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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | **LW** | **Date:** | **27/06/23** | **Manager:** |  | **Date:** |  |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2023/0338 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 25/06/23 | **Site Notice:** | 25/06/23 |
| **Officer:** | **LW** |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **REFUSAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Proposed sheep shed and widening of existing site access. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Newlands, Back Lane, Chipping, PR3 2QA |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| No comments received within consultation period. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** | The Local Highways Authority do not wish to raise any objections to the principle of the proposal. However, in order to fully support the application, further submissions would be required showing the visibility splay available at the site entrance. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| One letter of representation has been received in relation to the proposal. The concerns raised within the letter can be summarised as: * The quality of the agricultural land;
* The size and siting of the proposal;
* Impact upon highway safety
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development StrategyKey Statement DS2: Sustainable DevelopmentKey Statement EN2: LandscapeKey Statement DMI2: Transport ConsiderationsPolicy DMG1: General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2: Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DMG3: Transport & MobilityNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) |
| **Relevant Planning History:**3/2021/0336: Proposed single storey rear extension to create additional living accommodation. Proposed first floor extension above existing single storey element to create additional bedrooms with en-suite facilities (Approved)3/2013/0010: Proposed extension at first floor level to existing single storey building and extension at ground floor to form garden room (Approved)3/1992/0463: Double detached garage (Approved)3/1991/0779: Replacement dwelling and extension of residential curtilage together with new vehicular access (Approved)  |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to a detached property known as Newlands House, with the application site comprising 3.2 hectares of meadow located to the south of the property’s residential curtilage. Access to the application site is from the northwest, from Back Lane and via the private access to the residential property. The wider area comprises a mixture of residential properties, agricultural land and open countryside, with the application site lying approximately 1.2km south of the defined settlement boundary of Chipping and within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.  |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Consent it sought for the construction of a proposed sheep shed and widening of the existing site access. The proposed sheep shed would have a length of 12.9m and depth of 14.3m and would feature a pitched roof design measuring 3m to the eaves and 6.7m to the ridge. The walls of the proposed building would be constructed in natural stone to the lower levels and metal cladding up to the eaves. A set of double doors would be installed to the front elevation and metal sheeting would be featured to the roof. The existing access off the highway of Back Lane would also be widened from approximately 4.2m to 6m in order to increase visibility for vehicles upon exit. This would include the replacement of part of the existing boundary hedging with a 1m high boundary wall.  |
| **Principle of Development:**The application site lies outside of the defined settlement area of Chipping. Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that proposals for development outside the settlement areas can be considered as justifiable if “*the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture”.* In this instance, consent is sought for the construction of an agricultural building to house livestock. The application’s supporting information states that the application site has previously been let for many years on the annual grazing licence to a local farmer, however the land is now proposed to be used by the owner in order to erect a lambing shed for his flock comprising of 50 ewes. Despite this, no livestock were observed on the land parcel during site visits during May and June 2023, and the grass within the site was observed to be overgrown. In addition to this, it is also stated that the applicant does not own any farm machinery. As such, there does not appear to be any current agricultural activity on the site and therefore it can be argued that a functional agricultural need for the proposed sheep shed does not exist at this time.The proposal also raises a number of concerns in relation to the size and design of the agricultural building. In this instance, the proposed building would have an eaves and roof pitch height of 3m and 6.7m respectively, with the footprint of the building occupying an area of 185 square metres. Given the land parcel comprises of just 3.2 hectares and there does not appear to be an agricultural need at present, the proposal is considered to be unduly sized in relation to the application site. In addition to this, the proposed building is poorly designed for the housing of livestock, providing inadequate levels of ventilation in relation to its proposed use. Taking account of the above, the proposed agricultural building is poorly designed for the purposes of livestock accommodation and unduly large in terms of both its footprint and ridge height in relation to the size of the land parcel and its proposed use. In addition, there does not appear to be any current agricultural activity on the site that would justify the need for a building of the size and scale proposed. As such, the proposal would fail to accord with Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy and is therefore considered unacceptable in principle based on the information provided. The proposal site is also situated within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and therefore additional consideration will also be given towards the effect of the proposal on the aesthetic character of the surrounding landscape.  |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**Newlands House would be sited approximately 34m away from the proposed agricultural building and is within the same ownership as such, the proposed use of the building for livestock would be unlikely to result in a negative impact upon the existing occupiers of the residential property. Furthermore, the proposed development would be sited well away from the nearest neighbouring residential properties along Back Lane and Sand Bank and therefore it is not anticipated that the proposal would have any undue impact upon the amenity of any surrounding residents.  |
| **Visual Amenity/External Appearance:**Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states: ‘*Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting’.*In addition, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy provides general design guidance as follows:‘*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, features and building materials.’*With regards to proposals for development within the AONB, Key Statement EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states:‘*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… 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, feature and building materials.’* Moreover, Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that all development must ‘*be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing and style’* and ‘*not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area’.* The proposed building would be sited within the north-western corner of the application site, and whilst this corner of the land parcel benefits from a reasonable amount of screening due to an existing roadside hedge, the proposal would have a roof pitch height of 6.7m and would be located directly adjacent the main highway of Back Lane. In addition to this, the proposal would also widen the existing site access to 6m and incorporate a new 1m boundary wall, replacing part of the existing high hedging in order to increase visibility for exiting vehicles. The proposed development would therefore be visually prominent from the main highway and within the surrounding AONB landscape. Additionally, whilst the development would be situated adjacent the residential property of Newlands House, no other agricultural buildings or structures are present within the application site or the immediate vicinity and therefore the proposed building would read as an out of keeping feature within the largely open surrounding area. The development would also be sited beyond the existing building line of Newlands House and would incorporate a disproportionate roof pitch relative to the eaves height which in turn would accentuate the building’s visual impact. Moreover, the proposal’s physical presence cannot be justified at present, in as much that there does not appear to be a current functional need for the proposed sheep shed for the purposes of agriculture.As such, given the visual prominence and size of the proposed agricultural building, in conjunction with the absence of any similar structures within the vicinity, the proposed development would appear an incongruous and unsympathetic addition to the application site and would dominate and detract from the visual amenities of the immediate and wider AONB landscape. The proposal is therefore in conflict with Paragraph 130 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy.  |
| **Highways and Parking:**As part of the proposal, the existing site entrance off Back Lane, which serves both the application site and the residential property of Newlands House, is proposed to be widened to 6m in order to improve visibility upon exit. Following consultation with Lancashire County Council Highways, no objections were raised in relation to the principle of the proposal. However, to fully support the application, further submissions would be required showing the visibility splay available at the entrance.  |
| **Landscape/Ecology:**No ecological constraints were identified in relation to the proposal.  |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**The proposed development does not raise any concerns with regard to the amenity of any surrounding residents, however in this instance the proposed agricultural building would appear a visually prominent, incongruous and unsympathetic addition to the application site and would therefore be harmful to the visual amenities of the immediate area and the wider AONB landscape.Moreover, the proposal is poorly designed for the housing of livestock and there does not appear to be a current functional agricultural need that would warrant justification for the size and scale of the proposed agricultural building. It is for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that planning consent be refused.  |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning consent be refused for the following reasons: |
| **01:** | The proposal by virtue of its visual prominence, design and location would result in an unsympathetic form of development that would dominate and detract from the visual amenities of the surrounding AONB landscape. In addition, there is no agricultural need that would warrant sufficient justification for the size and scale of the proposed shed and the building is poorly designed for the purpose of housing livestock. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Paragraph 130 of the NPPF, Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. |