


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	5/9/25	Manager:	LH	Date:	5/9/25
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0527			 Ribble Valley Borough Council <small>www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk</small>	
Date Inspected:	22/7/25	Site Notice:	22/7/25		
Officer:	BT				
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				Decision	APPROVAL

Development Description:	Outline application for the erection of a farm worker's dwelling (self-build) with access applied for.
Site Address/Location:	Land at Lower Standen Hey Farm, Whalley Road, Pendleton, BB7 1PP.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Pendleton Parish Council:	Consulted 18/7/25 – no response.

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

LCC PROW:	Consulted 18/7/25 – no response received.
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RVBC Countryside:	No objections subject to condition.
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United Utilities:	No objections subject to adherence with standing advice.
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CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
One representation received to the consultation which makes reference to the applicant's on-site living arrangement, with no objection made to the proposal.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
<p>Ribble Valley Core Strategy:</p> <p>Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy Key Statement DS2: Sustainable development Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations Policy DMG1: General considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility Policy DMH3: Dwellings In The Open Countryside & The AONB Policy DMB5: Footpaths And Bridleways</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</p> <p>Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015</p>

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding PPG (February 2021)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2019/1110:

Proposed extension to existing steel portal framed agricultural building (Approved)

3/2019/1109:

Erection of an agricultural polytunnel (Approved)

3/2009/0564:

Proposed mixed use agricultural storage and livestock building (phase II) (Approved)

3/2009/0563:

Proposed mixed use agricultural storage and livestock building (phase I) (Approved)

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to land situated on the Western outskirts of Pendleton to the West of Whalley Road. Access to the application site is from the North-east from Whalley Road via a single width access track which also serves as Public Right Of Way FP0332010. The application site comprises a parcel of land which currently contains a portal frame agricultural building, polytunnel, open sided timber frame storage building and static caravan. The South-eastern perimeter of the application site is bordered by an extensive tree line with the remainder of the site being surrounded by agricultural fields and an additional tree line to the North-west. The residential property of Long Acre lies approximately 50 metres away to the South of the site with an additional cluster of dwellings lying approximately 250 metres away to the South-west of the site. The wider surrounding area comprises a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Outline consent is sought for the construction of one self-build agricultural worker's dwelling including access.

Principle of development:

The application site lies outside the defined settlement boundary of Bolton-by-Bowland within an area of open countryside.

Paragraph 84 (a) of the NPPF states:

"Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside".

In addition, Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states:

"Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings:

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses”.

The above national guidance is consolidated within Policy DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy which states:

“Within areas defined as open countryside or AONB on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied”.

Similarly, Policy DMG2 allows for development outside of the defined settlement areas when the development in question is needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry.

With the above in mind, an assessment has to be made of the proposal with regards to the following issues:

- Evidence of the necessity for the applicant to live at, or in close proximity to, their place of work to ensure the effective operation of the existing agricultural enterprise
- Labour requirements of the existing agricultural enterprise
- The degree to which there is confidence that the agricultural enterprise is currently economically viable and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future
- Suitability and availability of existing dwellings on the agricultural holding

An assessment of the above criteria has subsequently been carried out through consultation with the Council’s retained Land Agent advisor, the findings of which have been detailed within an agricultural report and which included a site meeting with the applicant. The findings are reflected below:-

The applicant farms around 113ha, 8ha of which is at the land at Lower Standen Hey Farm and with an additional 105ha of land rented in the vicinity of the application site and further afield on various forms of agreement. The following livestock are kept on these holdings:- 140 – 150 beef cattle, 300 Gritstone breeding ewes and 450 lowland breeding ewes producing fat lambs. In this case there is a clear requirement for one farm worker to be on hand to deal with instances relating to the management of livestock that need to be dealt with reasonably quickly, particularly instances relating to birthing and throughout the year for the applicant’s younger stock. As such, there is an established functional need on the farmstead and most of the existing functional need is located at the application site, particularly during the times of year when the livestock are housed.

In terms of labour requirements, the agricultural operation at the land at Lower Standen Hey Farm currently carries a labour requirement of around 2.4 full time workers which at present is being met through the applicant working full time with help from his grandson and by the use of contractors for specialist tasks.

Having regard to financial viability, the applicant’s existing agricultural operation is considered to be financially sound with a clear prospect of remaining as such for the foreseeable future.

In relation to the final requirement, in the interests of the wellbeing of the livestock, the efficient running of the holding and for overall security at the land holdings centred on the land at Lower Standen Hey Farm, it is essential that 1 full time worker, actively involved in the management of this farming unit, should be resident on the land holdings at Lower Standen Hey Farm. At the present time the existing static caravan on site is available to house 1 full time worker however the caravan in question does not have a valid planning consent. Furthermore, the existing caravan on site is not considered to be suitable dwelling for occupation as a permanent dwelling for a full time agricultural worker on these land holdings.

Accordingly, the above findings are considered to satisfy the requirements of Paragraphs 84 (a) and 88 (a) and (b) of the NPPF and Policies DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy with respect to the development of dwellings in the open countryside for rural workers and as such establish the principle of development.

Self-build

The proposal has been submitted as a self-build development. With a shortfall of self-build housing within the Borough whilst the proposal only relates to the provision of one dwelling, some weight is nonetheless given to the fact that this would be a self-build dwelling. The applicant has provided a unilateral undertaking in support of the application which confirms that the proposed agricultural worker's dwelling is to be delivered by way of a self-build housing project. The principle of self-build housing for the application site is therefore secured.

Sustainability

In this instance, the application sites occupies an open countryside location some distance away from the nearest defined settlement areas of Pendleton, Clitheroe and Barrow. In addition, there is a notable absence of public transport links, pavements and street lighting within the nearby vicinity of the site therefore future occupants of the proposed dwelling would likely be reliant on the use of a private motor vehicle. Notwithstanding this policy conflict, a functional need for an agricultural worker's dwelling has nonetheless been established for the application site against the provisions of Policies DMG2 and DMH3. As such, an isolated site location which will be dependent upon the use of private motor vehicles is justified in this case.

Residential Amenity:

As the application is made in outline with all matters reserved except for access, a definitive assessment of the impact upon neighbouring residential amenity cannot be considered at this stage. Notwithstanding this, the application site lies at considerable distance from the nearest neighbouring receptor in the area (approximately 50 metres away from the property of Long Acre) therefore it is not anticipated that the proposed development would pose any issues with regards to impacts upon neighbouring amenity.

Visual Amenity:

The application does not seek consent with respect to the design / external appearance of the proposed farm worker's dwelling therefore a detailed assessment of the individual elements of the proposed development cannot be considered at this stage. Notwithstanding this, the application site lies within an open countryside setting and the application's supporting information indicates that the proposed farm worker's dwelling would comprise a two storey design however the proposed dwelling would be sited in close proximity to existing buildings within the site which include a sizeable portal frame agricultural building, polytunnel and open sided timber frame storage building. Furthermore, the submitted plans indicate that the proposed dwelling would be set into the site approximately 20 metres away from Public Right Of Way FP0332010 with the interior of the application site also being well screened by an existing tree line which runs along the site's South-eastern perimeter. As such, it is not anticipated that the proposed dwelling would read as an isolated, oversized or prominent addition to the site therefore the proposed development raises no measurable concerns with respect to its impact upon the visual amenities of the area.

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review from Lancashire County Council Highways who have deemed the existing vehicular access to the site be appropriate with respect to its width for supporting the residential and agricultural use proposed for the site. Whilst no visibility splay drawing has been provided in

support of the application, on-site observations show that the existing site access can achieve sightlines for 20mph speeds which has been deemed as acceptable in light of the low vehicle speeds that were observed along the site's single width access track. As the application is made in outline with all matters reserved except for access no details have been provided regarding the number of bedrooms and / or parking and turning provisions within the site and these details would need to be provided at the reserved matters stage in order to fully assess matters pertaining to highway safety.

Landscape/Ecology:

Trees

The foundations of the proposed dwelling would be sited within influencing distance of a mature oak tree. The submitted plans indicate that the proposed development would not encroach into the root protection area of the aforementioned tree and this has been confirmed by the Council's Countryside Officer following a review of the submitted plans and a visit to the proposal site. As such, no tree survey work would be required at the reserved matters stage however a condition has been imposed on this consent requiring further details of protective fencing to be provided prior to the commencement of any works being undertaken on site, with a stipulation that the protective fencing shall cover an area of not less than 15 metres measured from the centre of the affected tree trunk.

BNG

The development is proposed as being exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it relates to self-build development which has been secured through the provision of a unilateral undertaking.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

A functional need for an agricultural worker's dwelling on the site has been established. The proposed development raises no concerns with respect to its impact upon highway safety with regards to access however further details pertaining to bedroom numbers and parking and turning provisions within the site would need to be provided at the reserved matters stage.

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 and a unilateral undertaking being secured.