

Ribble Valley Borough Council  
Housing & Development Control

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Your ref: 3/2023/0865  
Our ref: D3.2023.0865  
Date: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

FAO Kathryn Hughes

Dear Sir/Madam

Application no: **3/2023/0865**

Address: **Land at Pewter House Farm Commons Lane Balderstone BB2 7LN**

Proposal: **Erection of one new self-build dwelling with associated residential curtilage.**

The Local Highway Authority have viewed the plans and highway related documents and have the following comments to make:

### **Summary**

The Local Highway Authority advice is that the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the Local Planning Authority is advised to consider refusal on transport/highway grounds for the reasons outlined in this report.

### **Advice to Local Planning Authority**

The Local Highway Authority advises the following reasons for refusal:

*1. The proposal, if permitted, would lead to the intensification of use of an access which lacks the adequate visibility deemed safe and suitable for such a proposal. The proposal therefore is not in the interests of highway safety and contrary to paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).*

*2. The proposal, if permitted, would lead to the intensification of use of an access track which lacks the adequate width with a lack of passing facilities deemed safe and suitable for such a proposal. The proposal therefore is not in the interests of highway safety and contrary to paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).*

## **Introduction**

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) have been consulted on an application for the erection of a dwelling at the land at Pewter House Farm, Commons Lane, Balderstone.

The LHA are aware of the most recent planning history associated with Pewter House Farm, with the applications being listed below:

3/2023/0760- Proposed second floor extension following demolition of buildings to rear. Removal of existing conservatory and replacement with new porch. Ongoing.

3/2023/0725- Change of use of three adjoining steel portal frame agricultural structures to five dwellings under Class Q (a) and (b) of the GPDO. Resubmission of applications 3/2022/0909 and 3/2022/1072. Ongoing.

3/2022/1072- Change of use of three adjoining steel portal frame agricultural structures to five dwellings under Class Q (a) and (b) of the GPDO. Resubmission of application 3/2022/0909. Refused 03/01/2023.

3/2022/0909- Change of use of three adjoining steel portal frame agricultural structures to five dwellings under Class Q (a) and (b) of the GPDO. Refused 11/11/2022.

3/2019/0561- Removal of condition 2 (occupancy condition) from planning permission 3/2007/0734 to allow the holiday cottage to be used as a dwelling. Refused 19/07/2019.

3/2007/0734- Replace disused tractor and cart house with a pair of semi-detached holiday cottages. Permitted 07/03/2008.

## **Site Access**

The LHA are aware that the proposed dwelling will utilise an existing unadopted access track called Carr Lane, which is located off Commons Lane, an unclassified road subject to a 30mph speed limit. Carr Lane is used to serve numerous dwellings, outbuildings and farms as well as Public Footpath 3-4-FP34.

The LHA have reviewed the supporting documents and are aware that no drawings have been submitted which shows the junction and the junctions visibility splays. Usually, the LHA would request that a detailed site access plan is submitted showing the width and the junction being able to achieve visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m in both directions given the 30mph speed limit of Commons Lane.

However, the LHA have undertaken their own assessment of the access by analysing Mapzone, the digital mapping software used by Lancashire County Council, Google Streetview which has images of the access generated from February 2023 and have conducted a site visit. By using these tools, the LHA have been able to conclude that the junction is unlikely to be able to achieve visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m in both directions. This is because the splays are likely to be obstructed by vegetation which are located on third party land, outside of the Applicants land of control. Therefore, given that the Applicant does not own the land, any potential visibility splays will not be protected which would impact upon visibility at the junction and in turn highway safety.



The LHA have also undertaken their own assessment of the junction's width and have found that the width is unsuitable for the intensification of use. This is because the LHA normally require an access serving numerous dwellings and agricultural holdings to be a minimum of 6m wide for a distance of 10m behind the highway boundary. However, by reviewing Mapzone, the width is approximately 5m wide, but the mapping software does not take into account the verge which is located on both sides of the access track, meaning that the access width is much less than advertised. Therefore, the LHA are aware of the likely shortfall and so are concerned that the proposal will intensify the use of a substandard access.

### **Carr Lane**

Following the lack of an access track drawing the LHA have used Mapzone and C49 drawing number RBV PL 008 titled "Proposed Site Layout," which was used to support application reference 3/2023/0725. The LHA have found that Carr Lane from the access to Pewter House Farm, is approximately 540m in length and for the most part is approximately 1.9m wide and has access to 4 passing places along its length.

The LHA have disputed and have continued to dispute the number of passing places which have been recorded on the Agents drawing during the consultation period for application reference 3/2023/0725. This is because following a site visit and as shown on Google Streetview, the passing place which is located approximately 250m away from the site access can only be classed as a formal passing place while the others are informal and located on third party land. Therefore, there is no guarantee that the informal passing places can be used on a regular basis should two-vehicles meet on the single tracked lane, with some of these passing places being accesses or parking areas.

Given the lack of formal passing places along the access track, the LHA are concerned that the proposal will intensify the use of a substandard access track which lacks the adequate width and supporting infrastructure to support the application. Therefore, the LHA are concerned that should two vehicles meet along Carr Lane, one vehicle will have to reverse for a considerable distance until a formal or informal passing place could be found. This could be to the detriment of highway safety, given the windy and narrow nature of the unadopted track and potential conflicts could occur between pedestrians using Public Footpath 3-4-FP34.

The LHA are aware that potential improvements could be made to the access track to quash these concerns. However, the Applicant does not own the access track or the land either side of it and so this is not possible. Even if the Applicant did own the land there are constraints associated with widening the track due to a watercourse running alongside the track for the majority of its length.

The LHA also have concerns regarding the track suffering from poor inter-visibility. This is the case when the track meets number 1 Carr Lane Cottage, with the dwelling slightly overhanging the access track meaning that the dwelling obstructs the view of approaching vehicles. As a result of this, the area could potentially create a conflict pinch point given the narrow and windy nature of the track and the intensification of use.

**Internal Layout**

The LHA have reviewed the drawing number D1174/23/03 titled "Site Plan" and note that the proposed dwelling can provide 2 car parking spaces for the 2-bed dwelling. This complies with LHAs parking guidance as defined within the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan.

**Conclusion**

The LHA object to the application because the LHA are unable to accept any additional traffic using Carr Lane due to the substandard nature of the unadopted access track. The track currently serves numerous dwellings, outbuildings and farms as well as Public Footpath 3-4-FP34. Therefore, due to the substandard nature of the track, the LHA are concerned that any additional traffic using the track could pose a highway safety concern to pedestrians and other road users given the lack of formal and informal passing places.

Usually, the LHA could request that improvements are made to the track to make it more acceptable and to quash the LHAs concerns. However, there are no opportunities to make these improvements with the Applicant not owning the track or the land either side and even if the Applicant did there are other constraints, such as a stream running beside the track. Therefore, due to the substandard width of the track and there being concerns regarding the Carr Lane/ Commons Lane junction visibility splays, the LHA object to the application.

**Informatives**

This report sets out why the Highway Authority advises the Local Planning Authority should be refused planning permission. However, should the Local Planning Authority be minded to grant planning permission, please notify the Highway Authority so that advice can be provided on appropriate conditions and contributions to minimise the impact of the development.

Yours faithfully

Ryan Derbyshire  
Assistant Engineer  
Highway Development Control  
Highways and Transport  
Lancashire County Council

