

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	21/03/2025	Manager:	LH	Date:	25/3/25
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0039			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	20/02/2025	Site Notice:	20/02/2025	
Officer:	MC			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				REFUSAL

Development Description:	Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new two-storey detached dwelling with rooms in the roofspace. Installation of Air Source Heat Pump and Solar Panels.
Site Address/Location:	Dilworth Cottage, Ward Green Lane, Longridge, PR3 2ZL

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Longridge Town Council:	No response received.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	Lancashire County Council acting as the Local Highway Authority has concerns regarding the proposal and does not consider that the application as submitted fully assesses the highway impact of the proposed development
United Utilities:	An appropriate drainage strategy condition would be required to be added to any grant of permission in accordance with the NPPF and the NPPG.
RVBC Environmental Health:	<p>Recommends the addition of two conditions relating to construction/delivery hours and control of site construction phase and preparation in relation to dust/fumes/noise/vibration.</p> <p>The Environmental Health Officer considers the Air Source Heat Pump to be a sufficient distance to not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties.</p> <p>An informative is recommended regarding the solar panels proposed and the potential for pigeons to nest.</p>
RVBC Countryside Officer:	<p>The Countryside Officer notes that two further emergence surveys are required to be undertaken between May – September.</p> <p>They also recommend a tree protection condition in accordance with BS 5837 Protection of Trees in Relation to Demolition, Design and Construction for category B trees identified on the submitted tree protection plan dated 6th of Jan 2025 be added to any grant of permission.</p>

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No additional representations received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations
Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and the AONB
Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility
Policy DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodland
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection And Conservation
Policy DME5: Renewable Energy

Adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan:

Policy LNPD3: Longridge Design Principles
Policy LNPD6: Landscape

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

3/1983/0499

Erection of front porch.
Approved with Conditions

3/1975/1221

Erection of new double garage
Approved with Conditions

3/1975/1220

Internal modifications and alterations to window and door openings
Approved with Conditions

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site is occupied by a stone built, two storey dwelling and detached garage, located within the Open Countryside. The site is located on the junction of Ward Green Lane, and The B6243 Lower Road, Longridge, Preston, PR3 2ZL, approximately 2.4km east of the settlement boundary of Longridge. The character of the surrounding area is predominantly rural and is currently unoccupied.

The site is also located within the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The proposed development is for the demolition of the existing dwellinghouse and the erection of a new 2.5 storey dwelling. The existing dwelling is built almost up to the boundary with Lower Road and as such, visibility at the junction is poor. The proposed new dwelling would be sited further south, leaving a gap of approximately 5.1 metres between the northern site boundary at Lower Road and the rear wall of the dwelling. In addition, the new dwelling would be sited between approximately 5.1 and 2.9 metres from the site boundary along Wards Green Lane. In comparison the existing property was built up to the boundary.

The proposal includes a hard surfaced area surrounding the property with a patio to the front and an extension to the existing driveway. The detached two store garage would remain, as would the existing site access.

With regards to the proposed dwelling itself, this would be approximately 9.1 metres to the top of the roof ridge and 10.1 metres approximately to the top of the chimney. The eaves height would be approximately 6.4 metres. The proposal would have a two-storey gable roof front projection which would be set down from the main roof ridge by approximately 0.5 metres. This gable projection would include double doors with a Juliet balcony at first floor level to the front elevation. The external materials of construction would include a slate roof, brown uPVC soffits and fascias, brown uPVC windows and doors and to the walls, natural stone with stone quoins. Solar panels are also proposed to the front roof slope and an Air Source Heat Pump adjacent to the eastern flank wall.

Principle of Development:

The proposed development is not located within a settlement boundary and Policy DMG2 states that:

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

- 1. the development should be essential to the local economy or social well being of the area.*
- 2. the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.*
- 3. the development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.*
- 4. the development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.*
- 5. the development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.*
- 6. the development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.*

The submitted information does not indicate that the development is for local needs housing which meet an identified need and it would not fall under any of the alternative criteria outlined above.

Notwithstanding this, Policy DMH3 is for dwellings in the Open Countryside and the AONB (now National Landscape) which allows for:

“the rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings subject to the following criteria:

- the residential use of the property should not have been abandoned.*
- there being no adverse impact on the landscape in relation to the new dwelling.*
- the need to extend an existing curtilage”.*

Whilst the submitted Design & Access statement does indicate that the building has been vacant for 12 months, it is not considered that the residential use has not been abandoned. As such, it is not considered that there is an in principle objection to the development, subject to the proposal not extending the existing curtilage or resulting in any adverse impact on the landscape. This will be discussed below in the visual amenity section of this report.

Residential Amenity:

Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

‘Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users’.

Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.

Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan also states that:

Policy LNDP3 of the Longridge Neighbourhood Plan also states that proposals should:

“Have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity for existing and future resident” or

“Do not contribute to, or suffer from, adverse impacts arising from noise”.

In this instance, there are no neighbouring residential properties within the immediate vicinity of the site where the closest residential property is located approximately 126 metres to the north-east of the site (Hill Side). As such, the proposal would not likely result in any adverse impact by way of loss of light, overshadowing, overlooking or overbearing impact.

The Environmental Health Officer has provided comments on the scheme, noting that due to the distance between the proposed Air Source Heat Pump and neighbouring residential receptors, it would not likely result in any adverse impact by way of excessive noise. They do recommend the inclusion of two conditions relating to construction hours/delivery times and the control of noise/dust/smoke/fumes.

The proposal therefore complies with the above Policies.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance and Heritage Impact:

Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF states:

‘Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting’.

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows:

‘All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style...particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character.’

Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Plan also states that:

‘All new development proposals will only be supported when they are of good design that responds positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the surroundings’. This Policy states that proposals should:

- “a) Conserve and enhance the locally distinctive built, historic and natural environment;*
- b) Are designed to take account of site characteristics and surroundings, including:*
 - i. Layout – the predominantly green appearance of the area to be maintained with appropriate green space and planting of trees and shrubs;*
 - ii. Siting;*
 - iii. Scale;*
 - iv. Height;*
 - v. Proportions and massing;*
 - vi. Fuel efficiency;*
 - vii. Architectural detailing;*
 - viii. Landscaping;*
 - ix. Materials;”.*

Policy DMG2 states that:

“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. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build”.

Turning to the acceptability of the proposed replacement dwelling, it is noted that this would be much larger in size and scale than the demolished dwelling which is a much smaller, stone-built dwelling that is typical in character of a dwelling in this location. The dwelling would be approximately 2 metres taller than the existing dwelling, with an eaves height increase of approximately 1.5 metres. Whilst the dwelling would now be sited forward of the boundary with Lower Road, it is considered that it would be more prominent when viewed from Ware Green Lane. The dwelling would no longer appear as a traditional stone-built cottage but would have larger and more modern features of a greater size and scale.

For example, the proposal includes a gable roof projection to the front of the dwelling which would add bulk and mass to the building. Whilst this is not considered to be excessive in depth, its height is considered to add to the prominence of the building. In addition, this gable would feature a two-storey bay window which is not considered to be a typical design feature of the surrounding area. The dwelling is considered to be excessive in height, being 2.5 storeys with accommodation in the loft space. The flank walls include windows at the third-floor level which would likely be visible from Ward Green Lane as some of the trees along the boundary are proposed to be removed. The height of the building is considered to be excessive and the presence of third floor windows on the flank wall would add to the dominating appearance of the dwelling within the site.

Criterion (e) of Policy LNPD3 also states that proposals should:

“Utilise sustainable construction methods, minimising the use of non-renewable resources and maximising the use of recycled and sustainably sourced materials”

And (f) states that proposals should:

“Minimise resource use towards a zero carbon dioxide emissions”.

Whilst the benefits of using renewable energy are noted, it is not considered that this would outweigh the harm identified in terms of visual impact.

Overall, the proposed replacement dwelling, by reason of its size, scale, siting and design, is not considered to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, within the Open Countryside when compared to the distinct character of the existing building which contributes positively to the street scene, contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG2 or the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNPD3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Highways/Parking:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG3 states that:

‘All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards’.

In addition, Policy DMG1 states that all development must:

‘1. consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.’

2. ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated’.

The site has an existing garage which is shown on the submitted floorplans as a workshop. Two parking spaces are provided in front of the garage, and the Local Highway Authority (LHA) note that the dwelling complies with the LHA’s parking standards as defined in the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan and there would be room to turn within the site and leave in forward gear. They do however note that the garage cannot be classed as a parking space as it does not meet the minimal internal dimensions.

They recommend the inclusion of two covered cycle storage spaces and an EV charging point to encourage sustainable travel.

Notwithstanding the above, they note that whilst the application makes note of improvement to the junction visibility within the Design & Access Statement, given the location of the boundary wall, the LHA are of the view that there would be minimal improvement due to the height of the wall that would be retained and visibility splays should be provided to the right at the junction of Lower Road and Wards Green Lane to allow the LHA to review any proposed improvements to the sight lines.

Had the application been recommended for approval, a scheme for the retaining structure adjacent to the highway would be required to be secured prior to the commencement of development to ensure that any change in the retaining wall would not destabilise the adopted highway.

The LHA raise concerns that existing and proposed visibility splays to the right at the junction of Lower Road and Wards Green Lane have not been provided. If these were provided, this would allow the LHA to review any proposed improvements to the sight lines. They consider that the applicant has not fully assessed the highway impact of the proposed development as set out in this response. Notwithstanding this, the LHA have not stated that the amended scheme would result in greater harm to highway safety than the current site conditions. As such, a technical drawing of the retaining wall and amendments to the retaining wall height and visibility splays could be secured by condition and it would be unreasonable to refuse the scheme on highway safety grounds given the existing conditions.

Other matters:

With regards to landscaping, the proposal would involve the removal of a number of Category ‘C’ trees within the site and would retain eight individual Category ‘B’ trees. The Countryside Officer has provided comments on the scheme and considers that a tree protection condition should be added to any grant of permission to ensure the trees are protected in accordance with BS 5837 Protection of Trees in Relation to Demolition, Design and Construction.

Turning to protected species, Policy DME3 states that development proposals that:

“development proposals that are likely to adversely affect the following will not be granted planning permission”.

The application has been supported by a Preliminary Roost Assessment which indicates that the building has a number of features which are potentially suitable to be used by roosting bats and has moderate suitability for use. The report identifies that additional bat emergence surveys are required during the active season for bats (May to September) to determine the presence or absence of bats in the building. It identifies that two separate surveys are required and if bats are found to be roosting, a further survey would be necessary to determine the type of roost. The Local Planning Authority are unable to impose a condition requiring the necessary bat survey(s) be undertaken as this information is required to be submitted up front at the application stage in order to enable full assessment and consideration of the impacts on protected species.

In the absence of this information, there is insufficient information to fully consider the impact on protected species, contrary to Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

The development is proposed as being exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it relates to self-build development, however in order to benefit from this exemption the applicant would be required to enter into a Unilateral Undertaking. Had the application been recommended for approval, this would be required to be signed prior to the determination of the application.

United Utilities have provided comments on the scheme and they consider that a drainage strategy should be secured by a pre-commencement condition, should permission be granted. This is considered reasonable, had the application be recommended for approval.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION: That the application be refused for the following reason:

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| 01: | The demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of the proposed replacement dwelling, by reason of its inappropriate size, scale, siting and design is considered to constitute a prominent addition to the site and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the rural, open countryside when compared to the size, scale and appearance of the existing dwelling, contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG2 or the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNPD3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan. |
| 02: | There is insufficient information submitted within the application to determine the presence of bats within the site. In the absence of this information, the proposal fails to fully assess the impact on protected wildlife species, contrary to Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. |

