

Planning Inspectorate
The Square
Temple Quay
Room 3 O/P
Temple Quay House,2,
Bristol
BS1 6PN



10th January 2025

Ref: APPEAL TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOLLOWING REFUSAL NOTICE RECIEVED FOR FULL PLANNING APPLICATION 3/2024/0793: 1 FERRY BUTTS, GARSTANG ROAD, CHIPPING, PR3 2QJ.

Dear Sir/Madam

See enclosed an appeal at the above address following a refusal notice received on 27th November 2024.

We enclose the following information:

1. Copy of the full planning application submitted to Ribble Valley on 24th September 2024.
2. Copy of an email response received from the case officer on 25th November 2024.
3. Submitted drawing 2022/ 436_ 01 Revision B.
4. Refusal Notice received and dated 27th November 2024.
5. Further information: Drawing 03 (Streetscene elevation.)
6. Application Timeline (Below)
7. Assessment. (Below)
8. Summary. (Below)

APPLICATION TIMELINE

- Following submission of plans on the 24th September 2024, no communication or correspondence was received from the local authority. (LA) As a result an email was issued by AMG Architectural to the LA on 22nd November 2024 to request an update.
- Following the above email, a response was received from the case officer Ms Lucy Walker by email on 25th November 2024. The content in the email is below:

"Thank you for your email.

I've discussed the application with the head of planning, and we are unfortunately unable to support the proposal.

One of the criterions of Policy DMH4 of the Core Strategy is that the character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building, and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting. However, in this respect, the existing building is considered to appear somewhat incongruous in its overly industrial appearance. As such, the existing building is not considered to possess intrinsic interest, nor is it considered to contribute to

its setting, not only by virtue of its materiality but also by virtue of its largely industrial and utilitarian appearance. I therefore do not consider the building to be worthy of retention and the principle of the conversion is not secured in the first instance.

Furthermore, the proposed external alterations are considered to go beyond that of a conversion, significantly altering the visual appearance of the existing building and subsequently causing the proposal to read as a new structure rather than one that is already assimilated into the landscape. In addition to this, given the overall design, size, and scale of the building, it cannot be reasonably argued that the proposal would read as a subservient domestic extension, incidental to the residential use of the application property. The proposal would therefore have the effect of increasing the visual prominence of the building, resulting in it appearing both incongruous and anomalous. I have therefore written the application up with a recommendation for refusal.

Going forward, I think the best option may be to demolish the existing workshop and construct a smaller domestic extension – perhaps half the width of the existing – with a detached garage. If you wish to go down this route, then please feel free to send me some amended plans prior to the submission of a new application and I will try and provide some informal advice. Alternatively, you may wish to engage with our formal pre-application enquiry service.”

The above correspondence was the only communication received from the LA throughout the application timeline.

- An email was issued by AMG Architectural Ltd to the LA on 26th November 2024 to request that the case be determined.
- A refusal notice was received on 27th November 2024.

ASSESSMENT

The application submitted was to convert a 2-storey workshop which abuts, 1 Ferry Butts near the village of Chipping. The building is currently used for domestic storage only and was bound by planning approval 6/10/1171 to construct a workshop. There is no mechanism which requires this building to be taken down and this is confirmed by a previous LA planning application report for works on the same site, (Ref: 3/ 2023/ 0738: Demolition of existing garage and workshop store and replace with two-storey extension of living accommodation and domestic garage.) The public report stated the following:

“Given consent was granted in 1953, no enforcement action can be taken in this respect.”

Following refusal of application 3/2023/ 0738, a further application was submitted to convert the existing workshop. This was submitted for the following reasons:

1. Application 3/ 2023/ 0738 was refused. Whilst the application was submitted by another agent, we understand that the LA did not grant the applicant Mr Graham Gregson the benefit of submitting some reduced and revised proposals. Despite this, the case officer for the application now subject to this appeal suggested that a smaller domestic extension and detached garage may be viable in her email dated 25th November 2024.
2. There is no obligation to demolish the existing workshop which is confirmed in the public report for planning application 3/ 2023/0738.
3. The local plan for Ribble Valley includes policies, which supports the conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings. This is namely policy DMH4.
4. The building in question is structurally sound and this was confirmed by the structural report submitted by Molior Consultancy as part of the application.
5. It is not economically feasible to demolish a sound structure and then replace it with 2 smaller structures as suggested by the case officer in her email dated 25th November 2024.

The application site is in a rural location in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. (AONB) A typical feature of the immediate surrounding area includes small farm estates which typically include a natural stone faced walled dwelling houses with natural slate dual pitched roofs. Gables ends are a consistent theme of the dwelling houses. In most cases, the farm estates include a mixture of barns and agricultural sheds which include vertical cladding. This is evident at nearby estates including:

- Blackhall Farm (Approximately 180m away from the appeal site.)
- Halton Hill Farm. (Approximately 320m away from the appeal site.)
- Cuthbert Hill Farm. (Approximately 330m away from the appeal site.)
- W. M. Ellison Ltd (Approximately 640m away from the appeal site.)

There are numerous other examples of this type of development with similar facing material finishes in the vicinity.

In the public report the case officer states the following:

“As part of the overall development, numerous external alterations are proposed to the existing structure., including the incorporation of timber cladding to the external elevations, a new slate roof and replacement windows and doors throughout. These alterations are considered to go beyond that of a conversion, significantly altering the visual appearance of the existing building and subsequently causing the proposal to appear more akin to a new structure, rather than one that is already assimilated into the landscape.”

Ribble Valley local plan policy DMH4 states:

THE BUILDING TO BE CONVERTED MUST:

1. BE STRUCTURALLY SOUND AND CAPABLE OF CONVERSION FOR THE PROPOSED USE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR EXTENSIVE BUILDING OR MAJOR ALTERATION, WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING. THE COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE A STRUCTURAL SURVEY Core Strategy Adoption version 106 TO BE SUBMITTED WITH ALL PLANNING APPLICATION OF THIS NATURE. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE PLANS OF ANY REBUILDING THAT IS PROPOSED;

Other than the introduction of 2no. openings, there are no structural works required. The case officer does not reference these. Given the minor works required to the existing structure, can it be reasonably claimed that cladding

the existing walls in a more in-keeping vertical timber cladding, replacing the roof finish with a natural slate roof and replacing the existing door and window openings constitute as major alteration.

Currently the walls are finished in a sand cement textured render and an unsympathetic pale green corrugated sheet roof. These are not a consistent feature of the area. If an application were submitted to retain the existing structure for its current use as a workshop, but change the facing materials to those included in this appeal, we believe that the local authority would support this as the materials would be more consistent with other immediate surrounding properties. Therefore, and if this were true, the same should apply if we are converting the existing structure for another intended use. The 'newness' of any facing materials should not be of concern as these may be weathered in appearance and bound by condition.

Ribble Valley local plan policy DMH4 also states:

- 3. THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND ITS MATERIALS ARE APPROPRIATE TO ITS SURROUNDINGS AND THE BUILDING AND ITS MATERIALS ARE WORTHY OF RETENTION BECAUSE OF ITS INTRINSIC INTEREST OR POTENTIAL OR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ITS SETTING, AND**
4. THE BUILDING HAS A GENUINE HISTORY OF USE FOR AGRICULTURE OR ANOTHER RURAL ENTERPRISE.

The existing structure includes a dual pitched roof with a gable end and is similar in scale, form and character to similar agricultural buildings located at nearby farms. As a result, we believe that the character of the building is appropriate to its surroundings and meets the requirements of Ribble Valley local plan policy DMG2. In addition, policy 'DMH4' item 3, describes "its materials." It is not clear whether this means 'original,' 'existing,' or 'proposed' materials and it may not be assumed that this means the facing materials on the existing structure at the time the application was submitted. The facing materials proposed are more in-keeping with the surrounding area and therefore the case may be made that the 'potential' of the development is being realised.

The public report states that the domestic footprint of the property will be increased by 140%. This is not the case as the floor space already exists regardless of its current or intended use. Whilst the existing structure may be linear in form, it is a statement of fact that the eaves and the ridge are 'subservient' to the host dwelling house. Whilst the public report deems that the extension is not subservient when read in context with the host dwelling house, it does not appear to acknowledge that 1 Ferry Butt's adjoins a further dwelling house to the East. When read as a streetscene, the existing structure does appear 'subservient.' Therefore, we believe that this will meet the requirements outlined in Ribble Valley local plan policy DMH5. A drawing (03) is provided with this appeal to support this.

The public report states that the works will increase the visual prominence of the existing structure due to altering its character. If the building is not changing in scale, form or size and the proposed materials are typical and consistent to other estates in the immediate surrounding area, how can this be reasonably claimed? Subject to the inclusion of consistent facing materials which may be bound by condition, there is no reason why the works would not be in harmony with the surroundings. The suggestion that the proposals would make the existing structure more incongruous is inaccurate. The public report also states that the works will be 'anomalous.' This suggests that natural slate roof tiles and vertical timber cladding are not consistent theme of the area. This is factually incorrect, and numerous estates nearby include these types of finishes which are mentioned elsewhere in this statement.

For the reasons aforementioned, we believe that the works are in accordance with the Ribble Valley local plan policy DMG1 which covers general considerations for planning applications and policy EN2 which considers the landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

SUMMARY

The context of the report appears to read that the application has been assessed against the proposals been constructed or the application building not been there at all. This is not the case. There is no obligation to demolish the building, and it is not economically viable to do so. The

application description assigned by the local authority and agreed by us suggests that the building is already used for domestic purposes with the mention of a 'garage.' Therefore, the impact of any such development along with the suggested improvements should not create any adverse harm, particularly when there are no other material reasons why this development should not be supported.

To all intents and purposes the proposals offer to bring an existing building back into use which is a more sustainable process than demolishing a structurally sound building and then importing new materials to construct something in its place. The development will achieve the character and appearance of a converted agricultural building which is not unique in the context of its surroundings.

We believe that the proposals submitted are more in harmony with the local surroundings when compared to leaving the building in its current state, which is the only viable alternative. As a result, we are hopeful, that the decision reached by the LA can be overturned.

Yours Sincerely,



Alex Green
AMG Architectural Ltd

