

Bolton Fold Farm Alston Lane Preston PR3 3BN

Full Application for the Erection of 3no. Commercial Units (Use Class E) and Associated Works (Retrospective).

PLANNING STATEMENT INCLUDING:
Design and Access Statement;
Crime Impact Statement; and
Waste Management Strategy.

February 2025



REPORT CONTROL

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/1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. PWA Planning is retained by N&K Forshaw Rental Properties ('the applicant') to progress a Retrospective Planning Application for the erection the erection of 3no. commercial units (Use Class E) and associated works (retrospective) at Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Preston, PR3 3BN.
- 1.2. The planning application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council ('the Council') and relates to the edge application site boundary defined on the Site Location Plan (drawing no. 00A).
- 1.3. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement will look to demonstrate that the proposals accord with the provisions of the relevant policies of the development plan, and moreover that there are other significant material considerations which indicate that planning permission ought to be granted. In addition, the statement will seek to demonstrate that there are no technical reasons which could hinder the grant of planning permission.
- 1.4. This Planning Statement, alongside a review of the site history and relevant policies, provides a description of the Proposed Development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme as a whole. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application package, which includes the following documents:
 - Planning Application Form;
 - Planning Statement (this document)
 - Drainage Strategy with Flood Risk Assessment
 - Economic Benefits and Commercial Market Review
 - Lighting Assessment
 - Lighting Design
 - Transport Statement
 - Drawings:
 - Location Plan (Drawing no. 00A);



- Proposed Site Plan @1/250 (Drawing no. 07A);
- Proposed Site Plan @1/500 (Drawing no. 07A);
- Proposed Floor Plan Unit 1 (Drawing no. 10B);
- Proposed Floor Plan Unit 2 (Drawing no. 11B);
- Proposed Floor Plan Unit 3 (Drawing no. 12B);
- Proposed Elevations Unit 1 (Drawing no. 15A);
- Proposed Elevations Unit 2 (Drawing no. 16A);
- Proposed Elevations Unit 2 (Drawing no. 17A)



/2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is located to the south of Bolton Fold Farm, east of Alston Lane. The site occupies land which was formally agricultural land is directly to the southern boundary of the farmstead. Access to the site runs to the south west and connects with Alston Lane. The wider area is characterised by agricultural land to the south and east. The nearest properties beyond the farmhouse lie over 150m from the commercial units.
- 2.2. The site within its wider context is illustrated below in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Aerial Photo of Site (Source: Google Earth)

- 2.1 The site at present is part of a cluster of existing built development associated with Bolton Fold Farm. The site comprises an access drive and 3no. commercial buildings, which features concrete block base walls, with a corrugated metal roof and wall cladding. The design of the building is in keeping with the area's rural character.
- 2.2 The site is within the designated open countryside, as per the Housing and Economic Development Plan Document Map. There are no listed buildings or heritage assets within the site or in the local area. The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is at its lowest. There are no Tree Preservation Orders either on or in proximity to the site.



2.3 Access to the site is taken from the west, with the access road connecting to Alston Lane. The site lies in a sustainable location, lying between the settlement of Goosnargh to the north and Grimsargh to the south west. Bus stops off Preston Road within 250m of the site to the southeast provide regular bus services to Longridge and Preston City Centre via Grimsargh. The construction of significant areas of housing off Preston Road and the consequent highways improvements delivered as part of these has significantly improved wider accessibility and the quality of public transport facilities. Indeed, the site is walkable from the main urban area and whilst located in the Open Countryside (as defined within the Development Plan), staff and visitors have a choice of access via sustainable modes of transport.



/3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 A search of the Ribble Valley Borough Council online planning register has been carried out in order to understand the planning history relevant to the site and the proposed development. The relevant applications are discussed in turn below.

3.2 The following application has been identified on site:

- **Ref. 3/2023/0206:** *Proposed single storey side extension, Approved With Conditions, Fri 27th April 2023.*
- **Ref. 3/2022/0208:** *Proposed new buildings Unit 1 and Unit 3 to provide storage of animal feed to include hay/straw and machinery. Permission Required, 18th March 2022.*
- **Ref. 3/2022/0094:** *Proposed new buildings Unit 1 and Unit 3 to provide storage of animal feed to include hay/straw and machinery. Refused, 16th February 2022.*
- **Ref. 3/2021/0090:** *Proposed new building to provide storage of animal feed to include hay/straw and also machinery storage. Permission Not Required, 19th March 2021.*
- **Ref. 3/2016/1084:** *Phase 2 additional cattle housing building. (Resubmission of application 3/2015/0621). Approved With Conditions, 14th July 2017*
- **Ref. 3/2016/0896:** *Phase 2 extension of roof covering and walls to existing earth banked silo pit. Approved With Conditions, 18th April 2017*
- **Ref.3/2016/1083:** *Phase 1 extension to existing cattle housing and reconfiguration of orientation of existing building. Resubmission of planning application 3/2015/0616. Approved With Conditions, 6th March 2017.*
- **Ref. 3/2016/0897:** *Phase 1 roof covering and walls to existing earth banked silo pit. Approved With Conditions, 5th December 2016.*



/4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT, CRIME IMPACT STATEMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Design and Access Statement

- 4.1 This application is a planning application for the erection the erection of 3no. commercial units (Use Class E) and associated works (retrospective) at Bolton Fold Farm. The units are currently occupied under Use Class E(g), representing uses that can be carried out in a residential area, without a detriment on its amenity. An image of the commercial units is included below at Figure 2.



Figure 2: Photograph of Development (April 2022)

- 4.2 The 3no. commercial units are subdivided into 10no. commercial units, including 7no. smaller starter units, two slightly larger buildings to the centre and one larger to the eastern portion of the site. The units are occupied by a range of local businesses employing local people, which are summarised below. The unit numbers correspond with those provided on the submitted floor plans.

- Units 1 and 2 – occupied by R V Builders workshop which is owner occupied and employs 3 people locally. The occupiers live locally in Alston.



- Units 3 and 4 – occupied by Building Works Ltd for the storage and distribution of building supplies which is owner occupied and employs 3 people locally. The occupiers live locally in Longridge.
- Unit 5 – occupied by Fab and Funky Furniture who undertake furniture restoration. The unit is owner occupied and lives locally in Alston.
- Unit 6 – occupied by Pampas Grass who are a flower business for events. The unit is owner occupied and employs 1 person locally. The occupier lives in Longridge.
- Unit 7 – occupied by Longridge Shutters for storage. The unit is owner occupied and employs 1 person locally. The occupier lives in Longridge.
- Unit 8 – occupied by GMP Car Sales who store cars within the unit. The unit is owner occupied and lives in Longridge.
- Unit 9 – occupied by John Mahoney who is a supplier of flooring. The unit is owner occupied and lives in Longridge.
- Unit 10 – occupied by a kitchen and bathroom supplier for storage purposes.

4.3 In relation to the occupier of unit 8, this units use relates to car sales which predominantly takes place online. Given the small-scale nature of the operation, it is considered that this use is covered under Class E. If the Council are minded to disagree, car sales are a use commonly seen on employment sites which have no greater impact on amenity than traditional employment uses.

4.4 Unit 1 to the west of the site includes 7no. small starter commercial units, 6 of which are 51.5sqm in size, with one 46sqm in size. Each unit includes a W.C. The units are to be accessed via a roller shutter door and smaller side door, with 2no. car parking spaces provided to the front of each unit.

4.5 Unit 2 provides 2 commercial units, each of which is 241.8sqm in size. The units include internal office/storage areas and a W.C. The units are to be accessed via a roller shutter door and smaller side door, with 2no. car parking spaces provided to the front of each unit.

4.6 Unit 3 the east of the site provides 1 commercial unit of 729.9sqm in size. The unit includes an internal W.C. The unit is to be accessed via two roller shutter doors including a smaller access door, with 4no. car parking spaces provided to the front of the unit.



- 4.7 The Proposed Site Plan submitted in support of this application shows how the proposed development will sit within the landscape. It shows the 3 commercial unit, the relevant lay down areas, parking and access.
- 4.8 As can be seen from the submitted elevation plans, the units have been designed to provide a functional space for needs of local businesses whilst respecting the local character of the area. The use of green box cladding to the elevations and roof complements the neighbouring farm buildings, ensuring the proposals conform with the agricultural surroundings.
- 4.9 In terms of landscaping, planting is proposed along the site access including tree planting. The main portion of the site is covered in hardstanding to provide room for turning vehicles and additional car parking. The parking and hardstanding are contained to the north of the site so as not to be visible from the wider landscape, which is shielded by the existing farm buildings and proposed commercial units.
- 4.10 Vehicles and pedestrian access are proposed from Alston Lane to the west. The site will have a separate access track to the neighbouring farm, with the access point off Alston Lane also shared with the farm. Traffic and deliveries to and from the units is at present limited, with no HGV travel to or from the site. A Transport Statement will accompany a future planning application to demonstrate the acceptability of the scheme from a highway's perspective.

Pre-Application Discussion

- 4.11 The applicant submitted a pre application advice request to Ribble Valley Borough Council, with the proposals relating to *Retrospective unauthorised change of use of agricultural building approved under application 3/2021/0090 to B8 / Sui Generis use (Unit 2 – comprising commercial units 8 & 9). Regularisation of two unauthorised buildings to be utilised under use classes E (g) & B8 (Units 1 & 3 – comprising commercial units 1-7 & 10)*. A written response was received on the 3rd of February 2023, allocated (ref. RV/2022/ENQ/00042) provided by Planning Officer Ben Taylor.

Principle of Development

- 4.12 The pre application advice covered a number of issues. With regards to the principle of the development, attention was drawn to the allocation of the site under Policy DS1 and EC1, whereby the site is allocated outside the Borough's Enterprise Zones away from the A59 corridor and outside of Longridge's defined settlement boundary, and therefore the development fails to accord with the aims and objectives of the above key policies.



- 4.13 In addition to these policies, the officer also mentioned the Ribble Valley Economic and Employment Land Needs Study (2021), which the applicant had mentioned that the study clearly stated that the borough needs more employment areas, and that the proposal would be able to provide this. However, the officer noted that there are already allocated employment sites for commercial units in the area which can meet local demands. Therefore, the proposal is not considered to accord with point 1 of Policy DMG2. Furthermore, due to the size of the development, the unauthorised buildings would place the development within the realm of a major development and well beyond a small-scale use therefore, the proposal is not considered to accord with point 5 of Policy DMG2.
- 4.14 Taking account of all the above, retention of the proposed development was considered to be unacceptable in principle.

Residential Amenity

- 4.15 As noted by the officer, the existing units are over 150 metres away from the nearest residential properties on Alston Lane with the proposed use of the units relating to storage and other uses that could be carried out without detriment to the amenity of the surrounding area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke etc. However, he did mention that the lack of clarification on how many visits the site will receive could result in some disturbance so more clarification would be needed on this.

Visual Amenity

- 4.16 With regards to design, the pre application feedback notes that the overall design and scale is largely in keeping with surrounding agricultural dwellings. Therefore, it is not considered that retention of the units in their current form would have any undue impact upon visual amenities of the area.

Highways

- 4.17 The officer notes that the applicant will need to consider undertaking separate consultation with the Local highways Authority prior to any formal submission in order to address the following issues:
- Absence of pedestrian footways and streetlighting on Alston Lane.



- Suitability of existing vehicle access / vehicle track to the application site & potential conflicts with the second vehicle access serving the farmstead.
- Absence of pedestrian footways and lighting on access track to application site
- On-site parking capacity / turning facilities / provision of electric vehicle charging points / cycle storage.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.18 Within the formal pre app response, it is noted that the proposal will need to provide a Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that surface water from the site would promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and satisfy the drainage hierarchy outlined in National Planning Practice Guidance.

Other Matters

- 4.19 The officer notes that due to recent changes in planning legislation the Council must now seek the formal agreement of the applicant (or the agent) to impose pre commencement conditions, should it be minded to grant permission.

Conclusion

- 4.20 The overriding conclusion was that *"Given the issues raised with regards to the principal of the proposed development it would appear that agricultural uses may be the only viable option for retaining the buildings in this instance."*
- 4.21 The applicant fundamentally disagrees with the commentary provided within the pre-app with regard to the principle of development and further the Council's ongoing need for new employment premises. In this context section 6 of this statement looks to draw the officer's attention to other material considerations and policy interpretation which show the proposal to be acceptable.

Crime Impact Statement

Risk Assessment

- 4.22 The typical security and safety issues for a development of this nature are:
- Anti-social behaviour
 - Burglary and theft.



- Criminal damage including to vehicles.
- Theft of and from motor vehicles.
- Theft and criminal damage during the construction phases.

4.23 Crime Prevention advice has been provided to the designers of the scheme, in addition to the clients, by utilising SBD principles in conjunction with long term practical policing knowledge and crime pattern analysis. The Lancashire Constabulary Designing out Crime advice has also been utilised.

4.24 The overall aim is to achieve a suitable and sensible level of security for the entire sites and to introduce appropriate design features that enable natural surveillance and create a sense of ownership and responsibility for every part of the developments in order to deter criminal and anti-social behaviour. The crime prevention measures therefore recommended for this scheme comply with the ARC principle in that they are appropriate, realistic, and cost effective.

4.25 As the application is seeking retrospective consent, there is no need to look at crime prevention during construction.

4.26 In regard to operation crime prevention, the submission is supported by a lighting scheme, which ensure the site is well and appropriately lit allowing for increased natural surveillance.

4.27 The access of Alston Lane is gated so as to offer scrutiny outside ours of operation.

4.28 The southern perimeter of the development is also fenced as shown on the provided site plan.

4.29 Landscaping around the site will remain well maintained and pruned to ensure there is a clear field of vision across the site.

4.30 Parking is to the front of the units allowing vehicles to be visible at all times.

4.31 CCTV is in operation at the site cover the entrance onto the forecourt and each of the 3no. buildings.

4.32 Shutter doors into each unit are fitted with alarms.

4.33 The above is considered sufficient design and operational mitigation to ensure the site can operate safely and be resistant to crime.



Waste Management Strategy

Waste Management Strategy Planning application number	3/2025/0141
Development location	Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Preston, PR3 3BJ
Development description	Regularisation of erection of three commercial buildings (10 commercial units Use Class E) and associated works.
Strategy prepared by	PWA Planning
Date prepared	13.03.2025

Containers

- 4.34 Waste will be disposed of using standard commercial containers. Given the occupants of the units could change over time the number and type of containers is ultimately dependent on the activity of the occupant.
- 4.35 However, each of the units will be provided with a minimum of 1280 litres of refuse capacity. With the number of containers maximised to reduce the number of collections and allow for the segregating of recyclable material.

Storage areas

- 4.36 Storage areas are provided in the spaces between each of the three units, ensuring all waste is stored within the confines of the development. Refuse contains can be brought out of the areas to the front of the units for collection.

Collections

- 4.37 The site is and will remain to be served by a private refuse collection company. The refuse is not brought to the highway, rather refuse is collected from outside the units and hence there



are no impacts on the adopted highway. The forecourt has sufficient space to allow for the safe turning of refuse vehicles.

Other Matters

- 4.38 There will be no waste compaction on site or need for food disposal. Clauses are to be written into tenants contracts to obligate them to separate recyclable waste.



/5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

"Where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

5.2 The Development Plan for the site comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014). Key policy documents that comprise 'material considerations' include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), and any local supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the proposal, which are considered below.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

5.3 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and therefore can broadly be regarded as containing relevant and up to date policies in the consideration of this application. The relevant policies of the Core Strategy are considered below:

- Key Statement EC1 – Business and Employment Development
- Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
- Key Statement DS2: Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
- Key Statement DMG1 – General Considerations
- Key Statement DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
- Key Statement DMG3 – Transport and Mobility
- Key Statement DMI2 – Transport Considerations
- Key Statement DMB1 – Supporting Business Growth and The Local Economy

Local Plan Core Strategy

5.4 **Policy EC1 Business and Employment Development** relates to relevant business and employment development, with the aim of allocating appropriately located employment land in sustainable locations. The policy also states that developments that contribute to farm diversification, strengthening of the wider rural will be supported in principle.



- 5.5 **Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy** states that employment developments should be concentrated in the Barrow Enterprise Site and Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.
- 5.6 **Key Statement DS2: Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development** states that the council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.7 **Policy DMG1 General Consideration** assists in ensuring that development proposals are in line with numerous broad considerations by providing a series of overarching considerations regarding the quality of developments. The policy categorises the criteria under 6 headings which are as follows: Design, Access, Amenity, Environment, Infrastructure and Other.
- 5.8 **Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations** assists in the interpretation of the Development Strategy and underpins the settlement hierarchy for the purposes of delivering sustainable development. 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.
- 5.9 **Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility** outlines that in making decisions on proposals, the Council will attach considerable weight to the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development. All major proposals must offer opportunities for the increased use of, or the provision of, bus and rail facilities.
- 5.10 **Policy DMI2 Transport Considerations** outlines that new developments should be located to minimise the need to travel. Developments should also incorporate convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car. Schemes offering opportunities for more sustainable means of transport will be supported.
- 5.11 **Policy DMB1 Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy** states that proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. The expansion of existing firms on land outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)



- 5.12 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions as per Paragraph 2 of the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 5.13 The NPPF broadly defines sustainable development in Paragraph as having three overarching objectives: economic, social, environmental.
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.14 Additionally, Paragraph 84 mentions supporting a prosperous rural economy. Planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings and the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

Ribble Valley Economic and Employment Land Needs Study (2021)

- 5.15 This study identified the Ribble Valley has very limited available employment space. Whilst there are strong levels of demand for commercial and business sites across the Ribble Valley, there is an imbalance in stock with the majority located on and around Barrow Brook Business Park in Barrow, and very little in the key settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley.
- 5.16 Based on an identified need of between 22 ha to 26 ha of employment land, the quantitative assessment of demand and supply balance identified a potential deficit of between 10.5 and



14.5 ha of employment land, based on the site assessments over the plan period to 2038. With a shortage of suitable sites where there is greatest demand, Ribble Valley is at risk of losing businesses to other areas, as well as risking potential inward investment from businesses looking to move into the Ribble Valley.



/6 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1 During the pre-application stage, there were concerns raised regarding the development's principle and its adherence to Key Statement EC1 and DS1. The officer's standpoint was that the proposal did not align with Key Statement EC1 since the suggested development is positioned beyond the Enterprise Zones of the Borough, far from the A59 corridor, and outside Longridge's designated settlement boundary.
- 6.2 However, there is a lack of existing employment space in the Ribble Valley which is supported by the findings of the Ribble Valley Economic and Employment Land Needs Study (2021). Whilst there are strong levels of demand for commercial and business sites across the borough, there is an imbalance in stock with the majority located in and around Barrow Brook Business Park in Barrow, and very little in the key settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. Based on an identified need of between 22 ha to 26 ha of employment land, the quantitative assessment of demand and supply balance identified a potential deficit of between 10.5 and 14.5 ha of employment land, based on the site assessments over the plan period to 2038. With a shortage of suitable sites where there is greatest demand, Ribble Valley is at risk of losing businesses to other areas, as well as risking potential inward investment from businesses looking to move into the Ribble Valley. Although the site is situated outside the preferred employment development zone, it is important to consider the demand for additional employment sites in the area.
- 6.3 With regards to the above, the proposed development is deemed to accord with the relevant business and employment policies of the development plan. Key Statement EC1 relates to business and employment development, with the aim of allocating appropriately located employment land in sustainable locations. The development complies with this policy as the scheme contributes to farm diversification and strengthens the rural economy. The proposal facilitates the expansion of Bolton Fold Farm by including it as part of the already established cluster of farm structures. The rent from the existing units to local small businesses provides a valuable additional income stream for the farm within the existing site. Similarly, the NPPF at paragraph 84 supports the diversification of agricultural business to support the rural economy as proposed here.
- 6.4 Furthermore, in the pre-application advice, it was noted that the scheme failed to align with Policy DMG2, as it was not considered essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area in question. Nevertheless, as highlighted in section 6.1, the scarcity of employment



sites in the area indicates that the proposal meets the criteria of being essential under point 1 of the policy. The officer also noted that the size of the site does not comply with point 5, which pertains to small-scale uses appropriate for rural areas. However, the severe shortfall of up to 14.5ha of employment land is a matter of great concern and should be given significant consideration in the decision-making process. Consequently, it should take precedence over other conflicts with the policy.

- 6.5 Similarly, Key Statement DMG2 emphasises the importance of giving priority to the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge, and Whalley for new developments, including those related to employment. These developments should be in line with the character of the existing settlement and appropriately sized. While the site in question is situated outside of the defined settlement boundary, it does lie within a reasonable proximity. With recent consent acquired by Tilia Homes (ref. 3/2021/0470) which is now largely built and sits between the site and the adopted settlement boundary, the site now sits 385m from the boundary and as such benefits from good links to bus services leading to Longridge Town Centre. Moreover, it is located within walking distance of the settlement boundary, which is in accordance with both key statement DS1, EC1 and Policy DMG2.
- 6.6 In addition to the Council's own evidence base the applicant has commissioned a detailed assessment of current local commercial market & economic benefits of the proposal. The assessment, undertaken by Lambert Smith Hampton, concluded as follows:
- The new industrial units at Bolton Fold Farm have found ready occupiers, demonstrating that they are a) of the right type for local businesses b) in the right place, i.e. where there was unmet need, and c) were built at the right time to support the growth of small and local businesses.*
- They are providing economic benefits in the form of 12 direct jobs on site, employing mostly very local people. In addition to this, a further 9 FTE jobs are estimated to be indirectly supported by the activities on the site. These jobs are estimated to contribute around £1.8million GVA per annum. The new buildings are estimated to generate around £35k per year which would provide additional revenue to the Council.*
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Adopted Local Plan Policy DMG2 states that "Within the Tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas of development must meet at least one of the following considerations:" Six considerations are listed, of which two are relevant to the proposals for the Application Site. "1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area ... 5. The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.

This report has demonstrated that these units are already meeting a local need and are essential to the local economy by ensuring sufficient provision of workspace and are providing economic benefits in the form of new jobs for local residents, GVA and increased Business Rates.

- 6.7 This report is considered determinative in the context of the proposal and addresses the LPA's concerns in relation to principle in their entirety.
- 6.8 Policy DMB1 notes how proposals that are intended to assist business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. The proposal here supports local businesses, providing valuable smaller starter units serving the local area, which are otherwise not available on the market within the Longridge and Grimsargh area. As noted in the previous chapter, the commercial units are occupied by seven local businesses which have 18 owner occupiers and associated employees. The units therefore support a range of local businesses which both contribute to the local economy and create employment for the local area. It is therefore in accordance with both Policy DMB1 and Key Statement EC1. The officer stated in the pre-application advice that the proposal does not adhere to the policies mentioned above and therefore conflicts with Policy DMB1. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, the demand for employment sites in the area supersedes these policy conflicts. Consequently, any such conflict should not be determinative.

Sustainable Development

- 6.9 Further to the above, the proposed development is also consistent with the core development principles of sustainable development, representing an appropriate use within the rural landscape of the area.
- 6.10 Considering the Framework as a whole, it is important to note that Paragraph 7 of the NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At Paragraph 8 it states that: "*Achieving sustainable development*



means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)'. The economic, social and environmental benefits of the proposed development should be given significant weight in the decision-making process here.

- 6.11 The first objective is with regards to the economy, where the planning system should help to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. The second objective is a social objective whereby the planning system should help to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being. Finally, an environmental objective, whereby the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and minimising waste and pollution.
- 6.12 In terms of economic benefits, the proposals provide employment opportunities and valuable starter units for local businesses on site. This supports small businesses and the growth of the local economy. The units provide appropriate business space now which is otherwise unavailable within the local area. The proposals also support the diversification of Bolton Fold Farm, helping to ensure the business remains viable for the future.
- 6.13 The social aspect of sustainability is met, in that the proposals create small commercial units in a sustainable location close to Longridge and Grimsargh, with close links to regular bus services from Preston Road. Consideration has been given to designing a scheme which respects the amenity of nearby residential properties and relates well to the existing farmstead.
- 6.14 Turning to the environmental aspect of sustainability, the site is not subject to any statutory ecological designations, or protected species. It is not within an area at risk of flooding as defined by the Environment Agency. Taking all these elements as a whole, the proposal is considered to constitute sustainable development as sought by the NPPF.

Residential Amenity



The current units are positioned more than 150 meters away from the nearest residential properties. The proposed units are intended for storage purposes (Use Class B8) and other activities that can be conducted without causing any adverse effects on the surrounding area's amenity, such as noise, vibration, smell, smoke, and so on. Therefore, it is unlikely that the proposed development would have any negative impact on residential amenity. In the pre application response from the Council, it was stated that there are no objections in terms of the impact on residential amenity.

Details of any external lighting required on the building or around the site are provided as part of this submission.

Visual Amenity

- 6.15 Policy DMG1 relates to general considerations associated with development proposals, detailing requirements on matters such as design, access and amenity. The design of the proposals has been carefully considered to relate positively to the existing cluster of agricultural development at Bolton Fold Farm. As can be seen within the submitted Site Plan, the units constitute a logical southern extension to the south of the site, with vehicle movements, parking and hardstanding contained within the built form of the site to minimise impacts on the wider countryside setting and the amenity of properties within the area. The units have been designed to provide a functional space for needs of local businesses whilst respecting the local character of the area. The use of green box cladding to the elevations and roof complements the neighbouring farm buildings, ensuring the proposals conform with the agricultural surroundings.

Flood Risk

- 6.16 The site is not within an area at risk of flooding as defined by the environment agency. A drainage and FRA have been provided as part of the submission and concluded the risk of flooding to be low. With regard to surface water this will be controlled by a private drainage system which discharges into the water course that runs to the east of the site. A attenuation pond is also to be provided within the adjacent field.

Highways

- 6.17 The submission is accompanied by a Transport Assessment which robustly considers the implications of the development on the local highway network. In instances of retrospective applications, such assessments can be given increased weight as they assessed the impacts



of an operational development as opposed to one that is yet to be built. In considering the proposal the report concluded that there are no pre-existing patterns or trends of incidents at the site access of adjacent highway. The site has sufficient access to sustainable modes of transport and provides space for the largest anticipated vehicle to access and exit the site safely. Trip generation was shown to be negligible and overall the change in land use has induced no material impact on the local highway network.

- 6.18 In terms of highways, the Site Plan illustrates how a new access road is proposed off Alston Lane to provide a separate access road to Bolton Fold Farm. The access point itself of Alston Lane is as per the existing access point, which is a safe access point with appropriate visibility splays. The plan also demonstrates how an appropriate provision of car parking spaces is accommodated on site. It is important to note the business units are utilised by locally based people, this therefore minimises the need for private car use in line with the aims of Key Statement DMI2.

Ecology

- 6.19 Turning to the environmental impact, the site is not subject to any statutory ecological designations, or protected species. The development is seeking retrospective planning permission and as such the granting of consent would not induce any ecological impacts as all it would serve to do is regularise the current operation of the commercial units, as opposed to any further built works.

Summary

- 6.20 The proposed development in question is a farm diversification scheme which aims to provide much-needed employment land in the Ribble Valley area. Although the site is situated outside the preferred employment development zone and the defined settlement boundary, it meets the criteria of being essential for the local economy and social well-being of the area, as identified in the Ribble Valley Economic and Employment Land Needs Study.
- 6.21 Furthermore, the development complies with the relevant business and employment policies of the development plan, including Key Statement EC1 and Policy DMB1, by supporting local businesses and creating employment opportunities. Additionally, it is consistent with the core development principles of sustainable development and represents an appropriate use within the rural landscape of the area.



6.22 The lack of existing suitable employment sites in the Ribble Valley means that the proposal should be given significant consideration in the decision-making process, despite some conflicts with certain policies. Overall, the proposed development appears to be a positive step towards addressing the current shortage of employment land in the Ribble Valley.



/7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 PWA Planning is retained by N&K Forshaw Rental Properties ('the applicant') to progress a Retrospective Planning Application for the erection the erection of 3no. commercial units (Use Class E) and associated works (retrospective) at Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Preston, PR3 3BN. This application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council and relates to the red edge application site boundary defined by the Location Plan.
- 7.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a requirement upon Authorities when determining planning applications to do so in accordance with the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.3 This statement has set out the planning policy relevant to the determination of the planning application and has assessed the proposed scheme in this context. Section 6 of the statement discusses the planning policy context, and it is concluded that the proposed development is in overall compliance with the relevant policies of the plan and national planning policy.
- 7.4 The scheme is supported by the necessary technical information and other evidence which clearly demonstrate that there would be no harmful impacts resulting from the proposed development.
- 7.5 The proposed commercial units are deemed appropriate use within the countryside, representing development which contributes to farm diversification, whilst providing valuable starter units to support local businesses and the economy. The units provide a practical space for small businesses in the area which are otherwise not available in the local area. The development is well related to the existing cluster of farm buildings and is appropriately designed to reflect the agricultural and rural character of the area.
- 7.6 Given the above, the proposed development is considered acceptable and should be approved without delay.



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