

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	27/08/2026	Manager:	LH	Date:	27/8/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0518			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	29/07/2026	Site Notice:	29/07/2026	
Officer:	MC			
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:				APPROVAL

Development Description:	Retrospective planning permission for proposed re-surfacing of existing hardstanding within farm yards.
Site Address/Location:	Forty Acre Farm, Forty Acre Lane, Longridge, PR3 2TU

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
No issues raised.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objection on highway grounds.
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No additional representations received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:**Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**

Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN2: Landscape

Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:**3/2023/0959**

Change of use of land for the siting of two shepherd's huts for use as holiday accommodation
Approved with Conditions

3/2022/0479

Change of use of agricultural building to form a farm kitchen.
Approved with Conditions

3/2020/0917

Prior notification of proposed agricultural building for storage of straw, hay and agricultural machinery.

Permission Not Required

3/2010/0822

Proposed erection of a timber framed dairy unit to accommodate 120 milk cows and all facilities associated with a modern dairy cow housing.

Approved with Conditions

3/2003/0176

AGRICULTURAL FREE RANGE BUILDING

Approved with Conditions

3/1989/0563

ONE DETACHED BUNGALOW FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKER

Refused

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site forms the part of the farmstead known as Forty Acre Farm, to the south of Forty Acre Lane, on the outskirts of Longridge. A working farm which also provides a workshop and farm kitchen on site for functions and outside catering known as the Lovely Cow Shed.

The surrounds are predominantly rural, with the immediate surrounds comprising of various farm buildings some of which are large in scale. The site is located within the designated Forest of Bowland National Landscape (formerly AONB). A PROW passes through the farmstead from Forty Acre Lane before splitting into both a SW and SE direction, with the SE path passing close to the proposed siting of the two shepherd huts.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

This application relates to retrospective planning permission for the re-surfacing of a number of the existing hardstanding tracks within the farm yards. The application form indicates that the works began on 05/01/2026 but have not yet been completed. In addition, the works would replace existing broken concrete with new laid concrete.

Principle of Development:

Policy E2 of the NPPF states that:

- 1. To support business growth, substantial weight should be given to:*
 - a. The economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt; especially where this would support the economic vision and strategy for the area, the implementation of the Industrial Strategy, support improvements in freight and logistics and/or reflect proposals for Industrial Strategy Zones and AI Growth Zones; and b. Benefits for domestic food production, animal welfare and/or the environment which can be demonstrated through proposals for development for farm and agricultural modernisation.*
- 2. Where a development proposal is required to demonstrate whether an unmet need exists (including under policy S5) consideration should be given to whether:*

- a. *Market signals indicate an undersupply of specific types of business land or premises, taking into account the anticipated catchment area for the type of development proposed, the changing needs of different sectors and the availability of suitable existing land and buildings; or*
- b. *The specific locational requirements of the proposal are met by existing allocations in the development plan. This includes, but is not limited to, situations where:*
 - i. *Existing businesses plan to expand or improve their premises, or clusters or networks of businesses need to grow (such as clusters of knowledge and data driven, creative or high technology industries and associated facilities and infrastructure); or*
 - ii. *The availability of infrastructure (such as electricity network infrastructure to provide adequate grid connections, or water and wastewater capacity) makes certain locations particularly important, including opportunities to co-locate large scale generators and users of power (such as data centres); or*
 - iii. *Proposals would meet a local, regional or national need for the provision of new, expanded or upgraded facilities that would result in more efficient, reliable or sustainable handling of goods (whether for their receipt, storage, processing, interchange or distribution).*

Policy E4 also states:

1. *In applying policy E2, the sustainable growth of businesses in rural areas should be supported, including through:*
 - a. *The conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
 - b. *The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses;*
 - c. *Facilities to support rural leisure and tourism and measures to retain and expand accessible local shops and services; and*
 - d. *Development to maintain and enhance farm viability and sustainability and support domestic food production, such as improved accommodation for livestock, on-farm reservoirs, greenhouses, polytunnels, farm shops and temporary accommodation for seasonal workers (where this accommodation is ancillary to the agricultural use and not for permanent occupation).*
2. *Development proposals to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be located outside settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances: a. Development proposals should take opportunities, where they exist, to use previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing development; and b. The siting and design of development should be appropriate having regard to the character of its surroundings.*

Also of relevance is Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which 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 follows:

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*

The submitted supporting information identifies that the farm has holding of 88 hectares, including a mix of owned and rented land. The farm has 26 dairy cows, 50 calves, 7 beef cows, 4 bulls, 160 other cattle and a large quantity of poultry. The farm also a number of pieces of agricultural equipment and based on the submitted information, in addition to the planning history of the site, the Council are satisfied that the development relates to agriculture.

The applicant advises that the works have been undertaken/and are required as the existing concrete had become broken and uneven, whereas providing new concrete ensures that the hardstanding is durable and easily cleaned. This is considered to improve the farming enterprise by reducing disease. An articulated lorry enters the site two times a week for egg collection and the surfaces have to be cleaned down before and after it enters the site. As such, new concrete hardstanding is considered to support efficient cleaning of the farm. The works also include new drainage to help reduce the risk of pollution to the surrounding environment.

As such, it is considered that the development is required for the purposes of agriculture, in accordance with Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Policies EN2 and EN4 of the NPPF.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG1 provides specific guidance in relation to amenity and states that all development must:

- ‘1. not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.*
- 2. provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances.*
- 3. have regard to public safety and secured by design principles.*
- 4. consider air quality and mitigate adverse impacts where possible’*

In addition, Policy P3 1(b) of the NPPF states that proposals should:

‘Not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree. Where possible, opportunities should be taken to reduce pollution affecting the wider area (such as through traffic and travel management or improved external lighting)’

The proposal is located in excess of 100m from the nearest residential receptor and is located on land currently in agricultural use which is sited directly adjacent to Forty Acre Lane. The resurfacing works would support the existing agricultural activities on site and is not anticipated to result in any intensification of use. As such, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the amenity of any nearby residents.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Key Statement EN2 states that:

‘The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area’.

In addition, it states that:

‘As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials’.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG1 provides specific guidance in relation to design and states:

‘All development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style [and] consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings.’

Also, Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG2 states that:

'In protecting the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the Council will have regard to the economic and social well being of the area. However the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area avoiding where possible habitat fragmentation. where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. Development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting. the AONB management plan should be considered and will be used by the council in determining planning applications'

Policy N4 of the NPPF also states that:

'Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.'

The works are viewable within the public realm as a public footpath runs through the site and as such, the development does have some visual impact upon the surrounding landscape.

Notwithstanding this, the resurfacing works comprise compacted concrete in a light grey colour which is considered appropriate in relation to its agricultural use and as such are not out of keeping with or to such an extent that there would be any damaging effects on the rural character of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

Accordingly, the works are not considered to be so harmful to the visual amenities of the immediate or wider area to justify a refusal of the application.

Highways and Parking:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Policy DMG3 states that:

'all development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards'.

In addition, Policy DMG1 states that all development must:

- '1. consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.*
- 2. ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated'.*

Policy TR3 of the NPPF:

Any significant adverse impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be mitigated to an acceptable degree using a vision-led approach.

Lancashire County Council Highways have been consulted on the proposed development and raised no objection. The Local Highway Authority are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety or capacity in the immediate vicinity of the site and as such, the proposal is considered acceptable with respect to highway safety and parking.

Landscape/Ecology:

The proposal is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as it is a retrospective application.

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.
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