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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | MW | **Date:** | 14/02/23 | **Manager:** | KH | **Date:** | 15/02/23 |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2022/0986 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 14/02/23 | **Site Notice:** | N/A |
| **Officer:** | MW |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed removal of existing dilapidated building and construction of a steel frame building for livestock handling. Rain water handling system. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Smithies Bridge Farm Gisburn Road Sawley BB7 4NA |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| No response. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| None. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Policy DMG1 – General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** |
| **Relevant Planning History:**None. |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to a farmstead within an area of Open Countryside, 1km south of the defined settlement of Sawley. Smithies Bridge Farm comprises a total holding of over 96 hectares with the main enterprise including the rearing of approximately 550 sheep and 80 cattle. The main farmyard itself lies adjacent to the A59 and includes a range of traditional stone barns and general purpose agricultural buildings of typical design and appearance. The site is located within Flood Zone 2 but that aside lies within no other designation or constraint. |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Consent is sought for the removal of a dilapidated agricultural building and its replacement with a steel framed structure to accommodate livestock handling equipment. The existing structure to be removed is an open fronted, mono-pitch building constructed with timber poles and tin sheets located to eastern boundary of the farmyard adjacent to the highway (A59) which is of visibly poor structural/visual quality. In lieu of this, the replacement structure will be a steel framed building clad in Yorkshire boarding which will run parallel to the existing boundary wall for a length of 11 metres. The building will feature an open western elevation facing inward onto the farmyard with low height steel gates, with a depth of 6.5 metres and maximum ridge height of 3.8 metres. In addition to the replacement building, consent is also sought for a rain water handling system which will harvest rainwater from the roof to an adjacent container. |
| **Principle of Development:**Outside of defined settlements, policy DMG2 limits development to that which meets explicit criteria including development necessary for the purposes of forestry or agriculture. Material submitted to accompany the application demonstrates the need for the proposed development within the existing functions of the farm and upon reviewing this I am satisfied the development meets this criterion. It is acknowledged that the application seeks only the replacement of a dilapidated agricultural structure and this is considered to fall within the remit of being ‘reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture’ especially when the size and scale of the farm enterprise is considered. In light of the above, the principle of development is accepted. |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**Considering the existing arrangement of the farmyard and the distance of existing buildings to neighbouring residential properties, it is not considered that the proposal would result in additional impact on surrounding residential amenity.  |
| **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**The scheme’s design successfully reflects the nature of other agricultural buildings within the area and responds well to the surrounding landscape through its siting and use of materials. By retaining an existing stone wall separating the farmyard and highway with Yorkshire boarding above, the proposed agricultural building is similar to extant buildings on the farmyard. This achieves a design which is sympathetic to existing landscape character and built-form in accordance with policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The siting of the replacement building is also logical relative to the existing farmyard (the replacement building will be located roughly on a similar footprint) and it is acknowledged that the existing structure on site is of dilapidated form. As a result, the proposed removal of this building is welcomed given the prominent position of this structure adjacent to the main road and the development will in fact contribute to an overall improvement to the broader street scene whilst maintaining a modest overall form with eaves and ridge height of just 3 and 3.8 metres respectively, and length of just 11 metres at its maximum. Therefore whilst visible from the highway and public realm, the visual impact of the development is acceptable. |
| **Flood Risk**The site and building will be located within Flood Zone 2 which identifies the land as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding. Despite this, buildings for agriculture and forestry are identified as ‘less vulnerable’ according to the NPPF and therefore exception and sequential tests are not required. The proposed scheme will feature one open sided elevation to eaves and also incorporate other forms of mitigation as detailed within a Flood Risk Assessment which will reduce the expected impact of a flooding event to an acceptable level and therefore no issues are identified. |
| **Ecology**A bat scoping survey undertaken in November 2022 found no evidence to suggest present or historic bat activity within the roof of the building which is likely due to its poor condition and open nature. Consequently, the building is considered to be of negligible habitat value for roosting bats and on-site mitigation is not deemed necessary. |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**As such and for the above reasons, 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. |