

27th June 2025

Mr S Kilmartin
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe BB7 2RA

By email only



Our ref: NRHO100

Dear Stephen,

**REFUSAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 3/2025/0095
PROPOSED NPPF 84e DWELLING 'THE GROWING HOUSE' AT HIGHER ROAD, LONGRIDGE**

Having discussed the decision with my client and their project manager, I am writing to provide the following information which we would like you to consider before we resubmit the application. This is our preferred approach in the hope that an appeal can be avoided.

The application was submitted¹ with the four design review reports produced by Places Matter during 2023. These record each stage of design development and the final output of the collaborative design review process, whereby expert, constructive, criticism of the architectural and landscape design resulted in a proposal which is judged to meet criteria i) and ii) of NPPF 84e.

We are therefore surprised by the Council's decision and perception that the proposed house will harm the Forest of Bowland National Landscape and does not meet the NPPF 84e (i) and (ii) criteria, and especially knowing that the Council did not consult the National Landscape Partnership Team or Natural England for its view, nor a suitable alternative independent landscape and architectural design expert / assessor.

We have discussed the decision with Places Matter and the following points which we wish to draw to your attention:

1. Places Matter is the only design review panel recognised by the RIBA North West.
2. Places Matter has carried out design reviews for 26 proposed NPPF 84e houses² since 2018 and only endorsed five as meeting the policy criteria. The majority of the proposals it has reviewed did not meet, and/or where not deemed capable of meeting, the exceptional architectural and landscape design standards required. This demonstrates that the NPPF policy criteria and the Places Matter design review process are extremely difficult to pass, and approval of an individual scheme cannot set a precedent and lead to a profusion or deluge of proposals, which you indicated was the Council's main concern, as each must be exceptional on its own merits.

¹ Explained at paragraph 5.12 onwards of the Planning Statement and appended

² Including previous NPPF 79e and NPPF 80e

3. Places Matter tailors the expert membership of a design review panel to suit the proposal in hand. In this case, given the location of the proposed house in the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, the panel included two landscape advisors, including the chair, whereas normally only one landscape architect is involved.
4. Places Matter recommended at the first design review, that a Landscape and Visual Appraisal Impact Assessment should be carried out to assess the impact of the proposed house on the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. The LVA was presented at the second design review and the panel members agreed with the findings.

The above points make clear that the Places Matter design review process is robust and structured to ensure that the merit of proposed NPPF 84e houses are properly assessed such that local planning authorities can trust its advice. We have asked Places Matter to comment on this letter and its response is attached.

With this in mind, we would like to arrange a meeting with you, and any colleagues, to discuss the resubmission of the planning application.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Graham Love
S&L Planning Consultants

From: Richard Tracey [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 July 2025 22:43
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Growing House

Graeme,

Thank you for sending the attached letter.

In so far as it reflects the role and history of Places Matter in assessing such propositions, and specifically this one, I would concur that it is factually accurate, to the best of my knowledge.

Following the series of Design Reviews, the Panel assessed the proposition as meeting the criteria for NPPF Paragraph 84e.

Best regards,

Richard

Richard Tracey
Panel Manager for PlacesMatter
RIBA North
21 Mann Island
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Liverpool L3 1BP

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W: www.architecture.com/placesmatter

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