Lancashire County Council

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Your ref: 3/2023/0569

Our ref: 3_2023_0569-LCC

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FAO K Hughes

Dear Ms Hopkins,

Application 3/2023/0569: Conversion of agricultural barn to two dwellings and conversion of agricultural outbuilding to annexe accommodation, construction of two double garages, creation of garden areas and landscaping. Relocation of agricultural track.
Parsonage Farm, Church Street, Ribchester PR3 3YE

The above application is accompanied by a Heritage Assessment by C J O'Flaherty, which notes a 1650 reference to a brick-built parsonage and five-bay barn and a second collapsed barn of eight bays (possibly a timber-framed structure). Another source mentions a 'rectory-house' recorded in 1535. The site is likely that named as 'Parsonage' on William Yates' map of 1786 and is certainly the Parsonage and barn shown on the OS 1:10,560 mapping of 1847 and it seems probable that this was the site of the medieval parsonage or rectory, serving the parish church at Ribchester.

The barn proposed for conversion is constructed of brick with internal triangular buttresses supporting a series of king-post trusses. As noted in the Heritage Assessment this form of building is more commonly seen in West Lancashire, although they are not unknown elsewhere on the Lancashire Plain. The form of brickwork and roof trusses is said to indicate an 18th century construction date, which seems reasonable, and the building also appears to have formerly had two further bays to its northwest end, making a total of eight. It is probable that the barn is a replacement for the 17th century barns noted above, but it is not clear if it stands on the same site or if they were located elsewhere on the holding, perhaps closer to Parsonage Cottage which functioned as the parsonage and then farmhouse prior to the erection of the 'new' farmhouse in the 1930s nearer to the barns.

We would have no objection to the proposed demolition of the modern portal-framed buildings at Parsonage Farm and the conversion of the brick barn but would support the recommendations in the Heritage Assessment that (i) a formal record is made of the barn prior to works commencing, and (ii) that a scheme of archaeological investigation and recording is undertaken in conjunction with the demolition and development works.

These works do not need to be undertaken prior to a planning decision being made and can be required by planning condition applied to any consent granted. The following wording is suggested:

> **Condition**: No development, site clearance/preparation, or demolition shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation, recording and analysis works. This must be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All archaeological works shall be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional archaeological contractor and comply with the standards and guidance set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.
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> The programme of works should include:
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> (i) A level 3 record of the pre-1847 barn as set out in '*Understanding Historic Buildings*' (Historic England 2016), to include desk-based assessment to enhance the existing Heritage Assessment and the creation of a detailed record of all surviving historic woodwork.
>
> (ii) A phase of field investigation and recording following the demolition of the extant portal-framed structures on the site but prior to any excavation works including the grubbing up of any foundations, lifting of floor slabs, etc.
>
> (iii) A full programme of analysis and reporting on all elements of the work, appropriate publication and deposition of a report or reports and the deposition of the archaeological archive.
>
> **Reason**: To ensure and safeguard the investigation and recording of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the development.
>
> **Notes**: Relevant archaeological standards and a list of registered contractors can be found on the CIfA web pages: http://www.archaeologists.net. Contact details for other non-registered contractors can be found on the BAJR web site: http://www.bajr.org.
> Item (i) - '*Understanding Historic Buildings*' can be accessed online at https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/.
> Item (ii) – The field investigation and recording may be addressed by the archaeologically managed or supervised lifting of floor slabs, etc. followed by a phase of 'strip, map and record' or another appropriate methodology.

The council may wish to consider including a condition requiring a time limit (such as prior to first occupation) for the provision of the reports on the works or an appropriate timetable to produce a final report, archive and any publication to be agreed with the council.

This is in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (MoHCLG 2021) paragraph 205: "*Local planning authorities should require developers to record and*

advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible [*Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository*]".

Yours sincerely

Peter Iles

Planning Officer (Archaeology)
Historic Environment Team