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| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | BT | **Date:** | 29/7/24 | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **30/7/24** |
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| **Application Ref:** | 3/2024/0475 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 15/7/24 | **Site Notice:** | 15/7/24 |
| **Officer:** | BT |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **REFUSAL** |
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| **Development Description:** | Permission in Principle for change of use of organic dairy (use class B2) to one detached dwelling (use class C3). |
| **Site Address/Location:** | High Head Farm, Moss Lane, Chipping, PR3 2TR. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| **Chipping Parish Council:** | Consulted 9/7/24 – no response received. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** | No objection in principle. |
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| **LCC PROW:** | Consulted 9/7/24 – no response received. |
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| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| One representation has been received which is supportive of a conversion to a single residential property however raises concerns with respect to potential impacts upon existing water supplies and surface water drainage.  |
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| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy Key Statement DS2: Sustainable development Key statement EN2: Landscape Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity And GeodiversityKey Statement EC1: Business And Employment DevelopmentKey Statement DMI2: Transport ConsiderationsPolicy DMG1: General considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility Policy DME3: Site And Species Protection And ConservationPolicy DMH3: Dwellings In The Open Countryside And AONB Policy DMH4: The Conversion Of Barns And Other Buildings To DwellingsPolicy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth And The Local EconomyPolicy DMB5: Footpaths And BridlewaysNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  |
| **Relevant Planning History:****3/1999/0578:**Use Of Building For Cheese Manufacture And Storage (Approved)**3/1994/0699:**Use Of Redundant Building For Manufacture And Storage Of Small Agricultural And ATV Trailers (Approved) |
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| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to a grouping of agricultural buildings located on the South-eastern outskirts of Chipping within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Access to the application site is from Moss Lane via an existing vehicle access on the North-eastern corner of the site. The application buildings are sited within an area of hardstanding with the buildings in question comprising two traditional red brick barns with a timber mono pitch extension linking the two buildings. The residential property of High Head Farm lies directly adjacent to the East of the site with additional residential properties sited further away to the South-west along Moss Lane. The wider area comprises a mixture of isolated dwellings, woodland, agricultural land and open countryside. |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Permission in Principle is sought for a change of use of existing industrial buildings to form one detached residential dwelling.  |
| **Principle of Development:**Permission in Principle applications may onlydeal with the principle of development. Any other details relating to any other material planning consideration are to be dealt with within any future Technical Details application. In this instance, the proposed development comprises a change of use of industrial buildings to residential use which in turn would result in the loss of a site with employment generating potential. Policy DMB1 of the Core Strategy states:‘*Proposals for the development, redevelopment or conversion of sites with employment generating potential in the plan area for alternative uses will be assessed with regard to the following criteria*: *1. The provisions of policy DMG1, and* *2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies of the LDF, and**3. The environmental benefits to be gained by the community, and* *4. The economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the borough, and**5. Any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site (must be supported by evidence (such as property agents details including periods of marketing and response) that the property/ business has been marketed for business use for a minimum period of six months or information that demonstrates to the council’s satisfaction that the current use is not viable for employment purposes.)*Having regard to criteria point 1 of Policy DMB1, the proposed development raises no measurable concerns with respect to design (would be assessed at the technical details stage), access, amenity or impacts upon existing infrastructure however Policy DMG1 does require all developments to consider the environmental implications of any works proposed, including impacts upon protected species. In this instance, the proposed development would involve works to the existing buildings in order to convert the structures to residential use which in turn could potentially result in disturbances and harm to protected species however this could only be established / assessed at the technical details stage when ecology is a consideration.Turning to criteria point 2 of Policy DMB1, Key Statements EC1 and Policy DMH3 and DMH4 are of relevance with respect to the development proposed. Having regard to the provisions of Key Statement EC1, the policy states:*Proposals that result in the loss of existing employment sites to other forms of development will need to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact upon the local economy.’*In this instance, the application’s supporting information states that the existing buildings are not suited to agricultural use due to their dated construction not allowing for modern machines or being able to facilitate modern farming practices. It states that the previous occupants of the application site ceased their business due to increasing manufacturing and labour costs and substantial energy rises. However it is understood that the application buildings have been in continuous use in relation to rural enterprise in excess of twenty years, with the use of the buildings having only recently ceased, and there is no consideration as to why the building would not be suitable for other forms of employment development.Accordingly, it is not considered that robust information has been provided in support of the application to demonstrate that the proposed loss of an existing employment site (which until recently provided a source of employment to the surrounding rural economy) to a residential use would not result in any adverse impacts upon the local economy. As such, the proposal fails to satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EC1.Having regard to the provisions of Policy DMH3, the policy states: *‘Within areas defined as open countryside or AONB on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to the appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings providing they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.’*Furthermore, Policy DMH4 of the Core Strategy states: *Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of buildings to dwellings where:* *1. The building is not isolated in the landscape, i.e. it is within a defined settlement or forms part of an existing group of buildings, and* *2. There need be no unnecessary expenditure by public authorities and utilities on the provision of infrastructure, and* *3. There would be no materially damaging effect on the landscape qualities of the area or harm to nature conservation interests, and* *4. There would be no detrimental effect on the rural economy, and* *5.The proposals are consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area**6. That any existing nature conservation aspects of the existing structure are properly surveyed and where judged to be significant preserved or, if this is not possible, then any loss adequately* *mitigated.* *The building to be converted must:* *-Be structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed use without the need for extensive building or major alternation, which would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building;* *- Be of a sufficient size to provide necessary living accommodation without the need for further extensions which would harm the character or appearance of the building –* *- The character of the building and its materials are appropriate to its surroundings and the building and its materials are worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest or potential or its contribution to its setting, and* *The building has a genuine history of use for agriculture or another rural enterprise.*Having regard to criteria point 1 of Policy DMH4, the application buildings are sited in close proximity to the neighbouring property of High Head Farm (with which they have historic ties to) and as such do not read as isolated features within the surrounding landscape. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of criteria point 1 of Policy DMH4 and in turn, the locational requirements of Policy DMH3.Turning to criteria point 2 of Policy DMH4, access to the application site would be via the site’s existing access from Moss Lane with the application site also benefiting from an existing electrical supply therefore it is not anticipated that the residential conversion of the buildings would warrant any unnecessary expenditure by public authorities or utilities on the provision of infrastructure. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of criteria point 2 of Policy DMH4.Having regard to criteria point 3 of Policy DMH4, details of design would be dealt with at the technical details stage therefore the impact of the proposed development upon the amenity of the surrounding landscape cannot be assessed under the current application. The same applies to impacts upon ecology / nature conservation interests. Turning to criteria point 4 of Policy DMH4, and as previously conveyed, no robust information has been provided in support of the application to demonstrate that the proposed loss of the existing site to residential use would not result in any adverse impacts upon the rural economy. The proposed development would therefore fail to satisfy the requirements of criteria point 4 of Policy DMH4.Having regard to criteria point 5 of Policy DMH4, details of design would be dealt with at the technical details stage therefore the impact of the proposed development upon the natural beauty of the surrounding area cannot be assessed under the current application.Turning to criteria point 6 of Policy DMH4, this would be a matter for the technical details stage.The policy goes onto require a building that is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for extensive building or major alteration. Whilst the application’s supporting information deems the buildings to be structurally sound and capable of conversion to residential use, no structural survey work has been provided to confirm this. No details have been provided with respect to the internal layout of the proposed dwelling or number of bedrooms proposed however given the size of the existing buildings it is considered that these could likely accommodate the necessary living space for one unit of residential accommodation as proposed without the need for further additions. With respect to the character of the existing buildings, these largely reflect the vernacular of farm buildings within the locality and contribute to the rural setting of the area and as such are considered to be worthy of retention. In addition, the application site’s planning history clearly shows that the barn buildings in question benefit from a genuine history of use in relation to a rural enterprise.The proposed development would therefore fail to satisfy the local economy and structural requirements of Policy DMH4. As such, the proposed development is considered to be in conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy DMH3 and DMH4 and would therefore fail to satisfy criteria point 2 of Policy DMB1.Having regard to criteria point 3 of Policy DMB1, sole residential usage of the buildings would likely result in fewer comings and goings to and from the site (in addition to a potential reduction in noise levels) when compared with the noise and activity levels associated with the existing use of the site. As such, it could be argued that a de-intensified use of the application buildings would deliver a minor enhancement to the amenity of the adjacent neighbouring occupants of High Head Farm. As such, the proposed development is considered to be broadly compliant with criteria point 3 of Policy DMB1.Turning to criteria point 4 of Policy DMB1, and as previously conveyed, it is not considered that robust evidence has been provided with respect to the social and economic impacts that could potentially arise from the loss of employment opportunities associated with conversion of the existing site to residential use. The proposed development would therefore fail to satisfy criteria point 4 of Policy DMB1.Having regard to criteria point 5 of Policy DMB1, no evidence has been provided in support of the application to demonstrate that attempts have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the application site. The proposed development would therefore fail to satisfy criteria point 5 of Policy DMB1.Taking account of all of the above, the proposed development fails to satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EC1 and Policies DMG1, DMH3, DMH4 and DMB1 of the Core Strategy and as such is considered to be unacceptable in principle.  |
| **Other Matters**The concerns raised by a third party with respect to impacts upon water supplies are noted however such issues are a private civil matter. The concerns with respect to surface water drainage are also noted however such issues would be dealt with at the technical details stage. |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**It is for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for refusal. |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That Permission in Principle be refused for the following reason: |
| **01:** | The proposed conversion of the application buildings to residential use would result in the loss of a site with employment generating potential and no robust assessment has been provided with respect to the potential social and economic impacts of this. Furthermore, no evidence has been provided in support of the application to demonstrate that attempts have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the application site. Moreover, no information has been provided with respect to the application building’s structural integrity to demonstrate that they are capable of conversion. The proposed development therefore fails to satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EC1 and Policies DMG1, DMH3, DMH4 and DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. |