


**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>	BT	<b>Date:</b>	31/7/25	<b>Manager:</b>	LH	<b>Date:</b>	31/7/25
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<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2025/0061			 Ribble Valley Borough Council <small>www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</small>
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	24/6/25	<b>Site Notice:</b>	24/6/25	
<b>Officer:</b>	BT			
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>				<b>REFUSAL</b>

<b>Development Description:</b>	Proposed change of use of holiday accommodation and rear extension to form children's care home and change of use of dwelling and external alterations to form children's care home for up to 5 children together with access works to form car park.
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	Clerk Laithe, Slaidburn Road, Newton, BB7 3DY.

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
<b>Newton Parish Council:</b>	Object to the proposal for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of the proposal upon highway safety</li> <li>• Resultant loss of housing stock</li> <li>• The proposal would offer little in terms of benefits to the local community</li> <li>• The proposal would be sited in an unsustainable location</li> </ul>

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
<b>LCC Highways:</b>	No objections subject to conditions.
<b>Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU):</b>	Consulted 11/6/25, 25/7/25 & 28/7/25 – no response received.
<b>RVBC Environmental Health:</b>	No objections subject to conditions.
<b>RVBC Countryside:</b>	No objections.

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
Two objections received to the consultation, summarised as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the application would be in conflict with the Council's tourism key objective</li> <li>• Concerns raised with respect to potential occurrences of anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>	

- The rural location of the proposal site would be unsuitable for vulnerable children

Comments have also been made with regards to the lack of information pertaining to the operation of the proposed care home in relation to emergency situations, points of contact and management structure.

#### **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:**

##### **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy  
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development  
Key Statement EN2: Landscape  
Key Statement DMI2: Transport Consideration  
Policy DMG1: General Considerations  
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations  
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility  
Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation  
Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

##### **Relevant Planning History:**

###### **3/2020/0933:**

Construction of rural farm shop with the inclusion of two retail units. Resubmission of 3/2020/0444 (Refused)

###### **3/2020/0444:**

Construction of rural farm shop with the inclusion of two retail units (Refused)

###### **3/2018/1045:**

Erection of new single storey link building between existing dwelling and bed and breakfast annex (Approved)

###### **3/2018/0633:**

Construction of underground slurry tanks within and extending from an agricultural building and access track (Approved)

###### **3/2018/0141:**

Application to regularise a change of design to agricultural livestock building, including increase in footprint and new build extension to side (Approved)

###### **3/2012/0815:**

Application for a non-material amendment to planning permission 3/2011/0417P to change the South West ground floor window into a door to allow improved means of escape (Approved)

###### **3/2011/0417:**

Proposed erection of an annex building providing 5no. Bed and Breakfast rooms with ancillary space (Approved)

###### **3/2001/0727:**

Erect New Garage (Approved)

**3/1997/0058:**

Re-use and adaptation of redundant agricultural building to form one dwelling with ancillary workspace (Approved)

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:****Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application relates to a converted barn property and bed and breakfast property located on the North-western outskirts of Newton-in-Bowland within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Access to the proposal site is from Slaidburn Road via an existing vehicle access which leads to vehicle parking areas adjoining the South-western side of the site's buildings. The converted barn property comprises a traditional stone built barn which is currently in use as a two bedroom dwelling. The site's bed and breakfast property lies directly adjacent to the North-western gable end of the converted barn property and comprises a stone and slate based building which accommodates five bedrooms and amenities which include a kitchen, lounge, storage area and bathrooms. The village centre of Newton lies approximately 400 metres away to the South-east of the proposal site with the wider surrounding area comprising a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

**Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**

Planning consent is sought for the change of use of the proposal site's converted barn property and bed & breakfast accommodation for use as a children's care home to accommodate up to five children. Additional works proposed include the addition of a single storey lean-to extension to the North-western elevation of the site's bed and breakfast property, extension to the site's existing vehicle parking provision and alterations to the site's converted barn property including the addition of glazing above the building's cart entry and a new first floor window to the building's South-eastern elevation.

**Principle of Development:**

The application site lies outside the defined settlement area of Newton-in-Bowland which is identified as a Tier 2 Village in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy states:

*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 application's supporting information makes reference to criteria point 5 of the above considerations through asserting that the proposed development would deliver numerous benefits to the children that would take up residence in the proposed care home accommodation, with these being a peaceful setting to reduce stress and anxiety, access to green spaces, lower levels of pollution and noise and a reduced risk of exposure to crimes more commonly associated with urban areas. In addition, it stated that the proposal would provide extensive benefits to the local community through providing employment

opportunities to local carers, therapists and support staff. It is further stated that occupants of the proposed care home would also utilise local convenience stores, maintenance services and transport providers which in turn would provide benefits to the local economy.

Criteria point 5 supports small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated. The Planning Statement identifies 5 children residing at the site together with six full-time staff at normal operating periods and 3 additional parking spaces for visitors. This is considered to amount to a small-scale use. However, it is unclear as to whether the proposed care home would exclusively accommodate children from within the Borough, nor is there any legal mechanism proposed to ensure that this would be the case. Similarly, there would be no guarantee that the proposed care home would employ carers, therapists and support staff from within the Borough. Consequently, it cannot be reasonably argued that the proposal would provide local benefits in the context of providing accommodation for local children and providing employment to local carers, therapists and support staff.

In terms of demonstrating a local need for the proposed development, the application's supporting information makes reference to statistics from Lancashire County Council (from March 2023) which reported approximately 2,000 children in need and approximately 700 children subject to Child Protection Plans. Whilst these figures suggest shortcomings in child care provision, it is important to note that these shortcomings relate to the broader Lancashire region and therefore suggest a need for additional children's care homes at the county level rather than specifically within the Ribble Valley Borough. Additionally, even if a local need was demonstrated, it is unclear based on the information presented whether or not the proposed development would meet that local need by accommodating children from within the Borough. On this basis, it is not considered that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that a local need exists for the proposed development. Furthermore, no case has been put forward to demonstrate that the proposed development would meet any of the additional considerations for development outside the Borough's defined settlement areas as outlined above.

Policy DMG3 seeks to support development proposals which are well related to the primary road network and can be accessed by sustainable transport modes. This is in line with one of the overarching objectives of the NPPF to encourage sustainable development and in turn to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. In this instance, the application site lies within walking distance of Newton-In-Bowland, however Newton is identified as a Tier 2 settlement in the RV Core Strategy in recognition of its limited services and facilities. Therefore, occupants of the proposed care home would largely be dependent upon private motor vehicles in order to access the services and facilities necessary to meet their day to day needs, including shops, secondary schools and medical services. Additionally, staff accessing the site would largely be dependent upon private motor vehicle. Accordingly, the proposed change of use of the application buildings would amount to an unsustainable development by virtue of the site being sited in an unsuitable location for care home accommodation.

Taking account of all of the above, the proposal would fail to meet the criteria within Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and is therefore considered to be unacceptable in principle.

#### **Impact Upon 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.

In this instance, the proposal would create a permanent residential presence on site (as opposed to the existing arrangement in place whereby only the converted barn property accommodates an unrestricted residential use) which in turn could potentially give rise to increased levels of noise, disturbances and activities relative to the existing use of the application site. Notwithstanding this, the nearest residential receptors to the application site (The Old Police House and No. 1 & 2 College Cottages) lie approximately 200 metres away to the South of the application buildings, with no direct interface in place between the application buildings and aforementioned neighbouring properties.

Consequently, it is not anticipated that the proposed use of the application site as a care home facility would be unduly harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents. The proposed development would therefore be compliant with the aims and objectives of Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF and Policy DMG1.

Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with respect to the proposed development potentially giving rise to increases in anti-social and criminal behaviour in the area. This issue is discussed in the 'Other Matters' section of this report.

#### **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**

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.'*

With respect to development within National Landscapes (previously known as Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states:

*'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.'*

The above is reiterated within Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy:

*'The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.'*

In this instance, the proposed development would involve the introduction of glazing above the cart entry of the converted barn property which would read as a symmetrical and natural continuation of the existing cart entry feature. Similarly, the new first floor window opening proposed for the South-eastern elevation of the converted barn would be in keeping with the design and proportions of the existing adjacent first floor window opening. The works proposed to the converted barn are therefore considered to be acceptable. The single storey extension proposed for the bed and breakfast property would be a modest structure in terms of its footprint and height, with its lean-to roof profile set below the eaves level of the host building and with this mirroring the lean-to roof profile of the parent building. In addition, the proposed extension would be detailed in stone and slate which would be in keeping with the materiality of the host building. The proposed extension would therefore read as a

subservient and congruent addition to the bed and breakfast property and as such is considered to be acceptable.

Taking account of all of the above, it is considered that the proposed development would conserve the surrounding National Landscape without any harm to the visual amenities of the immediate or wider area. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 135 (c) and 189 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.

#### **Highways and Parking:**

The proposed development has been subject to review by Lancashire County Council Highways who have raised no issues with respect to access, parking provision or general highway safety. The LHA response recommends for the imposition of conditions with respect to the provision of parking and turning areas, secure cycle storage, surface treatments and construction management and these conditions would need to be imposed on any future planning consent granted. On this basis, it is not considered that the proposed development would have any undue impacts upon highway safety as such the proposal satisfies Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy (highways).

#### **Landscape/Ecology:**

##### Protected Species

The proposed development has potential implications with respect to disturbances to protected species therefore a preliminary bat roost assessment has been provided in support of the application. The results of the submitted survey identify both the converted barn and bed and breakfast property as holding moderate roost potential for bats however the report acknowledges that the potential roost features on the South-west and North-east elevations of the converted barn property would not be directly affected by the proposed scope of works. In addition, it further stated that construction of the proposed extension to the bed and breakfast property would have no undue impacts upon the potential roosting features within this building. As such, no further survey work has been recommended however the submitted ecology report includes numerous safeguarding and enhancement measures to be adhered to in the event of works of construction being undertaken on site. Compliance with the aforementioned safeguarding and enhancement measures would need to be secured through the imposition of a condition in the event of any future planning consent being granted.

##### Trees

An Arboricultural Constraints Appraisal and Impact Assessment have been provided in support of the application which show the presence of five trees sited within the South-eastern corner of the application site. The submitted AIA shows that there would be a requirement to remove a cherry and Chinese thuja tree (identified as T4 and T5 on the constraints and impact plans respectively) in order to accommodate the extended vehicle parking area proposed for the site. The proposed development has been subject to review by the Council's Countryside Officer who has raised no concerns with regards to the proposed extent of tree removal on the basis of these being low value category trees of limited amenity value. In addition, all other trees and hedges on site would be retained under the proposed development and analysis shows that the application site could comfortably accommodate compensatory replacement tree planting if required. As such, the proposed extent of tree removal is considered to be acceptable. The submitted AIA includes a programme of tree protection for all additional trees within and around the application site for the construction phase of the development and adherence with these measures would need to be secured through the imposition of a condition in the event of any future planning consent being granted.

##### BNG

A (draft) Biodiversity gain plan, covering letter and metric data have been provided in support of the proposed development. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit have been consulted on the application however no response has been received to date. Notwithstanding this, the BNG assessments provided in support of the application show that the proposal would deliver a post development biodiversity net gain to the application site in excess of the statutory 10% requirement. Given the extent of land within the application site the Council has no reason to believe that the proposed development could not achieve the statutory requirements with respect to biodiversity net gain.

#### Biological Heritage Site

A section of the roadside verge adjoining the South-eastern perimeter of the application site comprises a Biological Heritage Site however analysis shows that creation of the extended vehicle parking area to serve the proposed development would not involve any encroachment into the adjoining roadside verge. Furthermore, the aforementioned roadside verge would not be impacted upon by any of the other works proposed as part of the development. As such, no concerns are raised with respect to impacts upon the adjoining Biological Heritage Site.

#### **Other Matters:**

Concerns have been raised through the application's public consultation process with respect to the proposed use of the application property as a children's home potentially leading to an increase in anti-social and criminal behaviour in the area due to the applicant's care being inclusive of children / young people who may have a history of disruptive behaviour and other related issues.

Concerns about public safety, anti-social behaviour and safeguarding issues are a material planning consideration, although there is no specific planning policy or guidance on these matters. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides general guidance on promoting healthy and safe communities as referred to in section 8 of the NPPF including designing out crime and disorder having regard to Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) which requires local authorities to do all they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder.

In this instance no substantive evidence has been submitted by those raising the concerns to demonstrate that the proposal would result in anti-social and criminal behaviour, or that there are specific instances of these issues occurring currently making the area particularly sensitive to change. Therefore, there are considered insufficient grounds to refuse the application on the basis of the concerns raised with respect to crime and anti-social behaviour.

#### **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**

It is not considered that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that a local need exists for the proposed development, nor is it considered that the proposal would provide local benefits. In addition, no case has been put forward to demonstrate that the proposed development would meet any of the additional considerations for development outside the Borough's defined settlement areas. Furthermore, the rural location of the application site means that future occupants would be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access services and facilities, as would staff members and visitors accessing the site. The proposal would therefore fail to meet the criteria within Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

It is for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that planning consent be refused.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	That planning consent be refused for the following reason:
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<b>01:</b>	The proposal would introduce a new care facility into the defined open countryside without sufficient justification insofar that it has not been adequately demonstrated that the proposal would meet any of the exception criteria for allowing such a use within the open countryside. Furthermore the rural location of the application site means that future occupants would be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access services and facilities, and staff members and visitors would be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access the site. Therefore the proposal fails to comply with Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 as well as the National Planning Policy Framework which has a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
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