

DESIGN AND ACCESS

and Agricultural Need Statement

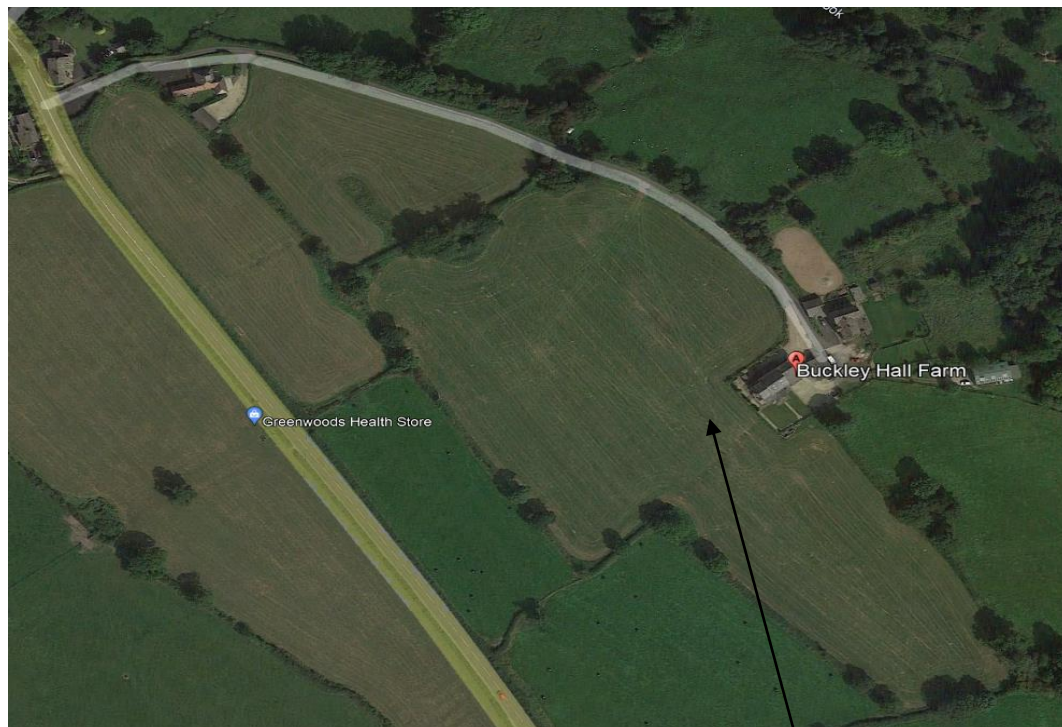
Proposal: **Proposed agricultural building
together with surrounding concrete
hard-standing and solar panels to roof.**

Site Location: **Buckley Hall Farm, Preston Road,
Ribchester, PR3 3YD.**

Applicant: **Mr John Cosgrove**

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Background and information



Location of proposed new building

The applicant owns 13 hectares (32.12 acres) of agricultural land, split between two sites at Buckley Hall Farm and Bleasdale. The site is designated as open countryside in the Ribble Valley Local Plan. There are no existing agricultural buildings on the site, with only the farmhouse itself on the land.

The site is an agricultural holding, accessed via a track leading from Preston Road, and all vehicle movements are via the access track from Preston Road.

The site is located in Flood Zone 1

There are no existing agricultural buildings to serve the land holding. Previously, this has not caused an issue for former owners of Buckley Hall Farm or the former owner of the land at Bleasdale, because both had their own buildings on land located elsewhere. Specifically, at Buckley Hall Farm, the grass crop was taken under a grazing licence by farmers from Longridge Fell and subsequently Great Harwood, who both had buildings elsewhere which have housed the machinery required to service the entirety of their land holding. This is not the case for the applicant, as he has no other buildings elsewhere which could be utilised. The only practical approach to meet this need is for a new agricultural building to be erected on site.

The applicant needs a building of sufficient size and security to house modern machinery and equipment required for the upkeep of the land holding. The majority of this machinery and equipment is already in the ownership of the applicant, however, the remaining equipment cannot be purchased until there is a safe and secure building on site in which to keep it. The existing machinery is being stored in the farmhouse garage and in the farmyard, which is not secure or suitable.

The items to be housed in the proposed building are a tractor, trailer, loader, transport box and associated tools, plus the crop of hay taken off the land.

Historically, there have been sheep grazing on the land under a short-term licence. The applicant has 70 ewes and 6 poultry. The proposed building will also assist in providing shelter for the livestock in adverse weather conditions and to meet sheep welfare requirements, as detailed on the attached DEFRA welfare guidance.

The land is agricultural land, and is all down to grass, which will be used for making hay each season. The land produces approximately 100 large bales per year. Any hay left over will be sold, as is common practice in this situation. It is considered bad practice to store hay bales wrapped in plastic in fields, not only due to the expensive nature of this practice, but also to avoid the use of single use plastics wherever possible, and therefore hay storage necessitates a building to facilitate dry storage. Hay storage guidance information is also attached to this application.

The proposed layout of the building, being open plan, is to ensure that the floor space within the building can be utilised effectively depending upon the time of year and the varying needs of the animals and on the land during each season.

The proposed position of the building on the land has been carefully considered to ensure that the adjacent listed building at Buckley Hall is not impacted, and that existing utilities on the site are not prejudiced. It is also proposed that solar panels be installed on the south facing roof of the proposed building, to maximise the efficiency of the solar panels.

The proposed hardstanding around the building is designed to ensure effective access to the building on a year round basis, without damaging the surrounding land during wetter months.



View towards Buckley Hall Farm and Buckley Hall



View from Buckley Hall Farm



Appearance

The proposed development is for an agricultural style building and is designed in traditional materials for that purpose, being sympathetic to the locality. The proposal aims to maintain the openness of the countryside by locating the building adjacent to the existing farmhouse, with sufficient hardstanding to enable access to the building for tractor/farm machinery.

Use

Storage for tractor, loader, forklift forks, trailer, transport box, backhoe for ditching, harrows, field roller, hedge cutter, chain saw, log splitter, fencing equipment and materials, hedging and forestry tools required to maintain and manage the land. This is agricultural land, and its upkeep and maintenance are essential in this countryside location.

Dry storage for hay taken from the land.

Accommodation for sheep (ewes) as required under DEFRA welfare guidance.

Based on the information above, the size of the building applied for is a reasonable size. The storage of the agricultural equipment needed to serve the land is fundamental to its effective use. The proposed building will allow the equipment to be stored securely and ensure that animal welfare needs are met.

Land management plan

The land is mown for two crops of hay in the summer months, then it must be harrowed, rolled, sprayed and fertilised in order to grow to make another crop. All the equipment required for this will be kept in the proposed building. After harvesting grass off the land, the sheep close graze the grass, ready for rolling etc.

2.4 tons of hay can be cropped off an acre. From 8.6 acres (3.48 hectares) this would equate to 20.64 tonnes requiring 121.57 cubic metres of space, thereby requiring 243.14 cubic metres of space for the hay storage from 2 crops. The proposal represents sustainable development which complies with the local plan and meets the objective of the NPPF.

Landscaping

The building will be situated adjacent to the farmhouse. If required, additional landscaping can be provided if the Council so wish, which can be secured by way of condition.

Amount

One building is being applied for, which will provide essential storage for the above detailed items. The building is stone to the front lower portion, for security, with timber Yorkshire boards above.

Layout

The layout is open plan.

Scale

The scale of the building is modest and necessary at 18.3 m x 12.2 m, providing 223.26 sq m of floor space in total.

The eaves height is 4 m and ridge height is 5.5 m, which will allow access by modern tractors and other machinery ancillary to the land.

Access

Access to the building will be from the existing access track from Preston Road, which is owned by the Applicant.

Policy

The development plan and the NPPF are relevant policy considerations as set out below.

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (excerpts)

The NPPF states that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development, that proposals in accordance with the development plan should be approved without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, grant permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this framework taken as a whole; or when specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted.

The relevant policies to this proposed development are DS1, DMG2, EN2 and DME2.

The proposed development is outside the settlement area and is needed for the purposes of agriculture. It is also in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area, in terms of size, design, materials and siting and therefore meets the requirements in DMG2 and EN2.

The proposed development will not significantly harm important landscape or landscape features and therefore policy DME2 is met.

Additionally the continued use of the land for agriculture supports and contributes to a prosperous rural economy, in accordance with NPPF guidance.

Conclusion

The applicant currently does not have a building from which to service the land holding, as is necessary for agricultural use.

The proposal would be consistent with the approach of supporting the prosperity of the rural economy.

The proposed open countryside location of the agricultural building is considered to be acceptable.

Therefore, it is submitted that the proposed building would have regard to its countryside location and would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal accords with Policy of the Local Plan which seeks to ensure development is of high-quality design that responds positively to its context and setting.