

HERITAGE STATEMENT



In connection with

Proposed conversion of existing barn at

LOWER REAPS FARM
WHINNEY LANE
MELLOR
LANCASHIRE
BB2 7EL

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SECTION 01

INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This document has been produced in support of applications for listed building consent and planning permission for the conversion of the existing barn at Lower Reaps Farm to form a single dwelling.

The neighbouring farmhouse is of 17th century origins and is of multiple phases of historical development and is a grade II listed building. The barn opposite the farmhouse, the subject of this statement, is assumed to be a curtilage listed structure along with the nearby outbuildings.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide the Local Planning Authority with the necessary and appropriate information that will inform the proposals. An assessment of the heritage values of the listed buildings will be included to determine their significance. A heritage impact assessment has also been included to assess the potential implications of the proposals on the special interest of the listed building and conservation area. It is produced in response to policies set out in Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2025 which states: -

"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".

This document is produced in accordance with recently published Historic England guidance document 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' published on the 21st October 2019 and considered to be current best practice.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

This document has been produced in accordance with a series of documents all of which are considered to be current best practice guidance and consist of the following: -

- Historic England (2008) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment.
- Historic England (2019) Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets - Historic England Advice Note 12.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and recording of Standing Buildings or Structures.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment.
- BS 7913:2013 – Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings

A search of the following databases and archives has been carried out as part of this investigation to identify published and unpublished sources of documentary evidence which contributes to an understanding of the site.

- Archaeological Data Service
- Historic England Online Archive
- Lancashire County Archive Catalogue
- Lancashire Library Catalogue

Exhaustive research will not be possible and cost effective, and attention will be focused on those documents which are readily available and those which provide an understanding of the design and development of the building.

SECTION 02

UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The small village of Mellor is located on the south fringe of the Ribble Valley Borough in Lancashire and lies approximately 3.5 miles to the north west of Blackburn. The buildings at Lower Reaps Farm are located outside the confines of the village, some 750m to the south west and are some 300m to the north of the nearby Yew Tree Drive dual carriageway, which forms the boundary between the Ribble Valley and Blackburn Boroughs. The buildings are accessed via an access road leading from Whinney Lane, located to the east, which is accessed via Yew Tree Drive to the south and Mellor Lane to the North. Middle Reaps Farm is situated on the north side of the track on the approach to Lower Reaps Farm.

The farmhouse occupies an elevated position as the access road sweeps around the front of the building from the east and is flanked at the entrance to the site by a small number of trees. The former barn lies directly opposite the house to the south approximately 20m away. A further three outbuildings lie to the south and west of the site. The immediate surroundings are rural in nature consisting of open countryside, presumed to be farmland. However, the built up sub-urban fringe of Blackburn lies approximately 300m to the south and is primarily characterised by large semi-detached dwellings dating from the 1930's and 1940's.



Fig 1 Plan showing location of Lower Reaps Farm

2.2 BUILT FORM ANALYSIS

Barn: Exterior

The barn is constructed from local sandstone with a mixture of coursed and random rubble walling. The roof coverings to the barn are a mixture of sandstone roofing slates and profiled roofing sheets as a result of piecemeal construction and re-roofing.

The earliest part of the barn forms its main core and is a two storey, five-bay former combination barn, with a cart entry porch and an integral outshut (off centre to the east) the exterior of which is largely concealed by later additions. The main entrance to the barn is comprised of a large cart entry doorway to the north elevation, with a timber lintel over, however the original cart entry doors have been lost to this opening. Opposite the cart entry, now internal, is a characteristic winnowing door, with timber lintel internally and a segmental arched head externally (now within rear shippon) however, the doorway has been infilled to form a smaller door opening.

The west elevation of the barn has a single doorway, with furrowed stone jambs and head. Centrally at first floor level, is a former forking hole, with plain stone jambs, head and cill, and with iron pintles indicating the former shutter to the hole. The east elevation of the barn has a blocked doorway to the east side and the lines of dichotomy between the barn and its adjoining outshuts are clearly visible.

The south outshut to the barn formerly served as a shippon and is built from rubble stonework. Opposing single leaf doorways to the east and west elevation denote the cattle passageway and each side has two window openings, with plain stone cills and heads. Three window openings are present to the rear south elevation, with brickwork jambs and furrowed stone heads and cills. The roof to the north east outshut has collapsed with the roof to the north west outshut having only partially collapsed at the abutment with the earliest phase of the barn.

The windows and doors to the front of the north east outshut appear to be modern formed openings, whereas the openings to the north west outshut appear to be contemporary with its construction and have furrowed stone heads and cills.

Barn: Interior

The original five bay combination barn now forms one single space. A forking hole on the west gable end would suggest a hayloft to the west end of the barn, however none is present and there is no physical evidence, i.e., joist sockets, to suggest one was ever here.

A blocked window and door are present to the west side of the north wall of the barn (seen internally), with two opposing blocked up windows noted to the south wall opposite. A brick recess lies adjacent to the blocked windows in the south wall and appears to be an inserted door opening, with brick jambs which was also subsequently blocked-up. The roof structure is comprised of 4no 19th century kingpost roof trusses. The roof structure to the rear south roof slope is somewhat piecemeal, comprising of varying rows of sawn timber purlins onto which the profiled sheet roofing is fixed to. The north slope has a central row of sawn timber purlins, with common timber rafters and battens over, with a sandstone slate roof covering.

The south shippon, has a row of concrete boskins along the north side, with the cattle passage behind to the south. The roof structure is comprised of a number of mono-pitch roof trusses, with 4 rows of staggered and trenched purlins.

The interior of the north elevation outshuts were not inspected due to health and safety concerns regarding the collapsed roofs.



Fig 2 View of the front elevation (north) of the barn from the north west



Fig 3 View of the front elevation (north) of the barn from the north east



Fig 4 View of the side elevation (east) of the barn from the north east



Fig 5 View of the side elevation (west) of the barn from the north east



Fig 6 View east within the barn core



Fig 7 View south west within the barn core



Fig 8 View north west within the barn core



Fig 9 View west within the barn core



Fig 10 Internal view of the cart entry porch (north)

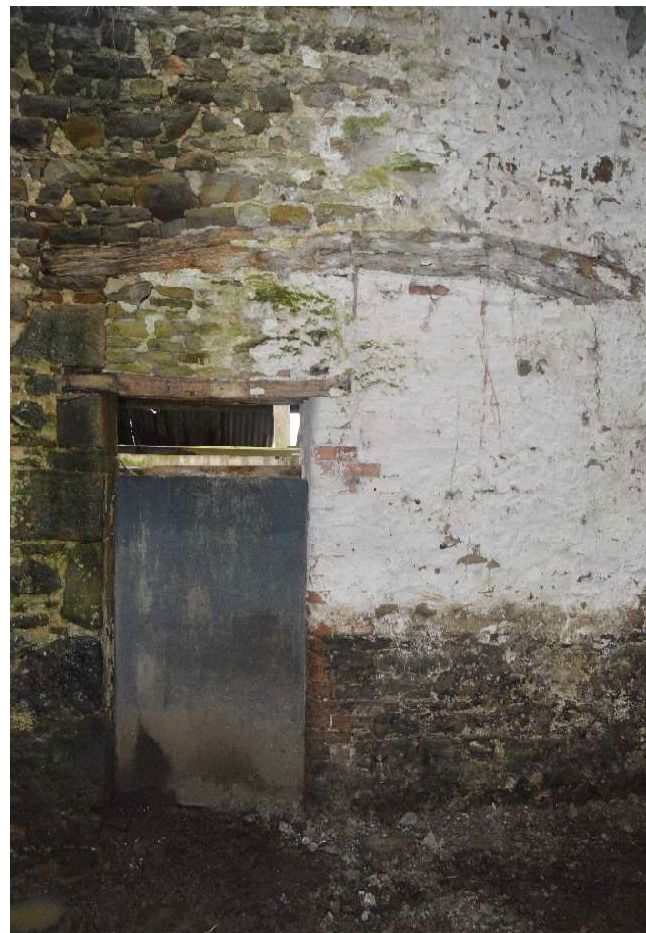


Fig 11 View of door opposite cart entry (blocked up)



Fig 12 View of stone voussoirs to the blocked up opening from within the south shippon



Fig 13 View of roof structure over the main barn core



Fig 14 Internal view (east) within the south shippon



Fig 15 View of the stone outbuilding from the south east



Fig 16 Internal view (north) of the stone outbuilding



Fig 17 Internal view (south) of the stone outbuilding



Fig 18 View of the roof structure to the stone outbuilding



Fig 19 View of the brick outbuilding from the east



Fig 20 View of the brick outbuilding from the south



Fig 21 View of the brick outbuilding from the north



Fig 22 View of the detached farm building from the south



Fig 23 View of the detached farm building from the south west

2.3 HERITAGE ASSET DESIGNATIONS

The farmhouse at Lower Reaps Farm is a grade II listed building and is designated as such under section 1 (3(a)) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for its special architectural and historical interest. Please refer to Appendix A of this report for the historic England List Entry.

It is, therefore, assumed that the detached barn is a curtilage listed structure.

2.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

This section is intended to give an account of the historical development of the site based on information obtained from secondary research sources.

Very little appears to be known of the history of Lower Reaps Farm as the history and development of the farm does not appear to be well documented amongst published and unpublished documentary resources and much of what can be found out about the history of the building has to be deduced from the physical fabric of the building but the building does not benefit from the presence of a visible datestone which would have provided an indication of the building's origins.

The farmhouse has 17th century origins and was likely constructed in the first half of the 1600's. The farmhouse was the seat of the Walmsley family who were of both 'Whitcroft' and 'the Reaps' and the family had the status of yeomen or lesser gentry. The branch of the family seated at Reaps included James Walmsley and his wife Ann (who died a widow in December 1684) and their son Giles, born in 1658. Giles, a yeoman, died in 1711 and fathered ten children between 1681 and 1700.

The farm first appears on Yates' map of Lancashire from 1786 but is shown only as 'Reaps' and does not provide sufficient detail to identify individual buildings. The same circumstances also apply to the later maps produced by Greenwood in 1818, and no new information can be deduced from these particular maps. The farm is not shown on Hennet's map of 1829.



Fig 24 Extract of Yates' Map of Lancashire



Fig 25 Extract of Greenwood's Map of Lancashire

The farm appears on OS mapping from the 1840's and is shown in sufficient detail to identify both the farmhouse and barn. The farmhouse, with its cross wing can be identified and it is also thought that the farmhouse has been extended westwards to its current length by this time. The barn is shown only having been extended to the east end of the front north facing elevation by this time. Two further structures are shown on the site, one to the south east of the farmhouse. And a second to the south east of the barn, neither of which are still standing and their purpose has not been deduced.

By the 1890's the barn had be enlarged to its current size and the farmhouse remained virtually unchanged since the 1840's with the exception of the small outbuilding adjoining the east side of the building, possibly a privy / earth closet. It is unknown if the small porch to the front of the building was added between 1848 and 1890 or if it was added prior to 1848 but had been built by 1890. A small building appears to be adjoining the rear shippon of the barn to the south east corner, again a structure that is no longer present. No other discernible changes appear to have occurred to the building based on later OS mapping for the site.

To the south west of the farmhouse is a small detached outbuilding constructed with stone walls and a slate roof. Its general appearance seems similar to the barn and would suggest that it were constructed at a similar time, it does not appear on historic maps.

To the immediate west of the barn is a second small detached outbuilding. It is constructed with red brick walls and a slated roof suggesting it was built in the early/mid 20th century. This outbuilding also does not appear on historic maps.

To the south of the barn is a large detached farm building in an advanced state of collapse. The walls and roofs are faced using a variety of panels and profiled boards. The condition of this building and apparent risk of collapse means that detailed internal inspection has not been possible.



Fig 26 Extract from OS 1:10560 map

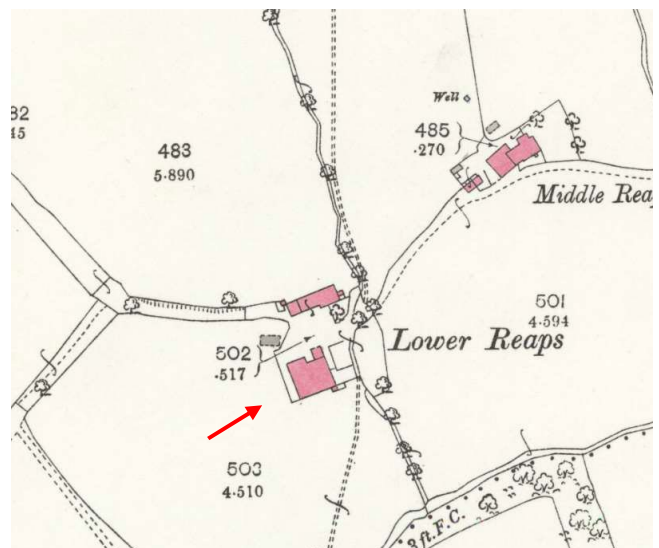


Fig 27 Extract from OS 1:2500 map



Fig 28 Extract from current location plan

2.5 PLANNING HISTORY

A search of the Ribble Valley Borough Council online planning application database reveals the following relevant planning history: -

3/2025/0270

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

Partially discharged

3/2025/0088

Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission 3/2022/1165 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.

Partially discharged

3/2025/0089

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.

Pending

3/2022/1166

LBC for the 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.

Resubmission of 3/2022/0729.

Approved with Conditions

3/2022/1165

Application for Planning Permission 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.

Resubmission of 3/2022/0727.

Approved with Conditions

3/2022/0729

Listed Building Consent for the 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.

Withdrawn

3/2022/0727

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.

Withdrawn

SECTION 03

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

Significance, in terms of heritage related planning policy is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.” Understanding the significance of a building or place is crucial when attempting to inform sensitively and intelligently managed change to sustain significance, and where appropriate and possible, to seek opportunities for enhancement.

The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of the significance of the barn so that the proposals for change can be informed by the level of significance they possess and so that the impact of the proposals can also be assessed.

This assessment of significance has been informed by a physical inspection of the buildings and both archival and desk-based research. It takes into consideration the significance the barn as well as the contribution made by its setting.

The following heritage interests have been described as per the guidance provided within The Historic England guidance document “Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets” (2019), which is considered to be best practice: -

Archaeological interest: “There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.”

Architectural and Artistic Interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place which can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.”

Historic Interest: “An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.”

3.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

The farmhouse provides physical evidence of settlement on the site dating back to at least the 17th century with the agricultural function of the site also having likely been established by this time with this function being denoted by the existence of the barn and outbuildings.

Both buildings have been significantly enlarged and altered since their construction and the various historical phases of development are very evident in their appearance and is of great interest. However, the past and rather unsympathetic alteration of the farmhouse has left it but a shell of its former existence and is extremely lacking in 17th century features, fixtures and fittings. The archaeological interest of the barn is largely limited to its exterior although former openings are present internally within the main central barn. The plan form of both buildings is of interest and although altered remains interpretable.

3.3 ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC INTEREST

Both the barn and farmhouse possess more in the way of architectural value than artistic value given their appearance, construction and historic function.

The farmhouse and barn are the product of local vernacular building tradition which is prevalent amongst such buildings within the region and would have been constructed using locally sourced materials and skilled craftsmen.

The barn would have been a highly functional and practical building with little use for architectural embellishment which is evidenced by its plain appearance and lack of architectural and design merit. This being said, the building is not without any conscious design. The building would have been designed in a very specific way in order to satisfy certain requirements and functions and so is not without any thought in terms of design and appearance. The appearance of the barn is relatively plain which is not unusual.

Although in poor condition, the farmhouse and barn retain a strong agricultural character due to their rustic vernacular appearance and have an imposing presence within the site and local landscape given their size and their contribution to the rural and agricultural character of the countryside has been sustained.

3.4 HISTORIC INTEREST

Historic Interest can be illustrative or associative. The historic interest of the barn lies in its survival as an example of traditional vernacular architecture evidenced in its construction and appearance as well as being illustrative of its building type and of the area's current and past agricultural function. The evolution of the building also contributes to the historic interest of the farm in that it illustrates how barn has evolved since the 17th century in order to adapt to the changing needs of the occupants and changes in farming practices.

The historic interest of Lower Reaps Farm also lies in its associative historic value for its known associations with the Yeoman or lesser gentry Walmsley Family of Mellor, although this association is not manifested within the physical fabric of the farmhouse or barn, along with any other known associations. Archival research has not yielded any well-known persons or events associated with Lower Reaps Farm.

3.5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The barn, although not listed on its own individual merit, is likely to be considered as a curtilage listed building, but does not appear to be of a quality that would be deserving of individual listed status. The fact that it is not listed suggests at the limited level of significance that it possesses.

The significance of the barn is derived from its extant historic fabric, mainly limited to the existing external walling and roof structure and features of interest such as former door and window openings. The barn has suffered from the loss of historic fabric, plan form and features due to past alterations which have been detrimental to its significance.

The significance of the barn is also derived from its relationship with the farmhouse, where one would appear to be anomalous within the landscape without the other. The buildings retain a strong agricultural character, regardless of condition and appearance and the survival of all buildings is paramount to the safeguarding of this small farmstead, its contribution to the setting of the listed farmhouse and the significance of the site overall.

Again, the barn is poorly preserved in terms of its condition, which has resulted in the loss of historic fabric, with better examples present within the locality and wider region.

SECTION 04

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

4.1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SUMMARY

Barn: The existing barn is to be converted into a single dwelling. This will avoid the subdivision of the barn and allow it still to be read as one building. The overall external form and appearance of the barn is to remain relatively unchanged except for a new window opening to the ground floor of the west elevation, which is to match the style of the existing windows, and a small number of rooflights to the north and south roof slopes, which will be flush fitting conservation roof lights. The existing roofs are to be stripped of the profiled roofing sheets and re-roofed with natural slates.

Internally, the dwelling is to be open plan at ground floor level which will maintain a sense of openness and retain the large spaces within the barn. However, some sub-division is proposed to the north-west outshut to form a lounge and ancillary accommodation to the kitchen. The north-east outshut will form a bedroom. Back of house accommodation is proposed to the easternmost bay of the combination barn.

At first floor level, two bedrooms are proposed to the bays at either end of the combination barn. A void is to be formed over the proposed staircase and entrance hall, again maintaining a sense of openness internally. The rooms at the first floor are to be open to the roof, with the roof structure exposed, again maintaining a sense of openness. The subdivision of the barn through the insertion of a first-floor structure and walls is inevitable and is required to form the spaces required from a family home and a degree of compromise is required in order to safeguard the existence of the building as part of the rural landscape.

The southern shippon is proposed to be sub-divided to form the principal bedroom to the east and family room to the west.

The existing shippon roof structure is to be kept visible as an internal feature. The external walls to the barn will be lined internally to improve its energy efficiency and provide a comfortable internal living environment.

Several repairs are proposed as detailed in the Structural Appraisal report accompanying this application, which include: -

- Taking down and rebuilding of collapsed area of external wall to the south elevation.
- Repairs to cracking to the internal face of the north elevation at the junction with the west gable.
- Repointing works using lime mortar.
- Repairs to existing timber roof structure to ensure retention.

External Works: The large outbuilding to the south of the barn is in an advanced state of disrepair and in danger of collapse. It is proposed to be taken down as part of the works.

The existing red brick outbuilding to the immediate west of the barn is to be retained.

The proposed garage is positioned on the existing hardstanding to the east of the barn. It is sited and orientated to minimise possible impact on the farmhouse and to ensure that the existing public right of ways are unaffected.

The topography is also used to ensure that the apparent presence is kept to a minimum, ensuring views to and from the farmhouse are largely unaffected. The proposed materials respond to the setting with natural stone walls and a slated roof. The garage doors face the east gable of the barn thereby ensuring they are largely concealed from view.

SECTION 05

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 NATIONAL LEGISLATION

The farmhouse at Lower Reaps Farm is a grade II listed building and the farm buildings are assumed to be grade II curtilage listed given their relationship with the farmhouse. As such, these buildings benefit from statutory protection in the form of national legislation, namely the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 due to their special architectural and historic interest. The Act is the legislative foundation in terms of decision making in relation to both listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 of the Act states that: -

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses

5.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The relevant national planning policies are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government’s economic, environmental and social planning policies for England and how these policies should be applied. The overarching principle of the NPPF is that of achieving ‘sustainable development’.

It is chapter 16 of the NPPF which addresses the national planning considerations in relation to the historic environment and how sustainable development within the historic environment can be achieved. The general principle suggested by these policies is that development which does not give due regard to the conservation of heritage assets will not be considered as ‘sustainable development’ and will therefore be considered as unacceptable and will not be supported by decision making bodies. The policies within the NPPF highlight the need to assess the significance of Heritage Assets and their setting which are to be affected by design proposals for change in order to inform this change and requires that the impact of any such change is assessed.

5.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The relevant local planning policies pertaining to the historic environment are contained within the Ribble Valley Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy which forms the central document of the Local Development Framework (LDF), establishing the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the borough.

The relevant Local Planning policies consist of the following: -

Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets

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 find an optimum viable use that strikes the correct balance between economic viability and impact on the significance of the asset. Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.

Carefully considering any development proposals that adversely affect a designated heritage asset or its setting in line with the Development Management policies. 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.

Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets

There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings.

1. Conservation Areas

Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance. This should include considerations as to whether it conserves and enhances the special architectural and historic character of the area as set out in the relevant conservation area appraisal. Development which makes a positive contribution and conserves and enhances the character, appearance and significance of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials and existing buildings, structures, trees and open spaces will be supported.

In the conservation areas there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of elements that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

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.

3. Registered historic parks and gardens of special historic interest and other gardens of significant heritage interest

Proposals which cause harm to or loss of significance to registered parks, gardens or landscapes of special historic interest or other gardens of significant local heritage interest, including their setting, will not be supported.

4. Scheduled monuments and other archaeological remains

Applications for development that would result in harm to the significance of a scheduled monument, or nationally important archaeological sites will not be supported.

Developers will be expected to investigate the significance of non-designated archaeology prior to determination of an application. Where this demonstrates that the significance is equivalent to that of designated assets, proposals which cause harm to the significance of non-designated assets will not be supported.

Where it can be demonstrated that that the substantial public benefits of any proposals outweigh the harm to or loss of the above, the council will seek to ensure mitigation of damage through preservation of remains in situ as the preferred solution. Where this is not justified developers will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording of the asset before or during excavation.

Proposals should also give adequate consideration of how the public understanding and appreciation of such sites could be improved.

In line with NPPF, Ribble Valley aims to seek positive improvements in the quality of the historic environment through the following:

- a) Monitoring heritage assets at risk and; i) supporting development/re-use proposals consistent with their conservation; core strategy; ii) considering use of legal powers (building preservation notices, urgent works notices) to ensure the proper preservation of listed buildings and buildings within the conservation areas.
- b) Supporting redevelopment proposals which better reveal the significance of heritage assets or their settings.
- c) Production of design guidance.
- d) Keeping conservation area management guidance under review.
- e) Use of legal enforcement powers to address unauthorised works where it is expedient to do so.
- f) Assess the significance and opportunities for enhancement of non-designated heritage assets through the development management process.

SECTION 06

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

Barn Exterior:

At present, the building is at risk of dilapidation due to redundancy which would eventually lead to its loss if not addressed. The proposals to repair and convert this building will halt its deterioration and provide a new optimum viable use that will be consistent with its conservation. The historic and agricultural character of the building will be preserved with the minimal loss of historic fabric and through repair / intervention. Where a building is proposed to be converted for use other than what it was originally built for, it is inevitable that alterations will be required to accommodate the functions within. However, it is considered that any harm caused, considering that the buildings on site are currently vacant and unused, is likely to be limited and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals and the overall survival of the buildings, through sensitive repair and conversion.

The general external appearance of the barn is to remain largely unaltered albeit with some minor alterations. The most significant alteration proposed is the re-roofing of the barn using a more sympathetic slate roof covering as per the farmhouse resulting in substantial enhancement to external appearances. The existing roof structures to the original barn and to the outbuilding are to be retained as features of interest and are to be repaired accordingly. The remainder of external alterations consist of a small number of new window openings to provide both natural lighting and ventilation and the replacement of existing windows and doors with new. New windows and doors will contribute to the thermal energy efficiency of the buildings and will ensure a comfortable living environment and will be agricultural in style to help maintain the character of the buildings. Existing window and door openings are to be retained, and new windows and doors should be set back at least 150mm to 200mm to reduce visual impact.

Proposed roof lights are to be flush fitting conservation roof lights, with central glazing bar and black paint finish to reduce their visual impact.

The works to the barn, stables and outbuilding will significantly enhance the setting of the farmhouse due to their improved condition and appearance.

Barn Interior:

As per the exterior of the agricultural buildings, it is again inevitable that, as part of their proposed conversion, alterations to internal layouts i.e., new wall openings and internal sub-division of spaces, will be required to suit the new functions of the buildings and are required to introduce a new optimum viable use and safeguard the existence of the buildings.

The existing external walls will be lined internally to improve the energy efficiency of the building and ensure a comfortable internal living environment. A new first floor structure is to be installed to part of the barn, with a large void provided at the centre of the existing combination barn in order to provide a sense of full height openness within the barn.

Again, the harm caused by the conversion of the farm buildings is not expected to outweigh the public benefits of the development proposals which will safeguard these buildings.

External Works: The proposed external works will have a negligible impact on the significance of the farmhouse and barn given their minor scale and will not harm the physical and visual relationship between the buildings, with the central area of the site remaining open and undivided as at present. New wall and stepped accesses will be in matching stonework in order to reduce their visual impact and be sympathetic to the appearance of the farmhouse and barn. The demolition of the existing modern agricultural building (to the south of the barn) should be welcomed and will provide a positive enhancement to the setting of the buildings.

6.2 MITIGATION STRATEGY

Mitigation against harm will be achieved in the following ways: -

- A programme of historic building recording and analysis should first be implemented prior to the commencement of any development works and which should be carried out in compliance with current recording best practice and guidance.
- Where significant intervention is proposed i.e., repair, replacement, or introduction of building elements, detailed method statements, details and specifications can be submitted to and agreed by the planning officer prior to commencement by way of a planning condition. This would include the formation of new wall openings, door and window details, details of new roof structures and coverings and details of proposed internal alterations.
- The use of heritage builders and craftsmen should be considered, who have extensive knowledge of the construction of historic buildings and have a strong background in their successful repair and alteration.
- Archaeological monitoring and supervision should be considered as part of any below ground excavation works such as landscaping, floor installation and repairs and service trenches.
- Archaeological monitoring should be considered as part of any sensitive opening up works or significant works, to the building i.e., removal of the existing roof to the building and works to other building elements such as opening up of floors and walls.
- Consideration should be given to 'tenting' the buildings as part of re-roofing works in order to safeguard extant historic fabric.

Consultation with statutory consultees as part of the planning application process is likely to identify where the buildings would benefit from additional controls and how these could be justifiably applied by way of planning conditions.

6.3 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC BENEFITS

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that harm to Designated Heritage Assets be balanced against the public benefits of the development proposals. The following social, economic, environmental and heritage benefits that are expected to be achieved through the implementation of the development proposals include:

- Sustainable Development – The re-use of existing buildings through the implementation of a new optimum viable use to the former farm buildings (environmental benefit).
- The safeguarding of the historic farmhouse and farm buildings which contribute to the agricultural and rural character of the local landscape (heritage and social benefit).
- The enhancement of the existing buildings through the use of traditional materials and significantly improved condition and structural integrity resulting from the development proposals. This will also result in the enhancement of the setting and the wider setting of the heritage assets.
- A net increase in housing provision on site (social and economic benefit).
- The employment of building consultants and contractors to facilitate the implementation of the development proposals (economic benefit).

It is considered that these benefits will considerably outweigh the harm caused, which is considered to be less than substantial, and accordingly the development proposals satisfy the test set out by the NPPF and that the proposals should be welcomed by Ribble Valley Borough Council and their statutory consultees. Therefore, planning permission and listed building consent should be granted.

APPENDIX A

LOWER REAPS FARMHOUSE: LIST ENTRY

LIST ENTRY NO. 1362343

House, probably c.1600, altered. Slobbered rubble with eaves height raised in brick and roof replaced by asbestos sheets mid C20. Main part of facade has a 6-pane sash with plain reveals on the ground floor, with a lean-to porch to its right covering a blocked mullioned window. On the 1st floor is a modern window with plain reveals. At the left, beyond a straight joint, is an addition which has 2 sashed windows with plain reveals on the ground floor and a modern window with plain reveals above. At the right of the facade is a one-bay cross-wing which has mullioned windows with hollow chamfer, outer chamfer, and hoods. The ground-floor one is of 4 lights, the 1st floor of 3 lights. Chimney in line with straight joint. Chimney cap removed from cross-wing. Inside, the room to the left of the door has one exposed original chamfered beam.