

Conversion of agricultural building to dwelling

Lane Side Barn
Grindleton Road
Grindleton
Clitheroe
BB7 4QH

Planning Statement (Rev A)
January 2025

Ian Swain BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI



WBW Surveyors Ltd
Skipton Auction Mart
Gargrave Road
Skipton BD23 1UD
Tel: 01756 692 900

www.wbwsurveyors.co.uk

1. Application Site & Development Proposal

- 1.1 The application premises comprises a detached traditional road-side stone barn located less than 0.5 km to the southwest of Grindleton village. Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the barn to a new residential dwelling.

2. Planning History

- 2.1 Under Planning Ref. 3/2021/0307, consent to convert the application premises to a new dwelling has previously been permitted under Class Q, Part 3, Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) (the decision notice erroneously refers to Class R of the regulations, but it is apparent from all other information that the application was assessed under Class Q).
- 2.2 This current planning application seeks permission for a new consent to convert the building. The proposed works are practically identical to the scheme that was previously considered and accepted by the Council under 3/2021/0307. The key difference between the previously approved submission and the current application is that less development is now proposed. A lean to extension (located on the eastern side gable of the building) previously permitted for conversion to provide additional living accommodation is instead to be removed.
- 2.3 A second prior approval notification submission to convert the premises to a residential dwelling under Class Q was submitted to the Council in June 2024 (Planning Ref. 3/2024/0380). That submission was also practically identical to that previously permitted by the Council under Planning Ref. 3/2021/0307. The purpose of the submission was to allow the new owner of the building a longer time period to implement the consent. Planning Ref. 3/2024/0380 was however refused by the Council for two reasons those being: -

'1. The application's supporting information is considered to be insufficient in as much that it fails to provide definitive confirmation that significant reconstruction works would not be required to the application building in order to support the residential use proposed. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy Class Q.1 (i) and (ii) of Schedule 2 Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

2. The cumulative land area occupied by the dwelling's garden area and adjacent parking and turning area i.e. curtilage would exceed the footprint area of the barn building subject to the proposed residential conversion. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy Class Q (a) and paragraph (x) of Schedule 2 Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.'

- 2.4 The refusal was unexpected since the structural condition of the barn was essentially unchanged from the previous approval (Ref. 3/2021/0307) and the proposed residential curtilage was also the same as previously approved.

Notwithstanding this, the Council's assessment of Ref. 3/2024/0380 was that the development proposal was acceptable with respect to all other considerations.

- 2.5 A third Class Q prior approval notification was submitted (Planning Ref. 3/2024/0748). The revised submission amended the residential curtilage and also included an assessment and report prepared by a structural engineer to demonstrate that the building is convertible. The submission was again refused. The revised residential curtilage was accepted, but the Council decided that: -

'The building operations proposed as part of the development would go beyond what is "reasonably necessary" to change the use of the building and would include the construction of new structural elements for the building. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy Class Q.1 (i) and (ii) of Schedule 2 Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.'

- 2.6 Subsequent informal pre-application advice with the Council has revealed that Officers would be more likely to support an application for planning permission to convert the building rather than a submission made under Class Q (since Class Q provisions were considered to be more limiting with less flexibility).
- 2.7 This current amended submission has therefore been submitted as a planning application rather than a further Class Q submission. As explained above, the proposal has also been amended to remove a lean to extension (located on the eastern side gable of the building) that is no longer to be converted to provide and additional living accommodation. Furthermore, amendments to the structural report have been made to clarify the development proposal.

3. Planning Policy

- 3.1 Development plan policies of key relevance can be found within the Adopted 2008 – 2028 Core Strategy. Policy DMH3 'Dwellings in the open countryside and AONB' and Policy DMH4 'The conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings' are applicable.
- 3.2 National planning policy of relevance can be found within the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). Paragraph 61 of that document identifies that the government has an objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Whilst this development would result in the provision of just one new home, paragraph 73 of the NPPF outlines that small and medium sized sites make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area.
- 3.3 The re-use of rural buildings for residential development is supported in principle by the NPPF which advises at paragraph 84 that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting.

4. Assessment.

Principle of development

- 4.1 Development Plan policy DMH3 relates to the provision of dwellings in the open countryside and AONB. It outlines certain types of development that are acceptable and criterion 2 of the policy allows for *'the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings provided they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction'*.
- 4.2 The application premises are located in a roadside location close to the village of Grindleton. The village is just a few hundred metres walk from the application premises. The site is suitably located and is not unduly isolated. Furthermore, the application premises is a traditional stone built barn that contributes to the character and appearance of the local area in a positive way. The application premises meets the policy objective of being suitably located and a form and general design that is in keeping with its surroundings. The conversion of the building is also in principle in accordance with paragraph 84 of the NPPF.

Ability to convert the application premises.

- 4.3 The application is accompanied by the structural report dated 26th August 2024 that accompanied Planning Ref. 3/2024/0748 together with a new addendum report dated 4th December 2024. The addendum considers the acceptability of the scheme following the applicant's decision to omit the eastern lean to extension from the development proposals (with respect to Planning Ref. 3/2024/0748 the lean to extension was proposed for retention / rebuilding, but the current application submission removes it).
- 4.4 The reports and assessments are prepared by an appropriately qualified and experienced structural surveyor and demonstrate that the building can be converted and put to a new residential use.
- 4.5 Compliance is therefore achieved with criterion 2 of development plan policy DMH3, and criterion 1 of the second part of Policy DMH4 that requires the building to be converted to *'be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alternation, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building'*.

Landscape / Visual Impact / Heritage Impact

- 4.6 The application premises is a stone built, roadside, traditional barn. It is a few hundred metres from the village of Grindleton together with the buildings on the opposite side of the road forms part of an existing group of buildings. The

development proposes the sensitive conversion of the building. Existing openings are proposed for re-use with minimal new openings necessary.

- 4.7 The premises is redundant from its' original use and has essentially been unused for several years. An adjacent insensitive metal sheet and concrete block building has already been removed as part of the proposals for the conversion of the building.
- 4.8 The development will have a positive impact on the character of the area and will enhance the local landscape. Compliance is achieved with criteria 1, 3 and 5 of part 1 of policy DMH4 as the premises is not isolated in the landscape (criterion 1), and there will be no damaging effect on the landscape qualities or natural beauty of the area (criteria 3 & 5). Compliance is achieved with criterion 3 of part 2 of policy DMH4 as the building's character and materials are appropriate to the surrounding environment and the premises is worthy of retention. Compliance is also achieved with the NPPF as the development involves the re-use of an existing building that will result in the enhancement of the local area.
- 4.9 Finally, in response to comments made on previous applications, the submission is accompanied by an assessment of the application premises' heritage significance through the provision of a report produced by a buildings archaeologist.

Highways

- 4.10 Access arrangements are unchanged from details previously proposed and accepted by the Highway Authority. With respect to Planning Ref. 3/2024/0748 Lancashire County Council stated that the '*Local Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site*'.

Bats / Ecology

- 4.11 The application is accompanied by a recent report that demonstrates that there will be no unacceptable impacts on protected species. The development being self-build development proposed for occupation by the applicant would be exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain Requirements.

Other Development Plan criteria

- 4.12 The development would not require unnecessary expenditure by public authorities on infrastructure and therefore compliance with criterion 2 of part 1 of policy DMH4 is met.

- 4.13 Since the building is presently unused, and has been for some time, development would not have any unacceptable impact on the rural economy. In fact, the conversion of the building, through the employing of contractors to assist with the conversion, together with the purchase of materials, would have beneficial impacts for the rural economy. Criterion 4 of part 1 of policy DMH4 is therefore met.
- 4.14 Finally, the development proposal will be a scheme that provides an appropriate standard of living accommodation for future occupiers and there will be no unacceptable impacts on others.

5. Conclusion.

- 5.1 It is considered that the conversion of the building to a residential use should be supported by the Council. In summary: -
- The conversion of such buildings to a residential use is supported in principle by both National planning policy and local plan policy.
 - The development is accompanied by a structural report undertaken by an appropriately qualified structural surveyor who confirms that the building is convertible.
 - A sensitive conversion is proposed that will ensure that the local landscape and character and appearance of the area is enhanced, and that preserves the historic character of the barn.
 - There are no unacceptable highway safety impacts.
 - A scheme is proposed that will provide a good standard of amenity for the intended occupier and that will not impact on others.
 - There are no unacceptable ecological impacts.
 - The development would contribute to the Council's housing supply, which is a material consideration.
 - The development proposal is very similar to previous schemes that have been allowed by the Council.
- 5.2 The applicant has submitted a series of applications recently (as detailed in the planning history), that effectively all seek to renew a development that was previously granted consent by the Council. There have been no significant changes in planning policy that would suggest that the development is now unacceptable, and applicant is keen to resolve the concerns of the Council so that the development can be finally implemented.