

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL



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my ref: RV/2012/ENQ/00046
your ref:
date: 12th April 2012

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Dear Mr Hartley,

PRE- APPLICATION ADVICE- WOLFEN MILL FISH HOUSE LANE, CHIPPING

I am writing in response to your request for pre- application advice in respect of the above- named site.

You enquired about the principle of conversion of 9 holiday lets into 5 dwellings. You included a site plan and covering letter, suggesting that an extension to the small detached cottage.

In assessing your proposal I have been mindful of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan Policies in respect of development within the open countryside (G5), the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ENV1) and policies with regard to conversion of buildings outside of settlement boundaries (H15, H16, and H17).

Development in the Open Countryside

Policy G5 of the Local Plan seeks to limit new development in the open countryside. It states that outside of the main settlement boundaries planning consent will only be granted for small- scale developments that are essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area; or needed for the purposes of agriculture or forestry; or sites developed for local needs housing; or small- scale tourism or recreational developments; or other small- scale uses appropriate to a rural area that conform to the policies of the Local Plan.

Development within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy ENV 1 relates to the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The policy states that development needs to contribute to the conservation and natural beauty of the area. The environmental impacts of proposals will be a major consideration and the design, materials, scale, massing and landscaping of development will be important factors in deciding planning applications. The protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment will be the most important considerations in the assessment of any development proposal.

The development's impact on the AONB will be considered at planning application stage. You stated in your supporting material that no external alterations are proposed. If this is the case, the development is likely to be acceptable in terms of this policy,

however changes to the residential curtilage, extensions or unsympathetic alterations would be inadvisable.

Conversions of Barns and Other Buildings to Dwellings

Policies H15, H16, and H17 of the Local Plan provide guidance in the determination of proposals for conversions for buildings outside of settlement boundaries.

Policy H15 relates to the location of the building to be converted, which states that the conversion of appropriate buildings within settlements or which form part of already defined groups is acceptable. I am confident that this proposal is in line with the policy as it relates to a group of buildings, with existing access, and proximate to Chipping.

Policy H16 relates to the building itself. It states that the building should be structurally sound and capable of conversion, without the need for extensive building or further alterations, which would adversely affect its character or appearance. The building should be of sufficient size to provide for minimal living accommodation without the need for further extensions, which would harm the character or appearance of the building. The building should be in appropriate materials and worthy of retention because of its intrinsic interest. The building should have a genuine history of use for agriculture or other rural enterprise.

I am confident that the building for conversion fulfils all of the above criteria. However, in your supporting statement, you suggest that an extension may be sought to the detached cottage. This would normally be resisted under the policy H16, which states that the building to be converted should be of a sufficient size to provide minimal living accommodation without further extensions.

Policy H17 relates to design matters. Proposals for conversions will be permitted where the design of the conversion is of a high standard and is in keeping with local tradition, particularly in terms of materials, geometric form and window and door openings.

In your supporting letter you state that no external alterations are proposed, though if this changes at planning application stage, any design features will have to be sensitive to the existing materials and character of the building. New window or door openings should be avoided.

Another concern in design terms, at planning application stage would be the extent of the domestic curtilage, which should preferably be kept within its existing boundaries.

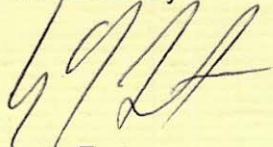
Conclusion

In assessing the proposal against the above policies, it is clear that the principal of residential conversion of the Wolfen Mill complex is acceptable in planning terms, subject to the considerations in terms of design, and impacts on the AONB that I have outlined above.

Please be mindful of the fact that the above advice has been given on the basis of the level of information submitted as part of the pre-application enquiry, which sought guidance on the principle of development on this site.

I trust that you find the above observations of use and stress that they represent officer opinions only, at the time of writing, given without prejudice to the final determination of the application submitted.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Fort', written in a cursive style.

Gareth Fort
Pre – application advice officer

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