

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	04/06/2025	Manager:	LH	Date:	5/6/25
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0276			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	15/04/2025	Site Notice:	15/04/2025	
Officer:	MC			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Planning Permission for the replacement of existing rooflights with new conservation style rooflights and to regularise past alterations including formation of first floor window opening in the north eastern (side) wall and part replacement of external window and door frames.
Site Address/Location:	Whitefold House Barn, Birks Brow, Longridge, PR3 2TD

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Thornley with Wheatley Parish Council raise no issues.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
N/A	
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
None received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Key Statement EN2 – Landscape
Key Statement EN5 – Heritage Assets

Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
Policy DMG2 – Strategic 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)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2025/0184

Listed Building Consent for the replacement of existing rooflights with new conservation style rooflights and to regularise past alterations including formation of first floor window opening in the north eastern (side) wall and part replacement of external window and door frames.
Pending Consideration

3/1997/0590

BARN CONVERSION TO DWELLING

Approved with Conditions

3/1997/0591

BARN CONVERSION TO DWELLING (LISTED BUILDING CONSENT)

Approved with Conditions

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site is occupied by a Grade II Listed Barn, converted to a dwelling in the 1990s, located to the North-East of the settlement of Longridge. The site is located in a rural area and comprises a cluster of historic farm buildings. The building adjoins Whitefold House which is also Grade II Listed and the site is located within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

The Listing is as follows:

“WHITE FOLD FARMHOUSE AND BARN ADJOINING TO NORTH-EAST

House, mid C18th. Sandstone rubble with roofs of stone slate and slate. Double-pile plan with central entry and end stacks. 2 storeys, 2 bays. Windows modern in rebated and chamfered surrounds, these either being late C17th and re-used or a late survival. The door has a plain surround of long-and-short stones. The right-hand gable has a tall stair window with plain stone surround and round head. The rear wing has C19th window details. Inside, the left-hand front room has a moulded shouldered fireplace. The barn adjoining to the left has a wide entrance with segmental head, 2 windows at a lower level to the left, one being a later insertion, and 3 shippon doorways in the gable wall, also at a lower level. Inside are softwood king-post trusses..”

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application is for Listed Building Consent for regularisation of the replacement of a timber door and formation of a new first floor window opening to the north eastern (side) elevation, the replacement of two windows and a door to the north-west (front) elevation and the replacement of a first floor window and timber door to the south-east (rear) elevation.

Following discussions between the Planning Officer and the agent for the application, the existing rooflights are now proposed to be replaced with conservation style rooflights. As such, drawing ref: 7214 – 02 Rev B has now been amended.

Principle of Development:

Whitefold House Barn is Grade II listed and therefore the principle of the development is dependent upon the level of harm to the significance of the listed building together with compliance with policy.

Impact upon Listed Building and Setting:

The building is Grade II listed and as such, 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:

2: LISTED BUILDINGS AND OTHER BUILDINGS OF SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE INTEREST

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 207 – 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.

220: Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

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.

Assessment of Impacts:

The Council's historic records associated with planning ref: 3/1997/0590 and 3/1997/0591 indicate that English Heritage (now Historic England) objected to the insertion of a rooflight to the front elevation due to the harm to the character of the listed building. This was subsequently removed on an amended plan, however two rooflights have been inserted into the rear roof slope.

As such, the proposal now includes the removal of the unauthorised rooflights and the insertion of two FAKRO FTP – V/C Conservation roof windows in sizes to match the existing. These are considered to be acceptable and are more appropriate to the character of the listed building. As such, whilst the proposal would result in some harm to the significance of the listed building, there is a clear benefit of installing conservation style windows that are more appropriate to the historic building. As such, this element of the scheme accords with Key Statement EN5, Policy DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, Section 16 of the NPPF and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

It should be noted that planning ref: 3/1997/0591 which was for Listed Building Consent for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling included a condition requiring further details of the windows. The Council do not have any further records of whether this condition was discharged and the approved final window details. Four external windows and two external doors have been replaced as well as the door and glazing to the former cart entry doorway. The submitted Heritage Statement indicates that these are like for like replacements and replaced modern units which were installed as part of the conversion so no historic fabric has been lost. The Heritage Statement also indicates that the replacement units have been set back and would have neutral impact and would result in no greater degree of impact than the previously installed windows.

Having regard to the above, it is noted that the windows are timber, in a cream colour with four panes. Whilst the approved plans (not the final window details) granted in 1997 show a more simplistic window design, without mullions which would have likely been more akin to those of an agricultural barn, it is not considered the installed windows are inappropriate, being constructed of timber. Whilst the openings do differ slightly compared to the adjoining property on the other half of the barn conversion, the cart lodge entrance provides a separation between the two designs. In addition, given the lack of symmetry to the window locations either side of the former cart lodge entrance, there is no stark difference between the inserted windows and the windows at the adjoining property.

In addition, a new window has been formed to the North-East elevation which would have resulted loss of historic fabric by way of removal of brickwork to allow for the new window to be inserted. Overall, there is some harm to the significance of the listed building by way of loss of historic fabric and insertion of the new window.

In addition, the adjacent farmhouse is also Grade II Listed. Having regard to the above, it is not considered that the retrospective development and insertion of new conservation rooflights would impact on the setting of the adjoining Listed Building as the rooflights would be an improvement on the existing unsympathetic rooflights and it is considered that the insertion of new window and replacement windows are appropriate in design and materials and would have a neutral impact on the setting of the adjacent Listed Building.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG1 provides specific guidance in relation to amenity and states that all development must:

- ‘1. not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
- 2. provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
- 3. have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
- 4. consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible’*

The proposal would not result in any adverse impacts to the amenity of neighbouring properties by way of harmful overlooking. The side facing window does not directly overlook any neighbouring properties and as such, is considered to be acceptable.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

Key Statement EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

‘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.

The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced.

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 addition, Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that development must *‘not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area’* and *‘consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance’.*

Policy DMG2 also states that in the AONB *‘where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. Development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting’.*

Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should ensure that development:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)

The windows, whilst would result in some harm to the designated heritage asset are considered to be sympathetic in terms of materials and design to the host dwelling and would be in keeping with the character of the landscape. In addition, the insertion of new conservation style rooflights would be an improvement and more appropriate in design. As such, the natural beauty of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape would be preserved.

The retrospective development and replacement roof lights are considered appropriate to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area the proposal complies with the aims and objectives of Key Statement EN2 and Policies DMG1, DMG2 and DMH5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways:

The proposal is not considered to impact on existing parking arrangements of affect highway safety.

Landscape/Ecology:

With regards to biodiversity net-gain, the development is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it is a householder application.

The works would now involve the replacement of rooflights. It is not considered that a bat survey would be required as part of the development as the agent for the application has confirmed that the loft space has been boarded and is used as habitable living accommodation created as part of the original conversion. As such, this would not likely be suitable space for roosting bats. An informative could be added to any grant of permission to advise the applicant what to do in the event of a bat being discovered.

As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be granted approved subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.