



JUDITH DOUGLAS TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

Parsonage Farm, Church Street, Ribchester PR3 3YE.

Notification for prior approval for a proposed change of
use of agricultural building to one dwelling
(Class Q Part (A) and (B)).

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This prior approval notification application has been prepared by Judith Douglas Town Planning Ltd on behalf of the applicant to convert a traditional brick barn with blockwork additions to one dwelling.

2.0 Site Description and Surrounding Area:

- 2.1 The application building is sited within a group of buildings at Parsonage Farm Church Street Ribchester. The building to be converted stands on the north-east side of the group of agricultural buildings at Parsonage Farm. Vehicle access is along a surface road from Church Street in the centre of the village which is also a bridleway. There are residential properties to the north and north east of the site which are served by the same vehicle access.
- 2.2 The applicant lives at Lower Alston Farm Ribchester where he has his main farmstead. He farms the land around the application site. He purchased the agricultural buildings at Parsonage Farm in January 2018

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

- 2.2 The application seeks prior approval under Class Q (a) and (b) of Schedule 2 Part 3. The subsequent parts of Class Q.1 are assessed as follows:

Q .1 Development is not permitted by Class Q if—

(a) the site was not used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established agricultural unit—

(i) on 20th March 2013, or

(ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use, or

(iii) in the case of a site which was brought into use after 20th March 2013, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

- 2.3 The applicant is a farmer and bought the Parsonage Farm in January 2018 which comprised the farm buildings and land at Parsonage Farm. The site was solely in agricultural use on the 20th March 2013. The buildings ceased to be used for agricultural purposes about 4 years ago except for a little agricultural storage use but have otherwise been vacant since that time.

(b) in the case of-

(i) a larger dwellinghouse, within an established agricultural unit—

(aa) the cumulative number of separate larger dwellinghouses developed under Class Q exceeds 3; or

(bb) the cumulative floor space of the existing building or buildings changing use to a larger dwellinghouse or dwellinghouses under Class Q exceeds 465 square metres;

(ba) the floor space of any dwellinghouse developed under Class Q having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order exceeds 465 square metres;]

(c) in the case of—

(i) a smaller dwellinghouse, within an established agricultural unit—

(aa) the cumulative number of separate smaller dwellinghouses developed under Class Q exceeds 5; or

(bb) the floor space of any one separate smaller dwellinghouse having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order exceeds 100 square metres;

(d) the development under Class Q (together with any previous development under Class Q) within an established agricultural unit would result in either or both of the following—

(i) a larger dwellinghouse or larger dwellinghouses having more than 465 square metres of floor space having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order;

(ii) the cumulative number of separate dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order exceeding 5;

- 2.4 The floor space of the agricultural building changing use under Class Q within the established agricultural unit is 294m² which is under 465m² but over 100m². It is therefore a “larger dwellinghouse for the purposes of Class Q. It is proposed to convert the agricultural building to one dwelling. There have been no previous Class Q applications on this agricultural unit.

(e) the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained;

(f) less than 1 year before the date development begins—

(i) an agricultural tenancy over the site has been terminated, and

(ii) the termination was for the purpose of carrying out development under Class Q, unless both the landlord and the tenant have agreed in writing that the site is no longer required for agricultural use;

- 2.5 The site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy. An agricultural tenancy has not been terminated with the last year.

(g) development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of this Schedule (agricultural buildings and operations) has been carried out on the established agricultural unit—

(i) since 20th March 2013; or

(ii) where development under Class Q begins after 20th March 2023, during the period which is 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;

- 2.6 There has been no development under Part 6 on the established agricultural unit in the last 10 years. A prior notification for development under Part 6 has been granted reference 3/2024/0190. This development has not been carried out.

(h) the development would result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point;

(i) the development under Class Q(b) would consist of building operations other than—
(i) the installation or replacement of—
(aa) windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or
(bb) water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services, to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse; and
(ii) partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(i)(i);

2.7 The proposed does not extend beyond the external dimensions of the existing building. The development includes the demolition of the portal frame building attached to the brick barn which is reasonably necessary to carry out the building operations allowed by paragraph Q 1(i)(i).

2.8 The National Planning Policy Guidance States ***“What works are permitted under the Class Q permitted development right for change of use from an agricultural building to residential use? The right allows either the change of use (a), or the change of use together with reasonably necessary building operations (b). Building works are allowed under the right permitting agricultural buildings to change to residential use: Class Q of Part 3 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. However, the right assumes that the agricultural building is capable of functioning as a dwelling. The right permits building operations which are reasonably necessary to convert the building, which may include those which would affect the external appearance of the building and would otherwise require planning permission. This includes the installation or replacement of windows, doors, roofs, exterior walls, water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwelling house; and partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out these building operations. It is not the intention of the permitted development right to allow rebuilding work which would go beyond what is reasonably necessary for the conversion of the building to residential use. Therefore it is only where the existing building is already suitable for conversion to residential use that the building would be considered to have the permitted development right.”***

2.9 Please see accompanying Structural Appraisal. This demonstrates that the works proposed would accord with Q. i (i) of the order.

(j) the site is on article 2(3) land;

2.10 The agricultural building is located within an area of open countryside and is not included within article 2 (3) land.

(k) the site is, or forms part of—

(i) a site of special scientific interest;
(ii) a safety hazard area;
(iii) a military explosives storage area;

2.11 The building does not form part of any of the above.

(l) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument; or

2.12 The agricultural building and its curtilage do not contain a scheduled monument

(m) the building is a listed building.

2.13 The agricultural building and its curtilage do not contain a listed building

3 Determination of whether prior approval is required

3.1 To satisfy the requirements of Class Q(a) the Local Planning Authority's approval is required in respect of the following:

(a) transport and highways impacts of the development

3.2 Vehicle access to the proposed site is via the existing surfaced road from Church Street. The conversion of the brick barn and the demolition of the portal framed building attached to it will permanently reduce the amount and potential amount of agricultural traffic visiting the site. The agricultural buildings which will remain on the site will be retained for storage of equipment only and not used for animal housing. Since the applicant bought the land and buildings at Parsonage Farm he has farmed the land from his farm at Lower Alston Farm which is approximately 660m to the south east. The main farm buildings associated with his business are at Lower Alston Farm. The level of traffic associated with one dwelling raises no undue capacity or safety concerns when considered against the fallback position of the existing buildings being fully used for agricultural purposes.

3.3 Parking for three vehicles is provided within the proposed curtilage.

(b) noise impacts of the development

3.3 The conversion of the brick barn to one dwelling and the demolition of the attached portal framed building will substantially reduce the level of agricultural activity at the site. The applicant is willing for a condition to be placed on the prior approval to limit the use of the remaining buildings on the site to agricultural storage. The main agricultural activities associated with Parsonage Farm will permanently move to Lower Alston Farm. The occupiers of the proposed conversion will not be disturbed by noise and activity associated with the keeping of livestock. The level of activity associated with the remaining buildings being used for agricultural storage is compatible with the residential occupation of the barn conversion.

3.4 Paragraph W (13) of Part 3 permits the local planning authority to grant prior approval unconditionally or subject to conditions reasonably related to the subject matter of the prior approval. We suggest that a condition could be imposed which requires the decommissioning and removal of the building attached to the building to be converted, prior to the commencement of the change of use of the building from agricultural to a single dwelling house. We suggest that a condition could be imposed that the remaining agricultural buildings on the site marked agricultural equipment shed A, agricultural equipment shed B and agricultural equipment shed C on the proposed site plan are used for agricultural storage purposes only and not used to house livestock.

(c) contamination risks on the site

- 3.5 There are no known contamination risks associated with the development. No excavation is required to carry out the development.

(d) flooding risks on the site

- 3.6 The building that is proposed to be convert to a dwelling and its curtilage are within flood zone 1 on the Environment Agency website.

(e) whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order.

- 3.7 The site has a genuine history of agricultural use and the fallback position that agricultural activities in the building could resume. The conversion of the brick barn to one dwelling and the demolition of the attached portal framed building, will substantially reduce the level of agricultural activity at the site. The applicant is willing for a condition to be placed on the prior approval to limit the use of the remaining buildings on the site to agricultural storage only. The future occupiers of the proposed dwelling would be aware of the agricultural activities that could take place and therefore it is considered that the development would not be undesirable or impractical.
- 3.8 The site is in an area which is rural in character it is close to other dwellings and has easy access to local services in Ribchester.
- 3.9 The agricultural activities that were associated with the use of the buildings at Parsonage Farm have moved to Lower Alston Farm. The occupiers of the proposed conversion will not be disturbed by odour, noise and activity associated with the keeping of livestock. The level of activity associated with the remaining building being used for agricultural storage is compatible with the residential occupation of the barn conversion.
- 3.10 A survey for protected species has been carried out. Ther report states that Reasonable Avoidance Measures are considered an appropriate approach to development of Barn 1 and the removal of Outbuilding 2. A method statement is provided. The overall purpose of the Method Statement is to ensure that bats and their roosts are fully protected to ensure the 'favourable conservation status of the species'. Breeding Barn Owl were recorded within Outbuilding 4. The development is not expected to impact on the presence of Barn Owl.

(f) the design and external appearance of the building,

- 3.11 The building to be converted is likely to have been constructed in the late C18th or earlier C19th possibly re-using elements from an earlier barn known to exist at the site in the C17th. The barn has later C20th additions. The other agricultural buildings on the site date from the twentieth century. The main part of the barn to be converted to a dwelling is two storeys in height. It is of brick construction which has been partly rendered externally with a pebbledash render. The historic roof is covered in natural blue slate whilst the C20th extensions on the north-western and north-eastern sides have corrugated sheet roofs. The C20th extensions are constructed out of unfinished blockwork which is pebbledash on some elevations.

- 3.12 The proposed conversion has been designed to re-use as many of the existing and pre-existing openings which have been blocked up as possible and to keep new opening to a minimum. Where new openings have been introduced, they are simple in form to reflect the rural setting and character of the building.
- 3.13 It is proposed to re-roof the building in slate where slate is currently used and insulated corrugated sheet where corrugated sheets are used at present. It is proposed to apply a lime render to the brickwork, and a through colour render to the C20th extensions. Windows and doors are proposed in painted timber.
- 3.14 The removal of the attached portal framed barn will improve the setting of the building and will have a beneficial effect on the visual qualities of the landscape and will safeguard the amenity of the future occupants of the barn conversion. The barn conversion will be seen as part of the group of dwellings around Parsonage Farm. The design of the conversion will not appear out of character in the landscape.
- 3.15 As set out in paragraph X of Part 3, *“curtilage” means, for the purposes of Class Q, R or S only—*
(a) the piece of land, whether enclosed or unenclosed, immediately beside or around the agricultural building, closely associated with and serving the purposes of the agricultural building, or
(b) an area of land immediately beside or around the agricultural building no larger than the land area occupied by the agricultural building, whichever is the lesser;”
- 3.16 The agricultural building it is proposed to convert occupies a land area of 294m². The curtilage to the proposed dwelling is shown on the proposed site plan 3415 A100 and has a land area of 294m². This includes parking for 3 vehicles. The proposal meets the requirements of paragraph X of Part 3.
- (g) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses, and the provision of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to that application.***
- 3.17 All rooms within the proposed conversion are provided with at least one window to provide natural light.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 It is considered that the proposal satisfies the requirements of Class Q (a) and (b) of Schedule 2 Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. As such, prior approval should be approved