


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	22/7/25	Manager:	LH	Date:	22/7/25
----------------	-----------------	----	--------------	---------	-----------------	----	--------------	---------

Application Ref:	3/2025/0367			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk				
Date Inspected:	~	Site Notice:	24/6/25					
Officer:	BT							
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:					APPROVAL			

Development Description:	Proposed construction of a general purpose agricultural building and removal of shipping container.
Site Address/Location:	Land adjacent to Stonefold Farm, Slaidburn Road, Waddington, BB7 3DL.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Newton Parish Council:	No objections.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
None.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

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

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

None relevant to the determination of the application.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to agricultural land sited on the North-western outskirts of Waddington. Access to the application site is from the North-east from Slaidburn Road via a lengthy access track which serves

as the access for the grouping of properties known as Stonefold Farm, Stonefold Holiday Cottage and The Garage. The Western extents of the site's access track accommodate a hardstanding area, shipping container (unauthorised) and sheep handling pens, all of which form the basis of this application. The application site lies within a remote area of moorland with the surrounding area comprising a mixture of agricultural land, woodland and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Planning consent is sought for the construction of a steel framed general purpose agricultural building for the storage for machinery and equipment, hay and animal feed and emergency shelter for livestock when required. The proposed agricultural building would be sited on an existing area of hardstanding adjoining the Southern side of the site's access track approximately 50 metres away to the South-west of Stonefold Farm.

Principle of Development:

The proposal site lies outside of the defined settlement area of Waddington. Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that proposals for development outside the Borough's defined settlement areas can be considered as justifiable if *'the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture'*.

In this instance, planning consent is sought for the construction of an agricultural building in order to provide pens and handling facilities for lambing sheep and finishing lambs. The application's supporting information states that the applicant owns and manages 63 ha of land which supports a flock of 80 Cheviot ewes and hogs. The applicant's farming operation is based on buying in Cheviot gimmer hogs, overwintering and grazing the livestock through the summer months to sell as breeding shearlings (i.e. having been shorn of their fleeces during the summer) at the following autumn sheep sales. It is understood that the current infrastructure on site is limited to permanent sheep handling facilities and a single 6 metre shipping container (unauthorised) which at present provides limited storage for fencing equipment, a quad bike and trailer and bagged animal feed concentrate and feed blocks. It is further understood that machinery is currently stored outside or at a friend's holding over three miles from the site, with no fodder conserved on the farm and with hay currently being bought in small batches which in turn is less cost effective.

It is stated that the lack of suitable buildings to store machinery, feed and fodder currently limits the opportunity to purchase feeds at reduced prices, with machinery often left uncovered which in turn results in higher maintenance costs and security issues. In addition, if ewes or hogs experience health problems there is no indoor penning to allow recovery, which presents welfare problems. The lack of buildings also means that the applicant is reluctant to lamb sheep himself due to the risk of high mortality rates if the weather is severe.

In light of the above issues, the applicant seeks consent for the construction of a new general purpose agricultural building to store machinery and greater quantities of fodder and hay, and also to provide shelter for his livestock in order to develop a more secure, cost effective and welfare driven farming operation.

The proposed development has been subject to review from the Council's agricultural advisor who having reviewed the application's supporting information and applicant's current farming operation, has confirmed that an agricultural need exists for the proposed building in light of the requirement for the applicant to be compliant with the rules and good practice in relation to the welfare of livestock, to house sheep in periods of extreme weather particularly over the winter months, and to house sheep together in a covered space for tasks such as shearing, regular dosing for worms and other medical treatment, sorting and weighing, preparation of lambs for sale and dipping etc.

Taking account of the above, it is considered that the proposed building would be a justifiable addition to the application site in the context of the applicant's existing agricultural operation. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed development would conflict with Policy DMG2 and is therefore acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of additional material planning considerations.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.'

Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.

In this instance, the proposed agricultural building would be sited approximately 50 metres away from the residential properties of Stonefold Farm, Stonefold Holiday Cottage and The Garage and as such would have no overbearing impacts on the occupants of these properties with respect to loss of natural light or outlook due to the separation distance that would be in place. In addition, the activities undertaken within the proposed building would be carried out on land which is currently in agricultural use and it is not anticipated that the intensity of the existing farming activities within the site would substantially increase following the introduction of the proposed development to the site. Accordingly, given the separation distance that would be in place between the proposed development and neighbouring properties and the scale of use proposed, no concerns are raised from the proposed development with respect to overbearing impacts, noise, disturbances or odour emissions beyond those associated with the existing use of the site and surrounding land.

Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents. The proposed development would therefore be compliant with the aims and objectives of Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF and Policy DMG1.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance/Impact Upon Setting Of Listed Building:

Paragraph 135 (c) of the NPPF states:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.'

Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional general design guidance as follows:

'All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style...particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character.'

With respect to development within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape, Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states:

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

Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy provides similar guidance:

'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...the Council considers that it is important to ensure development proposals do not serve to undermine the inherent quality of the landscape...the Council will also seek to ensure that the open countryside is protected from inappropriate development.'

In this instance, the proposed agricultural building would be somewhat larger than the existing shipping container on site with respect to its height and footprint however following technical analysis from the Council's agricultural advisor, the overall size of the proposed building has been deemed as proportionate for its intended end use and as such is considered to be acceptable. Having regard to the building's design, the proposed agricultural building would comprise a portal framed gable roof design with the building detailed in concrete panels, Yorkshire boarding and fibre cement roofing sheets, all of which would be predominantly in keeping with the rural character of the surrounding landscape and materiality of other agricultural buildings within the locality. Furthermore, the proposed removal of the unauthorised shipping container would deliver a minor visual enhancement to the proposal site. The public access land surrounding the proposal site would allow for some public views of the proposed development however as conveyed above the design and external appearance of the proposed building would be in keeping with its rural surroundings and the building would be sited in reasonably close proximity to existing built form (the grouping of properties known as Stonefold Farm, Stonefold Holiday Cottage and The Garage). As such, the proposed agricultural building would not read as an incongruous or isolated addition in the context of the surrounding landscape and would therefore comfortably assimilate into the application site and its wider surroundings.

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

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review from Lancashire County Council Highways who have raised no objections to the proposal with respect to access or general highway safety on the basis that the proposed development would utilise an existing vehicular access and would not increase the number of vehicle movements to and from the proposal site. Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would have any undue impacts upon highway safety as such the proposal satisfies Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy (highways).

Landscape/Ecology:

Biological Heritage Site

The proposed development would be located just within the confines of Waddington Fell and Browsholme Moor Biological Heritage Site however in this instance the proposed agricultural building would be constructed on an existing area of hardstanding and as such would not impact upon any features of biological interest.

BNG

The development is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it is subject to the de minimis exception.

Other Matters:

Flood Risk

Constraint analysis shows the proposal site' access track as being at risk of flooding from surface water. A Flood Risk Assessment has been provided in support of the application which identifies surface water flood risk as being limited to four points on the site's access where no flooding of the culvert systems has ever occurred (including during the Storm Desmond flood event in 2015). In addition, the submitted FRA confirms that there would be no risk of flooding at the proposed site of the building and no requirement to access the building during storm events in light of the building being predominantly required for storage. Furthermore, the FRA confirms that the applicant is currently signed up to the Environment Agency Flood Warning Alert. As such, the submitted Flood Risk Assessment is considered to be sufficient for the nature and scale of development proposed and in light of the analysis and mitigation provided no serious concerns are raised with respect to flood risk impacts on the proposed development.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The proposed development would be utilised in relation to an existing agricultural operation and as such would be wholly compliant with the aims and objectives of Policy DMG2.

The proposed development would not be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents, nor would the works proposed result in any harm to the visual amenities of the area. Furthermore, the proposal raises no issues with respect to impacts upon highway safety, the ecology of the area or flood risk.

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:	That planning consent be granted subject to the imposition of conditions.
------------------------	---