


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	29/10/25	Manager:	LH	Date:	31/10/25
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0645			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	24/11/23	Site Notice:	3/10/25	
Officer:	BT			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	To construct a steel framed building for sheep housing and sheep handling pens including new stone access track and hardstanding.
Site Address/Location:	Lords Farm, Hellifield Road, Bolton by Bowland, BB7 4LY.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Bolton-by-Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley Parish Council:	Consulted 11/9/25 – no response received.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections.
LCC PROW:	Consulted 11/9/25 – no response received.
Natural England:	No objections.
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU):	No objection subject to conditions.
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
None.	

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 EN2: Landscape Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations Policy DMG1: General Considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation Policy DME6: Water Management Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy Policy DMB5: Footpaths and Bridleways</p>

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

3/2023/0880:

Proposed change of use of first adjoining bay of attached barn to create additional living accommodation for existing dwellinghouse. Associated alterations to barn and house fenestration and to existing side lean-to roofs serving the house (Approved)

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to a farmstead situated on the North-western outskirts of Bolton-by-Bowland within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Access to the proposal site is from Hellifield Road via Public Right Of Way FP0307016 which subsequently connects with the site's access track which forms part of Public Right Of Way FP0319036. The farmstead comprises a two storey farmhouse property consisting of stone, slate and timber doors and windows. The farmhouse appears to have been previously extended by way of single storey mono-pitched extensions which adjoin to the property's North-eastern gable end. The property's front garden area is enclosed by a semi-circular stone wall. The South-western end of the farmhouse is adjoined by a sizeable barn which comprises a cat slide roof and cart entry feature on its principal elevation. The rear North-western elevation of the barn building appears to have later additions in the form of adjoining cart entry and single storey mono-pitched extensions and an additional blockwork based single storey mono-pitched extension. The application site previously accommodated a cluster of dilapidated farm buildings sited to the South-west of the farmhouse and barn however these buildings have since collapsed as a result of storm damage and were removed from the site in April 2025, with the remnant area having been reinstated with soil and seeded with grass. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Planning consent is sought for the following works:

- Construction of a portal framed agricultural building for sheep housing
- Construction of sheep handling pens
- Construction of stone access track and hardstanding areas

Principle of Development:

The proposal site lies outside of the defined settlement area of Bolton-by-Bowland. 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 and handling pens to house and manage sheep. The application's supporting information states that the applicant is an enthusiastic Texel breeder and currently runs a flock of 250 pedigree breeding ewes producing high value breeding females and high genetic value rams. It is understood that the applicant had previously operated his sheep enterprise on his father's tenanted farm prior to recently obtaining a tenancy at the

application site, with lambing being undertaken at the applicant's father's farm in temporary polytunnels. It is stated that the aforementioned polytunnel arrangement had only allowed sheep to be housed for short periods due to concerns over bio-security issues associated with disease transfer. It is further stated that the aforementioned polytunnel arrangement would be unsuitable for use at the application site due to issues of access with farm machinery and also due to the exposed nature of Lords Farm which would inevitably result in storm damage which in turn could present a risk to livestock and personnel. As such, the applicant seeks consent for the construction of a new agricultural building and sheep handling facilities in order to house their existing ewe flock prior to and during lambing and also for the management of their breeding flock to carry out tasks such as dipping, foot treatment, sorting and clipping.

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 development in light of the requirement for the applicant to be compliant with the rules and good practice in relation to the welfare of livestock, namely through preventing occurrence of ground poaching and carrying out livestock management tasks as detailed above.

Consequently, it is considered that the proposed building, sheep handling pens would be justifiable additions 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 application lies within an isolated location with the nearest residential receptor located approximately 750 metres away to the South-west of the application site therefore the works proposed do not raise any concerns with respect to their impact upon neighbouring amenity.

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

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

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 National Landscapes (previously known as Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty) 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 the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.'

In this instance, the proposed agricultural building and sheep handling pens would be sizeable additions to the application site and would also be publicly viewable from Public Right Of Way FP0319036. Notwithstanding this, proposed agricultural building and sheep handling pens are considered to be proportionate in terms of size relative to their proposed end use and these buildings and the proposed access track and associated areas of hardstanding would all be sited in reasonably close proximity to the existing farmhouse and adjoining barn and would therefore not read as isolated features within the surrounding landscape. Furthermore, the proposed agricultural building would comprise a portal framed design detailed in concrete panels, Yorkshire boarding and fibre cement roofing sheets, all of which would be in keeping with the external appearance of agricultural buildings within the locality and rural character of the surrounding landscape. As such, the proposal as a whole would read as a proportionate and congruent form of development that would appropriately assimilate with the existing built form within the farmstead and its open countryside setting. Moreover, the removal of the dilapidated agricultural buildings previously in place to the South-west of the farmhouse and barn has delivered a minor visual enhancement to the site and its surroundings. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any harm to the visual amenities of the immediate or wider area.

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed development would conserve the character and appearance of the surrounding National Landscape. 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 by Lancashire County Council Highways who have raised no objections to the proposed development with respect to access, parking or general highway safety, subject to Public Right Of Way FP0319036 remaining free of obstruction during any works of construction. On this basis, 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:

Protected Sites

The proposed development would be sited within Impact Risk Zones pertaining to SSSI sites therefore consultation has been undertaken with Natural England who have raised no concerns with regards to the

impact of the proposed development upon protected sites, subject to adherence with their standing advice.

BNG

A Biodiversity Net Gain Report has been provided in support of the proposed development which has been subject to review from Greater Manchester Ecology Unit who acknowledge that the proposed development could deliver the required net gain in Biodiversity on-site through the enhancement of grassland and new tree planting. The response from GMEU recommends for the imposition of conditions in order to secure a net gain in biodiversity for the site as detailed and these have been imposed as requested in order to satisfy the BNG legislation.

Other Matters:

Flood Risk

Recently updated flood risk mapping (NaFRA2 - National Flood Risk Assessment 2) identifies sections of the access to the application site as being at risk of flooding from surface water therefore a Flood Risk Assessment and associated flood risk mapping data have been provided in support of the application. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and accompanying data show that occurrences of surface water flooding would be unlikely to occur over 20cm at any points on the site's access. In addition, the proposed development falls within the 'less vulnerable' flood risk vulnerability classification and it is not anticipated that the proposed development would exacerbate flooding elsewhere. Furthermore, it is stated that the applicant will be signing up to flood warning alerts. In light of the above, the proposed development raises no significant concerns with respect to flood risk.

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.
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