



Lancashire Gardens Trust
Conservation & Planning Group

31 January 2023

Your ref: 3/2022/0988

Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
Lancashire BB7 2RA

For the attention of Kathryn Hughes

By email only to planning@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Application No: 3/2022/0988;
Proposed erection of one private dwelling with landscaping and demolition of equestrian development; Adjacent to Further Lane and Woodfold Park, Mellor, BB2 7QA. GT Ref: E22/1416.

Lancashire Garden Trust made comments on the above application in letter dated 4 January 2023. We have noted that a response to our comments dated 11 January, has been uploaded, we assume from the applicant's agent. The response makes several points upon which we have issues. I have numbered the paragraphs of the letter of 11 January 1 to 27, for ease of identification. Our further comments are as follows:

At Risk Register (Paras 4-6)

There is acceptance by the applicant that the Park is in decline and the applicant's aspiration is that the current application can 'repair' the setting of the heritage asset. However, the application also states 'we have no prospect of reversing the decline within, and nor can our designs have any direct impact on the RPG'. Their arguments demonstrating 'repair' to the setting of the heritage asset would be limited to removal of recent buildings on the application site. Wider benefits of repair to the heritage asset are unproven. Although denied in the letter of 11 January, a small part of the application site is within the RPG.

Shorrock Green Hall (Paras 9,10)

We remain unconvinced by the aspiration to raise the historic status of Shorrock Green. The use of the word 'hall' in the reference to the visit to Shorrock Green by the preacher David Crossley is not necessarily significant, as in Lancashire many farmsteads were recorded with the name 'hall'; the Ribble Valley has many. It was rather a means of describing a yeoman farm, as opposed to a more humble farm building.

Sharrock Green 'Avenue' (Paras 11-12)

We continue to propose that this feature is the historic line of Further Lane. This assertion is not at variance with Crosby's text which refers to 'an indirect alignment' and nor does Crosby claim that the previous route was south of the present site of Woodfold Farm for its complete length. Furthermore, Yates' map shows this indirect line as a T junction at Shorrock Green making a turn of the route south before turning eastwards to the vicinity of the Deer House. Yates' map is remarkably accurate in representing such minor changes in direction of highways and lanes and deserves a high degree of confidence.

Harm to the Setting of Woodfold Park (paras 13.14)

The applicant does not concur that the development would result in harm to the setting of the RPG and this is the key point. The impacts of the proposal are evident, (inappropriate scale, mass or style of an adjacent building). The setting is pastoral and most of the original designer's intentions survive. The lesser importance of the Further Lane entrance in comparison to the other entrance driveways and the fact that this lies outside the RPG are fundamental to the layout and appreciation of the Park. The applicant's speculation upon a possible evolution of the estate in terms of scale and character are not relevant.

The applicant's development proposal would be a major addition to the landscape in a very localised rural area, such that it would be in the immediate landscape setting of the RPG i.e. the surroundings in which this national heritage asset is experienced. The designation of the RPG records and reflects the qualities and setting of the park at its registration in 1995, acknowledging that the park retains substantial elements of its original layout and design intentions. Whilst land and land uses will be always be subject to pressures for change, the RPG designation and the At Risk Register are there to resist the further erosion of these remaining heritage elements.

Conservation of the Park (Paras 22,23)

The application site includes a small area of the RPG, despite the assertion in paragraph 23. In addition the crumbling park wall forms a long south boundary of the enlarged application site. We are reluctant to propose public gain obligations whilst the justification for the development is unproven.

In conclusion the comments and judgement made in our letter of 4 January remains.

If there are any matters arising from this please contact LGT on
conservation@lancsgt.org.uk

Yours faithfully

Stephen Robson

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Chair, Conservation & Planning Group