

Representations

Croston Parish Council: fully supports this application.

In total 1 representation has been received which is summarised below

- The single representation received queries the works required to facilitate access to the site from Grape Lane close to the junction with Syd Brook Lane. Comment is made that the current entrance will need to be widened to accommodate delivery vehicles.

These details have now been supplied and are included within the condition appertaining to 'approved plans'.

Consultees

Consultee	Summary of Comments received
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit	No objections raised, informatives have been suggested.
Lancashire County Council Highways	No objections.
Lancashire County Council Archaeology	No objections, conditions have been suggested.
Lancashire Police Architectural Liaison	No objections, suggestions made regarding design.
Lead Flood Authority	No objections subject to suggested conditions.

Assessment

Planning Policy Position

1. 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 Local Plan (2015) and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposal has had regard to guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the development plan. The specific policies/ guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.
2. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that the Local Planning Authority has a primary duty in relation to listed buildings to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Policy 16 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, 'Heritage Assets' and Policy BNE8, 'Protection and Enhancement of Heritage Assets' of the Adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015) seek to protect and enhance the Borough's heritage. Also of relevance is Section 12 of the Framework.

Description of the site

3. Croston Hall Estate is a small fragment of a once expansive country estate that dates back to the Norman Conquest. At least three hall buildings have occupied the site previously, the last being designed by Edward Welby Pugin (son of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, the high priest of Gothic Revival in England in the first half of the 19th Century and famous for buildings such as the Palace of Westminster, Scarisbrick Hall and Stoneyhurst College, amongst others) in the Victorian Gothic Revival style. This building was regrettably demolished in the 1960s and all that remains are some piles of rubble that fill the former cellars, the Chapel of the Holy Cross, the former stable block and the former kennel building. Much of the designed landscape, which is of considerable historic significance, remains. This includes a sizeable fish pond, walled garden and formal tree planting.
4. The site lies within the Croston Conservation Area, designated by Chorley Borough Council in 1969 and the Chapel of the Holy Cross is grade II listed. The site is also within the Green Belt and to a large extent is surrounded by open countryside on the south eastern fringe of Croston.
5. The site includes a significant number of mature trees, many of which dating from the original planting scheme. The previous owner undertook considerable work to these trees to weed out self-sown saplings and poorer examples to restore the original splendour of the parkland. The current owner has replanted the historic avenue of lime trees that line the carriage drive (outside the current application site) as part of the wider plan to restore at least some of the magnificence of this fine country estate.
6. Consent has previously been granted for the repair and conversion of the former stable block and kennels to single residential units – i.e. two dwellings in total (00/00480/COU and 00/00488/COU). This permission has been effectively implemented with strengthening and rebuilding works undertaken to the stable block and full repairs to the kennels having been completed.

Assessment

Principle of development

7. Policy 1 of the Adopted Core Strategy, which was adopted post Framework and as such is compliant with The Framework, states:

Focus growth and investment on well located brownfield sites and the Strategic Location of Central Preston, the Key Service Centres of Chorley and Leyland and the other main urban areas in South Ribble, whilst protecting the character of suburban and rural areas. Some greenfield development will be required on the fringes of the main urban areas. To promote vibrant local communities and support services, an appropriate scale of growth and investment will be encouraged in identified Local Service Centres, providing it is in keeping with their local character and setting, and at certain other key locations outside the main urban areas.

Growth and investment will be concentrated in:

- (a) The Preston/South Ribble Urban Area comprising:
- i. The Central Preston Strategic Location and adjacent inner city suburbs, focussing on regeneration opportunities in Inner East Preston, the Tithebarn Regeneration Area and the New Central Business District Area in particular.
 - ii. The northern suburbs of Preston, focussing on Local Centres, with greenfield development within the Cottam Strategic Site and the North West Preston Strategic Location.
 - iii. The settlements south of the River Ribble, comprising:
 - Penwortham, focussing on the regeneration of the District Centre, but with some greenfield development at the South of Penwortham and North of Farington Strategic Location.
 - Lostock Hall, focussing on the regeneration of brownfield sites.
 - Bamber Bridge, focussing on the regeneration of the District Centre and brownfield sites.
 - Walton-le-Dale, Higher Walton, focussing on brownfield sites.
- (b) The Key Service Centres of:
- ii. Leyland / Farington, focussing on regeneration of Leyland Town Centre* and brownfield sites.
 - iii. Chorley Town, focussing on the regeneration of the Town Centre* but with some greenfield development.
 - iv. Longridge, where land within Central Lancashire may be required to support the development of this Key Service Centre in Ribble Valley.
- (c) Strategic Sites allocated at:
- i. BAE Systems, Samesbury – employment
 - ii. Cuerden (Lancashire Central) – employment
 - iii. Buckshaw Village – mixed use
- (d) Some growth and investment will be encouraged at the following Urban Local Service Centres to help meet housing and employment needs:
- i. Adlington
 - ii. Clayton Brook/Green
 - iii. Clayton-le-Woods (Lancaster Lane)
 - iv. Coppull
 - v. Euxton
 - vi. Whittle-le-Woods
- (e) Limited growth and investment will be encouraged at the following Rural Local Service Centres to help meet local housing and employment needs and to support the provision of services to the wider area:
- i. Brinscall / Withnell
 - ii. Eccleston
 - iii. Longton

(f) In other places - smaller villages, substantially built up frontages and Major Developed Sites - development will typically be small scale and limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need, unless there are exceptional reasons for larger scale redevelopment schemes.

The policy confirms that growth and investment will be focussed on well-located brownfield sites and the Strategic Location of Central Preston, the Key Service Centres of Chorley and Leyland and the other main urban areas in South Ribble, whilst protecting the character of suburban and rural areas.

8. This part of the Borough is not identified for growth and although Policy 1 does allow for small scale development, limited to appropriate infilling, conversion of buildings and proposals to meet local need, a large scale development as proposed does not meet any of the criteria for such locations.
9. The site is also located within the Green Belt. National guidance on Green Belt is contained in Chapter 9 of the Framework which states:

79. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

80. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

87. As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

88. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

*89. A local planning authority should regard the **construction of new buildings as inappropriate** in Green Belt.*

10. There are exceptions to paragraph 89 although the proposed development does not fall into any of the exceptions. The proposed development therefore constitutes inappropriate development and as such the tests of paragraph 88 of the Framework are engaged. In this case very special circumstances need to be demonstrated which outweigh the harm the development will have to the Green Belt. These are considered further below.
11. The Adopted Central Lancashire Rural development SPD (2012) mirrors paragraph 89 of the Framework.

Applicants Case

12. In this case the agent has suggested the following as very special circumstances.
13. In addition to the Heritage Statement the application is also accompanied by a Heritage Commentary document. This describes the historical development of the site and demonstrates that there has been a long history of development on this site, there

being at least three hall buildings since the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066. In effect this document asserts that the proposed development will re-establish a building on the site of comparable scale to the previous halls and will effectively plug the gaping hole in the historical timeline and heritage of the area as a whole that was created when the last hall was demolished in the 1960s. The current situation is therefore akin to a rural manor bereft of its manor house. This application therefore seeks to rectify this situation with a building of suitable magnitude. It is clear from the public consultation exercises that the applicant has undertaken that many local people empathise with the desire to re-establish a hall building of suitable magnitude on the site and the proposal is widely welcomed.

14. Regeneration of the site will also facilitate the conservation of the historic designed landscape, which until the site was purchased by the current owner, was in very real danger of being lost forever through dereliction and neglect. The assertion is that allowing development and reuse of the site, it will enable the conservation of the heritage assets that remain.
15. Previously the site had been looted of many historic artefacts by opportunist thieves and vandals who removed stonework, statuary and other garden features. The current proposal seeks to restore at least some of these and will provide much needed security for the site and the artefacts that remain.
16. Once again the Croston Hall Estate will become the much missed historic metaphorical anchor that has for so long been missing from the settlement that roots its history back to the 11th Century and will serve to re-establish the communal value of the site.
17. In short the Heritage Commentary concludes that the regeneration of this lost estate will provide benefit to the wider community, which clearly places great importance on conserving heritage assets both now and for future generations.
18. The Special Circumstances document submitted with the application begins by examining the reasons why Green Belt areas are defined as follows:
 - a. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas – Croston is not a large built-up area.
 - b. To prevent neighbouring towns merging – Croston and its neighbouring settlements are villages that show no sign of merging.
 - c. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment – The site in question has been established for over 500 years and has been mapped since at least the earliest maps – 1837 tithe map. The proposal respects these long established boundaries and does not therefore represent encroachment.
 - d. To preserve the setting and character of historic towns – the site forms part of the historic, Medieval, pattern of development in Croston and the proposed development will preserve that setting and character.
 - e. To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land – In effect this proposal is for the regeneration of derelict land that happens to be in the Green Belt.
19. The Special Circumstances document continues by describing the historical development of the site, that there has been a hall building within the site since the 11th Century. Although the last hall building is no longer extant, many of the ancillary buildings and the designed landscape remain. Indeed historical research demonstrates that the Medieval patterns of field and estate boundaries are well defined in Croston and that the Croston Hall Estate perpetuates these historic boundaries. It is both unfortunate and unusual that the manorial estate, established since the 11th Century has, relatively speaking, only lost its hall in recent times. It is particularly unfortunate as the building survived the immediate post-war period of decline in the numbers of country houses where many were lost to avoid payment of prohibitive death duties.

20. Croston's medieval layout survives remarkably well, with the Croston Hall Estate as an integral feature of this. The current proposal will not only reinstate the missing focal point, the hall, from that layout but will also facilitate the conservation of the designed historic landscape and enable further archaeological research into the previous hall site – which for legal reasons cannot be redeveloped - that will facilitate a greater understanding of the history of the site overall.
21. It is suggested that the potential benefits in repairing and conserving the historic designed landscape will improve the character of the Green Belt at this point and that these benefits outweigh any harm caused.
22. The document provides examples of other similar houses that have been developed in the Green Belt:
 - Hitchambury Farm – Seymour Smith Architects, granted permission at appeal in September 2014. In this case in addition to exemplary design the very special circumstances cited are the use of better than zero carbon construction by exporting energy to the grid and exceeding Passivhaus standards. The Inspector also referred to the enhancement of damaged or derelict land.
 - The Burrows – Paul Tesla Architecture, Stocksbridge near Sheffield, granted in September 2012. Again paragraph 55 and exemplary design were quoted and once again the enhancement of a derelict site was cited as the requisite very special circumstance.
23. The document continues with other 'special circumstances' as outlined in the Framework.
 - Where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets. Whilst the remaining structures and landscape are non-designated, they are clearly heritage assets as remaining elements of a surviving historic designed landscape and a medieval pattern of development. The proposed development will secure the surviving historic features and provide them with a sustainable and secure future.
 - Where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting – The proposed development will see the re-use of currently redundant buildings and the re-establishment of the historic landscape, thus enhancing the wider conservation area in which the site sits.
24. The statement adds the following information as justification for the proposed development. Paragraph 6 of the Framework states:
The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development', whereby sustainable development is separated into three categories:
 - Economic – If granted the development will, wherever possible, use local craftsmen who will be employed for approximately two years. Whilst of only a temporary nature this will still have economic benefits for the area and could enhance property values in the area;
 - Social – evidence of public consultation shows overwhelming support for the development. The proposals will allow public access to the Church of the Holy Cross on an albeit limited basis and it is intended to produce an exhibition to showcase the results of the archaeological investigations;
 - Environmental – The proposal will conserve an historic landscape but will also improve biodiversity and ecological significance through the careful reintroduction of native flora and fauna to the site and by improving the water quality of the fish pond which has become seriously degraded.

25. Finally the statement asserts that the building will exceed the Council's stated policy on sustainable development and meet the aspirations of the Framework by the adoption of a 'fabric first' approach, plus the use of ground source heat pumps and solar p.v. which are anticipated to enable excess supply to be sold back to the grid.

Assessment of Very Special Circumstances

26. The two examples put forward by the applicants in respect of similar large dwellings that have been approved in the Green Belt since the publication of the Framework are different to the situation at Croston as the designs are specific to the landscape and the proposals involved the erection of a house constructed to Passivhaus standards.
27. The supporting information considers that the proposal does not result in encroachment into the countryside. However, the main part of the proposal (the large detached dwellinghouse) is located on previously undeveloped land within the walled garden which has always been free of built development. Although there has historically been a house within the grounds, this was located in a different position to the proposed dwelling and subsequently the remains of the permanent structure, or fixed surface structure, have blended into the landscape in the process of time. As such the proposal will result in the encroachment of built development into the countryside contrary to one of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Similarly it is not considered that the proposal assists in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land as suggested by the applicant as the land is not derelict. However, it is important to note that the proposal is specific to this site and would not have the same justification on derelict and other urban land which this purpose relates to.
28. Whilst the sustainability credentials of the proposed dwelling are noted and commended, it is important to note that the proposal does not propose a house constructed to Passivhaus standards (as is the case in the other two approved examples) and it is not considered that the sustainability principles forwarded in support of the proposal outweighs the harm to the Green Belt.
29. The proposal represents inappropriate development and conflicts with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Substantial weight is afforded to the harm caused by the development by virtue of its inappropriateness and the harm to the openness of the Green Belt. However in the case of this site it is considered that the following points are material to the consideration of the proposal:
- The proposed development will re-establish a building on the site of comparable scale to the previous halls and will effectively plug the gaping hole in the historical timeline and heritage of the area as a whole that was created when the last hall was demolished in the 1960s.
 - Regeneration of the site will facilitate the conservation of the historic designed landscape. Allowing the development and reuse of the site will enable the conservation of the heritage assets that remain.
 - The current proposal seeks to restore some of the historic artefacts and will provide security for the site and the artefacts that remain.
 - The Croston Hall Estate will become the historic metaphorical anchor that has for so long been missing from the settlement that roots its history back to the 11th Century and will serve to re-establish the communal value of the site.
 - Croston's medieval layout survives remarkably well, with the Croston Hall Estate as an integral feature of this. The current proposal will reinstate the missing focal point, the hall, from that layout but will also facilitate the conservation of the designed historic landscape and enable further archaeological research into the previous hall site.
 - The proposed development will secure the surviving historic features and provide them with a sustainable and secure future.
 - The proposed development will see the re-use of currently redundant buildings and the re-establishment of the historic landscape, thus enhancing the wider conservation area in which the site sits.

30. The scale of the proposed dwelling is quite substantial, however it is comparable to the scale of the Pugin designed hall that was demolished in the 1960s and is considered to be of appropriate magnitude to plug the hole in the historical timeline of development within the site. A manor house, which is in essence what the proposed development will be, needs to be of a certain scale to provide it with the required gravitas. In this case, it is considered that the proposed development meets this requirement, but is not excessive.

Other Considerations

31. Paragraph 55 of the Framework states that, '*...Local authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:(fourth bullet point) The exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling. Such a design should:*
- *Be truly outstanding or innovative, helping raise standards of design more generally in rural areas;*
 - *Reflect the highest standards in architecture*
 - *Significantly enhance its immediate setting; and*
 - *Be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.'*
32. There is no inherent reason why the innovative aspects of the scheme would have to be located in the Green Belt and paragraph 55 of the Framework does not specifically deal with the Green Belt. On the other hand, the Framework does not require a sequential approach when looking at the merits of proposals in the Green Belt and there is nothing to say that the special circumstances in paragraph 55 should not apply in the Green Belt.
33. As the Framework states, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard more generally, which reflect the highest standards in architecture, which significantly enhance the immediate setting and which are sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. This does not automatically mean a good design should result in the relaxation of Green Belt policy. However, truly innovative and exemplar design when taken in combination with the wider impacts on the wider Green Belt may, in very exceptional cases, be justifiable.
34. The issue raised by paragraph 55 of the Framework has been, on the advice of the Council, tested in terms of an assessment of the quality of architecture proposed by opening up the proposal, prior to submission of the application, to independent scrutiny by the Places Matter Design Review Panel. They overwhelmingly support the proposal, praising the quality of the design and agreeing that it is of exceptional quality. It should be stressed that outstanding or innovative design need not always be of a contemporary style. There are a number of similar cases throughout the country where in fact a traditional, classically inspired design has been considered by the local design review panel to be of an equally high quality and innovative nature as any contemporary design. One such design is that for a new dwelling in Warwickshire, where Rugby Borough Council approved a substantial and quite prominent classically designed house in the open countryside (reference R13/2000) in December 2014. It is therefore considered that the requirements of the Framework in respect to paragraph 55 have been met and that the principle of development is acceptable by virtue of the high quality innovative design. The design is also considered to achieve all the design objectives set out in paragraphs 56, 57, and 60 – 65 of the Framework.
35. Pertinent Policies are: Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012), Policy 17; Adopted Central Lancashire Design SPD (2012); Adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015), Policy BNE1.
36. A key thrust of these policies is the desire to encourage high quality and innovative design. Paragraph 56 of the Framework states that, '*The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute*

positively to making places better for people'. Paragraph 57 continues, 'It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider development schemes.'

37. Paragraphs 60 – 65 not only reinforce the need for good design and design which responds to context, but also the benefits of using independent design review arrangements to ensure high standards of design. Paragraph 63 states that, *'In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area.'* Paragraph 65 concludes that, *'Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design.'*
38. On advice from the Council, the applicant sought the independent advice of the Places Matter Design Review Panel prior to the submission of the application. The comments received from the Design Review Panel confirm that the proposed design is high quality.
39. It is therefore considered that the proposal represents the highest quality of design and that consequently it accords with the aforementioned policies.

Impact on the appearance of Croston Conservation Area and the significance of this designated heritage asset

40. Paragraphs 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are relevant to the *'Special considerations affecting planning functions'*.
Section 66 states:
In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
Without prejudice to section 72, in the exercise of the powers of appropriation, disposal and development (including redevelopment) conferred by the provision of sections 232, 233 and 235(1) of the principal act, a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.
Section 72 states:
In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
The provisions referred to in subsection(1) are the planning acts and Part 1 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.
41. In this particular instance Section 72 is pertinent as the site is located within the Croston Conservation Area. Whilst this conservation area was designated in 1969, after the Pugin designed Croston Hall building had been demolished, it was, and still is, recognised that this site was always occupied by a substantial building that was in part framed by the entrance and carriage drive but also by the abundance of trees that continue to maintain the historic sylvan setting.
42. The designed landscape including the fishpond and the former ancillary buildings are key remnants of the historic landscape and this part of the Croston Conservation Area. The sympathetic and informed design process that the applicant's agent has followed, after consultation with the case officer, is considered to preserve the appearance of the conservation area at this point such that the requirements of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 have been met.

43. Paragraphs 129, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137 and 138 of the Framework (National Planning Policy Framework) are pertinent as are policy 16 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012) and policy BNE8 of the Adopted Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026.
44. Within the Framework paragraph 129 states that, 'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'
45. Paragraph 132 states, 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'
46. Paragraph 133 states, 'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
 - The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.'
47. Paragraph 134 states, 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.'
48. Paragraph 136 continues by stating that, 'Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.'
49. Paragraph 137 states that, 'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas or World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset should be treated favourably.'
50. Paragraph 138 states that, 'Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated as either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage site as a whole.'
51. The Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012), policy 16 refers to Heritage

Assets. This policy mirrors that given in the Framework and states that it seeks to, 'Protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting by:

a. Safeguarding heritage assets from inappropriate development that would cause harm to their significances.'

52. The Adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015), Policy BNE8 refers to the Protection and Enhancement of Heritage Assets. Essentially this policy mirrors the Framework. Paragraph b, states that, 'Applications will be granted where they sustain, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of the heritage asset itself and the surrounding historic environment and where they show consideration for the following: iii, The Conservation and, where appropriate, the enhancement of the setting of heritage assets.'
53. In this case the applicant, via their agent, undertook extensive pre-application discussions with the case officer as regards the design and overall impact of the proposed development upon the significance of the Croston Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset.
54. Furthermore the applicant commissioned and submitted a detailed Heritage Statement drawing upon previously published and unpublished research material. It is clear that the submitted proposal has been informed by the evidence cited within the heritage statement as the key elements that provide the site and the wider conservation area with their significance are recognised, and will be sustained or enhanced as a result of this proposal.
55. The proposal is considered to be sympathetic and respectful to the site and the conservation area as a whole and to enhance the site by providing it with a new and sustainable economic use that will conserve it for future generations.
56. This being the case it is considered that the requirements of the aforementioned policies have been met.

Impact on the amenity of neighbours

57. Pertinent Policies are: Adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015), Policy BNE1. This policy, amongst other things, suggests that any proposed development should not have an unacceptable impact upon the amenity currently enjoyed by neighbouring properties.
58. Given the size and nature of the site, the distance to the nearest neighbouring property, Mill Brow, (140 metres) and the abundance of mature trees within the site it is considered that the amenity currently enjoyed by any neighbouring property will not be adversely affected by the proposed development. As such the proposed development is considered to accord with the aforementioned policies.

Highway Safety and Parking

59. Pertinent Policies are: Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan (2015), Policy ST4.
60. LCC Highways have commented that they have no objection to the proposed development. Furthermore it meets the parking requirements as set out in the aforementioned policy.
61. The proposed development is consequently considered to accord with the aforementioned policy.

Flood Risk

62. Pertinent policies are: adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012), policy 29.
63. The Lead Flood Authority has provided comments on the application, including the

submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and consider the proposal to be acceptable subject to a number of conditions. These have been suggested as pre-commencement conditions and include the implementation of mitigation measures identified in the FRA, the submission of sustainable drainage details and the implementation thereof together with a scheme for their future management. Furthermore the design of the new dwelling has been adapted such that ground floor accommodation has floor levels raised above the required flood risk level.

64. As such the proposed development is considered to accord with the aforementioned policy.

Ecology

65. Pertinent policies are: Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012), Policy 22; and Adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015), Policy BNE9. These policies, together with other legislation, seek to safeguard protected and endangered species and their habitats.

66. The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit has commented on the application and the submitted surveys that accompany the application:

- That the proposed development will not affect bat roosts.
- That the proposed development will not affect great crested newts.
- That the proposed development will not affect any sites designated for their nature conservation importance

67. A number of conditions and informatives are recommended that will safeguard these and other species that are not specifically protected but that are on the endangered list.

68. Also included are further conditions and informatives with respect to the potential for enhancement of habitats, which the applicant has already recognised and reflected in the proposed enhancements to wildlife habitats as part of the landscaping plans.

69. Overall the proposed development is considered to accord with the aforementioned policies.

Open Space

70. Pertinent Policies are: Adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015), Policies HS4A and HS4B. Adopted Central Lancashire Open Space and Playing Pitch SPD (2013). A Section 106 Agreement has been requested that seeks the following financial contributions with the associated heads of terms:

Amenity Greenspace

Local Plan Policy HS4A sets a standard of 0.73 hectares per 1,000 population.

There is currently a deficit of provision in Lostock in relation to this standard, a contribution towards new provision in the ward is therefore required from this development. The amount required is £140 per dwelling.

Provision for children/young people

Local Plan Policy HS4A sets a standard of 0.08 hectares per 1,000 population.

There is currently a deficit of provision in Lostock in relation to this standard, a contribution towards new provision in the ward is therefore required from this development. The amount required is £134 per dwelling.

Allotments

There is no requirement to provide allotment provision on site within this development.

The site is within the accessibility catchment (10 minutes' drive time) of a proposed new allotment site at Land East of Station Road Croston (HW5.4). A contribution towards new allotment provision is therefore required from this development. The amount required is £15 per dwelling.

Playing Pitches

A Playing Pitch Strategy was published in June 2012 which identifies a Borough wide deficit of playing pitches but states that the majority of this deficit can be met by improving existing pitches. A financial contribution towards the improvement of existing playing pitches is therefore required from this development. The Playing Pitch Strategy includes an Action Plan which identifies sites that need improvements. The amount required is £1,599 per dwelling.

THE TOTAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION REQUIRED FROM THIS DEVELOPMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

Amenity greenspace	= £140
Equipped play area	= £134
Parks/Gardens	= £0
Natural/semi-natural	= £0
Allotments	= £15
Playing Pitches	= £1,599
Total	= £1,888

CIL

71. The proposed development is liable for the community infrastructure levy.

Overall Conclusion

72. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):

- making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;
- moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature;
- replacing poor design with better design;
- improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and
- widening the choice of high quality homes

73. In terms of the three dimensions of sustainable development it is considers that the proposals contribute to these as follows:

Social Dimension	Economic Dimension	Environmental Dimension
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversion of existing buildings and bringing the site back into beneficial use.• Financial contributions towards local education and public services and infrastructure to be made through the CIL charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Infrastructure Levy payment• Off site open space contribution for sports pitches as required by Chorley Council.• The development will provide a high quality,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A high-quality, innovate design in accordance with Paragraph 55 of the Framework• 'Fabric first' approach, plus the use of ground source heat pumps and solar pv• Conservation of the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to public open space in Croston and Borough wide • Will secure the surviving historic features and provide them with a sustainable and secure future. • Restore some of the historic artefacts • Will re-establish the communal value of the site • Public access to the Church of the Holy Cross 	<p>innovatively designed house</p>	<p>historic designed landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will enhance the wider conservation area • Environmental enhancement of the landscape, improved habitats and species diversification.
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74. It is considered that the development of the site for a dwellinghouse is inappropriate development that would result in significant harm to the Green Belt. The benefits that have been identified by the applicants do not individually amount to very special circumstances however when taken together, cumulatively, they are material. Accordingly weight can be attached to those positive aspects of the development proposal as set out above.

75. The high quality and innovative design is not considered to be a very special circumstance in terms of Green Belt but does weigh in favour of the proposal in terms of contributing to sustainable development in respect of the proposal.

76. On balance, it is considered that very special circumstances have been demonstrated that outweigh the harm that would be caused to the Green Belt through inappropriateness and any other harm. Accordingly planning permission is recommended subject to the associated legal agreement.

77. If Members are minded to approve the application please note it is not open to Members to determine the application as it will have to be referred to the Secretary of State under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 as the proposal constitutes inappropriate development incorporating the provision of a building where the floor space to be created is 1,000 square metres or more. The Secretary of State will then determine whether he wants to call in the application for determination or whether this can be determined at the local level.

Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
00/00480/COU	Change of use and conversion of former kennels to dwelling	Approved	29 August 2000
00/00488/COU	Change of use of stables to dwelling	Approved	29 November 2000

Suggested Conditions

No.	Condition																																										
1.	<p>The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</p>																																										
2.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="379 533 1177 987"> <thead> <tr> <th>Drawing:</th> <th>Title:</th> <th>Date:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>159-01(02)003</td> <td>Proposed Site Plan</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)004</td> <td>Estate Landscaping Plan</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)005</td> <td>Garden Landscaping Plan</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)210</td> <td>Basement Floor Plan as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)211</td> <td>Ground Floor Plan as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)212</td> <td>First Floor Plan as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)213</td> <td>Second Floor Plan as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)214</td> <td>Roof Plan as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)215</td> <td>Proposed Kennel Layout</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)220</td> <td>Elevations as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)221</td> <td>Barns elevations as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(02)222</td> <td>Elevations as proposed</td> <td>02.06.2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td>159-01(09)010</td> <td>Proposed Secondary Site Access Temporary Works</td> <td>01.09.2015</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning</p>	Drawing:	Title:	Date:	159-01(02)003	Proposed Site Plan	02.06.2015	159-01(02)004	Estate Landscaping Plan	02.06.2015	159-01(02)005	Garden Landscaping Plan	02.06.2015	159-01(02)210	Basement Floor Plan as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)211	Ground Floor Plan as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)212	First Floor Plan as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)213	Second Floor Plan as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)214	Roof Plan as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)215	Proposed Kennel Layout	02.06.2015	159-01(02)220	Elevations as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)221	Barns elevations as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(02)222	Elevations as proposed	02.06.2015	159-01(09)010	Proposed Secondary Site Access Temporary Works	01.09.2015
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3.	<p>No development to the part of the proposal referred to as the 'sunken garden' on the site of the former Croston Hall shall commence and the dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the applicant has submitted to and received written approval for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A formal scheme of archaeological investigation on the former hall site before; 2. A detailed scheme for the creation of the garden features on the hall site which takes the results of the investigation into account; and 3. A scheme of archaeological recording or other works deemed to be necessary to mitigate the impact of the proposals. <p>Reason: To safeguard the historic site and ensure that appropriate records of any investigations are correctly catalogued.</p>																																										
4.	<p>Prior to the commencement of development samples of all external facing and roofing materials (notwithstanding any details shown on previously submitted plan(s) and specification) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the details as approved.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the materials used are visually appropriate to the locality.</p>																																										
5.	<p>Before the commencement of any works, full details of the proposed rainwater goods, including the eaves detail, to be used on the building shall have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works undertaken on site should be strictly in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the building</p>																																										
6.	<p>Prior to any works commencing details of the proposed fenestration (windows, doors and other joinery), to include full details at a scale of not less than 1:10 shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall then be undertaken strictly in accordance with the details as</p>																																										

	<p>approved.</p> <p>Reason: To maintain the integrity of the historic building</p>
7.	<p>All new dwellings are required to achieve a minimum Dwelling Emission Rate of 19% above 2013 Building Regulations.</p> <p>Reason: Policy 27 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy requires new dwellings to be built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 however following the Deregulation Bill 2015 receiving Royal Assent it is no longer possible to set conditions with requirements above a Code Level 4 equivalent. However as Policy 27 is an adopted Policy it is still possible to secure energy efficiency reduction as part of new residential schemes in the interests of minimising the environmental impact of the development.</p>
8.	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that each dwelling will meet the required Dwelling Emission Rate. The development thereafter shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: Policy 27 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy requires new dwellings to be built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 however following the Deregulation Bill 2015 receiving Royal Assent it is no longer possible to set conditions with requirements above a Code Level 4 equivalent. However as Policy 27 is an adopted Policy it is still possible to secure energy efficiency reductions as part of new residential schemes in the interests of minimising the environmental impact of the development. This needs to be provided prior to the commencement so it can be assured that the design meets the required dwelling emission rate.</p>
9.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until the applicant has received approval in writing from the Local Planning Authority for the details of a landscaping scheme, including works to the historic planned landscape and fishpond. Details are to include hard and soft landscaping works, planting schedules and method statement.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the integrity of the historic landscape.</p>
10.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until the applicant has received approval in writing from the Local Planning Authority for the details of the proposed works to the two bridges contained within the site boundary. Details are to include materials and method statements.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the integrity of the historic landscape and the significance of non-designated heritage assets.</p>
11.	<p>The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)(NW/AD/SS/36656-Rp001) and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limiting the surface water run-off to the proposed 3l/s so that it will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped site and not increase the risk of flooding off-site. 2. Provision of compensatory flood storage of 14.4m³ 3. Finished floor levels are set no lower than 9.5 m above Ordnance Datum (AOD). <p>The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority in consultation with the lead local flood authority.</p> <p>Reason</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of/disposal of

	<p>surface water from the site.</p> <p>2. To prevent flooding elsewhere by ensuring that compensatory storage of flood water is provided.</p> <p>3. To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants</p>
12.	<p>No development shall commence until further details of the design, based on sustainable drainage principles, and implementation of an appropriate surface water sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.</p> <p>Those details shall include, as a minimum:</p> <p>a) Information about the design storm period and intensity (1 in 30 & 1 in 100 year +30% allowance for climate change), discharge rates and volumes (both pre and post development), temporary storage facilities, the methods employed to delay and control surface water discharged from the site, and the measures taken to prevent flooding and pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters, including watercourses;</p> <p>b) The drainage strategy should demonstrate that the surface water run-off must not exceed the pre-development greenfield runoff rate which has been calculated at 10.4 litres per second. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.</p> <p>c) Any works required off-site to ensure adequate discharge of surface water without causing flooding or pollution (which should include refurbishment of existing culverts and headwalls or removal of unused culverts where relevant);</p> <p>d) Flood water exceedance routes, both on and off site;</p> <p>e) A timetable for implementation, including phasing as applicable;</p> <p>f) Evidence of an assessment of the site conditions to include site investigation and test results to confirm infiltrations rates;</p> <p>g) details of water quality controls, where applicable.</p> <p>The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of any of the approved dwellings, or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Thereafter the drainage system shall be retained, managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reasons</p> <p>1. To ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained.</p> <p>2. To ensure that there is no flood risk on or off the site resulting from the proposed development</p> <p>3. To ensure that water quality is not detrimentally impacted by the development</p> <p>Proposal.</p>
13.	<p>No development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the submitted details.</p> <p>The sustainable drainage scheme shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan.</p>

	<p>Reasons</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that the drainage for the proposed development can be adequately maintained. 2. To ensure that there is no flood risk on- or off-the site resulting from the proposed development or resulting from inadequate the maintenance of the sustainable drainage system.
14.	<p>No development shall commence until details of an appropriate management and maintenance plan for the sustainable drainage system for the lifetime of the development which, as a minimum, shall include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, management and maintenance by a Residents' Management Company b) arrangements concerning appropriate funding mechanisms for its on-going maintenance of all elements of the sustainable drainage system (including mechanical components) and will include elements such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. on-going inspections relating to performance and asset condition assessments ii. operation costs for regular maintenance, remedial works and irregular maintenance caused by less sustainable limited life assets or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime; c) means of access for maintenance and easements where applicable. <p>The plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of any of the approved dwellings, or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Thereafter the sustainable drainage system shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reasons</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that appropriate and sufficient funding and maintenance mechanisms are put in place for the lifetime of the development 2. To reduce the flood risk to the development as a result of inadequate maintenance 3. To identify the responsible organisation/body/company/undertaker for the sustainable drainage system.
15.	<p>External lighting associated with the development shall be minimal, designed to avoid excessive light spill and shall not illuminate potential bat habitat (e.g. hedgerow, trees) and or/ bird breeding places. In particular lighting of or along the River course should be avoided.. The principles of relevant guidance should be followed (e.g. the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Engineers guidance Bats and Lighting in the UK, 2009).</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of maintaining a favourable conservation status of bats on the site.</p>
16.	<p>No tree/ vegetation removal shall be undertaken during the bird nesting season (March to July inclusive) unless a survey for nesting birds has been first undertaken, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which demonstrates the absence of nesting birds.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the protection of any birds which may be nesting within trees/ vegetation which will be felled/ removed as part of the proposals</p>
17.	<p>During the construction period temporary fencing shall be erected along the bank of the river course to protect the river corridor and prevent debris and construction material from encroaching into this area. Prior to the</p>

	<p>commencement of the development full details of the temporary fencing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The fencing shall thereafter be retained during the construction and operational phase of the development in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure the protection of River Yarrow during the construction period.</p>
18.	<p>Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement shall be incorporated into the new development. These should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of bird and bat boxes, • creation of wildflower plantings, • planting of aquatic and marginal plants <p>Prior to the commencement of the construction of the dwellinghouse hereby permitted full details of the measures to be installed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development thereafter shall be completed in accordance with the approved measures.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure the continued protection of protected and their habitats and to maintain a favourable conservation status at the site</p>
19.	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the works to the Fish Pond shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In particular the details shall include a Method Statement detailing the proposed works along with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the measures for removing the existing fish prior to the works and their reinstatement into the pond following the works. • Details of new areas of reed within the restored pond • Details of new marginal and aquatic planting to be incorporated into the restored pond. • <p>Thereafter the works to the Fish Pond including the drain down shall be undertaken in late autumn/early winter and the pond shall be fully restored prior to the next spring following the works.</p> <p>Reason: to ensure the protection of common toads, to protect priority habitats for conservation, to ensure suitable habitat is maintained for toads to breed and to conserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the Pond.</p>
20.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until the applicant has received written approval from the Local Planning Authority for a scheme for the arrangements for public access to the Church of the Holy Cross that is located within the application site.</p> <p>Reason: To secure the public benefit proposed by the proposed development.</p>