

Scott House, Green Moor Lane, Preston PR3 2YR

Appeal statement for a proposed stable block

Introduction

This appeal is against the refusal of planning permission by Ribble Valley Council for a proposed stable block (reference 3/2023/0720). The application was refused 23rd May 2024 on the following grounds:

The proposal, as a result of its siting, scale and design, would lead to inappropriate development within the open countryside and would be injurious to the openness of the area and of detriment to the visual appearance and inherent character of the surrounding countryside without sufficient justification. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 The bat survey submitted with the application does not reflect the development proposal and recommends the need for further surveys. As such the proposal has failed to demonstrate that it would not result in harm to protected species and/or their habitat which is contrary to Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

This appeal statement deals with the first reason for refusal.

Site and Surroundings

The appeal site relates to a detached property situated in open countryside and located about three kilometres to the east of Longridge. The dwelling is set within its own curtilage behind a gated entrance approximately 50 metres from the nearest residential property, with the surrounding area characterised by sporadic forms of rural development. To the rear of the property is an existing barn and a menage with agricultural land located further to the east. The site is bound with a row of trees along the northern boundary. Agricultural land is also located to the north and south of the site.

Proposed Development.

The proposed development comprises a new stable block to replace an existing barn located to the rear of the dwelling. The stable block has been amended to comprise six stables and a storage area. The building would consist of a pitched roof structure, it would measure 14.9 metres by 9 metres equating to 134.1 square metres of floorspace. The height of the building would be approximately 3 metres.

The proposed development would be for private use only for the appellant and no commercial activities would be carried out on the site. The appellant would accept a condition to reflect the proposed use.

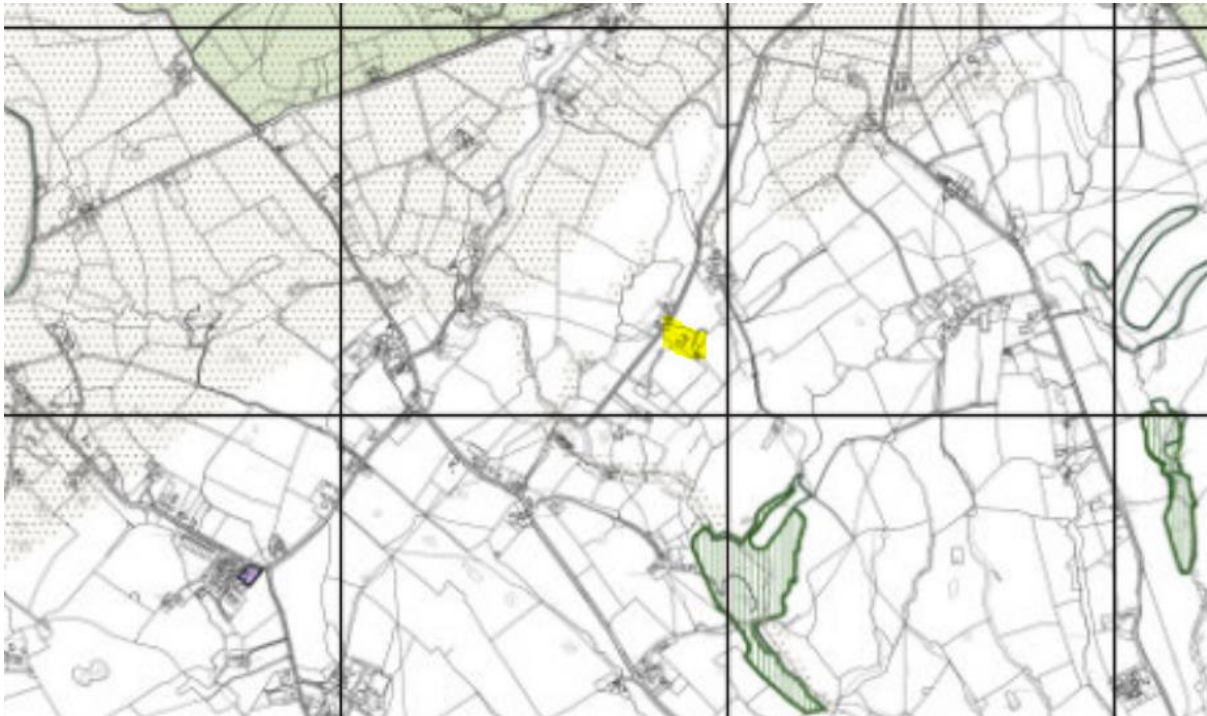
Planning History

In 2003 the Council approved a change of use of part of an agricultural field to form a menage for private use (Reference:3/2003/0482). The application was approved 16th July 2003.

In 2022 the Council approved a single storey side extension to the host dwelling to form a granny annexe. The approval was subject to a condition to ensure the annexe was ancillary to the main dwelling.

Local Plan Policy

The development plan for the area is the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is the central document to the Local Development Framework as it establishes the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the area. The site is located in open countryside as identified in the proposals map, which is shown below.



The relevant policies in the Core Strategy referred to in the first reason for refusal are as follows:

- Policy DMG1 – General Considerations. The relevant part of the policy states that in determining planning applications, all development must:
 1. Be of a high standard of building design.
 2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.
 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.
 4. Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.

- Policy DMG2- Strategic Considerations. The relevant part of this policy states the following:

Within the tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas development must meet at least one of the following considerations:

4.The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area

Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting.

Appellants Case.

The proposed stable block will be positioned in the same location as the existing outbuilding. The replacement building represents a modest enlargement compared to the existing building. It will be located close to the southern boundary of the site.

The Councils main concern is that they believe the quantum of development would be inappropriate due to the size of the building, which would be sufficient to cater for up to six horses and therefore does not meet the definition of a small scale recreational development appropriate to a rural area. They also consider the proposal would result in a much greater impact within the surrounding landscape.

Dealing with the issue of 'small scale' first, Policy DMG2 does not actually define what is 'small scale', this is highlighted in an appeal at Pendle View, Primrose Lane, Mellor BB2 7EQ (Ref: APP/T2350/W/22/3290586) for the partial demolition of an existing stable complex and the erection of a new building and conversion of the retained building to provide a wellbeing centre (**Appendix 1**). The inspector in their decision considered at Paragraph 9 *The CS does not seek to define 'small scale' for the purposes of Policy DMG2, exception 4*). He also accepted that the *proposed use is not itself of a 'rural' nature, or is reliant on a countryside location to operate*. In contrast, the current appeal proposal is for the stabling of horses, which is a use of a rural nature.

The proposal replaces an existing building, rather than a new building in the open countryside. The proposed building is of a modest size with a footprint of 134 square metres and a height of 3.012 metres. Although this building represents a larger building than is currently there, the proposed use is purely for domestic use, ancillary to the host dwelling. The appellant has no intention of using this building for commercial use and would accept a condition restricting its use to private use. The existing building on the curtilage, currently consist of three stables and a tack room (with a Shetland in a make shift stable in the tack room). The appellant currently has four horses one of which is 17hh and needs a bigger stable.

The appellant feels that in the future, their children will want their own horse and in the meantime, one of the proposed extra stables will possibly be used as a solarium as two of their horses will compete. Therefore, the appellant has a need for these horses to be under

cover to be able to bath the horses in winter and the solarium can be used to help dry them as well, as its main job to help with warm up/cool down). Furthermore, the circulation space and storage areas have been kept to a minimum in order to reduce the size of the proposed building.

Turning back to the appeal at Mellor, the inspector considered in Paragraph 10 that a condition restricting the use of the building to be ancillary to the predominant use was accepted. He concluded the following:

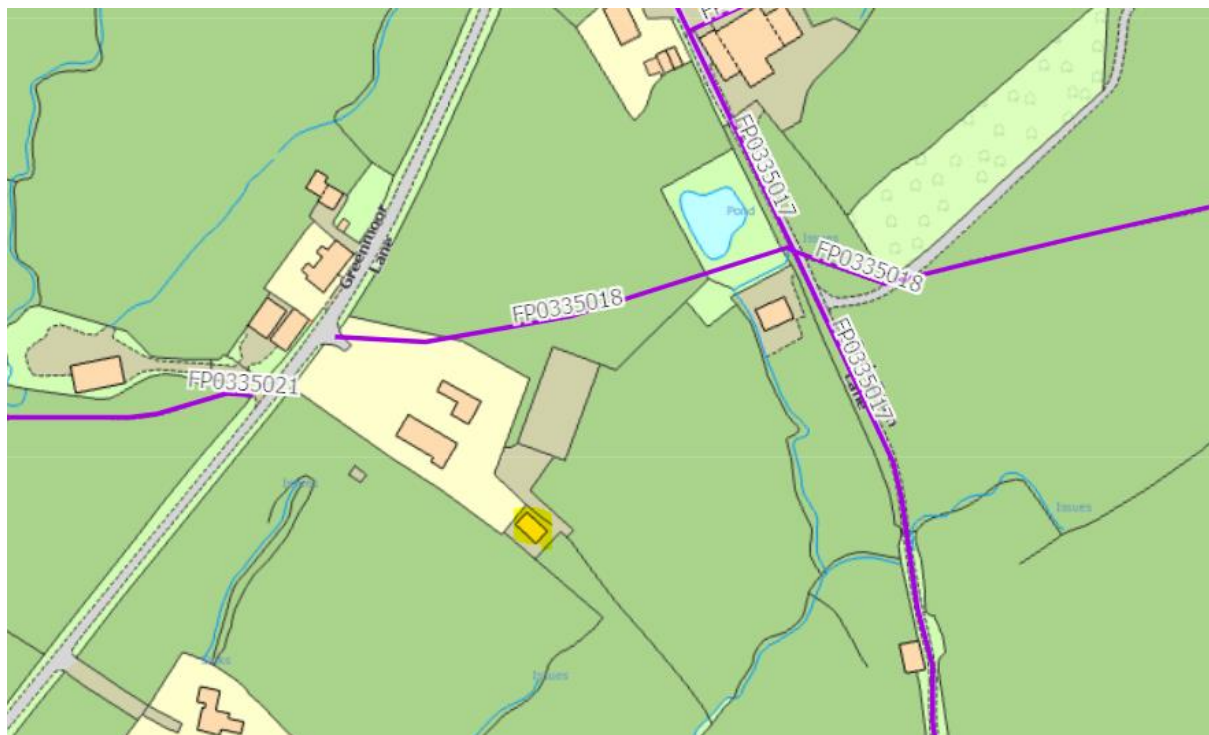
Consequently, with a planning condition that controls the use, I am satisfied that the appeal site would be a suitable location for the proposed development because it falls squarely within exception 4) of CS Policy DMG2, namely small scale tourism appropriate to a rural area.

With regard to this appeal the use of an ancillary condition restricting the use of the building to private use and ancillary to the host dwelling would meet exception 4 of Policy DMG2 namely small scale recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.

Turning to second issue, the impact the proposed building would have on the surrounding landscape, the building is set well back from Green Moor Lane. On the approach to the site from the south along Green Moor Lane, the mature roadside hedge will filter views of the building. Furthermore, there is a row of trees running parallel with the road in the field located to the south of the site. This will further prevent any views of the proposed development. Views of the building will be achieved when close to the entrance to the site, however the building will be set back from the road and the hedge along the southern boundary of the site will conceal the lower part of the building. The photograph below shows the limited visibility of the existing building and therefore it is considered the proposal would not be harmful to the rural landscape. Furthermore, this photograph was taken in the winter and in the summer months the hedge grows higher than two metres and no views from the road to the site are achieved.



The second potential public viewpoint is from a footpath (FP0335018), which traverses part of the appellants land and then meets another footpath (FP0335017) to the north east of the site (see plan below) . When walking the western part of the footpath near Green Moor Lane, views of the proposed development will partially be concealed by mature vegetation that exists along the northern part of the host dwelling's curtilage. Once clear of the curtilage of the dwelling views of the proposed building would be possible, however these views would be achieved over a considerable distance in excess of 80 metres at their closest point. As the footpath extends further east the distance between the viewpoint and the proposal increases to over 120 metres. When walking from west to east along the footpath, the proposed building would be located well to the south and outside the angle of view of a walker. When walking from east to west towards Green Moor Lane a walker would be able to view the proposed building for a distance along the footpath of about 70 metres before the building went outside the angle of view. However, from this viewpoint the proposed building would only be visible over a considerable distance. Given the building is for stable block its design is of an equestrian style and therefore would not be out of character in a rural landscape context.



The proposal is therefore not particularly visible when viewed from public vantage points. When viewed from the eastern part of the nearby footpath, the proposal is considered to be in keeping with the character of the rural landscape as the external appearance and design of the structure will create a vernacular style similar to other agricultural buildings. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policies EN2 and DMG1 of the Council Core Strategy and accordingly the Inspector is requested to allow the appeal.