

Mr Ben Taylor  
Ribbles Valley Borough Council  
Development Control  
Council Offices Church Walk  
Clitheroe  
Lancashire  
BB7 2RA

**Our ref:** NO/2025/116806/01-L01  
**Your ref:** 3/2025/0377  
**Date:** 27 May 2025

Dear Mr Taylor

**PRIOR APPROVAL FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF A FORMER AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO ONE DWELLINGHOUSE UNDER SCHEDULE 2, PART 3 CLASS Q OF THE GPDO.  
FIELDS FARM, MEARLEY, PENDLETON, BB7 1PU**

Thank you for consulting us on the above application which we received 23 May 2025.

**Environment Agency position**

The planning application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared by Stanton Andrews Architects, dated May 2025. We have reviewed the FRA in so far as it relates to our remit. Whilst the FRA does not comply with the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance and its site-specific flood risk assessment checklist, it is considered sufficient for the nature and scale of the proposed change of use.

We have no objection to the proposed development, but we wish to make the following comments: -

**Flood Risk – advice to applicant/LPA**

The red-edge boundary of the planning application includes an area that is located within Flood Zone 3, which is land defined by the planning practice guidance as having a high probability of flooding. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 167, footnote 55) states that an acceptable FRA must be submitted when development is proposed in such locations.

While the application boundary, specifically part of the access road, falls within Flood Zone 3, the proposed development is wholly within Flood Zone 1, which is land defined as having a low probability of flooding. As no development is proposed within Flood Zone 3, there are no tidal or fluvial flood risks that we would expect to be considered through a more detailed FRA.

Environment Agency  
Lutra House Walton Summit, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5 8BX.  
Customer services line: 03708 506 506  
[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

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## **Non-Mains Drainage – advice to applicant/LPA**

There is no reference made to the means to dispose of foul drainage from the proposed new dwelling. Our mapping indicates that there are no foul sewers within 30metres of the property, we therefore take this opportunity to remind the applicant of the rules governing non-mains drainage.

Government guidance contained within the national Planning Practice Guidance (Water supply, wastewater and water quality – considerations for planning applications, paragraph 020) sets out a hierarchy of drainage options that must be considered and discounted in the following order:

1. Connection to the public sewer
2. Package sewage treatment plant (adopted in due course by the sewerage company or owned and operated under a new appointment or variation)
3. Septic Tank

Foul drainage should be connected to the main sewer. Where this is not possible, under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 any discharge of sewage or trade effluent made to either surface water or groundwater will need to be registered as an exempt discharge activity or hold a permit issued by the Environment Agency, addition to planning permission. This applies to any discharge to inland freshwaters, coastal waters or relevant territorial waters.

**Please note that the granting of planning permission does not guarantee the granting of an Environmental Permit.** Upon receipt of a correctly filled in application form we will carry out an assessment. It can take up to 4 months before we are in a position to decide whether to grant a permit or not.

Domestic effluent discharged from a treatment plant/septic tank at 2 cubic metres or less to ground or 5 cubic metres or less to surface water in any 24-hour period must comply with General Binding Rules provided that no public foul sewer is available to serve the development and that the site is not within an inner Groundwater Source Protection Zone.

A soakaway used to serve a non-mains drainage system must be sited no less than 10 metres from the nearest watercourse, not less than 10 metres from any other foul soakaway and not less than 50 metres from the nearest potable water supply.

Where the proposed development involves the connection of foul drainage to an existing non-mains drainage system, the applicant should ensure that it is in a good state of repair, regularly de-sludged and of sufficient capacity to deal with any potential increase in flow and loading which may occur as a result of the development.

Where the existing non-mains drainage system is covered by a permit to discharge then an application to vary the permit will need to be made to reflect the increase in volume being discharged. It can take up to 13 weeks before we decide whether to vary a permit.

Further advice is available at:

[Septic tanks and sewage treatment plants: what you need to do: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/septic-tanks-and-sewage-treatment-plants-what-you-need-to-do)

Yours sincerely

**Carole Reynolds**  
**Planning Advisor**

e-mail [clplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:clplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk)

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