

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	05/06/2025	Manager:	LH	Date:	6/6/25
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0089			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	02/04/2025	Site Notice Expired:	19/03/2025	
Officer:	MC			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of listed building consent 3/2022/1166 for proposed refurbishment of existing farmhouse, conversion of existing attached and detached barns to create three new dwellings, conversion of outbuildings for associated residential use and external works.
Site Address/Location:	Lower Reaps Farm, Whinney Lane, Mellor BB2 7EL

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No response received.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
Historic England:	Not offering advice on the application.
Growth Lancashire:	<p>Growth Lancashire considered that the proposal currently represents a low level of less than substantial harm. As such the proposal fails to meet the duty to preserve under the Act and would need to be considered by the LPA under P215 of the NPPF. Public benefits must be more than a private benefit (P018 of the Planning Practice Guide). If in undertaking that weighing exercise a positive balance cannot be achieved then the scheme would remain contrary to Chapter 16 of the NPPF, and local policies DME1 and DME4.</p> <p>Further information has been submitted in relation to amendments and an addendum to the structural appraisal. Their objections have since been withdrawn and they consider the amendments to be acceptable.</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 – Sustainable Development

Key Statement EN5 – Heritage Assets

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations

Policy DME3 – Site and Species Protection and Conservation

Policy DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

Relevant Planning History:

3/2025/0271

Approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (materials), 4 (window and door specifications), 5 (details of roof lights), 6 (sections), 7 (building recording and analysis), 8 (external meter boxes) of listed building consent 3/2022/1166.

- Materials condition refused to discharge condition
- Remaining conditions are partially discharged

3/2025/0270

Approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (materials), 4 (window and door specifications), 5 (details of roof lights), 7 (building recording and analysis), 11 (electric vehicle charging point), 13 (landscaping) and 17 (drainage) of planning permission 3/2022/1165.

- Materials condition refused to discharge condition
- Remaining conditions are partially discharged

3/2022/1166

Listed Building Consent for the proposed refurbishment of existing farm house, conversion of existing attached and detached barns to create three new dwellings, conversion of outbuildings for associated residential use and external works. Resubmission of 3/2022/0729.

Approved with Conditions

3/2022/1165

Application for Planning Permission for proposed refurbishment of existing farm house, conversion of existing attached and detached barns to create three new dwellings, conversion of outbuildings for associated residential use and external works. Resubmission of 3/2022/0727.

Approved with Conditions

3/2022/0729

Listed Building Consent for the proposed refurbishment of existing farm house, conversion of existing attached and detached barns to create three new dwellings, conversion of outbuildings for associated residential use and external works

Withdrawn

3/2022/0727

Proposed refurbishment of existing farm house, conversion of existing attached and detached barns to create three new dwellings, conversion of outbuildings for associated residential use and external works

Withdrawn

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

Lower Reaps Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building dating to the 17th century with the barn opposite considered to be a curtilage listed structure with nearby outbuildings sited within land.

The site is located within the Green Belt, in an isolated location outside the settlement boundary of Mellor. Public footpaths FP41, FP43, FP44 and FP48 all pass through the site and as such, the site is considered to be located in a prominent position from the public realm.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The Section 73 application seeks to vary condition 2 (plans) in relation to extant permission 3/2022/1166. Specifically, it seeks to:

- Changes to the curtilages of Units 3 and 4
- Internal alterations to stud walls of Units 3 and 4 where Unit no.3 would comprise the hayloft and historic farmhouse extension, and unit no.4 will be the original farmhouse
- The staircase to unit no.4 (the farmhouse) would be relocated
- Removal of chimney to the eastern elevation
- Take-down and rebuild of part of the farmhouse
- Addition of rooflight and alteration to window design on south elevation of farmhouse
- Insertion of new window to first floor north elevation and creation of doorways to ground floor
- Alterations to location of rooflights to outbuilding
- Insertion of large windows to west elevation of outbuilding
- Re-location of door to east elevation of outbuilding and insertion of window
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It should be noted that following comments received from Growth Lancashire, amendments have been received in relation to providing amended proposed plans in clarifying external materials, and providing window/door amendments, as well as the submission of further information on the demolition of the chimney and the take-down and re-build of the rear wall.

Impact on Listed Buildings(s) and Setting:

In assessing the proposal, regard must be given to the statutory duties imposed on the authority in respect of the preservation and enhancement of such assets. In this respect, at a local level, Key Statement EN5 and Policy DME4 are primarily, but not solely, engaged for the purposes of assessing likely impacts upon designated heritage assets resultant from the proposed development.

Key Statement EN5 states that:

“There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.

This will be achieved through:

- *Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.*
- *Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.*
- *Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.*
- *Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.*
- *The consideration of Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights where the exercise of such rights would harm the historic environment.”*

With Policy DME4 stating, in respect of development within conservation areas or those affecting the listed buildings or their setting, that development will be assessed on the following basis:

“Alterations or extensions to listed buildings or buildings of local heritage interest, or development proposals on sites within their setting which cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset will not be supported. Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist.”

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Given the proposal relates to a Grade II Designated Heritage Asset, special regard must also be given to the statutory duties imposed on the authority, pursuant to national legislation, particularly in respect of the preservation and enhancement of such assets.

The principle statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by s.58B (1) of Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023) is to preserve or enhance the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. As such, in determining applications that affect designated heritage assets, the authority must consider the duties contained within the principle Act which states the following;

Listed buildings - Section 16 (2) (as amended by s.58B of Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023):

In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to a listed building the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the building. Under s.58B (2) this includes preserving or enhancing any feature, quality or characteristic of the asset or setting that contributes to the significance of the asset.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024):

The National planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out further duties in respect of determining proposals that affect heritage assets stating that *‘in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’.*

The Framework sets out further duties in respect of considering potential impacts upon designated heritage assets with Paragraphs 212 – 221 reading as follows:

212: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213: Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

214: Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that

the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

215: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

216: The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

217: Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

218: Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

219: Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

221: Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Having regard to the impact on the setting of the adjacent Listed and curtilage Listed Buildings, it is considered that when compared to the extant permission, the proposed amendments would have a neutral impact on the setting of the designated heritage assets.

Growth Lancashire have provided updated heritage comments on the scheme in relation to the impact on the listed buildings themselves. They note that the proposals would re-establish the original farmhouse plan size to create two similarly sized houses.

They raise no objection to the internal alterations which would be minimal and would mainly affect recent stud partitions, and the staircase would be relocated, which they consider would be returning it to its original position. Growth Lancashire consider that the proposed internal amendments now address the historic entrance area which allow the original rooms to be re-established.

To the north elevation, the two window openings that are to be lengthened to form doors would now have doors containing less glazing. Whilst the Heritage Officer has stated they would prefer that there was no glazing in these doors, they accept that the reduced amount of glazing is a more appropriate solution that will not result in any discernible harm and will help preserve the character of the listed building.

The proposed drawings now identify that the lean-to addition on the south elevation to the farmhouse (unit 4) will be finished in stone to match the farmhouse (walls to existing lobby to be finished in stone to match farmhouse). The Heritage Officer now finds this acceptable subject to a condition which requires a sample of the proposed stone to be submitted and approved by the LPA. In addition, the Heritage Officer notes that the additional proposed door to the west elevation of the outbuilding now appears to be proposed as partially glazed. Whilst the preference would be no glazing to the door, they accept the reduction in the amount of glazing as it is considered to be more appropriate that would not result in any discernible harm and is the same design put forward elsewhere on the farmhouse.

An additional opening proposed to unit 3 on the north elevation, appeared to be overly large in comparison with the host building. It has since been clarified that the openings are former openings. Therefore, the size of the proposed opening is determined by the original opening. As such, the Heritage Officer is satisfied that this is acceptable; however, any material details, should be secured via a suitably worded Condition.

In regard to the taking down of the large-scale take-down and rebuild of part of the farmhouse and removal of the chimney, there was a structural report provided however, originally there was no evidence to support the large-scale take-down and rebuild and further information including photographs were required as a means of justifying the work. A further Supplementary Report on North Wall to Farmhouse, has been provided which further highlights the lateral deformations and notes that 'for a wall to be stable the extent of deformation is required to be within the middle third of the overall thickness of the wall, subsequently for a wall of 410mm the allowable lateral deformation would be 68mm and for a wall of 550mm thick the allowable extremity of deformation would be 92mm. The thickness of the wall measured is between 478mm and 818mm, this suggests that the outer leaf has bowed to such an extent that the cavity has increased possibly in excess of 300mm. With a projection of 197mm with a thickness of 806mm the extent of lateral deformation is well outside of what is considered to be acceptable stability. Considering such extensive deformation, the Heritage Officer considers that strapping or tying of the walls back to the floor is unsuitable and it would therefore be necessary for the whole of the wall to be taken down and rebuilt and accepts that the taking down and rebuilding of the wall is required and adequately justified. In regard to the rebuilding of the north elevation, a detailed methodology of how the works will be sensitively undertaken, including how it will be taken down, stored and any additional materials needs to be provided or secured via a suitably worded Condition, to ensure the integrity of the listed building is retained. Furthermore, the existing stonework should be retained and reused. It is considered that these can be secured by way of planning condition.

In respect of the chimney, the Heritage Officer is satisfied that this is a later addition, which does not match in materiality to the rest of the building and as such, it is acceptable for this not to be rebuilt.

The Heritage Officer considers that subject to conditions including the submission of a detailed and acceptable methodology statement, the proposed works would not result in any substantive harm to the significance of the listed building and will in fact secure its long-term future. As such, the proposed amendments accord with Chapter 16 of the NPPF, Key Statement EN5 and Policies DME1 and DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

Having regard to all above material considerations including Section 16 of the NPPF the duty at section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the proposed amendments would not result in any substantive harm to the significance of the listed building and will secure its long-term future. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the relevant Policies in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the NPPF and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:	That Listed Building Consent be granted subject to conditions.
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