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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | BT | **Date:** | 3/3/23 | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **6/3/23** |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2023/0021 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | N/A | **Site Notice:** | N/A |
| **Officer:** | BT |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **APPROVAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed engineering works to form an earth-banked, clay-lined slurry lagoon. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Land situated to the west of Parsonage Farm, Ribchester. PR3 3XS |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| **Ribchester Parish Council:** | No objections. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **Environment Agency:** | No objections. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| None. |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1 – Development StrategyKey Statement DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable DevelopmentPolicy DMG1 – General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2 – Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DMB1 – Supporting Business GrowthNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) |
| **Relevant Planning History:**None within application site - numerous for associated farmstead at Lower Alston Farm, Ribchester. |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to an agricultural land parcel situated on the Western outskirts of Ribchester. The land parcel adjoins the North-eastern side of Parsonage Wood with access to the application site from Parsonage Farm which lies approximately 700 metres away to the South-east. The application site is bound by woodland and trees on its Southern and Western sides and hedgerows on its Northern and Eastern sides. The proposed slurry lagoon is to be sited at the Northern end of the field parcel. The proposal site is located within an isolated rural area characterised by woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.  |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Consent is sought for the construction of an earth banked slurry lagoon. |
| **Principle of Development:**The application site lies outside of any defined settlement area. Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that proposals for development outside the defined settlement areas can be considered as justifiable if *‘the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture’.* In this instance, the proposal relates to the applicant’s existing agricultural operation at Lower Alston Farm in Ribchester. It is understood that the applicant currently has 6 weeks worth of slurry storage capacity within their farmstead which in turn requires frequent tractor journeys between the farmstead and the application site in order to spread slurry on the land which surrounds the application site.Recent environmental legislation now requires all agricultural units to have a minimum of 4 to 6 months storage capacity for slurry produced on agricultural holdings. As such, the applicant seeks planning consent for the installation of a new slurry lagoon in order to meet the required storage capacity.The applicant has stated that the proposed slurry lagoon would allow for the storage of nutrient rich slurry which in turn would circumvent the need to spend money on bagged fertilizer which has dramatically risen in cost in recent months. The lagoon would be centrally located on the applicant’s holding which in turn would both facilitate the most efficient distribution of the fertiliser and reduce fuel consumption through less trips being required between the applicant’s farmstead and their land holding.With the above in mind, it is not considered that the installation of an earth banked slurry lagoon at the proposal site would conflict with Policy DMG2 and is therefore acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the other material planning considerations. |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**The proposed slurry lagoon would be sited well away from the nearest residential receptors which in this instance are situated approximately 600 metres away to the South-east of the application site. In addition, the lagoon would have a floating cover installed which would prevent the release of unpleasant and harmful odours. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed development would be unduly harmful to any neighbouring residents however ongoing management of the proposed development would need to be in accordance with the regulation and guidelines as specified within the response from the Environment Agency. |
| **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**The proposed slurry lagoon would be significant in terms of footprint however the proposal would comprise a modest projection above ground floor level and would be sited within an isolated area of open countryside where it would remain largely screened from the public realm. Furthermore, the earth banked design of the lagoon would allow the proposed development to blend into the natural topography of the application site resulting in a minimal visual impact upon the surrounding landscape. Accordingly, it is not considered the proposed development would be harmful to the visual amenities of the area. |
| **Highways and Parking:**No alterations are proposed to the application site’s existing access and no increases in vehicle traffic are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would have any adverse impacts upon the surrounding highway network. |
| **Landscape/Ecology:**No ecological constraints were identified in relation to the proposal. |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**The proposal site is situated in an isolated rural location therefore it is not considered that installation of the proposed development would be unduly harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents or to the visual amenities of the area. Moreover, the proposal accords with Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy in as much that the proposed works would be beneficial for the purposes of serving an existing agricultural operation. 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. |