

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.								
Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	06/11/2025	Manager:	LH	Date:	6/11/25

Application Ref:	3/2025/0644			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	25/09/2025	Site Notice:	25/09/2025	
Officer:	MC			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Listed Building Consent for proposed conversion of Barn 2 within the curtilage of the listed Writtenstone Farmhouse, into ancillary residential accommodation. Works to include insertion of new and infilling of existing windows and doors. Works to include insertion/infilling of window and door openings, replacement of cement fibre roofing with slates, insulation of walls and roof, installation of underfloor heating, alterations to internal openings.
Site Address/Location:	Writtenstone Farm, Writtenstone Lane, Longridge, PR3 2ZN.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No response received.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections subject to condition that the building remains ancillary.
LCC Archaeology:	No objections following submission of historic building record
RVBC countryside:	No objections subject to conditions that the development is implemented in accordance with the method statement.
Growth Lancashire:	The Heritage and Conservation Officer considers that proposed development would cause no discernible level of harm or loss of significance to the heritage assets identified above including their setting.
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No additional representations received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Ribble Valley Core Strategy: Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets Policy DMG1: General Considerations Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Relevant Planning History:

3/2025/0643

Planning permission for proposed conversion of Barn 2 within the curtilage of the listed Writtenstone Farmhouse, into ancillary residential accommodation. Works to include insertion/infilling of window and door openings, replacement of cement fibre roofing with slates and engineering operations to include the lowering of the ground level adjacent to the barn.

Pending Consideration

3/2025/0511

Listed Building Consent for internal works to renew and thermally upgrade the ground floor slab, replaster and thermally upgrade the external walls, install thermal roof insulation and creation of a WC at ground floor and an ensuite at first floor.

Approved with Conditions

3/2025/0311

Replacement of existing doors and windows and installation of one new conservation style roof light.

Approved with Conditions

3/2024/0746

Listed Building Consent for proposed re-slating roof including re-leading valleys and chimneys and re-pointing all external walls and washing existing render.

Approved with Conditions

3/2024/0622

Planning permission for proposed conversion of barn 1 to two-storey, five bedroom dwelling; demolition of outbuilding 1 and construction of new double garage; construction of new roof and conversion of outbuilding 2 to form single-storey incidental domestic hobby space; alterations to existing vehicular access, creation of domestic curtilage and landscaping; new sewage treatment plant and diversion of public footpath.

Approved with Conditions

3/2024/0622

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Approved with Conditions

3/2024/0623

Listed Building Consent for proposed conversion of barn 1 to two-storey, five bedroom dwelling; demolition of outbuilding 1 and construction of new double garage; construction of new roof and conversion of outbuilding 2 to form single-storey incidental domestic hobby space; alterations to existing vehicular access, creation of domestic curtilage and landscaping; new sewage treatment plant and diversion of public footpath.

Approved with Conditions

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application site is located adjacent to the boundary with the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, within the Open Countryside. The site relates to a farmstead situated on the Eastern outskirts of Longridge.

Access to the application site is via Writtenstone Lane from Lower Road with Writtenstone Lane also serving as Public Right Of Way BW0302019. Subsequent access to the site from Writtenstone Lane is via an access track which serves as Public Right Of Way FP0302021 which runs along the South-eastern perimeter of the application site. The surrounding area is predominantly agricultural.

Writtenstone Farm comprises a detached two storey farmhouse which is Grade II Listed (Written Stone Farmhouse) and a number of barns which are considered to be curtilage listed. To the East of the barn is also the Grade II Listed inscribed stone named 'The Written Stone'.

The site is also located within the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Listed Building Consent is sought for the conversion of the barn building identified as 'Barn 02' on the submitted site plan to ancillary living accommodation associated with the main Farmhouse. The works proposed are as follows:

- Excavating a 300mm wide trench to the North and East Elevations capped off with a steel grid where a French drain would be laid to the perimeter of the building.
- Opening of windows to the South-East elevation
- New timber doors added to existing openings to South-West elevation
- Insertion of small window opening to ground floor of North-East elevation
- Replacement of cement fibre roofing sheets to single storey roof with slate
- Internal alterations to improve insulation
- Insertion of underfloor heating
- Formation of internal door openings and stud walls

Impact upon Curtilage Listed Building:

The listing for Written Stone Farmhouse is as follows:

SD 63 NW 7/131

LONGRIDGE, WRITTEN STONE LANE, Written Stone Farmhouse

II

House, probably late C18th. Sandstone rubble with slate roof. L-plan. 2 storeys. Facade of 3 bays with chamfered quoins and windows of 3 lights with square stone mullions and plain stone surrounds, except for the central window on the 1st floor which has a plain stone surround with semi-circular head. The door has a plain stone surround with a semi- circular head.

Listing NGR: SD6258537882

In addition, the listing for The Written Stone is as follows:

SD 63 NW 7/130

LONGRIDGE WRITTEN STONE LANE The Written Stone

II Inscribed stone, 1655. Sandstone. About 8 feet long, 2 feet wide and 18 inches deep. The following is written in incised letters: 'RAVFFE RADCLIFFE LAID THIS STONE TO LYE FOR EVER AD 1655'.

For legends about the stone see Smith, Tom C., A History of Longridge, Preston, 1888, pp. 27-30.

Listing NGR: SD6261737902

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:

“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.”

Policy LNDP4 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan also states that:

“All of the town’s heritage assets, including the three Conservation Areas, will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.”

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 212 – 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 nondesignated 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.

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.

With regards to external changes, the Heritage and Conservation Officer has provided comments on the scheme. With regards to the French drain proposed, they raise no objection.

Turning to the replacement roof slates, they note that the slates and ridge stones are to be reclaimed to match those of the farmhouse and laid in a diminishing course which replicate the original arrangement. The works are welcomed and would be a considerable improvement on existing cement fibre/sheet metal coverings. They recommend a condition that any replacement/new slates be submitted for approval and secured by condition.

In terms of the proposed doors and windows, they note that the applicant has reviewed a previous design of doors/windows to match the farmhouse, which was considered to be contrary to the agricultural character of the barn. The proposed amended windows are to be simple plain glazed timber framed casements, and the doors along the SW elevation are to be replaced with good quality timber with design and glazing taking cues from the ad hoc existing arrangement of doors that will help to retain the agricultural character. No objection is raised to the new window proposed also.

Turning to internal changes, with regards to the limecrete floor (including underfloor heating), lime plaster/pointing, wool wood insulating slabs and the proposed methods of application/installation, they consider that these materials and methods follow good conservation practice and raise no objection. No objections are also raised to internal adaptations including new openings.

With regards to internal works to the roof, they consider that if any defects are found with the timbers, they raise no objection to like-for-like replacement where required.

It is considered that proposed development would cause no discernible level of harm or loss of significance to the designated heritage asset.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

Having regard to the above and the requirements of the NPPF, it is noted that the development would not harm the designated heritage asset and would result in heritage benefits through the re-use of the barn.

As such, the proposal complies the relevant Policies of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the requirements of Section 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and would not result in harm to the designated heritage asset.

Having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:	That listed building consent be granted subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.
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