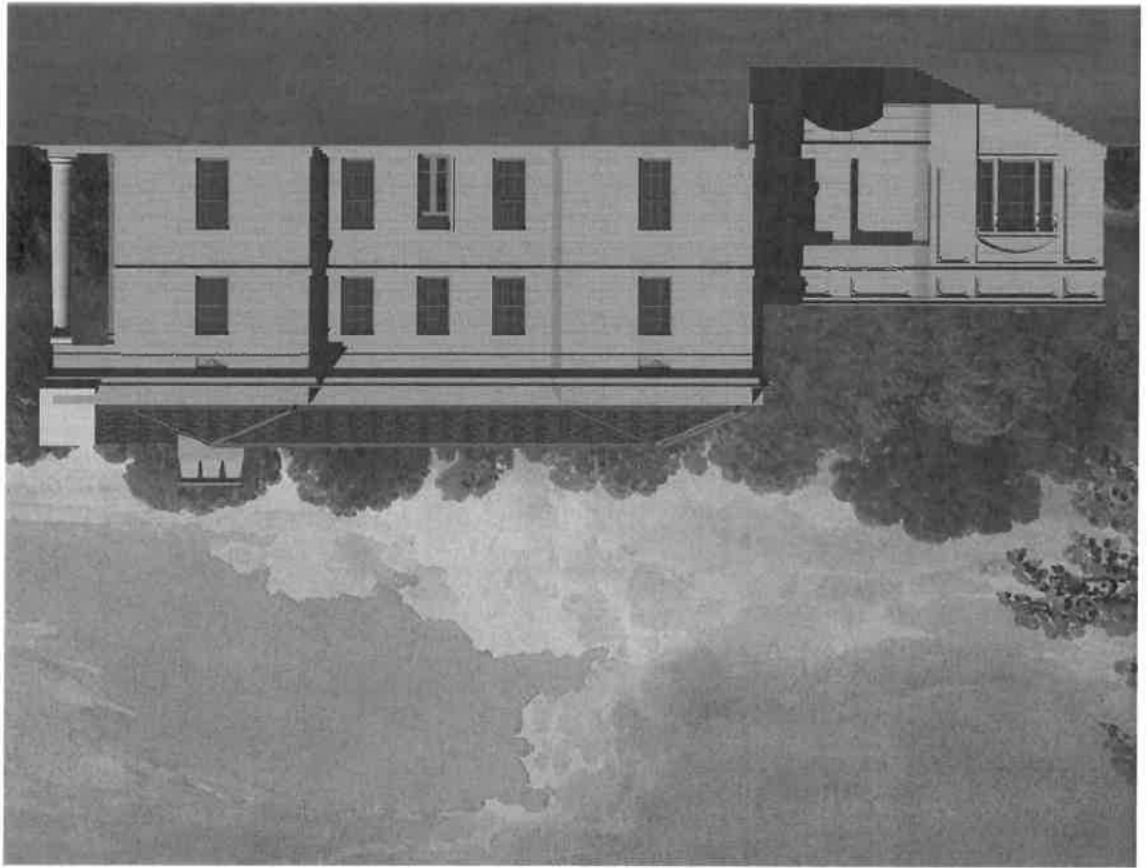
historic woodland planting and secure succession planting for the future. As such, the proposal accords with paragraphs 197 and 202 of the NPPF.

- 9.4 The proposal is expected to deliver a number of tangible benefits in favour of the proposal. Of particular significance is the landscaping scheme, which will secure both visual improvements and ecological enhancements to the site. The site is currently of low ecological value, so the introduction of additional tree and hedgerow planting, along with flowers and shrubs, and the introduction of a pond will introduce new and extended habitats. In turn, the ecological value of the site will be raised in support of a number of protected species.
- 9.5 The additional tree planting will also serve to visually reinforce existing woodland planting around the site, and secure succession planting. Visually, the proposal will also secure improvements in respect of the removal of the equestrian character of the land, which is considered to be harmful to the heritage setting to Woodfold Park. Removing the modern residential styled gates and the various equestrian related buildings and structures will allow the application site to be landscaped in a manner that is sympathetic to the setting of Woodfold Park.
- 9.6 The proposal satisfies all other technical considerations and will not result in any adverse impacts. In particular, the site is served by existing access onto Further Lane, and the site is not subject to flood risk, plus contamination is not expected to be an issue. Residential amenity will be upheld in respect of neighbouring properties and future occupants of the proposal.
- 9.7 Overall, the proposal represents exceptional quality and is considered to constitute sustainable development by virtue of enhancing the natural and built environment, and offering social and economic benefits. There are no identifiable harms that significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits and for these reasons it is clear that planning permission should be granted. As such, the significant weight to be given to the proposal constitutes very special circumstances in support of the granting of planning permission.

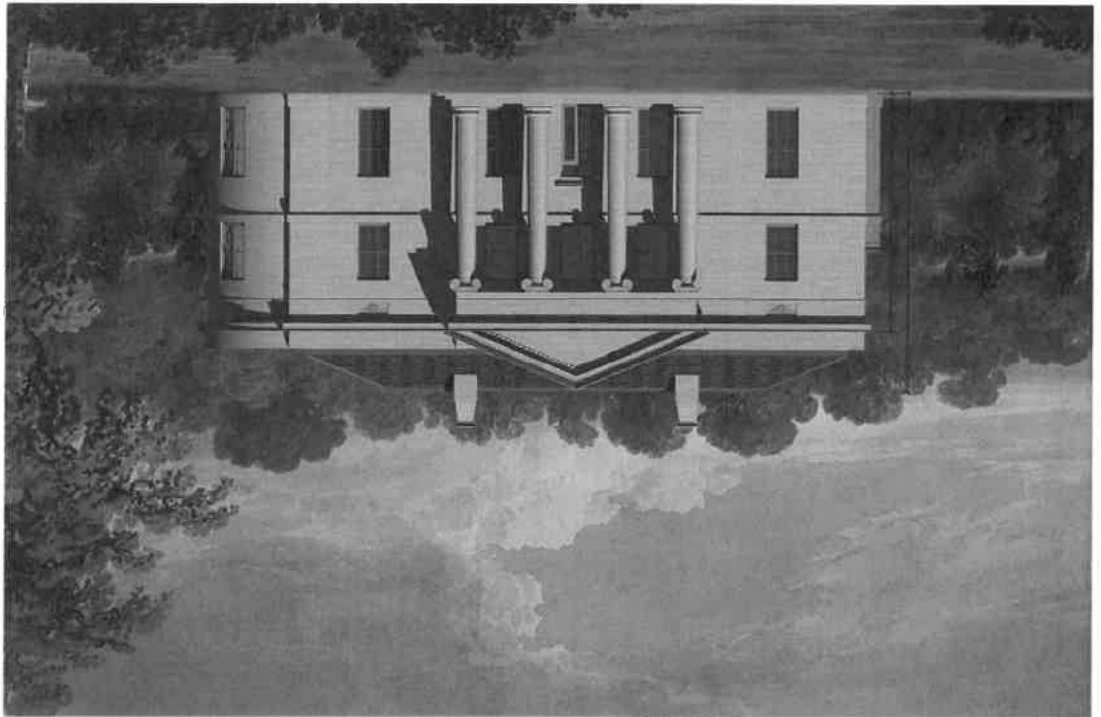
APPENDIX ONE: FLOOD RISK MAP



WOODFOLD VILLA - EAST ELEVATION



WOODFOLD VILLA - NORTH ELEVATION



383/01 (02) 200 A

Rev 01

Drawn by

Checked by

Scale 1:100

DATE OCT 22

PROJECT PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

WOODFOLD VILLA, WOODFOLD PARK, WOODFOLD

PRIVATE DWELLING

PRIVATE CLIENT

DESIGNED FOR APPROVAL

PLANNING

CONSENT

DATE 08/11/22

SCALE 1:100

DATE 08/11/22

SCALE 1:100

DATE 08/11/22

SCALE 1:100

NOTES

1. All dimensions and levels are to be checked on site.

2. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

3. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

4. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

5. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

6. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

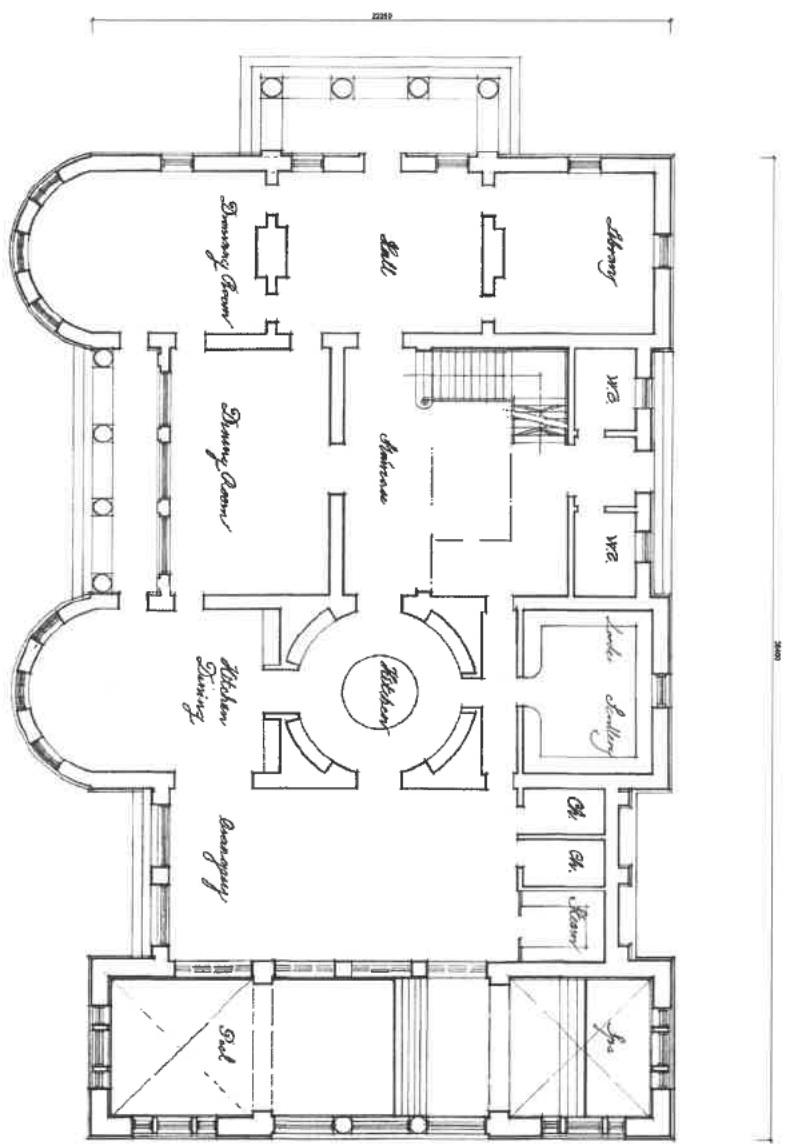
7. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

8. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

9. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

10. The building and its contents are to be checked on site.

- NOTES
- 1. All dimensions and levels are to be indicated on site.
 - 2. For dimensions to be taken to the centre of the room.
 - 3. All dimensions to be taken to the centre of the room.
 - 4. All dimensions to be taken to the centre of the room.
 - 5. All dimensions to be taken to the centre of the room.
 - 6. All dimensions to be taken to the centre of the room.
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 - 10. All dimensions to be taken to the centre of the room.



Ground Plan
WOODFOLD VILLA

PROJECT	PRIVATE DWELLING
LOCATION	WOODFOLD VILLA, WOODFOLD PARK, WOODFOLD PARK, WOODFOLD PARK, WOODFOLD PARK
DATE	1900
DESIGNED BY	SHAW & JAGGER
ENGINEER	SHAW & JAGGER
ARCHITECT	SHAW & JAGGER
STRUCTURAL	SHAW & JAGGER
MECHANICAL	SHAW & JAGGER
ELECTRICAL	SHAW & JAGGER
PLUMBING	SHAW & JAGGER
PAINTING	SHAW & JAGGER
LANDSCAPE	SHAW & JAGGER
INTERIOR	SHAW & JAGGER
EXTERIOR	SHAW & JAGGER
GROUND	SHAW & JAGGER

DATE	1900
DESIGNED BY	SHAW & JAGGER
ENGINEER	SHAW & JAGGER
ARCHITECT	SHAW & JAGGER
STRUCTURAL	SHAW & JAGGER
MECHANICAL	SHAW & JAGGER
ELECTRICAL	SHAW & JAGGER
PLUMBING	SHAW & JAGGER
PAINTING	SHAW & JAGGER
LANDSCAPE	SHAW & JAGGER
INTERIOR	SHAW & JAGGER
EXTERIOR	SHAW & JAGGER
GROUND	SHAW & JAGGER

SHAW & JAGGER
ARCHITECTS
1, CHURCH LANE
LONDON, E.C.4
TELEPHONE: 01-423 5240
HUGHES & HUGHES LTD
1, CHURCH LANE
LONDON, E.C.4
TELEPHONE: 01-423 5240

[illegible]

Endogone Blau: Fuchs 1880
WOODFOLD VILLA

NOTES

1. All structures indicated to be demolished.
2. The owner shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals from the appropriate authorities.
3. The owner shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals from the appropriate authorities.
4. The owner shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals from the appropriate authorities.
5. The owner shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals from the appropriate authorities.

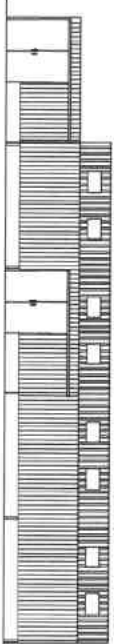


SITE BOUNDARY

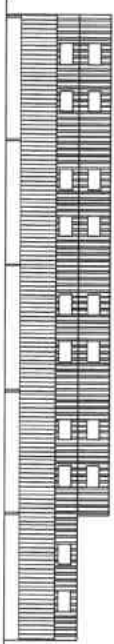
TO BE DEMOLISHED

STRUCTURE B -
TIMBER SHED (NTS)

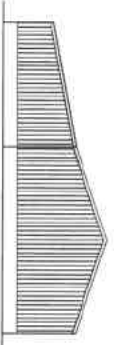
NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



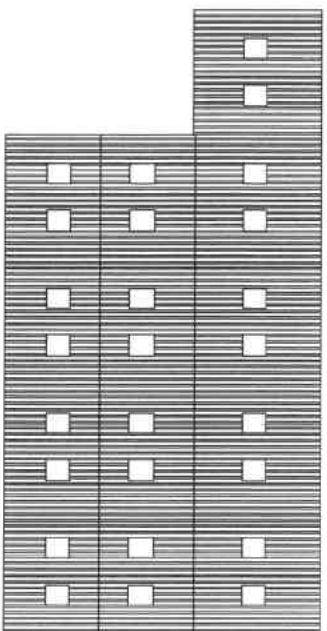
EAST ELEVATION



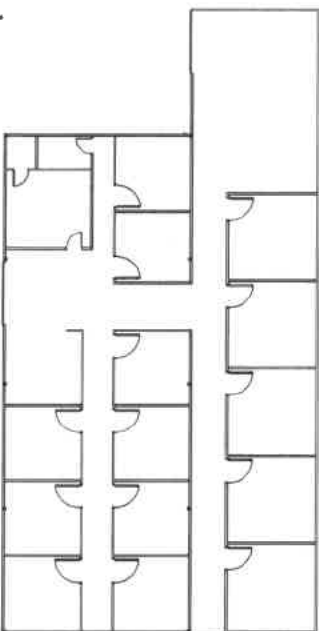
WEST ELEVATION



ROOF PLAN

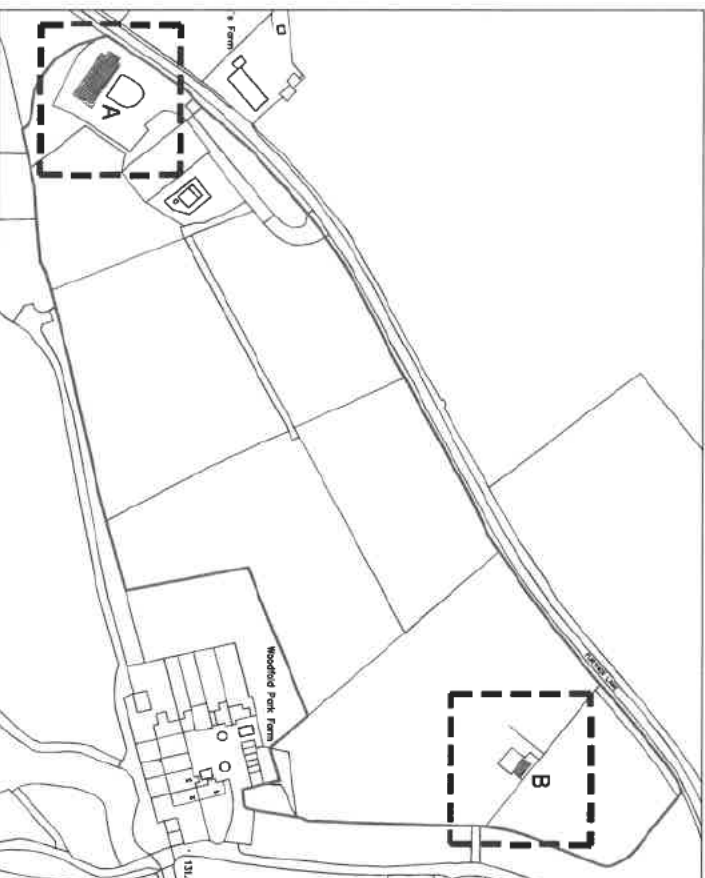


FLOOR PLAN



STRUCTURE A 1:250

SITE LOCATION 1:2500



Drawing title PLANNING

Drawing date: FOR APPROVAL

Author: PRIVATE CLIENT

Project:

PRIVATE DWELLING
BLAND ADJACENT TO
WOODFORD PARK, W. BUCKINGHAM

Drawing title:

PROPOSED DEMOLITION PLAN

DATE: NOV 22 DRAWN: BING
DATE: STATED AS QUOTED FS



SHAW & JAGGER
ARCHITECTS
1, CHURCH PARK
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TAD 14 6QJ, UK
(01454) 821197
(info@shawandjagger.com)
www.shawandjagger.com

JOB NO: DMO 316
383/01 (02) 006 #

1

Landings Plan: Scale 1:500

directly to **PLANNING**
 directly to **FOR APPROVAL**
 client

PRIVATE CLIENT

PRIVATE DWELLING
AT LAND ADJACENT TO
WOODFOLD PARK, nr BLACKBURN

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

date	OCT 22	drive	MMG
width	1.500 @ A1	checked	FG

SHAW
JAGGER
ARCHITECTS

1 Cardale Post

North Vietnam

HGS 1R1

TEL 01423 332597

www.bjv.com

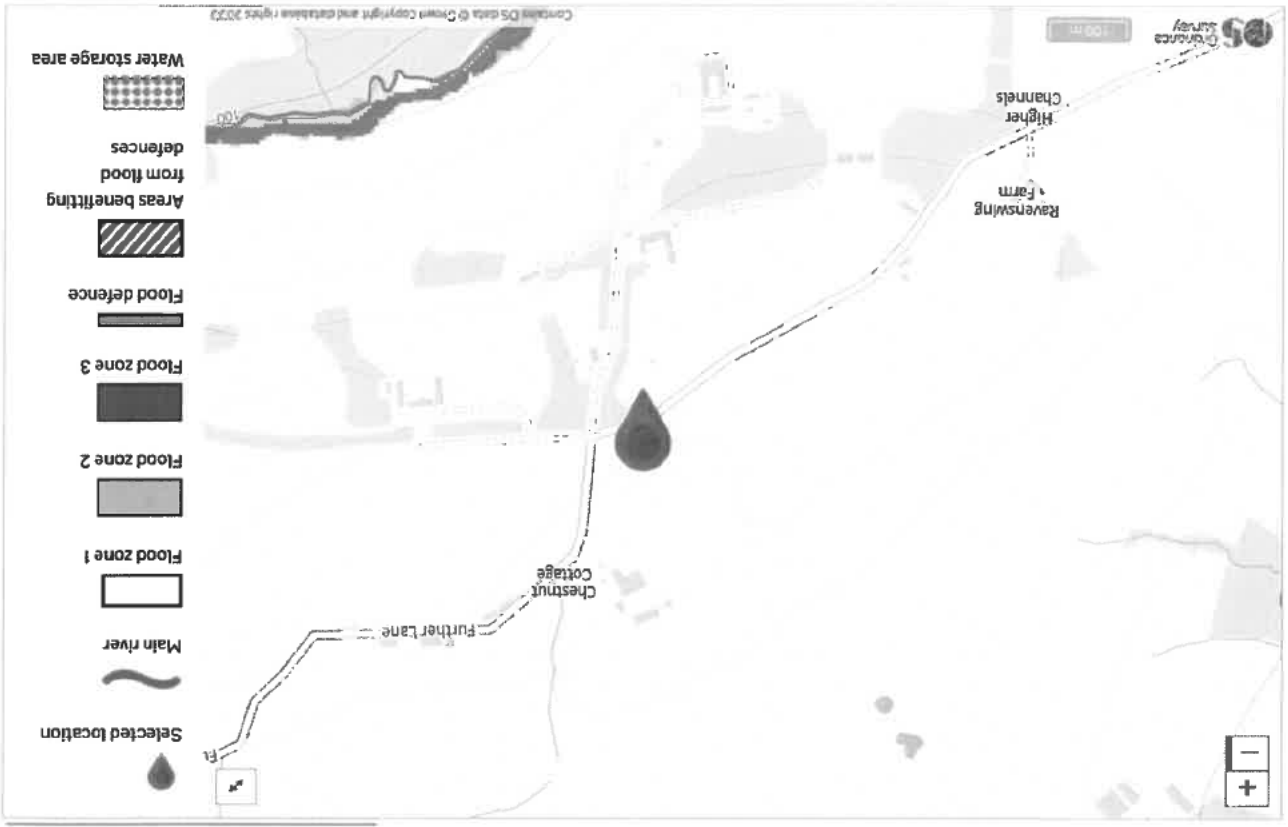
PM

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APPENDIX ONE: FLOOD RISK MAP



historic woodland planting and secure succession planting for the future. As such, the proposal accords with paragraphs 197 and 202 of the NPPF.

- 9.4 The proposal is expected to deliver a number of tangible benefits in favour of the proposal. Of particular significance is the landscaping scheme, which will secure both visual improvements and ecological enhancements to the site. The site is currently of low ecological value, so the introduction of additional tree and hedgerow planting, along with flowers and shrubs, and the introduction of a pond will introduce new and extended habitats. In turn, the ecological value of the site will be raised in support of a number of protected species.
- 9.5 The additional tree planting will also serve to visually reinforce existing woodland planting around the site, and secure succession planting. Visually, the proposal will also secure improvements in respect of the removal of the equestrian character of the land, which is considered to be harmful to the heritage setting to Woodfold Park. Removing the modern residential styled gates and the various equestrian related buildings and structures will allow the application site to be landscaped in a manner that is sympathetic to the setting of Woodfold Park.
- 9.6 The proposal satisfies all other technical considerations and will not result in any adverse impacts. In particular, the site is served by existing access onto Further Lane, and the site is not subject to flood risk, plus contamination is not expected to be an issue. Residential amenity will be upheld in respect of neighbouring properties and future occupants of the proposal.
- 9.7 Overall, the proposal represents exceptional quality and is considered to constitute sustainable development by virtue of enhancing the natural and built environment, and offering social and economic benefits. There are no identifiable harms that significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits and for these reasons it is clear that planning permission should be granted. As such, the significant weight to be given to the proposal constitutes very special circumstances in support of the granting of planning permission.

- 8.18.6 Public views of the site are generally short in nature due to topography and the presence of existing land features, such as woodland. The proposal will, therefore, have limited opportunity to impact on openness in respect of visual impacts. This means that the potential visual impact of the dwelling on the wider character of the area is restricted to Further Lane, which lies immediately adjacent to the site. Any visual impacts on the openness of the green belt will, therefore be limited in terms of significance by virtue of the existing land features that already determine the potential to gain views of the application site.
- 8.18.7 Of particular significance is the fact that the proposed dwelling is to be located against a backdrop of mature woodland planting, which already interrupt views beyond. The presence of existing trees and the intension to extend the woodland planting will further limit views and increasingly restrict the potential impact of the dwelling on the openness of the countryside.
- 8.18.8 In this instance, the exceptional quality of the proposal and the removal of harm to the heritage asset is of sufficient weight to outweigh any potential harm to the green belt. Especially when coupled with the tangible benefits of the proposal in respect of ecological and landscape enhancements, removing the current equestrian development and as all other technical matters can be dealt with satisfactorily. Subsequently, very special circumstances existing in favour of the proposal with reference to paragraph 147 and 148 of the NPPF given that the potential for harm is clearly outweighed by all other considerations.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Paragraph 148 of the NPPF requires an assessment to be made as to whether the potential harm to green belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The purpose being that very special circumstances will only exist where the potential for harm is outweighed by other considerations. This statement addresses the various considerations pertinent to determining the potential impacts of the proposal with a view to assessing whether very special circumstances exist.
- 9.2 In this instance, a dwelling is proposed that is considered to be of exceptional quality with reference to paragraph 80 of the NPPF. This has been demonstrated through the level of analysis in respect of the defining characteristics of the local area and the opportunities that have been identified to enhance the immediate setting. The resulting design of the dwelling has been commended by a number of peers that are more than qualified to determine that the architecture is of the highest standards and truly outstanding. Consequently, the proposal will help to raise the standards of design more generally in rural areas by virtue of its exceptional quality. As such, paragraph 134 of the NPPF is engaged and exceptional quality of the proposal is to be given significant weight.
- 9.3 The proposal is located within the setting of a heritage asset, which includes listed buildings and a registered park and garden. The heritage assets have been harmed following a number of alterations and extensions, which means that their significance has been undermined. The proposal will act to repair some of the harm and secure a number of enhancements by establishing a new dwelling as part of the collection hierarchy of dwellings and buildings that constitute Woodfold Park. Additionally, the proposed landscaping will serve to reinforce the

- 8.17.2 If necessary, a condition can be attached to any permission to seek submission of information and a remediation strategy if contamination were to be found during construction.

8.18 Green Belt

- 8.18.1 The Proposals Map shows the application site to be located within the general extent of the green belt. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF makes clear that the construction of new buildings is to be considered inappropriate in the green belt. This is with a view to upholding the fundamental aim of green belt policy which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, as explained under paragraph 137. Paragraph 147 then sets out how inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the green belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 explains that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the green belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 8.18.2 Following the High Court's judgement in [Samuel Smith v NYCC], where Lindblom J agreed with an earlier judgement in [Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government], it is clear that visual impact, as well as spatial impact, is part the consideration of 'greater impact' on openness. Lindblom J found that *"To exclude visual impact, as a matter of principle, from a consideration of the likely effects of development on the openness of the Green Belt would be artificial and unrealistic" and that "A realistic assessment will often have to include the likely perceived effects on openness, if any, as well as the spatial effects."*
- 8.18.3 In this instance, the potential harm to the green belt is in respect of building a new dwelling within open countryside, where new dwellings are generally considered inappropriate. This is because the physical presence of a new structure will create a physical interruption in otherwise open land. As such, the impact on openness is a consideration in respect of determining whether the potential for harm to openness is outweighed by other considerations. This is why this matter has been left until last, as it requires an overall assessment of the impacts of the proposal.
- 8.18.4 In terms of spatial considerations in respect of openness, there is already sporadic development present within the same vista, where the presence of existing buildings lends itself to part of the character of the area. The area, is therefore, not completely open and there are views of different built forms within both short and long distance views. Spatially, development therefore has a role to play within the character of the landscape. The introduction of a further dwelling will not detract from the general character given the scale is not sufficient to conflict with the purposes of green belt policy, as listed under paragraph 138 of the NPPF.
- 8.18.5 At the same time as a dwelling is proposed, the proposal also incorporates the demolition of several largescale buildings to the west of the application site. The proposal will also prevent a temporary new dwelling from being erected that was granted under reference 3/2020/0011. It can, therefore, be argued that the proposal will actually result in a reduction of built form within the green belt. As such, the proposal will secure a greater degree of spatial openness given the reduction in footprint and scale of buildings within the green belt.

8.16 Ecology

- 8.16.1 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal found that the site is itself of poor ecological value due to the lack of biodiversity, but that a number of opportunities exist to enhance the biodiversity value of the site in support of the wider ecological value of the area. In particular, there are a number of protected species within the area where the application site could assist with extending existing habitats or creating new habitats to support the protected species.
- 8.16.2 Within the surrounding area to the site, a badger sett was found within 30m and a pond supporting great crested newts lies within 2km of the application site. Breeding birds are evident within the site, including a barn owl, and there are also bats within the general area and hedgehogs.
- 8.16.2 The landscaping proposal for the site consequently offers opportunities to enhance the biodiversity with a view to supporting the local populations of protected species. As such, the landscaping proposal includes extensive tree and hedgerow planting to extend and reinforce corridors that will create new foraging and breeding areas for bats and birds. The tree planting to the east and south is intended to deepen the existing tree planting in order to reinforce the presence of a dark corridor for bats.
- 8.16.3 A pond is proposed to extend the existing network of ponds in support of the wider great crested newt population that will also increase the biodiversity value of the site. Planting of a wider range of grasses, shrubs and flowers will also make a positive contribution to the biodiversity of the site by introducing new habitats.
- 8.16.4 To provide protection to existing species during construction, including the badgers and breeding birds, it is expected that conditions will be required.
- 8.16.5 Further conditions would then be reasonable in respect of securing the provision of new bat and bird boxes as part of the ecological enhancements.
- 8.16.6 Policy EN4 of the Core Strategy makes clear how the Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity and to avoid the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats and help develop green corridors. The proposed landscaping scheme therefore accords with the objective of the policy given it will develop green corridors and serve to enhance the biodiversity of the area in which the application site is located.
- 8.16.7 Overall, the proposal will result in significant net benefits when compared to the existing situation in accordance with paragraph 174 of the NPPF. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF therefore lends support for the proposal given the opportunity to integrate improvements to the biodiversity in and around the development. The enhancements proposed are tangible benefits which weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

8.17 Contamination

- 8.17.1 The site is currently in equestrian use, and prior to its current use, the land was in agricultural use. There is, therefore, no reason to suspect contamination will be present given the historic land use.

8.14 Flood Risk and Drainage

8.14.1 The site is located within flood risk zone one, as made clear by the plan included under Appendix One to this statement. The site is, therefore, not at risk of flooding.

8.14.2 In terms of surface water drainage, the expectation is that surface water will be dealt with via soakaway incorporating a SUDs system. A pond is included as part of the landscaping scheme, which is expected to be incorporated into the SUDs system to provide on-site attenuation. The final design is expected to be conditioned.

8.14.3 In respect of foul, a connection is to be made into the existing system.

8.14.4 On this basis, the proposal satisfies the requirements of policy EN3 and the policy provisions within the NPPF in respect of addressing the impact of climate change on the risk of flooding.

8.15 Trees

8.15.1 The proposal includes the planting of trees, as both specimens within and to create new belts of woodland planting. Additionally, new lengths of hedgerow are to be planted along sections of the site boundary.

8.15.2 The planting is intended to provide an appropriate response to the findings of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and LVA that accompanies the application. This is in terms of enhancing the ecological value of the site, increasing the visual interest and to provide screening.

8.15.3 Policy DME1 of the Core Strategy makes clear how the visual, botanical and historical value of trees is an important factor when determining applications. The additional tree and hedgerow planting is therefore considered to be a significant benefit of the proposal. Especially, when considered in light of existing circumstances. There is already a belt of tree planting to the east and south of the site, along the length of the driveway to Woodfold Hall. The belt of tree planting is not, however, subject to a formal management plan and the trees appear to be from a similar timeframe. This means that the long term retention of the tree belt is questionable, due to the lack of succession planting.

8.15.4 The proposal therefore offers an opportunity to provide additional woodland planting along the existing lengths of woodland that will act to reinforce the presence of planting for the future. The additional depth to the planting will also reinforce the visual screening role of the woodland, as well as enhance the foraging and breeding function of the woodland planting by extending the habitat.

8.15.5 The proposed planting scheme, which is illustrated on a landscaping drawing and explained further in a document dated May 2022, is therefore considered to accord with policy DME1 of the Core Strategy, and consequently, the benefits are supported by paragraphs 174 and 180 of the NPPF. The benefits of the tree and hedgerow planting weigh heavily in favour of the development.

8.11.2 To this end, the Design and Access Statement explains on page 145 how the proposal adopts a fabric first approach in accordance with the requirements of current Building Regulations. The fabric first approach advocates levels of insulation and particular construction details with a view to achieving a low U value. The highly insulated nature of the construction means that the structure will reduce energy demand.

8.11.3 Heat into the property is expected to be provided via renewable means, as the primary heating source is to be with the use of a geothermal borehole ground source heat pump.

8.11.4 Consequently, the proposal satisfies the requirements of policy EN3 and DMG1 of the Core Strategy, and paragraph 157 of the NPPF. This is on the basis that the proposal will assist with reducing carbon emissions by limiting energy demand.

8.12 Access and Parking

8.12.1 Access to serve the proposed dwelling is to be gained through the existing field entrance into the northern eastern paddock. As the access is existing then it is considered to be appropriate to serve the proposal.

8.12.2 Within the site, there are five parking spaces to be provided within an integrated underground garage. The basement garage is to also provide storage for cycles. Further parking is to be provided on the northside of the proposed dwelling. The proposed parking access arrangements are considered to accord with policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.

8.12.3 Further to the west, along Further Lane, there is a second existing access that serves the equestrian use of the western portion of the application site. This access is to be removed and the fence plus hedgerow planting is to be extended in order to fill the resulting gap. Removing the existing access is considered to provide a visual improvement to Further Lane, due to the current 'urban' appearance of the gate posts and sliding gate that are alien to the rural character of the area. The gates also currently detract from the setting to Woodfold Hall, which can be viewed within the same vista from Further Lane.

8.12.4 The proposed removal of the access is consequently supported by policy DME4 of the Core Strategy and the visual benefit of establishing a continuous field boundary accords with the principles set out in paragraph 197 of the NPPF. Paragraph 206 of the NPPF also provides support for the proposal in respect of removing the existing gates with a view to better revealing the significance of the setting to a heritage asset by reinstating a continuous hedge to the application site to be viewed as part of the setting to Woodfold Hall beyond.

8.13 Residential Amenity

8.13.1 The proposed dwelling is set sufficient distance from other dwellings so that no issues will arise in respect of overlooking, overbearing and overshadowing. Additionally, there are no neighbouring land uses that might conflict with the proposed residential use of the site. As such, residential amenity will be upheld.

- 8.10.2 The Design and Access Statement, Character Study and LVA, along with the peer review by the Traditional Architecture Group all identify how the value of the heritage assets has been harmed by changes in ownership and development over the years within the parkland and also involving the listed buildings. Additionally, the change to equestrian use associated with the application site itself is also considered to have caused harm to the setting of the heritage assets by virtue of the character associated with equestrian development in contrast the character of the historic parkland and wider agricultural land.
- 8.10.3 Consequently, the proposal is considered to provide an opportunity to address the existing harm and also to better reveal the significance of the heritage asset. In respect of addressing harm, views of Woodfold Park from the application site and across it from Further Lane reveal the rear of Woodfold Hall. The view reveals the extent of recent extensions to the Hall, which enabled its conversion to a series of residential properties, as well as the new dwellings within the Walled Garden. The significance of the original Hall is simply not visible because the main elevation to Woodfold Hall faces southwards and in the opposite direction to the application site.
- 8.10.4 At the same time, the equestrian use of the site bears no relation to the adjacent parkland. It also acts to sever the parkland from the wider agricultural use of surrounding land that was originally the context for parkland and formed part of the original use of the wider Estate. Recent planning permission allows for the erection of further equestrian development, including a temporary new dwelling. The development associated with Woodfold Stud Farm and the use of the land therefore have the potential to cause additional visual harm as a result of intensification of the equestrian use of the land.
- 8.10.5 It is therefore considered that the proposal, which includes a new dwelling and landscaping of the land between the parkland and Further Lane will act to remedy some of the harm created by previous changes and recent development. This is in so far as the landscaping and proposed dwelling will act as a signpost to the heritage assets and offer a more appropriate context to the historic parkland through the creation of a landscape based on principles of traditional parkland landscaping.
- 8.10.6 Consequently, the proposal is considered to better reveal the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with paragraph 206 of the NPPF. Furthermore, the improvements offered to the setting of the heritage assets are considered to deliver benefits sought by policy EN5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. At the same time, the proposal is considered to conform with policy DME4 of the Core Strategy because it will not cause harm or loss to the significance of the heritage asset.

8.11 Addressing Climate Change

- 8.11.1 Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy requires all development to optimise energy efficiency by using new technologies and minimising the use of energy through appropriate design, layout, material and landscaping.

8.8 Reflecting the Highest Standards in Architecture

- 8.8.1 Given paragraph 80 expects the design to be of exceptional quality where it reflects the highest standards in architecture. The applicant has, therefore, engaged an architect of notable reputation with regards to achieving the highest standards of architecture. It is understood that each of the architects within Shaw and Jagger has designed at least one 'paragraph 80 dwelling' where planning permission has been granted.
- 8.8.2 The Practice is also well versed with designing schemes involving heritage assets, including scheduled ancient monuments. The development of the proposal has therefore been based on a significant level of academic knowledge and appropriate experience that is also recognised by various National accolades.
- 8.8.3 The high standards of Shaw and Jagger's work is also evident in various comments set out within the peer reviews that accompany this application.

8.9 Exceptional Quality

- 8.9.1 Overall, it is believed the proposal site offers a unique opportunity to repair harm and enhance the setting of various heritage assets found across Woodfold Park by employing classical architectural design techniques in terms of both the design of the house and also its grounds.
- 8.9.2 The intention is not to create a pastiche, but actually employ the traditional architectural rules associated with designing a new villa in celebration of Woodfold Park and the original vision for the Estate. As Mr Musson states *"There have been few neo-classical houses of this design ambition realised in the later twentieth and early twenty-first century, and an exemplary project should be a reference point for new domestic work in a traditional style."*
- 8.9.3 Given the original vision for Woodfold Park failed to be realised, the proposal site offers an opportunity to seek to complete the vision and bring the application site back into the Estate, as originally envisaged. This includes through extensions to the parkland through new landscaping, which would secure visual improvements to the site by removing the current equestrian development, and also enhancing the ecological value of the otherwise single species grassland.
- 8.9.4 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that significant weight should be given to outstanding design, as long as it fits in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. Given the understanding of the context for the proposal and how the knowledge has influenced the proposal then it is considered that paragraph 134 is engaged and significant weight is to be given in support of the proposal.

8.10 Impact on Significance of Heritage Assets

- 8.10.1 The Character Study accompanying the application identifies the heritage significance associated with the site in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF. In this instance, the application site is located adjacent to Woodfold Park, which is a registered park and garden, whilst several buildings within the vicinity are listed, including Woodfold Hall and The Orangery. The proposal site is not within the curtilage of any of the listings, but it is considered to be within the setting of Woodfold Park due to proximity.

proportions and scale of such country residences, which would have an irregular floorplan and incorporate an 'antiquated' style.

- 8.6.6 The Design and Access Statement also builds upon the Character Study and peer reviews by illustrating how the site might be laid out with reference to landscape features and opportunities for enhancement. In particular, the importance of providing grounds of sufficient scale to create an appropriate context to the dwelling, whilst re-establishing the former relationship of the application site with Woodfold Hall.
- 8.6.7 It should be noted on this matter that the tradition in 18th century landscape design, as evident in the approach to Woodfold Park, was to create a series of landscapes within a more comprehensive landscape. The intention was for each part of the landscape, where some landscape cells contained or framed buildings, to create a series of separate pictures. Each picture was then intended to fit together to create the whole historic holding. The intention of the proposal is the same, whereby the dwelling is to be located within its own landscaped cell that contributed to the setting of Woodfold Park as a whole.
- 8.6.8 In terms of raising the quality of design within rural areas generally, the proposed dwelling and landscaping scheme are based on design principles from one of the key influential periods in landscape history. Without doubt, the proposal clearly improves upon the visual quality of the site as existing and therefore the contribution the site makes to the wider landscape. Removing equestrian development to make way for classical design will, quite simply, improve the appearance of the area. As such, the proposal accords with paragraph 80 of the NPPF, which provides support of the proposal.
- 8.7 Truly Outstanding**
- 8.7.1 The design rationale for the new dwelling is set out in detail in the Design and Access Statement, which accompanies this application and so it does not need to be repeated in full. The term 'outstanding' can be a subjective one, but with the latest design having gone through a thorough and robust design process, with influence and input from a spectrum of specialists, it is considered that the resulting design will deliver a dwelling that can be classed as truly outstanding.
- 8.7.2 This is evident from the peer review process whereby the design has been subject to the consideration of the Traditional Architectural Group and Jeremy Musson. The Traditional Architectural Group includes a number of notable architects who are recognised widely as being authorities on architectural design. As an individual, Jeremy Musson is also recognised as an expert in architecture. Both TAG and Mr Musson are in agreement that the proposal is truly outstanding.
- 8.7.3 Given the outstanding quality of the proposal then it is considered that the policy requirements set out under policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy are satisfied in respect of design and the spatial qualities of the proposal. As such, the application scheme has been endorsed and found to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

considered to provide a visual improvement to Further Lane, due to the current 'urban' appearance of the gate posts and sliding gate that are alien to the rural character of the area. The gates also currently detract from the setting to Woodfold Hall, which can be viewed within the same vista from Further Lane.

- 8.5.9 The opportunities to enhance the ecological value of the site, along with enhancing the setting of heritage assets are considered to accord with policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy. Additionally, the proposal clearly meets the criteria set out under paragraph 80 of the NPPF, which weighs in favour of the proposal.

8.6 Raise Standards of Design More Generally in Rural Areas

- 8.6.1 Having reviewed the landscape and heritage setting for the site, it is apparent that the heavily visible influence of purposeful landscaping and buildings placement has had on the character of the surrounding landscape provides an important influential role. The landscape associated with Woodfold Park was purposefully designed on the basis of principles defined by Repton, who was a notable landscape architect of his time. The historic association of the proposal site with Woodfold Park and the proximity of the proposal site to the historic country house and parklands would therefore suggest it is appropriate to adopt traditional techniques in the design of the recreational landscapes associated with country houses for the development of the proposal site. The proposal site feels to be an appropriate opportunity to celebrate traditional architectural design and landscape design principles.
- 8.6.2 The Design and Access Statement explains how the concept for the proposal have evolved through several iterations that led to the submitted scheme. Originally derived directly from the principles used in the design of Woodfold Park, which is based in design geometry using 'squaring the circle'. However, further historic research and queries raised by the pre-application peer review process led to a reappraisal of not just the design of the villa, but also the extent of the site.
- 8.6.3 The accompanying Design and Access Statement explains the development of the principles and various iterations behind the design of the proposed new dwelling and accompanying landscaping scheme, which is based on the principles of a traditional villa.
- 8.6.4 In particular, how it was typical for country homes of the scale experienced at Woodfold Park to incorporate a hierarchy of houses and entertainment spaces, including the principal residence, the villa, the hunting box, and the ornamental cottage. In respect of Woodfold Park, the hierarchy and range of buildings is incomplete, as it appears there is only the main Woodfold Hall and an Orangery. As such, Woodfold Park lacks the diversity of houses and entertainment spaces that might have been expected of an Estate set on the outskirts of an urban area and built for the enjoyment of a wealthy family in the Regency Era. Especially, given the size of the parkland itself. The history of the Estate also suggests Woodfold Park was not completed given the documentation available and as parts were sold.
- 8.6.5 The Design and Access Statement provides examples of similar country houses and their parklands, as well as setting out illustrations of how villas are designed of the appropriate time period to which the proposal now refers. This is in terms of the technical requirements for the

of the land. The location of the application site adjacent to Woodfold Park means that it forms part of the setting to various heritage assets.

- 8.5.3 The reports accompanying the application identify a number of opportunities to enhance the immediate setting to the proposal, which predominantly relate to extending or creating new habitats through the introduction of additional planting and bodies of water. The reports identify how there are opportunities to enhance the setting of the heritage assets and also the ecological value of the site.
- 8.5.4 A drawing is included within the application pack to illustrate the proposed landscaping scheme. An explanation of the principles for the landscaping is set out from page 146 of the Design and Access Statement, which has been informed by the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal and the Character Assessment.
- 8.5.5 The Preliminary Ecology Appraisal sets out a number of recommendations in respect of enhancing the ecological value of the site with a view to providing additional habitat for the various protected species that are evident within the local area. The various opportunities for enhancement are set out in the ecology section of this statement below.
- 8.5.6 Whilst the reinstatement of meadowland, with the reinforcement of the boundary tree planting and new lengths of new hedge planting will enhance the ecological value of the site, it will also serve to repair the setting of the Woodfold Park so the relationship of the site with the parkland and Hall would be reinstated through a change in character to the site. This is on the basis that equestrian development currently serves as a visual detractor to Woodfold Park because the various equestrian buildings and structures, plus the subdivision of the application site into smaller paddocks have appeared in recent times and are also not typically found on the edge of historic parkland. It also needs to be kept in mind that there are further applications that have been granted for additional development associated with Woodfold Stud Farm. The proposal will therefore prevent those permissions from being implemented that would only serve to cause further harm. The proposal therefore intends to secure the replacement of the currently unsympathetic use of the land and to prevent further harm with more appropriate development to the setting of the heritage assets.
- 8.5.7 Of particular interest is how the landscaping will create a continuous flow of planting across the entire site, whilst also extending the screening to some of the more undesirable aspects of the recent redevelopment of Woodfold Hall when viewed from Further Lane. The result will be that the application site will appear to be a component part of Woodfold Park, thereby restoring the historic association of the site with the wider park so it once again appears to form part of the same landownership.
- 8.5.8 The proposal also provides the opportunity to enhance the visual quality of the boundary of the site by reinforcing and repairing the existing hedgerow following removal of current disruptions in its length. Along Further Lane, there is a second existing access that currently serves the equestrian use of the western portion of the application site, which is known as Woodfold Park Stud. This access is to proposed to be removed and a new fence coupled with hedgerow planting is to be introduced in order to fill the resulting gap. Removing the existing access is

parkland. Their understanding is that the application site is located adjacent to the service entrance to Woodfold Hall, which would have originally been accessed from the south.

- 8.4.14 In order to respond to the historic context of Woodfold Park and to assist with repairing the historic landscape, the panel encouraged the idea of the application incorporating the land associated with the equestrian development to the west of the initial extent of the pre-application enquiry site. The purpose being to remove the visually intrusive equestrian development from the immediate context of Woodfold Park; to allow the hedge along Further Lane to be enhanced; to create a seamless flow between the proposed dwelling and its context; and to create a suitable sized landscape for the dwelling. The applicant listened to the panel and the purchase of the adjacent land has been agreed with a view to removing the equestrian development, which includes a manège, gate posts and buildings, from the setting of Woodfold Park.
- 8.4.15 Having reviewed the various assessments of the historic and landscape context for the application site, and gained an understanding of how historic events have led to the current equestrian use of the site, it would appear that the appearance of the site detracts from the setting of Woodfold Park. If history had played out as first planned, then the application site would have been maintained as part of the setting to Woodfold Hall, either through subsequent phases of development or simply being used in a more sympathetic manner. However, the sale of the land and its subsequent subdivision and strengthening of character for equestrian use serves to visually sever the land from Woodfold Park and cause further harm to the setting of the heritage assets. Coupled with the harm caused to the historic significance of the Hall and Walled Garden through redevelopment, including the subdivision of the immediate grounds into gardens and introduction of extensions then we believe the situation creates opportunities to address the harm by altering the layout, introducing landscaping and reinstating the relationship between the application site and Woodfold Park.
- 8.4.16 Subsequently, the Design and Access Statement explains how *"there are reasonable grounds for the accepting creation of new dwelling as a positive contribution to the development of Woodfold Park. The Hall has lost its significance as the principal residence by being made derelict and converted to apartments. The clutter of new buildings around the hall, with no reference to its historic plan, have also diminished its significance. The studies outline a route to creating a sympathetic Reptonian influenced landscape as base for siting a new Hall. The proposed Hall should follow Repton's design ethos in siting and layout. As part of this narrative the typology of various housing/lodge types have been highlighted as suitable for the site."*

8.5 Significantly Enhance its Immediate Setting

- 8.5.1 One of the considerations set out under paragraph 80 of the Framework is how the proposal should "significantly enhance its immediate setting." Typically, it is understood the expectation is that a scheme will further improve the quality or value of the immediate setting to the proposal.
- 8.5.2 In this instance, the site forms a series of paddocks that are currently within equestrian use and used for the grazing of horses. As such, the paddocks are identified within the ecology report and LVA to be neutral grasslands with no UK priority habitats recorded. The site also contains a number of buildings and structures, including a manège associated with the equestrian use

vantage points. This includes, introducing planting along the southern boundary of the proposal site to screen the redevelopment of Woodfold Hall and the associated domestic paraphernalia from Further Lane and other public vantage points to the north of the parkland.

- 8.4.7 The LVA found there to be no notable landscape or visual constraint that might prevent development of a dwelling of exceptional quality because the site itself is visually well contained. Any public views are gained from the limits of the immediate area, especially as the woodland along the southern boundary screens views of the site from the wider area.
- 8.4.8 Given the significance of Woodfold Park to the context of the proposal site and its influence on the appearance of the wider landscape, a Character Study was undertaken in addition to the LVA. The purpose of the Character Study was intended to understand the history to the design of the landscape and its significance on the character of the area today. If development is to be located within the setting of Woodfold Park, which is a recognised heritage asset, then the historic value provides an important perspective and influence to the design of the proposal.
- 8.4.9 The Character Study outlines how the landscape of Woodfold Park is by Charles McNiven in the style of Humphrey Repton. Woodfold Hall is understood to have been designed by James Wyatt, along with Geoffrey Wyatt his nephew.
- 8.4.10 Historic maps of the site and its surroundings reveal the way in which the landscape matured as development progressed in the form of scattered farmsteads and the implementation of the vision for Woodfold Park. The available historic maps for the area also suggest that the original vision for Woodfold Park was not ultimately realised, which can be discerned from a series of physical changes within the landscape notations. It also appears that the vision involved wider changes whereby the original Shorrocks Green Hall was demolished and the avenue of trees that led to the building (and originally crossed the application site) were removed to make way for Huntsman's Cottage and the creation of Further Lane. Overlaying an existing landscape with a new landscape meant that the application site has a different character to the wider parkland.
- 8.4.11 Also, the wall surrounding the extent of the Estate is incomplete, as there is no wall defining the northern boundary to the parkland, particularly in proximity to the proposal site. It appears changes of landownership may have influenced the development of the Estate and explain why the wall is incomplete and early landscape features changed. Especially, as the proposal site appears to have originally formed part of the extent of the Estate, but later became detached through a change of ownership.
- 8.4.12 The Character Study concludes that the proposal site provides the opportunity to repair some of the harm caused to Woodfold Park and also further explain the significance of the heritage asset. In particular, the relationship of the proposal site with Woodfold Park could be reinstated with appropriate development and landscaping.
- 8.4.13 In the initial TAG Peer Review, the panel agree with the findings of the Character Study that the application site historically formed part of the original Estate, but that it was not part of the

design will respond positively to the landscape context. The full findings are set out in the accompanying LVA.

- 8.4.2 In brief, the LVA sets out how the general character of the landscape has been heavily influenced by the development of industry in the area, so areas of countryside are fragmented by towns and scattered development. Within the countryside there are also a considerable number of country houses and parklands, where the designed landscape is evidence of the developing industrial enterprises and increasing wealth that being apparent between the 16th and 19th centuries.
- 8.4.3 The landscape to the north of the site is recorded as being defined by pastoral farmland with frequent urban influences, including the A677, prominent settlements and the presence of the BEA development and Airfield at Samlesbury Aerodrome. To the south of the site, the landscape is characterised by Woodfold Park, including both its buildings and parklands.
- 8.4.4 Woodfold Park is understood to have been subject to extensive redevelopment of its various buildings over the last twenty years, including through both conversion and new build development. Recent redevelopment of Woodfold Park is considered to have caused visual intrusions within the landscape and presence of development that is out of character to the original parkland. Namely, Woodfold Park Farm, Woodfold Park Stud and The Walled Garden where these properties have clearly been designed in recent years and are visible from both short and long distance vantage points. The parkland itself is no longer actively managed and is instead mostly in some form of agricultural use. Areas of planted woodland and other features introduced into the landscape as part of the purposeful design are also not subject to active management or plans for succession planting.
- 8.4.5 In the pre-application response, the Council suggests that the site offers views with little distraction to Woodfold Park. However, the pre-app response does not identify specific views that require protection in order to preserve the setting of Woodfold Park. Equally, the pre-application response does not provide any explanation as to what element of the view requires protection. Analysis of the area suggests the only views of Woodfold Park over the application site are of the rear to Woodfold Hall and the new houses within the Walled Garden from Further Lane. Views are therefore limited due to distance and the height of the hedge, along with the ability to only see the rear elevation and top section of Woodfold Hall or the new houses within the Walled Garden. The rear to Woodfold Hall consists of only modern extensions where none of the original Hall is evident, whilst the houses within the Walled Garden are also of recent times. As such, the views of Woodfold Hall over the application site do not reveal the significance of the heritage asset, as it simply presents itself as a late 21st Century housing development. Instead, the significance is limited to the relationship between the application site and Woodfold Park, and the way in which the application site provides a contextual setting to the parkland beyond.
- 8.4.6 Due to the harm that has succumbed Woodfold Park, the LVA concludes the location of the site on the edge of Woodfold Park provides an opportunity to improve the damage to the heritage asset. In particular, development of the proposal site creates an opportunity to establish new tree planting to screen some of the recent redevelopments across Woodfold Park from public

scheme as a whole can be reviewed. As such, whether a scheme is of exceptional quality is the overall assessment of the proposal.

- 8.2.4 Following the logical thought process associated with consideration of paragraph 80(e) house is why a pre-application enquiry was submitted to Ribble Valley at the start of the design process. Also, why TAG were asked to comment on an early version of the scheme before the drawings were finalised. The intention being to ensure the thought process behind the design of the house was robust and correct.

8.3 Isolated Home in the Countryside

- 8.3.1 Since the NPPF was first published in 2012, there have been a number of High Court Judgements and also Inspector's decisions concerning planning appeals that have attempted to provide explanation and clarity to the meaning of 'isolated' within the context of paragraph 80 and its predecessors. Despite the various iterations of paragraph 80 through previous versions of the NPPF the essence of national planning policy has remained unchanged in relation to providing the context for considering proposals concerning isolated new homes within the countryside.
- 8.3.2 Our understanding of how 'isolated' should be treated within the context of paragraph 80, is best explained with reference to the High Court Judgement concerning *Braintree District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Others* [2018]. The Judgement found that *"the word 'isolated' in the phrase 'isolated homes in the countryside' simply connotes a dwelling that is physically separate or remote from a settlement."* Whilst this judgement was issued with reference to the 2018 version of the NPPF there has been no change of wording to the NPPF or further High Court Judgements to suggest a different interpretation should now be attributed to the consideration of how to define 'isolated' in relation to paragraph 80.
- 8.3.3 With this in mind, the application is clearly located away from any existing settlements and in countryside that is characterised by scattered farmsteads and small clusters of development. Whilst there are other dwellings at Huntsman's Cottages and Woodfold Hall, these are some distance from the application site. The separation distance between is such that whilst it is possible to view the other properties within the same vista as the application site, it cannot be argued that the properties are immediate neighbours or of sufficient density to constitute a hamlet or other type of settlement. Our understanding is confirmed by the Counsel's opinion that accompanies the application, which explains in more detail how 'isolation' is to be interpreted in reference to paragraph 80.

8.4 Sensitive to the Defining Characteristics of the Local Area

- 8.4.1 For the design of a dwelling to be considered exceptional, paragraph 80 of the NPPF requires it to be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. In order to understand the defining characteristics of the local area, DRaW Ltd were instructed to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). The methodology of the LVA process is intended to identify and outline the key characteristics of the site and surrounding landscape, as well as to identify any important visual receptors or constraints. Assessing the significance of the surrounding landscape is intended to provide direction to the development of the proposal to ensure the

EN4 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
EN5 Heritage Assets
DMG1 General Considerations
DME4 Protecting Heritage Assets

7.4 Housing and Economic Development DPD (October 2019)

- 7.4.1 Having reviewed the DPD, there are no policies within the document that are relevant to the consideration of the application.

8.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The introduction to this statement makes clear that the application is for the demolition and removal of various equestrian related buildings and structures, and for the erection of one dwelling. On this basis, a number of key policy matters and material considerations are pertinent to the determination of this planning application. Each is addressed in turn below.

8.2 Principle of Development

- 8.2.1 The development strategy set out in the Core Strategy is to concentrate development within the principal settlements and a number of named villages, as stated under policy DS1. Policy DMG2 then states that within open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area. Additionally, the policy suggests that the re-use of existing buildings will in most cases be more appropriate than new build. As such, the Core Strategy does not preclude development outside of existing villages as it does not explicitly state that new dwellings outside of existing settlements will be considered inappropriate. Also, the Core Strategy does not provide any criteria for determining applications involving new dwellings outside of existing settlements. Instead, the Core Strategy is silent on the matter, which means it is necessary to determine the application with reference to other planning policies governing the location of development.
- 8.2.2 In turning to national policy, the NPPF sets out under paragraph 80 how planning decisions should avoid development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more circumstances listed applies. Under criterion (e) to paragraph 80, the Framework makes clear that one of the circumstances in which an isolated home might be considered acceptable is where *"the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
- is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area."*
- 8.2.3 In considering paragraph 80(e), there are clearly a number of considerations to address, which are dealt with in turn below. We have however, reordered the considerations so they are presented with reference to the thought process in determining whether a proposal constitutes exceptional quality. The point being is that it is usual to consider the characteristics of an area and opportunities for enhancement with a view to gaining an appreciation of the context for a proposal. It is only once the context can be appreciated that thought can be given to an appropriate design response that might raise the standards of design more generally in the rural area. Just as, it is only possible to understand whether the design is truly outstanding once the

'narrative' which sets out the idea for the proposal, which gives confidence in this elegant design.

"The traditional rules of classical design and proportion inform this contemporary neo-classical design. Both elevation and plan form, echo the finest traditions of country house design, as realised in the original 1790s Woodfold Hall, and other works of James Wyatt, and his nephew Jeffry Wyatt, later known as Wyatville."

- 6.4.3 Mr Musson concluding remark is that *"I would commend this project for approval."* Given Mr Musson is an expert in the design of country houses then receiving such a high commendation evidences the exceptional quality of the proposal. His comments are independent to those of the Traditional Architecture Group, and so offer further support for the proposal.

6.5 Counsel Advice

- 6.6 Given the planning policy context for the application, and in light of the Council's pre-application response, Counsel opinion was sought to identify whether there are any legal or policy barriers to taking forward the proposal. The opinion sets out the material considerations for the determination of the application based on case law. It also makes clear how the proposal satisfies the requirements of paragraph 80 where the supporting information provides a strong case for the scheme to be approved.

7.0 PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The development plan in this instance consists of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014) and the Housing and Economic Development DPD (October 2019). The proposals map shows the application site to be located within the general extent of the green belt and a mineral safeguarding area. On this basis, the following national and local planning policies are considered to be of particular pertinence in the determination of the application.

7.2 National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.2.1 The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') was published on 20 July 2021 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Framework makes clear that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the Framework is such a material consideration.

- 7.2.2 The relevant policies of the Framework will be referred to as appropriate in this Statement, and in particular those policies in sections 2 (Achieving sustainable development); 5 (Delivering as sufficient supply of homes); 11 (Making effective use of land); 12 (Achieving well-designed places); 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land and 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment).

7.3 Ribble Valley Core Strategy (December 2014)

- 7.3.1 Having reviewed the Core Strategy, the following policies are considered to be pertinent in the determination of the application:
DS1 Development Strategy
EN1 Green Belt

detailed constraints in respect of the setting of Woodfold Park and providing an appropriate response in respect of layout, landscaping and appearance.

6.3 Traditional Architecture Group Peer Review

6.3.1 The Traditional Architecture Group (TAG) were first invited to review the proposal in May 2022. The review involved a site visit and opportunity to consider the pre-application enquiry pack of information, along with drafts of the drawings.

6.3.2 The initial feedback was that the context of the site provides an opportunity for a new dwelling, even within the historic context of Woodfold Park. This is on the basis that *"The panel were very pleased to have available in the Design Statement and through the other consultants' reports a detailed and thorough analysis of the site and the process of an evolving design. The proposals are well supported by both analytical information and precedent for the design concept."*

6.3.3 The panel raised a number of detailed comments where changes to some of the detailing in the design were suggested. The feedback concluded *"This is more than competent restrained design that should be able to achieve the requirements as set out in the paragraph 80e clause. In the next iterations and with the additional information suggested there should be no barrier to achieving this."*

6.3.4 The comments offered by the panel subsequently informed alterations to the detailing of the design, and an updated scheme was submitted to the panel for further comment in September 2022. This time, the panel concluded that *"the overall is an exceptionally competent new neo-classical villa... It will be a great asset to the surrounding area (including the historic context) and a marker of how acceptable rural development can proceed in the future."*

"As previously set out, this is a design that reflects the highest standards of architecture and will fulfil the goals stated in NPPF Paragraph 80e for a project of exceptional quality."

"The proposal harmonises with the topography and wider setting to produce an exemplar example of its building type and, in its context, reflects the highest standards of architecture."

6.3.5 Through the peer review, the TAG has clearly offered unequivocal endorsement for the proposal taking into consideration the historic and landscape context of the site.

6.4 Special Design Review by Jeremy Musson

6.4.1 Jeremy Musson is a notable architectural historian who is an authority in British country houses and architecture. As such, he is qualified to undertake a design review of the proposal in respect of determining whether the proposed dwelling is of exceptional quality with reference to the design tests set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF.

6.4.2 Having visited the site and reviewed the drawings, Mr Musson concludes that *"the design is 'of exceptional quality, in that it is truly outstanding, 'reflecting the highest standards in architecture', and would 'help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas'."* This is on the basis that "Mr Shaw has taken a deeply researched approach and has developed a

PLANNING STATEMENT
FULL PLANNING APPLICATION AT WOODFOLD PARK, MELLOR
PREPARED ON BEHALF OF SHAW & JAGGER ARCHIECTS

3/2014/1127	Discharge of condition 3 - materials of planning consent 3/2012/0359	Withdrawn
3/2015/0005	Variation of condition 7 of planning consent 3/2012/0359 to read 'The stable building and manege hereby permitted shall be for commercial use limited to a remedial farrier (and shall not be used in connection with livery stables or riding school'.	Withdrawn
3/2012/0359	Proposed construction of agricultural building for stables and a 40m x 20m manege. Close off the existing field gate and construct a new field access, gravel track and 6no. parking spaces.	Approved
3/2008/0674	Proposed alterations to listed boundary wall including the creation of a new access point and track to serve stud farm.	Appeal dismissed
3/2009/0389	Alterations to and rebuilding of existing boundary wall.	Approved
3/2008/0675	Proposed alterations to listed boundary wall including the creation of a new access point and track to serve stud farm	Appeal dismissed

Table One: Planning History for the Application Site

6.0 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

6.1 The proposed scheme, as submitted, has been informed by various discussions and consultations in advance of the drawings being finalised and the submission of the applications.

6.2 Pre-Application Enquiry to Ribble Valley

- 6.2.1 Directions Planning Consultancy submitted a pre-application enquiry to Ribble Valley in June 2021 with a view to seeking an initial opinion in respect of the principle of a new dwelling on the northern portion of the application site.
- 6.2.2 The pre-application enquiry focused upon the principle of a new dwelling. The intention being to ensure the design team had identified the right design cues and opportunities for enhancement, particularly, as the site is located adjacent to Woodfold Park, a designated heritage asset. The idea being that the Council's response would inform the final design in respect of scale, layout and appearance on the basis that agreement had been reached in relation to the relevant contextual considerations.
- 6.2.3 The pre-application enquiry was accompanied by a Landscape Visual Appraisal, Character Definition Study and a Design Concept Brochure to explain the landscape and historic context for the site, and the initial design cues that had been identified following analysis of the landscape and heritage context.
- 6.2.4 The Council's response states that the proposal site makes an important contribution to the setting of Woodfold Park due to the open land affording views with little distraction to Woodfold Park. As such, the proposed development would be harmful to the development history of Woodfold Park. However, reference is made to Woodfold Park in general, but the Council's response does not identify the specific historic elements considered worthy of protection. Additionally, the response simply focuses upon general principles of developing within the context of a heritage asset that is located in open countryside and subject to green belt policy.
- 6.2.5 The lack of detail in the Council's response and the focus on high level matters was consequently seen as an opportunity to continue with the proposal with a view to identifying

The proposed dwelling is to be set within landscaped grounds that are intended to provide parking and amenity space to serve the detached house.

- 3.2 The application also involves the demolition of stables to allow for the erection of the dwelling. The demolition of further equestrian buildings, along with the removal of a manège is to form part of the application as well. An existing access onto Further Lane to the south west of the site is also to be closed off. The area of land currently occupied by the equestrian related development is simply to become part of the wider landscaping to the proposed dwelling.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

- 4.1 As the site is greater than 1 hectare, it appears that the development falls under Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the Regulations').
- 4.2 Part 3 of the Regulations makes clear how this planning application can be treated as the request for a screening opinion. Consequently, the Council is required to assess the proposal with reference to Regulation 6. In order to allow the necessary assessment to be made, given that this is a comprehensive full application for a single dwelling, we believe the application contains the information required. However, please do not hesitate to request further information if it would assist consideration of the proposal in light of Regulation 6.
- 4.3 Having regard to the selection criteria contained in Schedule 3 of the Regulations, it is not considered, given the scale and nature of the development, that the proposal will have significant effects on the environment in the context of the Regulations. Consequently, it is not considered that the development constitutes EIA development.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 The Council's online planning record lists a number of planning applications associated with the application site.

Ref. No.	Description of Development	Outcome
3/2020/0474	Discharge of condition 6 - landscaping of planning permission 3/2020/0011	Approved
3/2020/0011	Erection of a 6.19m x 30.48m steel portal frame equestrian building and one temporary equine workers dwelling for three years.	Approved
3/2019/0483	Temporary equine workers dwelling (Resubmission of application 3/2019/0229).	Refused
3/2019/0482	Application for the extension to a steel portal framed building for the stabling and work area for existing business. (Resubmission of application 3/2019/0222)	Refused
3/2019/0229	Temporary equine workers dwelling.	Withdrawn
3/2019/0222	Application for a steel portal framed building for the stabling and work area for existing business.	Refused
3/2018/0262	Retention of existing, unauthorised stable building and proposed new access off Further Lane.	Approved
3/2015/0360	For the retention of the existing stable building, access track and manege to be used as a remedial farrier business	Approved