

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	EP	Date:	10/09/2026	Manager:	LH	Date:	11/9/26
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Application Ref:	2026/0333			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	21/08/2026	Site Notice:	21/08/2026	
Officer:	EP			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Proposed change of use of attached barn to provide extended living accommodation.
Site Address/Location:	Moor Close Farm Whytha Lane Rimington BB7 4EQ

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No comments received.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	NA

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No comments received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy:

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMH5: Residential and Curtilage Extensions

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

No recent planning history.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to a detached farmhouse property within adjoining barn in Rimington, accessed via Wytha lane. The surrounding area is residential and agricultural in nature and the site does not benefit from any specific designations.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks consent for the conversion of an existing attached barn to provide additional living space.

Principle of Development:

The site is not located within a defined settlement and Policy DMG2 therefore applies.

Policy DMG2 requires development within the Tier 2 villages and outside the defined settlement areas to meet at least one of six considerations which are listed as below:

1. The development should be essential to the local economy or social well-being of the area.
2. The development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture.
3. The development is for local needs housing which meets an identified need and is secured as such.
4. The development is for small scale tourism or recreational developments appropriate to a rural area.
5. The development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where a local need or benefit can be demonstrated.
6. The development is compatible with the enterprise zone designation.

Whilst none of the criteria within Policy DMG2 relates to the conversion of an existing barn into additional living accommodation (rather than a new dwelling), Policy DMH4 is also of some relevance as the proposal would result in the conversion of an existing agricultural barn to residential accommodation.

Policy DMH4 which is for the conversion of barns and other buildings to dwellings states that:

Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where:

1. the building is not isolated in the landscape, i.e. it is within a defined settlement or forms part of an already group of buildings, and
2. there need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure, and
3. there would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservations interests, and
4. there would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy, and
5. the proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.
6. that any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or, if this is not possible, then any loss adequately mitigated.

The building to be converted must:

1. be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alternation, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building. The council will require a structural survey to be submitted with all planning application of this nature. this should include plans of any rebuilding that is proposed;
2. be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building, and
3. the character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting, and
4. the building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise.

The Ribble Valley Core Strategy notes that the re-use of existing rural buildings provides an important opportunity to preserve buildings that contribute to the areas character and setting, can usefully provide a housing resource and promote sustainability. Whilst the building would not result in a separate dwelling, it would enhance the existing living arrangements at the property.

The building in question is not isolated within the landscape, given that it adjoins the existing property. In addition, any new utilities would connect to existing provisions at Moor Close Farm. The reuse of the barn would not result in a detrimental effect on the rural economy.

A structural survey has been submitted which demonstrates that the building is capable of conversion without the need for extensive building or major alteration.

As such, it is considered that the conversion aligns with the relevant policies and would be appropriate in principle.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

The application dwelling is positioned within a large plot away from any neighbouring receptors. As such, no adverse impact to residential amenity is expected resultant.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

The proposed development involves the change of use of an existing attached barn to create additional living space. The dwelling itself is located down an access track and does not host a visually prominent position within the street scene. However, there is a public right of way access that runs adjacent to the property form which some views of the dwelling are afforded.

There are no extensions proposed that would change the fabric or linear formation of the barn itself. In respect to window openings, there are several changes proposed. There will be one new opening in the east elevation of the barn, this is modest in size and reflects the vernacular of the existing barn. To the north elevation, an existing window opening will be enlarged to accommodate a new access door. This alteration is modest and given it utilises an existing opening, is not considered to be of harm to the character of the barn. There are also three, small barn style roof lights proposed in the northern roof slope of the barn. These are small and are typical for a barn building of this nature and therefore integrate sufficiently. The western elevation features a garage door opening, which will be enlarged slightly to accommodate the width of this elevation. Again, this is a modest alteration and does not cause concern from a visual amenity perspective. To the south, the existing barn openings will be retained and replaced with glazing.

The existing roof is corrugated sheet metal; this will be replaced with a slate roof. This is considered an appropriate material choice for a property with this traditional character. All glazing will be timber framed to reflect the character of the barn and farmhouse.

The proposed alterations to the barn itself are modest and it is not considered they would result in the loss of traditional form or character. As such, the proposal is acceptable from a visual perspective.

Highways and Parking:

No highways implications identified.

Landscape/Ecology:

Bats.

The barn has been confirmed to support a whiskered bat roost. Whiskered bat day roosts within buildings are less common in east Lancashire as compared to pipistrelle species and brown long-eared bats; however, such roosts are considered to be of relatively low conservation significance and good practice working measures (under licence) can be easily applied to mitigate any potential impacts to such roosts.

The Natural England licence application will not require the completion of a Reasoned Statement and therefore, information relating to two of the three licensing tests (overriding public interest and satisfactory alternatives) is not required. Albeit the Council is satisfied that if these tests were to be applied the proposal would satisfy them in light of the planning assessment made above. The third test does apply which states

‘The action will not be detrimental to maintaining the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range’.

Appropriate compensation can be secured as part of the license / a planning condition. Accordingly, as the relevant tests are capable of being met, there is a reasonable prospect that NE would grant a licence for this development. The acquisition of a Natural England Licence as well as incorporation of the compensatory measures referred to within the report have been secured by way of appropriate planning conditions.

Biodiversity.

The development is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement as it is subject to the de minimis exception.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning consent be granted subject to the imposition of conditions.