


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	2/3/26	Manager:	LH	Date:	2/3/26
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0750			 Ribble Valley Borough Council <small>www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk</small>
Date Inspected:	29/5/25	Site Notice:	14/10/25	
Officer:	BT			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Proposed demolition of existing dwelling house and conversion of attached barn to create replacement dwelling house (self-build) with single storey extension on original footprint.
Site Address/Location:	Fells Farm, Wigglesworth Road, Slaidburn, BD23 4SY.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Slaidburn and Easington Parish Council:	Consulted 13/10/25 - no response received.
Grindleton Parish Council:	No objections.

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objections subject to conditions.
LCC Archaeology:	No objections subject to condition.
LCC PROW:	Consulted 13/10/25 - no response received
RVBC countryside:	No objections subject to condition.
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
None.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

- Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
- Key Statement DS2: Sustainable development
- Key Statement EN2: Landscape
- Key Statement DM12: Transport Considerations
- Policy DMG1: General considerations
- Policy DMG2: Strategic considerations
- Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility
- Policy DME2: Landscape And Townscape Protection
- Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation
- Policy DMH3: Dwellings In The Open Countryside And AONB

Policy DMH4: The Conversion Of Barns And Other Buildings To Dwellings
Policy DMB5: Footpaths And Bridleways

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

None.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to a single storey dwelling and adjoining barn building located on the Eastern outskirts of Slaidburn within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Access to the application site is from the North from Wigglesworth Road via a single width access track which also carries Public Right Of Way FP0317018. The existing dwelling on site known as Fells Farm primarily comprises a single storey timber-based structure with pitched and flat roof profiles with the bathroom / coat & boot room components of the dwellinghouse being contained within a single storey stone-based structure topped with a corrugated metal lean-to roof. The South-western corner of Fells Farm adjoins to a traditional stone barn which forms the primary basis of this application. The land surrounding Fells Farm and the adjoining barn building comprises a mixture of grassland and hardstanding with front and rear garden areas adjoining the Southern and Northern sides of the buildings respectively. The application site occupies a remote location with the nearest residential property of Shays Farm lying approximately 400 metres away to the North-west of the site. The wider area comprises a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Planning consent is sought for the demolition of Fells Farm and residential conversion and extension of the adjoining barn building to form a three-bedroom self-build dwelling. Additional works proposed include soft and hard landscaping and an extension to the existing extent of domestic curtilage adjoining the Northern side of the barn building.

Principle of Development:

The proposal site lies within the open countryside within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Criterion 2 of Policy DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy allows for the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings within areas of open countryside providing they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. The same policy stipulates that buildings must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.

With regards to criterion 2 of DMH3, whether or not the proposal amounts to an 'appropriate' conversion leads to the engagement of policy DMH4 and requires a consideration of the proposal against that policy.

Policy DMH4 of the Core Strategy states:

Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where:

1. The building is not isolated in the landscape, i.e. it is within a defined settlement or forms part of an existing group of buildings, and

2. There need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure, and

3. There would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservations interests, and

4. There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy, and

5. The proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area

6. That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or, if this is not possible, then any loss adequately mitigated.

The building to be converted must:

- Be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alternation, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building;

- Be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building –

- The character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting, and

The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise.

In this instance, the barn building subject to this application adjoins to a single storey dwelling and as such does not read as an isolated feature within the surrounding landscape. Whilst it is accepted that the proposed demolition of Fells Farm would technically result in the barn building no longer forming part of a group of buildings, the land surrounding the barn has already been subject to a discernible level of domestication by virtue of the garden, soft landscaping, parking area and boundary fencing associated with the use of Fells Farm. As such, conversion of the barn building to a dwelling would not result in any significant additional urbanisation of the site relative to its current residential character. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed development would be in conflict with criteria point 1 of Policy DMH4.

Access to the barn building would be via the site's existing vehicle access track from Dugdale Lane. The applicant seeks to install four passing places (not requested by LCC Highways) along the site's access track to allow for two-way vehicle movements, all of which would be at the applicant's expense. Furthermore, foul water would be dealt with by way of a package treatment plant which would also be at the applicant's own expense, with surface water drainage directed to an existing soakaway and watercourses. As such, it is not anticipated that the residential conversion of the barn would warrant any unnecessary expenditure by public authorities or utilities on the provision of infrastructure. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of criteria point 2 of Policy DMH4.

Having regard to criteria points 3, 4 and 5, amendments to the original design concept of the proposed scheme of residential conversion have been secured (these are covered in more detail in the report's visual amenity section) and in light of these it is not considered that conversion of the barn building would be damaging to the landscape qualities or natural beauty of the area. In addition, it is not anticipated that the development proposed would be harmful to any nature conservation interests. Furthermore, the application's supporting information states that the barn building subject to the proposed conversion is no longer suited to modern farming practices therefore it is not considered that the proposed reuse of

the barn would be of detriment to the Borough's rural economy. Accordingly, the proposal would satisfy the requirements of criteria points 3, 4 and 5 of Policy DMH4 and design requirements of Policy DMH3.

Turning to criteria point 6, ecological survey work has been submitted in support of the application which raises no concerns with respect to the impact of the proposed development upon protected species, subject to adherence with appropriate working methodologies. As such, the proposed development meets the requirements of criteria point 6 of Policy DMH4.

Having regard to the additional criteria within Policy DMH4, a structural survey has been provided in support of the application which shows the structural integrity of the barn to be in generally good condition and capable of supporting the proposed residential conversion. The proposal would therefore satisfy criteria point 6-1 of Policy DMH4 and the structural requirements of Policy DMH3.

An extension is proposed to the barn building as part of its conversion to a dwelling however the extension in question comprises a modestly sized single storey addition with acceptable amendments to its original design having been secured. As such, it is not considered that the extension proposed would be harmful to the character or appearance of the barn building. The proposal would therefore satisfy criteria point 6-2 of Policy DMH4.

In addition, the character of the barn and its materiality reflect the vernacular of rural farm buildings in the locality which contribute to the setting of the surrounding National Landscape therefore the building in question is considered to be worthy of retention. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of criteria point 6-3.

Furthermore, a heritage statement has been provided in support of the application which comprehensively documents the agricultural origins of the barn and surrounding site and in light of this it is clear that the barn benefits from a genuine history of use for agriculture. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of criteria point 6-4.

Policy DMG3 of the Core Strategy also requires decision taking to consider the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from new developments. This is consistent with the NPPF which requires development proposals to promote sustainable transport. Due to the rural location of the application site future occupants of the dwellings would likely be reliant on the use of private motor vehicles and this weighs against the proposal, however this is balanced against the sustainable benefits of re-using an existing building and the fact that the site is already accessed by private vehicles

Taking account of all of the above, the proposed development would satisfy the requirements of Policies DMH3, DMH4 and DMG3. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to further assessment of additional material planning considerations.

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. In addition, the applicant has provided a unilateral undertaking in support of the application which confirms that the proposed 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.

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 barn building to be converted for residential use occupies a remote location at considerable distance from the nearest neighbouring property of Shays Farm. In addition, the application site accommodates an existing residential use. As such, it is not considered that the residential use proposed for the barn building would be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents. Having regard to the amenity of future occupants of the development, all habitable rooms within the proposed dwelling would be served by a sufficient quantity of windows and roof light openings therefore future users of the dwelling would receive an adequate provision of natural light and outlook to support the proposed residential use.

Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents or future occupants of the proposed dwelling. The proposed development 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 Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscapes), 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.'

The above is reiterated within Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy:

'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.'

Policy DMH4 provides additional guidance with respect to the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings as follows:

'Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where there would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area... the building to be converted must

be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building.'

In addition, Historic England guidance on converting traditional farm buildings states:

'There should always be a presumption in favour of maximising the use of existing openings without changing their size and limiting the formation of new ones. Where new openings are added or new windows inserted within existing door openings, great care needs to be given to their placing and design'.

In this instance, the proposed scheme of residential conversion would be largely centred around the use of the barn's existing openings, with amendments having since been secured to the original scheme of proposed fenestration to incorporate a half-boarded design to the barn's Northern cart entry in order to retain the agricultural character of the building. The original design concept of the proposal included the addition of solar panels to the entirety of the barn's Southern roof slope however following negotiation the proposed quantity of solar panels has since been reduced which in turn would allow the historic Southern roof profile of the barn building to remain legible.

The original design concept of the single storey side extension proposed for the barn building was not considered to be a wholly sympathetic addition by virtue of its width and Eastern fenestration detailing however following negotiation an alternative design for the extension has since been secured, with the width of the extension reduced and a modestly sized half boarded opening incorporated to the Eastern elevation of the extension. As such, the proposed extension would read as a subservient and congruent addition to the barn building.

The existing dwelling on site (Fells Farm) is a modern (1980s) and somewhat dilapidated structure that currently detracts from the character and appearance of the historic barn building therefore its demolition would deliver a visual enhancement to the barn building and proposal site. The proposal also includes the removal and replacement of the barn's Northern lean-to component however this structure appears to be a later addition to the barn building and the replacement lean-to extension would largely mirror the existing structure with regards to its size, design and materiality, albeit with a stone slate roof which would be more in keeping with the historic character of the barn building in comparison to the corrugated metal roof in place on the existing lean-to structure.

Samples of external materials to be utilised as part of the proposed development have not been provided in support of the application however the application's supporting information indicates that timber doors and windows would be utilised for all window and door openings, with the stone slate roof of the converted barn building to be re-laid and repaired where necessary with like for like roof slates, all of which be respectful to the historic character of the barn building and in keeping with the vernacular of historic rural buildings within the locality. In addition, the proposed side extension and replacement lean-to structure would be detailed in materials to match the converted barn building. As such, the proposed use of external materials is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to further details being provided with regards to materials and specifications.

Domestic outdoor space and vehicle parking for the converted barn building would largely be facilitated through the existing lawned and hardstanding areas adjoining the Northern and Southern sides of the barn building respectively, albeit with a modest increase to the site's existing lawned area that would naturally round off the North-western corner of the existing rear garden area. As such, conversion of the barn to residential use would not require any excessive encroachment into the surrounding open countryside.

Taking account of all of the above, it is considered that the proposed scheme of residential conversion would be predominantly respectful to the historic character of the barn building, with the removal of the existing dwelling and lean-to structure delivering a minor visual enhancement to the application site and its immediate surroundings. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed development as a whole would conserve the character of the surrounding National Landscape and would therefore satisfy

the requirements of Paragraphs 135 (C) and 189 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.

Heritage:

Correspondence from Lancashire County Council's Archaeology team identifies the barn building as holding some historic interest by virtue of its origins to the period 1750-1880 which has been recognised as the most important period of farm building development in England. In light of this, the initial response from LCC Archaeology stipulated for the provision of an archaeological building record in order to document the archaeological and historic importance associated with the barn building. Following this the applicant has since provided a Written Scheme Of Investigation which has been subject to further review from LCC Archaeology who have subsequently deemed the Written Scheme Of Investigation to be acceptable. As such, the proposal raises no concerns with respect to matters of archaeological / historical importance, subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the proposed schedule of building recording and subject to a final report being submitted to the Lancashire Historic Environment Record.

Highways and Parking:

The proposed development has been subject to review by Lancashire County Council Highways who have raised no issues with respect to access, parking provision or general highway safety. The LHA response recommends for the imposition of conditions with respect to parking and turning areas, construction management and cycle storage, all of which have been imposed on this consent. On this basis, it is not considered that the proposed development will have any undue impacts upon highway safety as such the proposal satisfies Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy (highways).

Landscape/Ecology:

Protected Species

The proposed development would involve disturbance to the roof space of the barn building to be converted therefore a preliminary roost assessment has been provided in support of the application which found no evidence of any bat related activity within the application building, with the survey work further identifying the application building as holding negligible to low bat roost potential and the area surrounding the application site as holding poor foraging potential. As such, no further survey work has been recommended however the submitted ecology report includes a method statement comprising numerous working practices and compensatory measures. Compliance with the aforementioned working practices and compensatory measures has been secured through the imposition of a condition.

Trees

The proposed development would be sited within influencing distance of trees within the application site therefore an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. The submitted AIA confirms that no tree removal would be required to facilitate the proposed development however the report confirms that there would be a requirement to safeguard the root protection area of a sycamore tree (identified as 'T1 in the AIA). Consequently, the proposed development raises no concerns with regards to its impact upon trees, subject to adherence with the tree protection measures specified within the submitted AIA which has been secured through the imposition of a condition.

BNG

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

Other Matters:

Flood risk

Recently updated flood risk mapping (NaFRA2 - National Flood Risk Assessment 2) identifies the application site as being at risk of flooding from surface water therefore a Flood Risk Assessment has been provided in support of the application. Mapping analysis within the submitted FRA confirms the extent of surface water flood risk as being limited to sections of the site's access track with the identified extent of surface water flood risk relating to a nominal 3.3% (1 in 30) risk of annual flooding. Furthermore, the FRA shows an absence of flood risk from all sources to the barn building and its immediate surroundings. As such, the proposed development raises no significant concerns with respect to flood risk.

Public Right Of Way

Public Right Of Way FP0317018 runs through the Southern portion of the application site. The proposed development would involve a minor diversion to the section of the public footpath currently within the confines of the application site whereby this section of the PROW would be relocated approximately 40 metres to the East of its existing position. As such, formal consultation has been undertaken with Lancashire County Council's Public Rights Of Way team however no response has been received to date. Notwithstanding this, whilst it is accepted that the proposed development, to some degree, is likely to change the user experience of the Public Right of Way, it is not considered that the change would be of such significance to be of detriment to the route or the enjoyment of members of the public utilising the Right Of Way. No concerns are therefore raised with respect to the suggested footpath diversion proposed, which would need to be applied for under TCPA 1990 S257 Public Path Order.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The proposed scheme of residential conversion accords with the aims and objectives of Policies DMH3, DMH4 and DMG3 of the Core Strategy thus securing the principle of development. The proposed development would not have any undue impact upon the amenity of any neighbouring residents, nor would the proposed development be harmful to the historic character of the barn building or visual amenities of the immediate or wider area. Furthermore, proposed development raises no concerns with respect to its impact upon highway safety, flood risk or the ecology of the area.

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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