

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	13/02/2026	Manager:	LH	Date:	18/2/26
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Application Ref:	3/2025/0794			 <p>Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</p>	
Date Inspected:	22/10/2025	Site Notice:	22/10/2025		
	22/01/2025 (pre-application enquiry)				
Officer:	MC				
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				Decision	APPROVAL

Development Description:	Prior notification for proposed change of use of an agricultural building to office use including ancillary parking and open space under Schedule 2 Part 3, Class R of the GDPO.
Site Address/Location:	Old Dairy Farm, Chipping Road, Chaigley, BB7 3LS

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No comments received in respect of the proposed development.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	Following the submission of additional information relating to highways safety, the Local Highway Authority does not object to the scheme subject to a number of planning conditions being added to any grant of consent.
RVBC Environmental Health Officer:	No objection subject to conditions.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
<p>12 letters of representation have been received. The concerns/comments outlined within these letters can be summarised as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns regarding increase in traffic and safety issues with regards to the site access • Lack of footpath would increase dangers to pedestrians • Harm to character of the area and the Forest of Bowland National Landscape • The proposal would set a precedent which would significantly affect any future development of nearby farms • It is unclear what the units would be used for and number of units planned is unclear • Car parking spaces are narrow • No information on how sewage would be managed is provided with the application • The number of units is considered to be excessive and cannot be sustained by infrastructure within area • Proposal conflicts with Policies in the Ribble Valley Core Strategy • No details provided regarding materials to be used • The number of vehicle trips do not match the number of units • Lack of information regarding soft landscaping 	

- Concerns regarding noise pollution
- Concerns with regards to light pollution and erosion of dark skies within National Landscape, undermining tranquillity, wildlife habitats and visitor experience.
- The proposal would boost economical benefits and improve appearance of locality
- Unclear if the proposal would be one large building or occupied by several businesses

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 and (Amendment) Order 2018

Relevant Planning History:

3/2025/0787

Prior notification for demolition of a mixed-materials agricultural lean-to under Part 11 Class B of the GDPO
Permission not required

3/2011/0310

Proposed Farm Workers dwelling
Approved with Conditions

3/2009/0524

Construction of an agricultural livestock building (Phase 3)
Approved with Conditions

3/2009/0523

Construction of an agricultural livestock building (Phase 2)
Approved with Conditions

3/2009/0522

Construction of an agricultural livestock building (Phase 1)
Approved with Conditions

3/2009/0261

Re-submission of outline application for a farm workers dwelling, including siting with all other matters reserved.
Refused and Allowed at Appeal

3/2008/0703

Proposed outline application for farm workers dwelling, including siting with all other matters reserved
Refused

3/2007/0788

Phase III. Construction of an agricultural livestock building.
Approved with Conditions

3/2007/0787

Phase II. Construction of an agricultural livestock building.
Approved with Conditions

3/2007/0786

Phase I. Construction of an agricultural livestock building.
Approved with Conditions

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to an agricultural building at Old Dairy Farm which forms part of a historical creamery building. The site is located within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, just over 4km to the northwest of the main settlement of Clitheroe.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks the Council's determination as to whether prior approval of the highway impacts, noise impacts, contamination implications and flood risks would be required for the change of use of an agricultural building to office use (including ancillary parking and open space) under Class R of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

Whether or not Permitted Development

Subject to a number of conditions and restrictions, agricultural buildings and land in their curtilage may be converted to a 'flexible use' under Class R. Flexible use means any use falling within Class B8 (storage or distribution) of Schedule 1, Class C1 (hotels) of Schedule 1, or Class E (commercial, business or services) or Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

Development is not permitted by Class R if –

(a) the building was not used solely for an agricultural use as part of an established agricultural unit—

- (i) on 3rd July 2012;**
- (ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use, or**
- (iii) in the case of a building which was brought into use after 3rd July 2012, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class R begins;**

The applicant alleges that the building was used solely for an agricultural use as part of the established agricultural unit at Old Dairy Farm. There is no evidence to suggest otherwise.

(b) the cumulative floor space of buildings which have changed use under Class R within an established agricultural unit exceeds 1000 square metres;

The drawings have been amended prior to the determination of this application and reference to individual containers within the existing building has been removed from the plans. The floorspace of the area of the building which the change of use relates to is now considered to be under 1000 square metres and 890 square metres of floorspace would change from agricultural to office use.

- (c) the site is, or forms part of, a military explosives storage area;**
- (d) the site is, or forms part of, a safety hazard area; or**
- (e) the building is a listed building or a scheduled monument.**

The site/ building does not fall within any of the above.

The proposal satisfies criteria a) – e) therefore is defined as permitted development.

Whether or not prior approval is needed

In accordance with condition R.3 (1) (b) the Local Authority must determine whether prior approval is required as to the following:

(i) transport and highways impacts of the development;

There have been a number of objections to the scheme, raising concerns with regards to increase in traffic and car/pedestrian safety with regards to the access arrangements.

Lancashire County Council Highways have been consulted in respect of the proposed development and following the submission of further information, including a traffic count survey, updated comments have been provided following their initial objection on highway safety grounds.

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) note that the southern site access will serve the proposed office use class, and the northern access will continue to be used by the agricultural uses that will be retained on the site. They consider the southern access to be an appropriate width to provide 2-way movement as noted within drawing ADL_6871-01 titled Access Detail and Vehicle Tracking for Cars within the supporting document ADL/AM/6854/20A. The plan also shows that a minimum of 10m setback distance when gates are opened will be provided, allowing two cars to be situated fully off Chipping Road. They include suggested conditions to ensure the access is surfaced for the first 10m to ensure no debris is dragged onto the highway, resulting in a hazard.

A swept path analysis has been submitted demonstrating that a Fire Tender and a Refuse Vehicle can safely access and exit the site in forward gear. The LHA has reviewed the tracking and considers it acceptable. The LHA previously requested that the applicant provide a visibility splay drawing to ensure adequate intervisibility between highway users at the access. The applicant undertook a traffic count, which found that the 85th percentile speed of traffic travelling northwest bound was 34.7mph and southeast bound was 34.9mph. As such, the applicant has provided visibility splays of 2.4m x 51m in both directions as noted within drawing ADL_6871-02. The visibility splays are wholly within the land which the applicant controls and/or the adopted highway. A condition should be added to any grant of permission to ensure that nothing shall be erected, retained, planted and / or allowed to grow at or above a height of 0.9 metres above the nearside carriageway level which would obstruct the visibility splay of the access.

With regards to trip generation, the applicant has provided detailed trip generation information using TRICS data within the supporting document ADL/AM/6854/20A. The TRICS data shows that up to 17 two-way vehicle movements in the peak hour of 17:00 – 18:00 could take place, similar to the morning peak hour of 16 vehicle movements between 08:00 – 09:00. The LHA is of the opinion that, given the above results, the site would not result in a significant impact on the local highway network.

With regards to the internal layout of the site, the LHA have reviewed drawing number 6811 SK-CT-1 Revision D. The LHA have calculated the number of parking spaces to be 28 (based on the previous submission of 29 individual units). Whilst reference to the individual units have been removed from the plans, based on the parking standards outlined in the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan, offices would require 1 no. parking space per 35sqm and as such, the level of parking is considered to be appropriate, alongside appropriate manoeuvring space. The LHA note that the site also provides 2 disabled bays which are designed in line with guidance, as well as cycle storage facilities.

As such, prior approval is approved in terms of transport and highways impacts.

(ii) noise impacts of the development;

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the proposed development and raised comment with regard to noise. Other than the inclusion of two conditions relating to construction noise/deliveries and site preparation and construction phase control of noise/dust/fumes/vibration (the latter of which would not meet the tests), they do not raise any objection to the scheme. Vehicular movement within the site from users/employees of the office use may generate some noise but this would be no greater than expected from the continued use of the site for agricultural purposes including the comings and goings of agricultural machinery and vehicles.

As such, prior approval is approved in terms of noise impacts.

(iii) contamination risks on the site; and

The site is located on known contaminated land. The Environmental Health Officer has also raised concerns with regards to suspected asbestos within the building and recommends survey is undertaken prior to any demolition works taking place. As such, it would be reasonable to include a condition to a desk study to assess the risk of potential on-site contamination and ground gasses to ensure there would be no harm arising from land contaminants.

As such, prior approval is approved in terms of contamination risks.

(iv) flooding risks on the site,

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 (i.e. the lowest possible risk of flooding). The submitted planning statement identifies that a small section of the rear of the building that is proposed to change use is at risk of surface water flooding (1 in 1000 chance). As such, given the rear of the site is at low risk of surface water flooding (albeit at risk), it is considered appropriate to include a drainage condition to ensure that the development would not increase flood risk at the site or elsewhere.

As such, prior approval is approved in terms of flooding risk.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The occupiers of neighbouring properties have raised a number of other concerns, such as concerns regarding visual impact, impact on the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, sewage management concerns and issues with the scale of development and the potential to set a precedent for future development. However, these issues do not fall to be assessed under this prior approval application, as the prior approval process does not allow for the same full assessment as a full planning application would. As such, it is only necessary to assess the application against the details outlined in Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with all of the criteria set out within Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 and is therefore defined as permitted development. The transport and highways and noise impacts of the development and contamination and flooding risk of the site are considered to be acceptable for the reasons stated above, subject to appropriately worded planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Prior Approval Granted.