

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:		Date:		Manager:		Date:	
----------------	-----------------	--	--------------	--	-----------------	--	--------------	--

Application Ref:	3/2021/0098	 Ribbles Valley Borough Council www.ribblesvalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	Pre-Application	
Officer:	SK	
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:		REFUSAL

Development Description:	Proposed Conversion of a barn to a residential dwelling and associated works.
Site Address/Location:	Lea Barn, Four Acres Lane, Preston.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Thornley with Wheatley PC has considered the planning application and have raised no objection.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	
LCC Highways Development Control Section have offered the following observations: <i>With respect to this application we would not raise any objections to the principal of the application.</i> <i>However there are concerns regarding the access and the location of the gates. It is expected that the gate posts should be positioned 5m behind the edge of the carriageway to allow a vehicles to pull clear of the carriageway.</i> <i>A plan showing the available sight lines measured 2.4m back from the edge of the carriageway should be provided. Construction details of the treatment of the proposed hardstanding between the edge of the carriageway and the barn wall including the gated access will be required. Our records indicate that this area forms part of the adopted highway, in order to form the revised access a Section 278 Agreement will be required.</i> <i>In order to progress the application, we would look for the submission of further plans showing how our concerns can be allayed.</i>	
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No representations have been received in respect of the application.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Ribbles Valley Core Strategy: Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy Key Statement DS2 – Sustainable Development Key Statement DMI2 – Transport Considerations Key Statement EN2 - Landscape Policy DMG1 – General Considerations Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations

Policy DMG3 – Transport & Mobility
Policy DMH3 – Dwellings in the Open Countryside
Policy DMH4 – The Conversion of barns and Other Buildings to Dwellings

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

No recent planning history directly relevant to the determination of the application.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to an existing stone-built agricultural barn located off Four Acre Lane, Longridge. The building to which the application relates benefits from a roadside location being located outside of any defined settlement being located in the designated Forest of Bowland AONB.

The surrounding area is typically rural in character with the area largely being defined by open-aspect agricultural land.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Consent is sought for the conversion of the existing structure to that of a three-bedroom dwelling. The submitted details propose that primary habitable living accommodation will be located at ground floor level with bedrooms being accommodated at first floor.

The submitted details do not propose the introduction of any additional openings to accommodate windows/doors with the envelope of the building remaining relatively intact save that for the introduction of three conservation-style rooflights on the south facing roof-slope. The submitted details also propose the creation of a dedicated residential curtilage to incorporate a driveway, lawn and patio area including dedicated parking provision. It is proposed that the curtilage will be delineated by 1.2m high post and rail fencing.

Principle of Development:

The proposal seeks consent for the creation of a new residential dwelling, outside of a defined settlement within the Forest of Bowland AONB, through the conversion of an existing building.

As such a number of policies are engaged for the purposes of assessing the appropriateness of the proposed conversion particularly in relation to locational matters or whether such a proposal would meet exception criterion relating to 'need'. In these respects Key Statements DS1 and DMI2 and Policies DMH3, DMH4 and DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy are considered fully engaged.

The building to be converted is located in a relatively remote location, being outside of a defined settlement and within the Forest of Bowland AONB. In this respect Policy DMH3 states that that residential development will be limited to '*residential development that meets an identified local need*' and the appropriate conversion of buildings provided they are '*suitably located*' further stating that the building must be '*capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction*'.

Policy DMG2 provides further context in relation to the location aspirations for new residential development within the Borough, stating that outside the defined settlement areas residential

development should be for *'local needs housing which meets an identified need'*, a requirement which is also reiterated within Key Statement DS1.

In respect of the above matters the proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Key Statement DS1 and Policies DMG2 and DMH3 insofar that the proposal is not for that of local needs housing, furthermore it is not considered that the proposed dwelling would be *'suitably located'* insofar that residents or occupiers of the dwelling would not benefit from adequate walkable access to local services or facilities.

Whilst it is noted that Policy DMH4, in principle, lends support for the conversion of barns and other buildings to that of residential use, the primary criterion of Policy DMH4 (DMH4(1)) states that such proposals will be supported whereby the building to be converted *'is not isolated in the landscape, i.e. it is within a defined settlement or forms part of a group of buildings'* in this respect, given the proposal is not located within a defined settlement consideration must be given in respect of whether the building to be converted *'forms part of a group of buildings'*.

It is recognised that the building to be converted is located within close proximity to the dwellings located to the west fronting Elm Brow, however, it is considered that it cannot be reasonably argued the building to be converted forms part of a grouping with these buildings nor can it be considered that they are read as 'a group' particularly due to the distances between the buildings and the intervening highway. In this respect, upon approach, the building to which the application relates is clearly read as being a standalone building and therefore the support afforded by DMH4 is fully disengaged insofar that it fails to meet the exception criterion that requires the building to be converted forming part of a group of buildings.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity:

Given the separation distances between existing dwellings within the vicinity and the proposed dwelling and taking account of the orientation of primary habitable room windows it is not considered that the proposed conversion would result in any significant or measurable detrimental impact upon existing or future residential amenity.

Visual Amenity/External Appearance:

The proposal seeks consent for the conversion of an existing building located within the Forest of Bowland AONB. As such Policy DMH4 is fully engaged for the purposes of assessing any likely visual impacts resultant from the proposal and the suitability of the building in terms of its ability to contribute to the character of the area.

In this respect it is recognised that that the building to be converted possesses a character and is of materials that are considered appropriate to their surrounding and could be considered worthy of retention by virtue of its contribution to the immediate setting. In respect of the proposed alterations to the building, these are considered to be minimal in their intervention and as such do not undermine the inherent character of the building.

However, the extent of the proposed residential curtilage, in concert with the proposed dedicated parking provision, boundary treatments and likely visual impact of associated domestic paraphernalia such as sheds, washing lines, children's play equipment and fence lines would result in the introduction of a form of development of an overtly domestic and suburban in appearance which fails to reflect local distinctiveness, particularly by virtue of its roadside location and as such is likely to result in significant detriment of the character, appearance and visual amenities of the area and the Forest of Bowland AONB landscape.

Landscape/Ecology:

The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, the report concludes that there was no evidence of the building having been utilised by bats for the purposes of roosting and the building, due to its condition, is of negligible potential for the roosting of bats.

As such, should consent be granted, there is no requirement to provide protected species mitigation to offset or mitigate the impacts of the development.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

It is for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that it is recommended that planning consent be refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning consent be refused for the following reason(s)

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 01 | The proposal is considered contrary to Key Statements DS1, DS2, and Policies DMG2 and DMH3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy insofar that approval would lead to the creation of a new residential dwelling in the Forest of Bowland AONB, located outside of a defined settlement boundary, without sufficient justification insofar that it has not been adequately demonstrated that the proposal is for that of local needs housing that meets a current identified and evidenced outstanding need. |
| 02 | The proposal is considered to be in direct conflict with Policy DMH4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy insofar that the building to be converted is visually read as being isolated on the landscape by virtue of not being part of nor forming part of a group of buildings. |
| 03 | The proposal, by virtue of the extent and scale of proposed residential curtilage, driveway/parking area and the likely visual impact of associated domestic paraphernalia such as sheds, washing lines, children's play equipment and fence lines would result in the introduction of an incongruous form of residential development which is overtly domestic and suburban in appearance which fails to reflect local distinctiveness, vernacular style or acknowledge the special qualities of the area or contribute or enhance its setting, being of significant detriment of the character, appearance and visual amenities of the area and the Forest of Bowland AONB contrary to Key Statement EN2 and Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. |
| 04 | The proposed conversion would lead to an unsustainable pattern of development, without sufficient or adequate justification, insofar that occupants of the residential dwelling would fail to benefit from adequate walkable access to local services or facilities - placing further reliance on the private motor-vehicle contrary to the aims and objectives of Key Statement DMI2 and Policies DMG2 and DMG3 of the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework presumption in favour of sustainable development. |