

Nicola Hopkins
Director of Economic Development and Planning
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
CLITHEROE
BB7 2RA

Phone: 
Email: 
Your ref: 3/2026/0094-0095
Our ref: 3_2026_0094-0095-LCC
Date: 13th March 2026

FAO M Cullen

Dear Ms Hopkins,

Planning and Listed Building Applications 3/2026/0094 and 0095: Proposed conversion of 2no. curtilage listed barns (Main Barn/Barn 2) to create 2no. dwellings and the re-building of a smaller stone barn (Barn 3) for ancillary use (re-built for safety/practicality).

Barns at Winkley Hall Farm, Whalley Road, Hurst Green BB7 9PN

Introduction

The above applications are accompanied by an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA, Greenlane Archaeology 2025), a Heritage Statement (HS, C J O'Flaherty 2025), and a Structural Survey (SS, Reid Jones 2026). It is noted that the previous planning application (3/2024/0519) and its associated planning appeal have confirmed that the buildings proposed for change are considered to be 'curtilage listed' and it is clear that the site and buildings are of heritage significance. The Lancashire Historic Environment Record (LHER) has separate entries for the Listed farmhouse and cottage and the adjacent former mill pond, as well as for the bark mill and tan yard shown on the OS 1:10,560 mapping of 1848 (sheet Lancashire 55).

Historical Notes and Discussion

The Winkley or Winckley Hall estate (both spellings are used) is linked to the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, the 'Knights Hospitallers', in the 13th century, having been originally donated by and subsequently let out to members of a local family named Winkley. That religious ownership seems to have persisted, as in the will of Anthony Winkley dated 1566 it is referred to as "*Winkley Hall in Aighton and 30 acres of land, held of the queen as of the late monastery of St. John of Jerusalem in England*" (Victoria County History of Lancaster, 1912, Vol.7 pp.13-4). The 16th century hall was subsequently replaced by the present hall buildings.

The earliest mapping showing any detail of the site found by the DBA is dated to 1733, and a second plan of 1774 was also found. The latter map, the OS 1:10,560 map of 1848 and a further estate map of 1878 (reproduced in the DBA, p.9) show the pond to the immediate west of the buildings as a sharply angled 'C'. It is noted in the LHER that this shape is strongly reminiscent of the western side of a moat which could have

Lancashire County Council
PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD



formerly surrounded the hall site, but no moat or similar defensive work is mentioned by other sources found by the DBA. This may mean that the eastern part of the moat had long been lost under the developing hall and farm site, or that the shape of the pond is just a coincidence. This water body is named as a 'mill pond' on the 1848 mapping and at that time is likely to have been a part of the tanning operation at Winkley. It is tempting to suggest it as the source of water to power the 'Bark Mill' – tannin from ground-up bark was a staple in the tanning process – also named on the map, even though the levels suggest only a limited fall between pond and mill. It is probable, although not certain, that the bark mill machinery was located within what is known in this application as the 'main barn', and the Heritage Statement certainly assumes that this was the case (section 2.4). It identifies some features within the northern aisle of the barn as possibly associated with the milling mechanisms (Figures 15 and 16) and a feature on the north wall as a possible water inlet/outlet (Figure 8). An alternative power source for the mill, and one which would also be supported by the features noted in the HS, would be a horse engine or sweep mill, situated in an external (and now demolished) horse engine house represented by the 'northern projection' to the main barn seen on HS Figure 25. The tan yard itself would also have required copious amounts of water, and it may be that the mill pond reference is a generic link to these industrial processes.

It is clear, however, that the main barn was not a purpose-built mill and any industrial use would have been an adaption of this substantial agricultural building. The HS suggests that it may have been of later 18th or early 19th century origin, but the form of the internal structural timbers would suggest to us an earlier date. In plan the barn has a main floor and a flanking aisle to the north under a continuous roof, but, unusually, that aisle is only partly separated from the main space by a stone wall, as three bays at the west end are open with the roof and main truss ends being supported here by two massive wooden posts (HS Figures 12-14; SS section 3.0, 'Barn 1 – Internal' and Photo 14). These aisle posts are more commonly seen in fully open and timber-framed aisled barns of the 16th-17th centuries, and it is not a coincidence that most Lancashire examples occur in this part of the county. These particular posts use natural forks at their top ends to provide bracing, rather than separate jointed timbers, a feature we have not noted previously in Lancashire, and are thus even more significant.

Other early historical features noted in the main barn but not necessarily highlighted in the reports are two re-used moulded stone window frames in the eastern gable end (HS Figure 9).

Barn 2 appears to be later in date than the main barn, but we would not argue with the suggested 18th century date for the roof (HS section 2.5) and would also agree with the suggestion that the roof and walls of this building have been raised at a later date to facilitate the formation of a loft. Images of the roof timbers in the Structural Survey suggest that the roof timbers in this building may well have incised assembly marks.

Finally, Barn 3 is the smallest, most recent, and least significant of the stone buildings impacted by the proposals. We would agree that it appears to have functioned as a pigsty with storage over and may well date to the earlier 19th century. It is not clear if the external gable steps are original to the building, or are an addition, but the incorporation of a metal fuel tank into them is unusual and presumably of 20th century

date. Whilst it would appear possible to repair and refurbish this structure, we would appreciate that this is unlikely to be cost-effective.

Comment on Documents Supplied

It should be particularly noted that the 'plans as existing' provided with the application are inaccurate in respect of the part walled and part timber aisle post division between the main space and northern aisle in the main barn noted above, nor are the aisle posts shown in the 'plans as proposed'. These omissions will need to be addressed, and appropriate details submitted including at least one long section of the main barn and two cross sections (both 'as existing' and 'as proposed') should be provided, showing the existing structures and how they are impacted by the proposals. For barn 2 it is also not clear how the proposed changes to the upper floors will impact the extant roof structure and again at least one long section and a cross section (as existing and as proposed) showing the roof structure should be submitted. This needs to be done prior to a decision being reached, so that the council and its conservation advisors will be sure of what alterations are being proposed and how these will impact the historic roof structures and the main barn aisle posts.

We would also stress that whilst we appreciate that the 'insect decay' and 'rot' noted in the SS report needs to be further investigated by an appropriate specialist with experience of working on heritage buildings, the timbers must be fully recorded (below) before any de-frassing or other destructive investigation or treatment is undertaken. De-frassing in particular is damaging to historic woodwork and is often structurally unnecessary (as in dry conditions insects generally only attack former sapwood leaving very solid heart timber). It is likely to remove important features such as evidence of how the timbers were cut, as well as historic graffiti and 'assembly marks' on the roof timbers, such as the engraved 'III' seen on the queen post and tie beam in SS photo 25.

Recommendations

We would not object in principle to the proposed conversion works and accept that the best way of protecting historic buildings is to keep them in appropriate use, but must recommend further details are supplied by the applicants as noted above. Some conditions will also need to be applied to protect and record the site, including a programme of archaeological works to mitigate the inevitable impacts on the heritage value of the site.

As well as the amended drawings noted above, more details need to be provided setting out how the repairs and alterations are to be undertaken and their extent, showing that this will be achieved without the removal of the (possibly unique) aisle posts or of significant amounts of the structural timberwork of the roofs, and without excessive demolition and rebuilding of the stonework. The method statement for these works should include a commitment to retaining as much of the structural timberwork as is possible, with repairs and reinforcement being undertaken rather than replacement. Details of any new foundation works and floor slabs will be necessary, along with details of roof surface repairs, internal and external woodwork, drainage, rainwater goods, etc. The council and their conservation advisors may wish to see some or all these details prior to considering their decision, or by the application of suitable conditions on any consents.



The archaeological mitigation works should include two main elements. The first element, which needs to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity and certainly before any defrassing or other works to the timbers, is a comprehensive record of the buildings as existing. This should be at Level 3 for the main barn and barn 2, and Level 2 for barn 3. Particular attention should be given to recording and interpreting the structural timbers in the main barn and barn 2 and a professional assessment of their potential for dendrochronological dating should be undertaken. Should this show that there is a reasonable potential for obtaining dates from the timbers, a programme of such dating should also be undertaken. Also of importance is recording of any re-used early stonework and any evidence for the operation of the former bark mill.

The second element should be a scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording undertaken during any significant excavation required during the works, whether for underpinning, lifting and/or replacement of floor or yard slabs, the provision of services and landscaping.

These archaeological works can be required by planning conditions. The following wording is suggested:

1 - Building Recording:

Condition: No works to the application buildings, including any clearance, demolition or preparation works (including timber defrassing) shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological building recording as set out in '*Understanding Historic Buildings*' (Historic England 2016).

The main barn and barn 2 should be recorded to 'Level 3', whilst barn 3 should be recorded to 'Level 2'. This recording must be carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor to the standards set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The recording should be accompanied by an appropriate professional assessment of the suitability of the structural timbers in the main barn and barn 2 for dendrochronological dating. Should, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority and its advisors, the timbers be considered suitable for such dating, an appropriate programme of dating should be commissioned. These works shall result in the compilation and deposition of a formal report or reports on the works undertaken and the results obtained. A digital copy of the report shall be placed in the Lancashire Historic Environment Record prior to the first occupation of the dwellings consented or by another date agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure and safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the buildings/site.

Note: Relevant archaeological standards and lists of potential contractors can be found on the ClfA web pages: <http://www.archaeologists.net> and the BAJR Directory: <http://www.bajr.org/whoseWho/>. '*Understanding Historic Buildings*'



can be accessed online at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/>.

2 - Monitoring and Recording:

Condition: No excavation or ground disturbance works on the application site, including any required for clearance/demolition, site preparation, compounds, services, landscaping, etc. shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording works, to the standards and guidance set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists as an integral part of the groundworks required for the development. The monitoring and recording should be undertaken during any significant excavation required during the works, including underpinning and other foundation works, lifting and/or replacement of floor or yard slabs, and the provision of services and landscaping. These works must be carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor and in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall include a contingency plan for the unexpected discovery of complex, extensive or particularly significant remains. The work shall result in the compilation of a formal report on the works undertaken and the results obtained and include the deposition of a copy of the report with the Historic Environment Record prior to the first occupation of the dwellings consented or by another date agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure and safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the buildings/site.

Note: Relevant archaeological standards and lists of potential contractors can be found on the ClfA web pages: <http://www.archaeologists.net> and the BAJR Directory: <http://www.bajr.org/whoseWho/>.

This is in accordance with National Planning Policy (MoHCLG 2024) paragraph 218: *"Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible [Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository]"*.

Yours sincerely

Peter Iles

Planning Officer (Archaeology), Historic Environment Team

