Lean to Cow Cubicle at Bolton Fold Farm,

Alston Lane
Alston,
Nr Longridge
Lancashire
PR3 3BN

FRA
May 2026

FRA Summary

Lean-to Cow Cubicle at Bolton Fold Farm, Alston, Nr Longridge, Lancs, PR3 3BN

Below is a preliminary desktop-style Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) summary for Bolton Fold Farm at Alston Lane, Alston, Longridge PR3 3BN. This is **not** a certified engineering FRA suitable for planning submission, but it follows Environment Agency and planning guidance structure and should help for feasibility, planning discussions, or due diligence.

Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment

Site

Bolton Fold Farm
Alston Lane, Alston, Longridge, Lancashire PR3 3BN

1. Purpose of Assessment

This assessment reviews potential flood risks affecting the site and considers:

- River (fluvial) flooding
- Surface water flooding
- Groundwater flooding
- Sewer/drainage flooding
- Reservoir flooding
- Climate change impacts
- Site drainage and mitigation considerations

The report is based on publicly available mapping, planning records, Environment Agency guidance, and local authority planning information.

2. Site Description

The site is an operational agricultural holding located off Alston Lane near Longridge in the Ribble Valley district of Lancashire. Existing development includes:

- Agricultural buildings
- Farm access tracks
- Open grazing/agricultural land
- Existing drainage ditches and agricultural runoff systems

Recent planning records show agricultural and residential-related applications associated with the farm.

The surrounding landscape is predominantly rural with gently undulating topography typical of the Longridge area.

3. Flood Risk Policy Context

The assessment has regard to:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Environment Agency Flood Risk Standing Advice
- Ribble Valley Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Government guidance states that a site-specific FRA is generally required where:

- Development lies within Flood Zone 2 or 3
- The site exceeds 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1
- Surface water flood risk exists
- Vulnerability increases through development proposals

4. Flood Risk Sources

4.1 Fluvial (River) Flood Risk

Preliminary Findings

Based on available mapping and the absence of major main rivers immediately adjacent to the core farmstead:

- The principal developed area of the farm is likely within **Flood Zone 1** (low probability).
- Flood Zone 1 means land having less than 0.1% annual probability of river flooding.

However:

- Agricultural fields and low-lying land nearby may experience localised overland flow or ordinary watercourse flooding during extreme rainfall.
- Small unnamed drains, ditches, and agricultural watercourses may present local flood pathways.

No major Environment Agency main river appears to cross the core farmyard area from available public records.

Risk Rating

Low to Moderate

Commentary

Although the formal fluvial risk appears relatively low, rural agricultural sites can experience:

- rapid runoff from saturated fields,
- ditch overtopping,
- culvert blockage,
- local ponding.

Climate change will increase rainfall intensity and could elevate future risk.

4.2 Surface Water Flooding

Key Consideration

This is likely the most relevant flood mechanism for the site.

Rural Lancashire locations with:

- compacted agricultural ground,
- sloping terrain,
- heavy rainfall events,
  can experience significant surface runoff.

The Environment Agency notes that even Flood Zone 1 sites can still be at risk from surface water flooding.

Potential risks include:

- runoff from higher agricultural land,
- exceedance of farm drainage systems,
- ponding in yard areas,
- highway runoff from Alston Lane.

Risk Rating

Moderate

Likely Characteristics

- Short-duration intense rainfall events
- Temporary standing water
- Local drainage surcharge
- Flooding of access routes rather than buildings themselves

4.3 Groundwater Flooding

The area's geology and rural setting suggest groundwater emergence may occur seasonally during prolonged wet periods.

However:

- no significant recorded groundwater flooding information has been identified in publicly available planning records,
- risk appears secondary compared with surface water.

Risk Rating

Low to Moderate

4.4 Sewer and Drainage Flooding

The rural location means:

- foul drainage may rely partly on private systems/septic arrangements,
- highway drainage infrastructure may be limited,
- agricultural drainage systems are important to flood management.

Blocked culverts or poorly maintained agricultural drains could materially increase local flood risk.

Risk Rating

Moderate

4.5 Reservoir Flooding

No significant reservoir inundation concern has been identified from available public information.

Risk Rating

Low

5. Historical Flooding

No clear evidence of significant historic flooding affecting the principal farmstead has been identified in publicly available planning records.

However:

- absence of recorded flooding does not eliminate future flood risk,

- Environment Agency and planning guidance both emphasise that flood risk mapping is predictive rather than purely historical.

6. Climate Change Considerations

Climate projections for North West England indicate:

- more intense rainfall events,
- wetter winters,
- increased surface water runoff,
- higher probability of drainage exceedance.

Future development at the site should therefore include:

- sustainable drainage systems (SuDS),
- attenuation storage,
- permeable surfaces where feasible,
- controlled discharge rates.

7. Development Constraints

Potential planning and flood-risk constraints include:

Constraint	Potential Impact
Surface water runoff	May require attenuation and SuDS
Agricultural drainage ditches	May require easements and maintenance
Access flooding	Emergency access routes may need assessment
Increased impermeable area	Could require runoff reduction measures
Climate change allowances	Finished floor levels may need raising

8. Recommended Mitigation Measures

For any future residential or commercial development, the following are recommended:

Site Drainage

- Permeable paving
- Swales and filter drains
- Attenuation tanks/ponds
- Controlled outfall rates

Finished Floor Levels

- Set above surrounding ground levels

- Include freeboard allowance

Maintenance

- Routine ditch and culvert inspection
- Agricultural drainage management plan

Exceedance Planning

- Overland flow routing away from buildings
- Safe access/egress routes during storm events

9. Overall Flood Risk Conclusion

Flood Source	Risk Level
River flooding	Low
Surface water flooding	Moderate
Groundwater flooding	Low–Moderate
Sewer/drainage flooding	Moderate
Reservoir flooding	Low

Overall Assessment

The site appears broadly suitable for development from a strategic flood-risk perspective, subject to:

- proper drainage design,
- sustainable drainage implementation,
- detailed topographical and hydraulic assessment,
- climate change allowances.

The greatest likely risk mechanism is surface water runoff rather than main river flooding.