

REVISED PLANNING STATEMENT
IN SUPPORT OF THE ERECTION
OF TWO DETACHED DWELLINGS
AT BOLTON FOLD FARM, ALSTON

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/1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Alh Design Services is retained by Stuart and Andrew Forshaw ('The Applicants') to progress a revised full application for the erection of 2no. rural workers dwelling and associated works ('The Proposal') at Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Preston, PR3 3BN ('The Application Site'). The planning application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council ('The Local Planning Authority') as a revised full planning application, relating to the red edge application site boundary defined by the Location Plan, and after taking into account the reasons for refusal on the application 3/2024/1029, with three conditions noted below :-

i)The proposed development would fail to accord with the local character of the surrounding area, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the street scene by way of the size, siting and design of the proposed dwellings which would be unduly prominent within the street scene, contrary to Policy DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.

ii)The proposed development would by reason of the substandard agricultural access track, number of accesses and lack of visibility splays provided would result in result in harm to highway safety, contrary to Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

iii)The proposal fails to demonstrate that appropriate assessments have been carried out to fully assess the impacts upon Great Crested Newts. Therefore, the proposal fails to adequately protect and enhance protected species and habitat contrary to Key Statement EN4 and policy DME3 of the Ribble Valley Core and the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.2. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement will look to demonstrate that the proposals accord with the provisions of the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and moreover that there are other significant material considerations which indicate that planning permission ought to be granted. In addition, the statement will seek to demonstrate that there are no technical reasons which could hinder the grant of planning permission.

/1 INTRODUCTION

1.3. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application package, which includes the following documents: -

- 1 Application Form, relevant certificates and notices;
- Drawn information: -
 - LP001 – Location Plan
 - ESP001 – Existing Site Plan
 - PSP001 – Proposed Site Plan Rev B
 - PRO001 – Proposed Plan and Elevations Dwelling 01 Rev B
 - PRO002 – Proposed Plan and Elevations Dwelling 02 Rev A
 - LSS001 – Proposed Landscaping Scheme Rev B
 - SST001 - Proposed Street scene visuals
- Planning Statement (this document);
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- UG GCN letter statement response to LPA refusal
- Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment;
- Drainage Strategy;
- Agricultural Need Assessment; and
- Highway improvements and transport statement 648-25-1A visibility splays
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

/2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is located to the south of Bolton Fold Farm, located off Alston Lane. Access to the site runs to the north where an existing field gate access can be found off the main access to Bolton Fold Farm. To the north and east of the site is Alston Dairy Ltd and to the immediate east are a cluster of existing agricultural buildings that make up Bolton Fold Farm. The wider area is characterised by agricultural land with clusters of dwellings along the roadsides.
- 2.2. The site within its wider context is illustrated below in Figure 1.

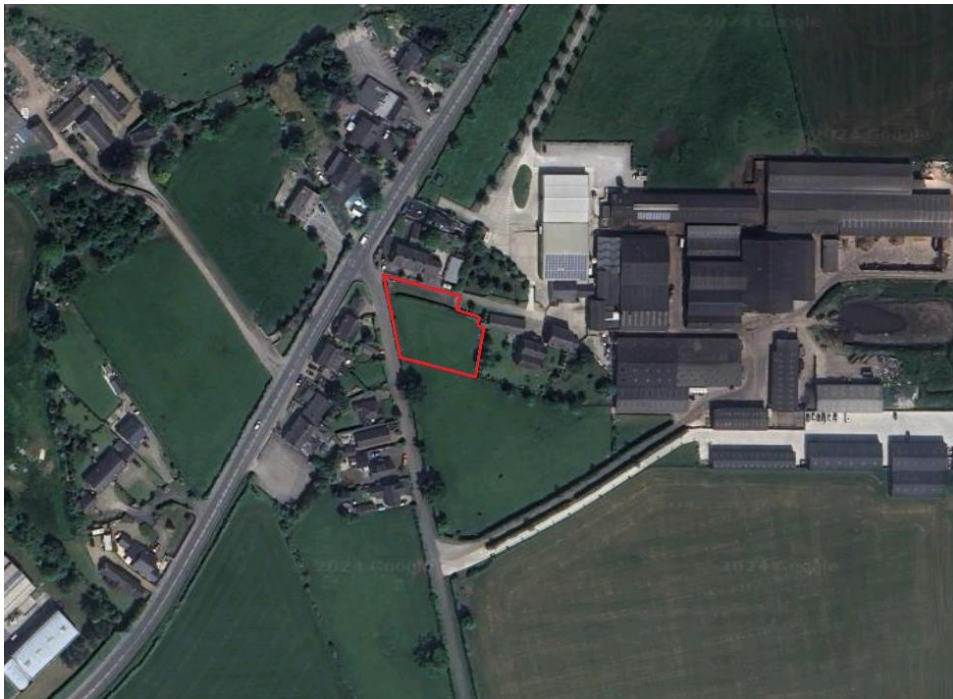


Figure 1: Aerial image of the site (edged in red) and surroundings

- 2.3. The site at present is farmland which connects to Bolton Fold Farm to the east. The site is adjacent a row of existing residential properties situated along Alston Lane.
- 2.4. The site is within the designated Open Countryside, as per the Local Plan Policy Map. There are no listed buildings or heritage assets within the site or in the local area. The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is at its lowest. There are no Tree Preservation Orders either on or in close proximity to the site.

2.5. The site lies in a sustainable location, between the settlement of Longridge to the north and Grimsargh to the south west. Bus stops are located on Preston Road within 200m of the site to the west and provide regular bus services to Longridge and to Preston City Centre via Grimsargh. The construction of significant areas of housing off Preston Road and the consequent highways improvements delivered as part of these has significantly improved wider accessibility and the quality of public transport facilities. The site is walkable from the main urban area and whilst located in the Open Countryside (as defined within the Development Plan), residents have a choice of access via sustainable modes of transport.

/3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1. A search of the Ribble Valley Borough Council online planning register has been carried out in order to understand the planning history relevant to the site and the proposed development. The relevant applications are discussed in turn below.

3.2. The following applications have been identified on site:

- **Ref. 3/2023/0206:** *Proposed single storey side extension, Approved with Conditions, Fri 27th April 2023.*
- **Ref. 3/2022/0208:** *Proposed new buildings Unit 1 and Unit 3 to provide storage of animal feed to include hay/straw and machinery. Permission Required, 18th March 2022.*
- **Ref. 3/2022/0094:** *Proposed new buildings Unit 1 and Unit 3 to provide storage of animal feed to include hay/straw and machinery. Refused, 16th February 2022.*
- **Ref. 3/2021/0090:** *Proposed new building to provide storage of animal feed to include hay/straw and also machinery storage. Permission Not Required, 19th March 2021.*
- **Ref. 3/2016/1084:** *Phase 2 additional cattle housing building. (Resubmission of application 3/2015/0621). Approved With Conditions, 14th July 2017*
- **Ref. 3/2016/0896:** *Phase 2 extension of roof covering and walls to existing earth banked silo pit. Approved With Conditions, 18th April 2017*
- **Ref.3/2016/1083:** *Phase 1 extension to existing cattle housing and reconfiguration of orientation of existing building. Resubmission of planning application 3/2015/0616. Approved With Conditions, 6th March 2017.*
- **Ref. 3/2016/0897:** *Phase 1 roof covering and walls to existing earth banked silo pit. Approved With Conditions, 5th December 2016.*

3.3. The following recently determined applications have been found in the Ribble Valley relating to rural workers dwellings and are considered relevant to the determination of this application:

- **Ref. 3/2022/1185:** *Proposed erection of a farm workers dwelling. Approved with Conditions, 24th May 2023.*
- **Ref. 3/2022/1062:** *Proposed agricultural workers dwelling and farm office over detached garage. Approved, 1st June 2023.*

- **Ref. 3/2022/0265:** *Proposed erection of a farm workers dwelling and the creation of a new access off the public highway.* Approved, 6th April 2023.

/4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposal involves the construction of 2no. agricultural workers dwellings with associated landscaping, access works and parking. The dwellings will be occupied by the Applicant Stuart and Andrew who are the two sons of the owner of the farm who currently manage the operation of the farm to ensure that it is effectively run and who deal with out of hours emergencies.
- 4.2 The dwellings will comprise 2no. detached, two storey houses with 2-4no. parking spaces per property contained within the garage as well as external parking. The ground floor will be the main living areas, with 3 bedrooms and bathrooms provided at first floor.
- 4.3 The proposed materials as demonstrated in the submitted elevation drawings include the use of natural slate, timber and stone which is highly representative of development in the surrounding area. Aluminium windows and the use of render breaks up the more traditional design to add interest into the scheme and which can be seen in many existing dwellings within the locale.
- 4.4 The existing access point off Alston Lane, which currently serves Bolton Fold Farm, will be utilised to serve the properties. There is an existing gate with access into the application site which is currently used as an agricultural field. The access will be formalised to allow for safe access and egress into the site for the occupiers as noted on the drawing number 648-25-1A by Amni Transport Consultants
- 4.5 There is a demonstrable need for the 2no. agricultural workers dwellings on site to support the operation of the business. Bolton Fold Farm extends to approximately 31.71 hectares (78.36 acres) of owner/occupied grassland and is the main farmstead where the dairy farming business is operated from. The applicant does however also farm land in the surrounding area totalling 195.49ha (483.1 acres) as set out in the accompanying Agricultural Appraisal.
- 4.6 Bolton Fold Farm is a dairy farm and the livestock comprise the following:
- 450 milking cows
 - 50 dairy cows
 - 400 dairy followers (heifers and calves)
- Total livestock numbers = 900

- 4.7 The dairy cows calve all year round and frequently require assistance, particularly first-time calves. Dairy cows often calve during the night/early morning as this is a quiet time when the dairy cows feel settled.
- 4.8 There are no dwellings situated at Bolton Fold Farm; the original farmhouse is owned and occupied by the applicant's grandparents who have no involvement in the applicant's farming business. The applicants run the farm (Stuart and Andrew) as their father (Stephen) is looking to retire. They both live remotely from the farm, in Chipping and Goosnargh respectively. The permanent residence on the farm of Stuart and Andrew would ensure they can continue to run the dairy farming business and remain employed by the family farm. The supporting Agricultural Need Assessment provides further clarification in the respect of the need for the permanent on-site presence.

/5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

"Where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

5.2 The Development Plan for the site comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (2014). Key policy documents that comprise 'material considerations' include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), and any local supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the proposal, which are considered below.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy

5.3 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014 and therefore can broadly be regarded as containing relevant and up to date policies in the consideration of this application. The relevant policies of the Core Strategy are considered below:

- Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
- Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy DMG1: General Considerations
- Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
- Policy DMG3: Transport Mobility
- Policy DMH3: Dwellings in The Open Countryside and AONB
- Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscapes Protection
- Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation

5.4 **Policy DS1: Development Strategy** states that the majority of new housing will be concentrated in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. The policy goes on to state that that development that is for identified local needs will be considered in all the boroughs settlements.

- 5.5 **Policy DS2: Presumption in Favour Of Sustainable Development** states that the council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.6 **Policy DMG1: General Considerations** assists in ensuring that development proposals are in line with overarching considerations regarding the quality of developments. The policy covers Design, Access, Amenity, Environment, Infrastructure and Others.
- 5.7 **Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations** assists in the interpretation of the Development Strategy and underpins the settlement hierarchy for the purposes of delivering sustainable development. Within the open countryside, development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting.
- 5.8 **Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility** outlines that in making decisions on proposals, the Council will attach considerable weight to the availability and adequacy of public transport and associated infrastructure to serve those moving to and from the development.
- 5.9 **Policy DMI2: Transport Considerations** outlines that new developments should be located to minimise the need for travel. Developments should also incorporate convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car. Schemes offering opportunities for more sustainable means of transport will be supported.
- 5.10 **Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB** states that development in open countryside areas will be limited to agricultural or residential development that meets an identified local need, or an appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings that is in keeping with their surroundings, and finally, for the rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings.
- 5.11 The policy states that development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need will be accepted. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied.

- 5.12 **Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection** outlines that developments should not harm important landscape or landscape features including traditional stone walls, ponds, characteristic herb rich meadows and pastures, woodlands and copses.
- 5.13 **Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation** states developers are encouraged to consider incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity where appropriate.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 5.14 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions as per Paragraph 2 of the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 5.15 The NPPF broadly defines sustainable development in Paragraph 8 as having three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental.
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.16 Additionally, Paragraph 84 states that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at their place of work in the countryside.

5.17 Similarly, Paragraph 88 states that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, which includes well designed new buildings.

/6 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The application site is located within the designated Open Countryside and the scheme proposes the erection of 2no. residential dwellings, therefore the key policy of relevance is Policy DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. Although development is not generally supported in the Open Countryside, the policy allows for development needed for the purposes of agriculture or other uses appropriate to a rural area, including the erection of agricultural workers dwellings where there is a demonstrable need. The proposed development will provide accommodation for the two managers of an existing rural business, which has been proven as necessary to support the business by the submitted Agricultural Appraisal.
- 6.2 The nature of the business is a dairy farm which is intrinsically connected with the rural area, meaning that any development to support the operation of this business must by its nature, be compliant with planning policy. The Agricultural Appraisal states that the proposed dwellings will allow two agricultural workers of the farm to be in immediate proximity which will allow for them to properly run the family farm and deal with any issues that arise out of typical operating hours.
- 6.3 Policy DMH3 states that in assessing proposals for essential workers dwellings, a functional and financial test will need to be provided. The supporting Agricultural Appraisal submitted as part of this application provides clear evidence of need of the two agricultural workers to reside on site to ensure the business is run safely and effectively. The Appraisal goes on to state that the dairy business requires a high level of 24-hour supervision to ensure proper and continuing functioning as a viable farm business. The applicants two sons, who work full time at Bolton Fold Farm but live off-site in Chipping ang Goosnargh, start work at 06:00 and often finish at 21:00. As such, it can be concluded that the business will benefit from having the two workers living on site to properly manage and supervise the large number of livestock at the farm.
- 6.4 The following questions are to be considered when assessing if a proposal meets the functional and financial test, namely:

- Is there a clearly established existing functional need?
- Does the need relate to a full-time worker or one who is primarily employed rather than a part time requirement?
- Have the unit and the agricultural activity concerned been established for at least 3 years, been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so?
- Could the functional need be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit?

6.5 These points are assessed below:

Established Functional Need

6.6 There is a clearly established functional need for the dwellings. A dairy business requires a high level of 24-hour supervision to ensure its proper and continuing functioning as a viable farming business. A high standard of animal welfare, stockmanship and supervision is required to ensure that the farming business operates effectively in terms of its financial viability and its health and safety. Further details are included in the supporting Agricultural Need Appraisal including a breakdown of all of the relevant tasks undertaken by Stuart and Andrew at the farm on a day-to-day basis, alongside problems that may arise out of hours that would need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency to avoid detrimental impacts to the farming business.

6.7 Both of the proposed occupants of the dwellings are now responsible for the management of the farm, and therefore their need to reside on site has become increasingly important. As such, there is a clear and demonstrable need for the managers to reside on site to ensure that the business can operate successfully and without any issues arising that could negatively impact the overall business. Given the size of the operation and the family nature of the business, there is a need for 2no. dwellings in this circumstance to facilitate the safe and viable operation of the business, given that a number of issues could require more than one person, or to cover periods when one of the brothers is not available. It is proving almost impossible for Stuart and Andrew to provide the level of supervision the livestock need whilst continuing to reside away from the farm. Both are currently having to sacrifice a great deal of their personal life to allow for their management of the farmstead, which cannot continue indefinitely.

Full Time Workers

- 6.8 The management of the farming business is both Stuart and Andrew's full time, sole employment and therefore the need relates to 2no. full time members of staff who are responsible for the management of the farm. For context, a calculation was done to work out the number of full-time employees required to carry out works in association with the operation of the farm and this equates to 10.87 full time workers. It is therefore considered that 2no. full time workers/management residing on site is entirely appropriate given the level of staff required to successfully operate the farm.

Financial Viability

- 6.9 Bolton Fold Farm has been in business for in excess of three years and has been profitable for at least one of those years. The farm accounts are available if the Council require to assess them, however the current position of the farm is positive and given that it is a long standing family business, it is proposed to continue operating as such for years to come.

Alternative Accommodation

- 6.10 The Agricultural Appraisal assesses whether there are any alternative buildings on site that could be utilised as dwellings or for conversion purposes, or if there are any suitable available dwellings in the surrounding area.
- 6.11 In terms of buildings available on the site, there is no farmhouse attached to the Applicant's farm. The original farmhouse has been in third party ownership for several decades. All buildings situated on Bolton Fold Farm are of modern construction and fully utilised for agricultural purposes. Therefore, no existing buildings are available or suitable for conversion into residential use. It is therefore clear that new build development on the site is the only possible way to provide the accommodation needed.
- 6.12 A search of available properties within a 1-mile radius using the Rightmove Best Price Guide provides a range of properties between £235,000 - £589,000, which is outside the budget of Stuart and Andrew as agricultural workers. Notwithstanding a property being available and within an affordable budget, the professional opinion of the author of the Agricultural Assessment is that Stuart and Andrew need to reside at Bolton Fold Farm to properly manage and supervise the large number of livestock at the farm. Continuing to live away from the

farm is not a long-term or viable option for either Stuart and Andrew or an agricultural business of this nature.

- 6.13 It is considered that the proposed dwellings are in a suitable location given that they are within close proximity to the farmstead and existing agricultural buildings, meaning that the occupiers will be in close proximity to the farm to allow them quick access. Alongside this, the site fronts Alston Lane which also features a number of dwellings opposite and therefore the surrounding area is residential in character and 2no. properties in this location will not appear out of place. Given that the scheme meets the functional and financial test as set out in the Agricultural Assessment, and the siting of the proposed properties is acceptable, the scheme is considered to accord with the provisions of Policy DMH3 of the Core Strategy.
- 6.14 According to Policy DMG2, development outside the designated settlement area must satisfy at least one criterion listed. In this instance, the proposed development complies with the *development required for forestry or agriculture* clause. In principle then, the proposed development aligns with this policy.
- 6.15 Key Statement DS1 states that the majority of new housing development will be concentrated in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. However, the policy goes on to state that development that is for identified local needs will be considered in all settlements. The local need development has been demonstrated through the Agricultural Appraisal which shows the need for the proposal in this location which cannot be satisfied anywhere else within the Borough, thus this policy is complied with.
- 6.16 Considering the Framework as a whole, it is important to note that Paragraph 7 of the NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At Paragraph 8 it is stated that: "*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)*".
- 6.17 The first objective is with regards to the economy, where the planning system should help to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. The second objective is a social objective whereby the planning

system should help to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing. Finally, an environmental objective, whereby the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and minimising waste and pollution.

- 6.18 Firstly, in terms of economic benefit, the proposal would, during construction of the development, make a valuable contribution to the local economy, both directly through the employment of local people and companies and indirectly through the supply chain. The proposed dwelling would also enable the two agricultural workers to live on site 24 hours a day, ensuring they are able to support the business on site and enable it to grow. This will provide a valuable contribution to the local rural economy.
- 6.19 In terms of social benefit, the proposed development would result in the creation of a high-quality environment for the applicant. The proposal would also allow for the two workers to live on site and ensure the business is kept safe and overcome issues that they are currently having with the management of the business affecting their ability to enjoy their personal lives which cannot continue indefinitely.
- 6.20 The third objective relates to the environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and minimising waste and pollution. The supporting ecological surveys demonstrate that the proposal will provide a biodiversity net gain. The proposed development therefore meets the environmental aims of sustainable development.
- 6.21 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would constitute sustainable development in the context of the NPPF and the relevant policies of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the above analysis would also suggest the proposals can be viewed positively in the context of the adopted Development Plan with regards to the principle of development.

Design and Technical Considerations

Design

- 6.22 Policy DMG1 states that all developments must be of a high standard of building design, be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses and use sustainable construction techniques where possible.
- 6.23 The properties have been designed to be in keeping with the surrounding area, in terms of the external appearance replicating the design of similar properties in the area. The layout of the proposal has been designed for Stuart and Andrew to both create a family home and a space which can support the dairy business. The choice of materials is reflective of the area, and the orientation of the proposed properties facing onto the adjacent existing properties is representative of comparable development in the area. The scheme has been carefully designed to ensure it respects the rural character of the area whilst providing high quality family homes for the brothers. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal will comply with Policy DMG1.

Tress and Ecology

- 6.24 Policy DME2 and DME3 states that development proposals should seek to enhance the local landscape and protect the existing landscape features such as woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees. Additionally, Policy DME3 states that developers are encouraged to consider incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity where appropriate.
- 6.25 The scheme has been assessed in terms of ecological impacts through the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which concluded that further surveys should be undertaken with respect to Great Crested Newts. Further surveys were undertaken, which resulted in a negative result, confirming the absence of GCN. On that basis, there is not considered to be any negative impacts on protected species as a result of the proposed development.
- 6.26 With respect to the requirement to provide at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on site, the application is proceeding on the basis that the development is exempt from the obligation due to the development constituting self-build development. The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 defines such dwellings as:

"The building or completion by—

(a) individuals,

(b) associations of individuals, or

(c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals,

of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals.

- 6.27 It is understood that with regard to regular market housing that is applied for as a self-house build dwelling that the LPA require applicants to be part of the self-build register and demonstrate a local connection. In this instance it is not necessary for the applicant's to go through that process. This is on the basis the local connection is evident in that they operate the farming business from the site and equally there is no need to be on the self build register as the case put forward is that the applicants need to reside on site and hence sites elsewhere would not be considered suitable.
- 6.28 Consequently, not only are the proposals exempt from the aforementioned BNG requirements but moreover the submission constitutes self-build development, which the LPA have a duty to grant sufficient consents to meet demand.

Highways

- 6.29 Key Statement DMI2 is in relation to traffic and highways safety. The policy requires that all development should be located to minimise the need for travel and that it should also incorporate good access by foot and cycle.
- 6.30 The proposal involves the construction of two agricultural workers dwellings. As a result, occupants will not have to commute to work because they will be living on-site. There will be limited trips associated with general comings and goings for personal reasons, as there would be with any dwelling. Therefore, it is expected that the proposed development will have little impact on the local roadway network.

The Planning Balance/ Summary

- 6.31 The principle of residential development is deemed acceptable, with supporting information, particularly the Agricultural Appraisal, demonstrating an identified need for 2no. agricultural workers dwellings at Bolton Fold Farm to ensure the business can continue to operate. The criteria relating to the functional and financial tests used to assess the need for agricultural workers dwellings have been met as such, the development accords with DMH3 and DMG2.

- 6.32 The development would utilise an existing safe access point onto Alston Lane. The supporting plans demonstrate the dwellings can be sited and designed appropriately as to respect the character and appearance of the local area, whilst providing adequate levels of amenity for future residents in with the Core Strategy.
- 6.33 Taking the above into account, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable and there are no material considerations which indicate otherwise. Moreover, it is clear that in addition to being acceptable in principle there are also no technical matters which would preclude the granting of planning permission. The social, economic and environmental benefits of the proposals in terms of sustaining an existing farming business weigh further in favour of the proposal.

/7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 ALH DESIGN SERVICES is retained by Stuart and Andrew Forshaw to progress a revised full planning application on land associated with Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Preston, PR3 3BN for the erection of 2no. rural workers dwellings and associated works.
- 7.2 The site represents an appropriate location for 2no. rural workers dwellings. The submitted evidence, particularly the Agricultural Assessment has demonstrated the need for the dwellings to ensure the safe and efficient running of the farm into the future in line with the requirements of the Core Strategy. There are no material considerations which would preclude the granting of planning permission, whilst the social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme weigh in favour in the planning balance.
- 7.3 There are also no technical constraints which would preclude the development of this site for residential use. Given the above, the proposed development is considered acceptable and should be approved without delay to support the successful continued operation of Bolton Fold Farm.