|  |
| --- |
| **Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.** |
| **Signed:** | **Officer:** | BT | **Date:** | 10/4/25 | **Manager:** | **LH** | **Date:** | **10/4/25** |
|  |
| **Application Ref:** | 3/2024/0798 |  |
| **Date Inspected:** | 29/11/24 | **Site Notice:** | 29/11/24 |
| **Officer:** | BT |
| **DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:**  | **REFUSAL** |
|  |
| **Development Description:** | Proposed agricultural building for storage and livestock. |
| **Site Address/Location:** | Land off Back Lane, Chipping, PR3 2QA. |
|  |
| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Parish/Town Council** |
| **Chipping Parish Council:** | Consulted 15/11/24 – no response received. |
|  |
| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies** |
| **LCC Highways:** | Recommended for refusal of the application on the grounds of highway safety. |
|  |
| **RVBC Environmental Health:** | No objections subject to conditions. |
|  |
| **Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU:**  | Consulted 15/11/24 – no response received. |
|  |
| **Natural England:** | Consulted 15/11/24 – no response received. Subsequent analysis shows that consultation not required. |
|  |
| **CONSULTATIONS:**  | **Additional Representations.** |
| None. |
|  |
| **RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:** |
| **Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**Key Statement DS1: Development StrategyKey Statement DS2: Sustainable DevelopmentKey Statement EN2: LandscapeKey Statement EC1: Business and Employment DevelopmentKey Statement DMI2: Transport ConsiderationsPolicy DMG1: General ConsiderationsPolicy DMG2: Strategic ConsiderationsPolicy DMG3: Transport & MobilityPolicy DME2: Landscape & Townscape ProtectionPolicy DME3: Site and Species Protection and ConservationPolicy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local EconomyNational Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) |
| **Relevant Planning History:****3/2024/0367:**Prior notification for agricultural building for livestock, machinery and feed 22.8m long, 16.76m wide, 6.78m high to ridge and 3.2m high to eaves (Refused) |
|  |
| **ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:** |
| **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**The application relates to an agricultural land parcel located on the Southern outskirts of Chipping. Access to the land parcel is from the North-western side of Longridge Road approximately 120 metres North-east of the junction with Hesketh Lane. Numerous residential properties lie to the South of the application site on Hesketh Lane with Meadow Top Farm and Banks House lying further away to the North-east. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of agricultural land and open countryside with the application lying within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. |
| **Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**Planning consent is sought for the construction of a steel portal framed agricultural building in order to house livestock, machinery and feed. The proposed agricultural building would be sited within the South-western portion of the applicant’s land parcel (Plot 2) approximately 130 metres to the North-west of the site’s access on Back Lane. Additional works proposed include alterations to the site’s access in the form of kerb radii’s and surface treatments. |
| **Principle of Development:**The proposal 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 Borough’s defined settlement areas can be considered as justifiable if *‘the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture’.* In this instance, planning consent is sought for the construction of an agricultural building in order to house livestock, machinery and feed. A similar development was proposed by the applicant under prior notification application 3/2024/0367. This proposal was partly refused on the basis that the applicant had failed to provide sufficient supporting information to justify the need for the agricultural building proposed. Additional concerns were also raised with respect to the siting, design and visual impact of the agricultural building previously proposed. Following this, it was conveyed to the applicant that any future planning application for a similar development would need to be supported by sufficient evidence in order to establish the need for an agricultural building as previously proposed. The application’s supporting information states that the applicant is currently in ownership of 75 breeding ewes which lamb each March with around 120 lambs produced each year. It is understood that the applicant currently rents an agricultural building near Chipping to house his breeding ewes before and during lambing. The applicant has stated that during lambing time ewes and new born lambs are sometimes returned to the pastures during periods of adverse weather as there is insufficient space in the building that he currently rents which in turn has resulted in losses of lambs. It is also understood that the applicant currently rents additional buildings to house his farm equipment which includes a tractor, trailer, quad bike, muck spreader, sheep trailer, hurdles and a sheep handling system. It is understood that the applicant has recently purchased agricultural land off Back Lane which includes the land subject to this application and now wishes to provide a farm building on that land to house his breeding ewes and their lambs before, during and after lambing until the weather is suitable to return them to the pastures. It is further stated that the proposed building would be utilised to store the applicant’s farm equipment and hay as winter feed for his livestock, as opposed to having to rely on renting buildings in the locality. It is further understood that the proposed building would be utilised for sheep management tasks including dozing, clipping, foot trimming and scanning during the summer months. The proposed development has been subject to review from the Council’s agricultural advisor who having reviewed the application’s supporting information and applicant’s current farming operation, has confirmed that an agricultural need exists for the proposed building in light of the requirement for the applicant to be compliant with the rules and good practice in relation to the welfare of livestock and in order to protect hay, bedding straw and farm equipment and machinery from deterioration. Taking account of the above, it is considered that the proposed building would be a justifiable addition to the application site in the context of the applicant’s existing agricultural operation. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed development would conflict with Policy DMG2 in so far as *‘the development is needed for the purposes of forestry or agriculture’* and is therefore acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of additional material planning considerations. |
| **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states:*‘Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users’.*Furthermore, Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy requires all proposals for development to consider the effects of development upon existing amenities.In this instance, the proposed agricultural building would be located approximately 120 metres away from the nearest residential receptors on Hesketh Lane on land which is currently in agricultural use. In addition, the farming operations in question are predominantly managed by the applicant (with periodical assistance from the applicant’s brother during lambing and hay times) therefore it is not anticipated that the introduction of the proposed building to the land would result in an overly intensive use of the application site. Accordingly, given the separation distance that would be in place between the proposed development and neighbouring properties and the scale of use proposed, no significant concerns are raised from the proposed development with respect to noise, disturbances or odour emissions beyond those associated with the existing use of the site and surrounding land.Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents. The proposed development would therefore be compliant with the aims and objectives of Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF and Policy DMG1.  |
| **Visual Amenity/External Appearance/Impact Upon Setting Of Listed Building:**Paragraph 135 (c) 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’.*Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy provides additional 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 and style…particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character.’*With respect to development within the AONB, Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states:*‘Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.’*The above is reiterated within Key Statement EN2 of the Core Strategy: ‘*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, features and building materials.’*In this instance, the proposed agricultural building would be a fairly sizeable structure with respect to its footprint however following technical analysis from the Council’s agricultural advisor with respect to space standards for agriculture, the floorspace proposed for the building has been deemed as acceptable on the basis that the floorspace proposed would be necessary to comfortably house the applicant’s existing 75 breeding ewes, farm equipment, sufficient hay and bedding straw for the 75 breeding ewes and new born lambs. The application site comprises a largely open parcel of grassland with a noticeable absence of built form within the site and its immediate surroundings. The proposed agricultural building would be set approximately 120 metres into the application site and would also be publicly viewable from Back Lane. As such, the visual impact of the proposed development would be apparent within the surrounding landscape. In light of this, the applicant was asked to give consideration towards locating the proposed building closer towards Back Lane so as to reduce its visual impact within the surrounding landscape however given that the land adjoining the North-western side of Back Lane is not within the ownership of the applicant this option remains unfeasible. Notwithstanding this, it was conveyed to the applicant that reorientating the position of the proposed agricultural building within the site by 90 degrees would serve as an acceptable compromise through reducing some of the development’s visual impact when viewed from Back Lane and the applicant has since agreed to this amendment. Furthermore, it is noted that the height of the proposed agricultural building has been reduced from the previously refused scheme (application 3/2024/0367) and the building would be detailed in concrete panels, Yorkshire boarding and fibre cement roofing boards all of which would be predominantly in keeping with the rural character of the surrounding landscape and materiality of other agricultural buildings within the locality.In light of the above, the visual impact of the proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable and it is not considered that the proposal would be harmful to the visual amenities of the immediate area or wider National Landscape. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 135 (c) and 189 of the NPPF and Key Statement EN2 and Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy. |
| **Highways and Parking:**Lancashire County Council Highways have been formally consulted on the proposed development who in their initial response dated 26/11/24 made a request for further information with respect to the application site access and internal layout, along with drawings detailing swept path analysis and visibility splays. These details were subsequently provided and reviewed by the LHA who in their response dated 17/1/25 requested the provision of a speed survey in order to determine achievable visibility splays from the application site’s existing vehicular access in light of the submitted visibility splay drawing showing shortfalls in statutory visibility splay requirements. A speed survey was subsequently undertaken as requested with the recorded speeds showing that North-eastern and South-western visibility splays of at least 120 metres would need to be provided to support the proposal, as acknowledged in the LHA response dated 24/2/5 which subsequently recommended for refusal of the application on the basis that such visibility splays would not be achievable from the application site’s existing vehicular access. Following this, additional correspondence was subsequently undertaken between the case officer and the LHA with regards to a possible resolution, with the LHA stating that the creation of an alternative vehicular access to the South-west of the application site could be considered in the event of adequate visibility splays being achievable, and on the basis of the existing access serving the application site being closed off. Notwithstanding this, the applicant has stated that the creation of an alternative vehicular access as a possible resolution would be problematic due to the land in question not being within their ownership. Additionally, the applicant has sought further clarification from the LHA with respect to the rationale for not utilising the existing site access, along with further analysis of the submitted traffic survey data with a view to justifying use of the application site’s existing access however upon review of this analysis and following numerous rounds of email correspondence, the LHA have confirmed that their position remains unchanged and as such have recommended for refusal of the application on the basis that the proposed development would lead to the intensification of use of an access which lacks the adequate visibility deemed safe and suitable for the development proposed. Consequently, the proposal is considered to be unacceptable, being contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraphs 115 and 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). |
| **Landscape/Ecology:**Protected SitesThe application site lies within SSSI Impact Risk Zones therefore consultation was initially undertaken with Natural England. No response has been received from Natural England to date however subsequent mapping analysis shows no requirement for formal consultation with Natural England with respect to the development proposed. As such, the applicant should refer to Natural England’s statutory guidance (Annex A - Natural England general advice).BNGA biodiversity net gain report has been provided in support of the application which indicates that the proposed development would result in a loss of biodiversity to the application site (0.1 ha of modified grassland) however the submitted BNG assessment shows that the identified loss of biodiversity could be offset through habitat creation in the form of enhancing the site’s modified grasslands along with the introduction of tree planting to the site, both of which would result in a post development biodiversity net gain of 10.26%. As such, the proposed development satisfies the statutory requirements with respect to biodiversity net gain. |
| **Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**The proposed development would be utilised in relation to an existing agricultural operation and as such would be wholly compliant with the aims and objectives of Policy DMG2. In addition, the proposed development would not be harmful to the amenity of any neighbouring residents, nor would the works proposed result in any harm to the visual amenities of the area. Furthermore, whilst ecological constraints are present on site it is considered that these could be effectively managed through the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures.Notwithstanding the above, the proposed development would lead to the intensification of use of an access which lacks the adequate visibility deemed safe and suitable for such a proposal and is therefore considered to be unacceptable, being contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraphs 115 and 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework.  |
| **RECOMMENDATION**: | That planning consent be refused for the following reason: |
| **01:** | The proposal, if permitted, would lead to the intensification of use of an access which lacks the adequate visibility deemed safe and suitable for such a proposal. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be unacceptable, being contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and Paragraphs 115 and 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). |