

Item 3f	15/00058/FUL
Case Officer	Iain Crossland
Ward	Euxton South Ward
Proposal	Change of use of 1 no. barn (Microprocessor Offices) to 1 no. dwelling including single storey extension
Location	The Barn Dean Hall Lane Euxton Chorley PR7 6ER
Applicant	Mr John Ashcroft
Consultation expiry:	27 February 2015
Decision due by:	24 March 2015

Recommendation

It is recommended that this application is approved subject to conditions.

Executive Summary

The main issues to consider are whether the proposal would result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the impact on neighbour amenity.

Representations

Euxton Parish Council: No comments have been received	
In total 3 representations have been received from 2 addresses, which are summarised below	
Objection	
Total No. received:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The development of the boundary wall would encroach onto the public highway and would be inappropriate to the character of the barn and locality• The application form states that the existing roof is slate but it is asbestos as should be disposed of in accordance with existing laws• The barn is in business use, with vans making regular visits, and is not unused and deteriorating• The proposal would result in a materially larger building• The enlargements would be visible from the lane• Large vehicles will continue to access the lane despite the change of use as the owner has an HGV licence and owns a large vehicle and farm machinery• The building is capable of continued use for commercial purposes.• Who will live in the barn and the main house?• Why is disabled accommodation being included?• The dwelling at Rose Hill House is not identified on the Location Plan or Site Plan nor is the applicants current dwelling• The inaccuracies within the proposal present an incorrect representation of the situation	

Consultees

Consultee	Summary of Comments received
LCC Highways	Have no objections to the proposal in principle, however, unless the proposed single storey extension can be set back away from the footpath and the submitted plans amended to show the applicant's true site boundary, it is recommend that the application is not approved at this stage.

Assessment

The Site

1. The application site forms part of an active farm holding, located at the eastern end of Dean Hall Lane in a rural part of Euxton that is washed over by Green Belt. The site comprises a former barn building that has most recently been in use as a light industrial and office building, and some surrounding land that is used for access and parking.
2. The building is of a traditional design and has been altered in the past through the addition of window and door openings in association with the commercial use. The building is faced in red brick and natural stone. It has a dual pitched roof laid in manmade roof panels and there are timber framed window frames and door openings. There is a yard and turning area to the side and rear of the building.
3. The character of the area is predominantly open agricultural land with agricultural buildings and small clusters of dwellings in a variety of designs and types.

The Proposal

4. The proposed development is the change of use of an existing building from a light industrial and office unit (Class B1c) to a residential dwellinghouse. This would incorporate a single storey addition projecting approximately 3.75m south east elevation. It would be approximately 10.8m in width and would have a mono pitched roof with a ridge and eaves height of approximately 3.7m and 2.4m respectively. There would also be a parking and turning area with garden curtilage.

Assessment

The main issues are as follows:-

Issue 1 – Impact on the Green Belt

Issue 2 – Neighbour amenity

Issue 3 – Impact on character and appearance

Issue 4 – Impact on highways/access

Issue 5 – Public Open Space (POS)

Principle of the Development

5. The Central Lancashire Core Strategy Policy 1: Locating Growth, criteria f) states that development 'in other places' – will typically be small scale and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need.
6. Paragraph 55 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances. This includes where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting. In this respect the proposal is in accordance with the Framework.
7. Paragraph 90 states that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. This includes the re-use of buildings provided that they are of permanence and substantial construction.
8. Paragraph 89 confirms that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt. An exception to this is the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. In this respect the proposal is in accordance with the Framework.
9. The Inspector has issued her Partial Report on her findings into the soundness of the Chorley Local Plan, which is a material consideration in the consideration of any planning application.

10. In summary, the plan is considered to be legally compliant. In relation to soundness, the plan is considered sound, with the exception of matters relating to Gypsies & Travellers.
11. Paragraph 18 of the Partial Report states: "For the avoidance of doubt, the Plan may not be adopted until it has been changed in accordance with all of the main modifications set out in the Appendix to this partial report and any which may be specified in the Appendix of my forthcoming supplementary report. However, because of the very advanced stage in the examination process that the main modifications set out in the attached Appendix have reached, significant weight should be attached to all policies and proposals of the Plan that are amended accordingly, where necessary, except for matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers.
12. It is therefore considered significant weight can be given to the policies and proposals of the emerging Local Plan, as amended by the main modifications.
13. Emerging Local Plan Policy HS9 covers the Conversion of Rural Buildings in the Green Belt. Although the proposal is not an agricultural building Policy HS9 is relevant and states that proposals for the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt will be allowed provided that all of the following criteria are met:
 - a) The proposal does not have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
 - b) The proposal would not harm the character or quality of the countryside or landscape;
 - c) The re-use of the building must not be likely to result in additional farm buildings which would have a harmful effect on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - d) If an agricultural building, it is not one substantially completed within ten years of the date of the application;
 - e) The building is of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without more than 30% reconstruction;
 - f) The building must be capable of conversion without the need for additions or alterations which would change its existing form and character. Particular attention will be given to curtilage formation which should be drawn tightly around the building footprint and the requirement for outbuildings, which should be minimal;
 - g) The building must already have, or there exists the capability of creating, a reasonable vehicular access to a public highway that is available for use without creating traffic hazards and without the need for road improvements which would have an undue environmental impact;
 - h) The development would not result in the loss of or damage to any important wildlife habitat or protected species.
14. The Central Lancashire Rural Development SPD (Oct 2012) provides additional information regarding the re-use of existing buildings in the Green Belt for residential use. It says that re-use for business, community or tourism purposes will usually be preferable to residential use because they typically require less alteration. Where business, community or tourism uses are not feasible, residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations and for some types of building. In these instances, the Councils will require the submission of a report demonstrating that it is not practical or financially viable to use the building for business, community or tourism purposes or where there is an amenity or environmental reason why these uses are not acceptable.
15. Policy 10: Employment Premises and Sites, deals specifically with buildings that have most recently been used for a B use class stating that there will be a presumption of them being retained for a B class use. A number of criteria are set out under which proposals for redevelopment for other uses will be considered. These are considered below.
16. a) *There would not be an unacceptable adverse impact on the type, quality and quantity of employment land supply:*
The original planning approval for the use of the building as a light industrial and office unit included a condition restricting the use light industrial with ancillary office

accommodation only. This restriction was imposed to retain control of the development in order to protect the amenity of nearby residential dwellings. This impacts on the marketability of the site through such a specific restriction. The unit is contained within a confined site close to a dwellinghouse and within the ownership of the dwellinghouse and farm. As such the unit would not realistically become available on the open market and in reality does not contribute to the employment land supply.

17. *b) The provision and need for the proposed use:*

It is not considered that there is any specific need for the proposed use or lack of provision.

18. *c) The relative suitability of the site for employment and for alternative use:*

The site is located in a rural area and is accessed via a narrow country lane from the A581. The site is not accessible by public transport and is close to residential properties. As such it is not a sustainable location for an employment use. Although the Framework states that Local Authorities should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, the building is tied to the neighbouring dwelling and farm, and as the occupiers of the dwelling have no intention of allowing the building to be used for employment purposes there is no realistic prospect of the site being made available for employment use. On this basis a domestic use is more suitable for this specific site.

19. *d) The location of the site and its relationship to other uses*

The proximity of the unit to a residential dwellinghouse is a key factor as a commercial use other than one that is in connection with the dwelling itself is likely to impact negatively on the amenity of the occupiers of Rose Hill Farm and other residential properties along Dean Hall Lane. In this instance a domestic use as proposed would have a lower impact and would be more appropriate to the location than an employment use.

20. *e) Whether the ability to accommodate smaller scale requirements would be compromised*

The unit can only be used as a light industrial unit with ancillary office use and is already limited in scale, which restricts its potential and flexibility as a viable employment unit. It is notable that the unit is contained within a confined site close to a dwellinghouse and within the ownership of the dwellinghouse. As such the unit would not realistically become available on the open market and in reality does not contribute to the employment land supply. As such the ability to accommodate smaller scale requirements would not be compromised.

21. *f) There would be a net improvement in amenity.*

The proposal would make use of an existing building that is currently vacant and in a state of disrepair. As such, it would result in an improvement to the amenity in the area through an improvement in the appearance of the site. In addition disturbance through noise and the coming and going of delivery vehicles along the lane would be removed.

22. *g) convincing evidence of lack of demand through a rigorous and active 12 month marketing period for employment re-use and employment redevelopment;*

The unit has been vacant for some time and has not been marketed for employment use due to its condition and proximity to the dwellinghouse also within the ownership of the applicant. As such the unit would not realistically become available on the open market as it is effectively controlled by the owners of the adjacent dwellinghouse and farm.

23. *h) an assessment of the viability of employment development including employment re-use and employment redevelopment.*

The unit is poorly located to serve as an employment unit for a business other than that carried out by the occupiers of Rose Hill Farm, due to its isolated location, poor transport links and proximity to residential uses. The building is not viable as an employment use or redevelopment in its own right as it is effectively controlled by the owners of the adjacent dwellinghouse and farm, who own the unit.

Impact on the Green Belt

24. The conversion scheme incorporates a single storey extension to the south east side of the building comprising a side extension to provide additional living accommodation. The originally submitted plans included a wrap-around extension to the south east and south west elevations but the section to the south west elevation has been omitted from the plans as it would have resulted in an unacceptable volume increase and character change to the original building.
25. The Framework allows extensions to existing buildings as long as they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. However, Policy HS9 of the emerging Chorley Local Plan and specifically criteria (a) requires the re-use of buildings not to have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt whilst criteria (f) requires a scheme not to change the existing form and character of the building. The revised scheme and extension to the south east elevation would be subservient to the scale of the existing building and would result in the original volume of the building being increased by approximately 24%, which would not have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and would not compromise the form and character of the building.
26. It is considered that the additional volume created by the extension would not lead to the resultant dwelling having a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing building.
27. The curtilage boundary would be drawn tightly around the property allowing for a reasonable degree of amenity space without impacting on the Green Belt and the building itself is of permanent and substantial construction.
28. On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal would not result in any inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity

29. The application building is located approximately 7m from the dwellinghouse at Rose Hill Farm, which is within the ownership of the applicant. The application property would have windows to habitable rooms at first floor and ground floor in the south west elevation. It is noted that there are windows to habitable rooms in the first floor and ground floor elevations of the eastern elevation of Rose Hill Farm. Although the application property would be visible from these windows the windows of the two properties would not be parallel and would not result in any direct views or subsequent loss of privacy.
30. The windows in the first floor and ground floor south west elevation of the application property would provide views across the farm yard area of Rose Hill Farm. As such they would not result in any loss of privacy to the occupiers of Rose Hill Farm.
31. The physical alterations to the application property would incorporate a single storey rear extension to the south east elevation. This would be located approximately 12m to the east of Rose Hill Farm and would have a negligible impact on light or outlook in relation to this property.
32. The application property would be located approximately 8.5m from the boundary with Rosehill House to the north west and approximately 9.5m from the property itself. There would be a window to a habitable room in the north west elevation of the application property at first floor. This would face the side elevation of an attached garage with habitable accommodation in the roof space at Rosehill House. Although there would be a window to the habitable room in the roof space this is obscure glazed and not parallel therefore no loss of privacy would occur.
33. It is noted that the window in the north west elevation of the application property would be less than 10m from the boundary with Rosehill House, however, it would not provide any

views over the private intimate amenity space at Rosehill House and would not result in any unacceptable impact on privacy.

34. The extended part of the application property would not be visible from Rosehill House. There would be no detrimental impact on light privacy or outlook as a result.
35. The impact on general neighbour amenity would improve as a result of the change in use as there would be no commercial operation from the building with the potential for noise generation from within the building and the need of deliveries and vehicle movements related to commercial activity would be removed.

Impact on character and appearance

36. The proposed development would involve alterations to convert the existing building (currently used as workshops, offices and storage) into a four bedroom dwelling. A single storey extension would be added to the south east side of the building projecting approximately 3.75m from that elevation covering the entire width.
37. The existing building retains the appearance of an agricultural barn, despite the more recent addition of window and door openings that are more domestic in nature. The form of the building has been retained as have certain features such as the ventilation spaces and stone skirting. The roofing has at some point been replaced with manmade panels. Overall the appearance of the building has been compromised by previous alterations and the building appears neither domestic nor agricultural. Its lack of recent use has led to a sense of disrepair and the building does not contribute positively to the character of the area.
38. The proposed development would bring the building back into use and would retain the features of interest that still remain. The replacement of the roof panels with natural slates would contribute towards the property regaining some of its original character. The extension to the south east elevation would be modest in scale, commensurate with the original building and would not be prominent in the street scene despite being visible from the south east of the lane. As such the physical alterations would not alter the existing form and character to an unacceptable extent.
39. The curtilage would be tightly defined around the property with a vehicular access, driveway and parking to the north west side, hardstanding to the south west side and a lawn and garden to the south east side, with a hedge to the boundary. Details for the remaining boundary treatments are recommended to be required by condition. A better defined boundary would improve the appearance of the site as it exists currently.
40. The overall changes to the building are likely to improve the appearance of the property and would contribute positively to the character of the area. The development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026.

Impact on highways/access

41. The proposed development would result in a four bedroom dwelling. There would be a driveway and off street car parking available for at least three vehicles. This meets with the adopted parking standards set out in relation to policy ST4 of the emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026.
42. Vehicular access would be created between the application building and Rosehill House. The property is located at the end of the lane and as a result the impact on highway safety through the creation of such an access would be limited.
43. The Lancashire County Council highway's officer has no objections to the proposal in principle, however, it was stated that the land immediately adjacent to the north east side of the site is in the ownership of LCC. This would result in encroachment. Although this is not a planning matter the scheme was amended to remove the proposed boundary wall.

Further evidence from the Land Registry demonstrates that the proposed extension can be accommodated entirely within land under the ownership of the applicant.

Public Open Space

44. The National Planning Practice Guidance was updated by Government on 28 November 2014 in respect of contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations. These measures were introduced to support small scale developers by reducing disproportionate burdens on developer contributions. The updated guidance confirms that such contributions should not be sought from small scale and self-build development. In particular, the guidance states that contributions should not be sought from developments of 10 units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1000m².
45. This development is for a single dwelling, which has a gross floorspace of less than 1000m².
46. In the case of this development there is no evidence at this time, which is directly related to the development, to seek a contribution towards public open space contrary to the national guidance.

Other matters

47. It was observed from the officer's site visit that the roof is laid in manmade panels and not slate as stated on the application form. The removal and disposal of the asbestos panels is not a planning matter and is governed by separate Health and Safety Executive legislation through the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
48. It is known that the lawful use of the barn is for light industrial business (B1c) and it was noted from the officer's site visit that the unit was not occupied at the time of the visit.
49. Who will live in the barn is not a material planning consideration.
50. The provision of accommodation for disabled people has no bearing on the assessment of the application and is not a material planning matter.
51. The officer's site visit established the relationship with surrounding properties. An independent assessment of the application has been made with the aid of desk based research using previous planning records and through an officer's site visit to establish the situation on site. The assessment is described above.

Overall Conclusion

52. The proposed development would have no unacceptable detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and would result in an overall improvement in the appearance of the site and character of the area. There would be no unacceptable impact on the Green Belt and the loss of the employment use is considered acceptable. In addition it is considered that safe access and adequate parking would be provided. On the basis of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

Planning Policies

53. In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposals has had regard to guidance contained with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the development plan and the emerging Local Plan 2012-2026. The specific policies/ guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.

Planning History

Ref: 00/00972/COU Decision: WDN Decision Date: 28 February 2001
Description: Change of use of barn to dwelling,

Ref: 01/00444/COU Decision: PERFPP Decision Date: 1 August 2001
Description: Change of use of barn to dwelling including single storey rear and side extensions,

Ref: 13/00182/FUL Decision: WDN Decision Date: 30 April 2013
Description: Change of use of barn from microprocessor manufacturing/office to dwelling including single storey extension

Ref: 13/00960/FUL Decision: WDN Decision Date: 2 July 2014
Description: Change of use of 1 no. barn (Microprocessor Offices) to 1 no. dwelling including single storey extension

Ref: 82/00806/FUL Decision: PERFPP Decision Date: 3 May 1983
Description: Use of barn as offices for microprocessor development and production

Ref: 79/01386/FUL Decision: PERFPP Decision Date: 17 March 1980
Description: Retention of existing and proposed additional Riding Stables

Suggested Conditions

No.	Condition									
1.	<p>The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission. Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>									
2.	<p>Notwithstanding the details shown on the submitted plans, the proposed car parking and driveway to the side of the property shall be constructed using permeable materials on a permeable base, or provision shall be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the boundaries of the property (rather than to the highway), unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to prevent flooding</p>									
3.	<p>Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced, full details of the position, height and appearance of all fences and walls to be erected (notwithstanding any such detail shown on the approved plans) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The dwelling shall not be occupied until all fences and walls shown in the approved details to bound its plot have been erected in conformity with the approved details. Reason: To ensure a visually satisfactory form of development, to provide reasonable standards of privacy to residents</p>									
4.	<p>A scheme for the landscaping of the development and its surroundings shall be submitted prior to the commencement of the development. These details shall include all existing trees and hedgerows on the land; detail any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development; indicate the types and numbers of trees and shrubs to be planted, their distribution on site, those areas to be seeded, paved or hard landscaped; and detail any changes of ground level or landform, proposed finished levels, means of enclosure, minor artefacts and structures.</p> <p>All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of any buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory landscaping scheme for the development is carried out to mitigate the impact of the development and secure a high quality design.</p>									
5.	<p>The external facing materials, detailed on the approved plans and application form, shall be used and no others substituted. Reason: To ensure that the materials used are visually appropriate to the locality.</p>									
6.	<p>The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="320 1760 1254 1883"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1760 600 1794">Plan Ref.</td> <td data-bbox="600 1760 879 1794">Received On:</td> <td data-bbox="879 1760 1254 1794">Title:</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1794 600 1827"></td> <td data-bbox="600 1794 879 1827">19 March 2015</td> <td data-bbox="879 1794 1254 1827">Location Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1827 600 1861">LF/JA/2918a</td> <td data-bbox="600 1827 879 1861">19 March 2015</td> <td data-bbox="879 1827 1254 1883">Existing and Proposed Plans, Elevations and Site Plan</td> </tr> </table> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning</p>	Plan Ref.	Received On:	Title:		19 March 2015	Location Plan	LF/JA/2918a	19 March 2015	Existing and Proposed Plans, Elevations and Site Plan
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7.	<p>Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, B, C, D) or any subsequent re-enactment thereof no extension or alteration to</p>									

	<p>the dwelling shall be erected carried out other than those expressly authorised by this permission. Reason: In the interests of neighbour amenity and the character and appearance of the property.</p>
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