

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

For the Conversion of an Existing Garage into a new Dwelling house at
Ridings Cottage
Whalley Old Road
Billington
Clitheroe
BB7 9JF



Date: March 2026
Job ref: 7129

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Sunderland Peacock Architects on behalf of Clare Brown in support of a planning application for the conversion of an existing detached garage into a single residential dwelling at Ridings Cottage, Whalley Old Road, Billington.

The proposal seeks to re-use an existing building within the site curtilage, maintaining its form and appearance while providing a new residential home. The development has been carefully considered in the context of local and national planning policy, particularly in relation to development within the Green Belt.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings, including proposed plans and elevations:

- 7129-L01 (A3) Location Plan
- 7129-S01 (A3) Site Plan
- 7129-E01 (A1) Existing Plans and Elevations
- 7129-P01 (A1) Proposed Plans, Elevations and Section A-A

Site

The site forms part of Ridings Cottage and is accessed directly from Whalley Old Road. It comprises an existing dwelling, associated outbuildings, and a detached three-storey garage. The surrounding area is characterised by rural residential properties, natural landscaping, and traditional stone-built structures.

The existing garage is built from natural reclaimed stone with a slate roof and timber windows and doors. Internally, it comprises of masonry wall construction across all three of its levels.

The site slopes gently across its length, with established vegetation and boundary walls defining the curtilage. The existing access and parking arrangements to Riding cottage are well established and will remain unchanged.

Biodiversity

We believe the proposed alterations are not applicable with the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement as it falls below the de minimis threshold. The new parking comprises a small-scale drive less than 25 square metres and does not result in the loss or degradation of any priority habitat within the application site. As such, in accordance with current regulations, the proposal does not trigger the requirement to deliver biodiversity net gain.



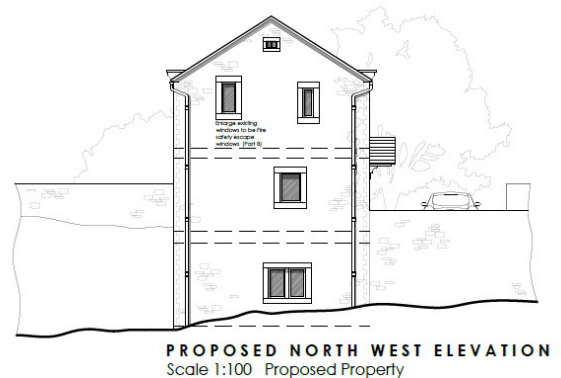
Location Plan

The brief is to convert the existing garage into a functional and well-proportioned family dwelling while retaining the full character and integrity of the original structure.

Size and Scale

The building will remain unchanged in its external dimensions, with a maximum height of 9M from the north west elevation and a footprint of 10m by 6m. The proposal utilises the existing three-storey form to accommodate three bedrooms, study / home office, two en-suites, a bathroom, lounge and kitchen / dining accommodation.

No extensions are proposed, ensuring the scale and massing remain consistent with the existing structure preserving the openness of the Green Belt.



Proposed elevations



All existing openings will be utilised.

Materials

All existing materials will be retained, including natural random stone walls, slate roof tiles and timber windows and doors. New elements will match the existing palette, including the use of stone for any new boundary and retaining walls for the parking area. New timber windows will be installed to comply with fire safety requirements and matching window designs will be used. One gable window at first floor to also be widened to comply with Approved Document B, means of escape.

Roof Design

The existing pitched roof will remain unaltered, retaining its form, materials, and visual presence. No additional roof structures or alterations are proposed.

Appearance / Style

The proposal adopts a conservation-led approach, retaining the existing openings and overall appearance of the building. A new glazed feature door will be introduced within the existing garage opening on the southeast elevation, providing a contemporary yet sympathetic intervention.

Opaque glazing will be used at first floor on the South West elevation to maintain privacy between the proposed dwelling and Ridings Cottage. Overall, there will be no visual impact from the conversion, fully preserving the established character of the building and its surroundings.

Scale / Massing

The scale and massing remain entirely unchanged, as no extensions or alterations to the building envelope are proposed. A small parking area will be constructed in the garden of the new home using materials that match the existing home (all in line with pre-application advice). The development represents a re-use of an existing structure, ensuring no additional impact on the surrounding landscape or Green Belt openness.

Materials

The material strategy reinforces the existing character of the building. External walls will remain as natural stone, with timber windows and doors retained or replaced on a like-for-like basis. Roof coverings will remain as reclaimed stone slate.

Rainwater goods will remain undisturbed. Any new stone boundary wall will be constructed to match the height and materials of the existing wall, ensuring continuity across the site.



A large mature garden separates the proposed garage conversion and Ridings Cottage

Access

Access to the site will remain unchanged, utilising the existing driveway from Whalley Old Road. Parking for the proposed dwelling will be accommodated by 1no. space within the existing garden curtilage and 1no. space adjacent to the existing parking for Ridings Cottage (all as agreed with LCC Highways during pre-application advice). All as illustrated upon SPA drawing ref: 7129-P01.

The main entrance to the dwelling will be located on the upper ground floor on the South West elevation, using the existing access point.

Internally, the layout has been designed to provide safe and efficient circulation across all levels. Fire safety has been carefully considered, with 1no. gable window enlarged where necessary to meet escape requirements, and all bedrooms provided with compliant sized escape window openings.

Surface water drainage will continue to discharge as existing to soakaway, with no alterations from how it is now. A new Marsh Ensign 6-person package sewage treatment plant will be installed, along with a new manhole connection, to serve that of the new dwelling (located within the residential curtilage of the proposed new dwelling).

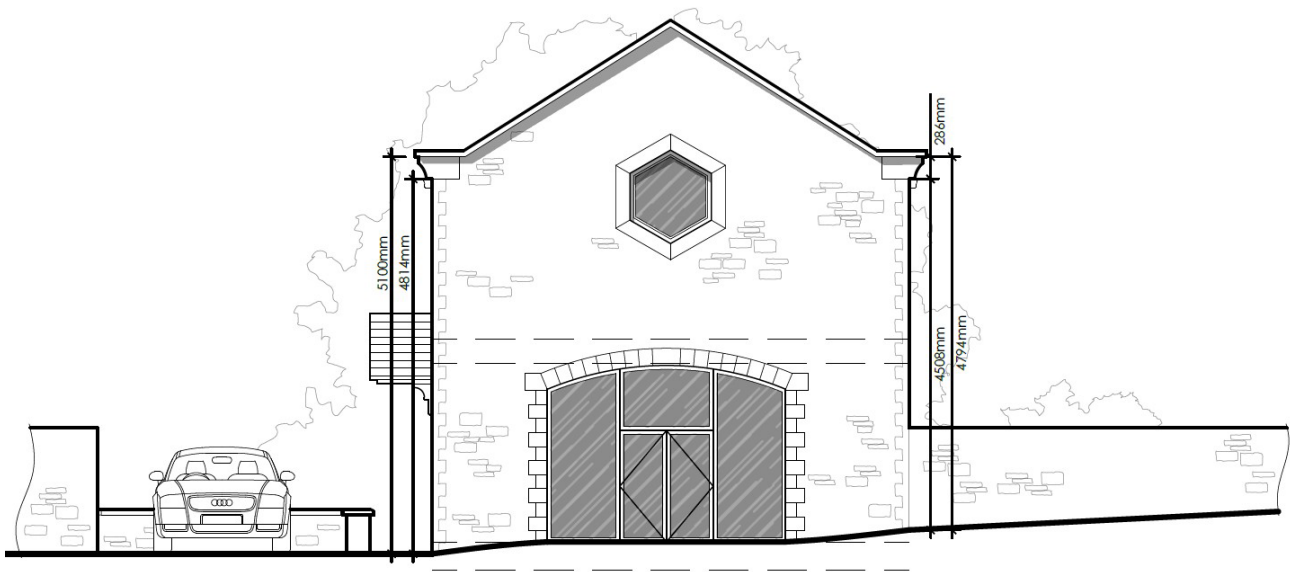
Highway and Access Improvements

As part of the development, a series of highway and access improvements have been incorporated to ensure safe and suitable access to the site in line with LCC Highways' pre-application advice). The junction area between the private access track and Whalley Old Road has been upgraded through the introduction of a hard-paved surface extending a minimum of 5 metres back from the carriageway edge. This measure prevents loose material from being displaced onto the public highway, reducing potential hazards for road users.

To improve visibility at the junction, vegetation within the southern verge will be carefully managed. Low-level vegetation within the first 2 metres from the carriageway edge will be cut back and maintained at a maximum height of 0.9 metres above carriageway level, while higher growth will be removed up to 3 metres above ground level. These works ensure clear sightlines for vehicles entering and exiting the site, particularly in seasonal conditions where vegetation growth may otherwise restrict visibility.

Internally, the access arrangement has been designed to achieve appropriate visibility splays. A 45-degree visibility splay will be provided at the point where the parking area meets the private access track, measured 3 metres back from the track edge. This allows drivers to safely observe pedestrians, including users of the adjacent Public Right of Way, and other vehicles before manoeuvring.

Collectively, these measures enhance highway safety and ensure the development integrates appropriately with the existing road network.



Conclusion

The proposed development represents a considered and sustainable re-use of an existing building within the Green Belt. In accordance with NPPF Paragraph 154, the re-use of permanent and substantial buildings is not inappropriate development, and this proposal fully complies with that guidance.

By retaining the existing building's form, materials, and visual character, the scheme ensures that there is no adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the wider landscape. The absence of extensions further reinforces this position.

The design approach preserves the architectural integrity of the structure while delivering a high-quality residential environment. Privacy has been carefully managed, and all parking and access requirements have been accommodated and addressed.

Overall, the proposal offers a sensitive and appropriate conversion that enhances the building's usability, contributes positively to the site, and aligns with both local and national planning policies.