

APPLICATION REPORT – 17/00924/FUL

Validation Date: 19 September 2017

Ward: Brindle And Hoghton

Type of Application: Full Planning

Proposal: Erection of extension to north facing side elevation of livestock building.

Location: Crossfields Bury Lane Withnell Chorley PR6 8BH

Case Officer: Chris Smith

Applicant: Mr J Savage

Agent: Mrs Mary Miller

Consultation expiry: 13 October 2017

Decision due by: 14 November 2017

RECOMMENDATION

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

SITE DESCRIPTION

2. The application site is located in the Green Belt on agricultural land within the rural Parish of Withnell. The site bounds with open and rural land on all sides. The original group of buildings associated with this land, Cross Fields, have been subdivided into two domestic dwellings many years ago (pre 1974) and these are now divorced from the majority of the original agricultural holding.
3. The site is served by the original access track that leads from Bury Lane (A674) located approximately 400m to the north east and this also provides access to the two aforementioned domestic dwellings. Whilst having the typical appearance of a farm track this route can be used by private cars.
4. The site occupies an elevated position set on rising topography that is located at between three and four metres higher than the land on which the adjacent dwellings sit, albeit not less than 60 metres distant from them. A number of trees and shrubs effectively screen the site from these dwellings.
5. Consent was previously granted for three agricultural buildings within the site in 2009, 2013 and 2016 and these buildings are in situ and have the appearance of typical modern agricultural structures that are very similar to the proposed extension.
6. A public footpath crosses the site (footpath no. 26), approximately 20 metres to the south west of the location for the proposed building extension.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

7. The application seeks planning permission for an extension to an existing livestock building.

8. The extension would project approximately 6m from the north facing side elevation of the existing livestock building, for the full length of the building (approximately 15.2m). The proposed extension would be a steel framed, mono-pitched structure with an eaves height of approximately 3m and a maximum height of approximately 3.6m.
9. It would cover an existing feeding area in order to prevent rainwater from mixing with silage and feed. The roof would comprise cement fibre sheets and the walls would be concrete block to approximately 2m in height with green coated box profile steel sheets above.

THE APPLICANT'S CASE

10. The proposed extension would cover an existing animal feeding area currently located to the north of the existing livestock building. The purpose of this would be to enable the diversion of rainwater to a clean water drain in order to prevent rainwater mixing with silage and feed.
11. The application site contains an existing farm enterprise and the supporting design and access statement states that the applicant currently farms 15 fattening cattle and it is the intention of the applicant to purchase more this autumn. It is also claimed that the applicant manages approximately 20 acres of grassland and that the business has a flock of 20 breeding ewes which would increase to 40 this autumn. In addition, store lambs are purchased annually for finishing.
12. The livestock building to be extended provides accommodation for cattle and space for the storage of hay and straw. In addition, lambs are housed within the building. The extension would enable the cattle rearing element of the business to expand without risk of causing pollution.

REPRESENTATIONS

13. One representation of objection from the occupier of no. 14 Chapel Street who objected to the proposed development and cited the following reasons as to why the development would not be acceptable:
 - Site already contains a large and oversized barn
 - This barn was built on a public footpath
 - It is important to protect public rights of way
 - Farm currently has few livestock so building might not be needed

CONSULTATIONS

14. **Withnell Parish Council** – have not commented.
15. **CIL Officers** - this development is currently exempt from CIL under Reg.42.
16. **Lancashire Highway Services** – have not commented.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the development in the Green Belt

17. The application site is a farm holding located in the Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt and The Framework advises that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt.
18. 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.*

19. The Framework sets out a number of exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Paragraph 89 of the Framework states that one exception includes buildings for agriculture and forestry. In order for the proposed development to be considered as an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt then it must be established that the proposed buildings are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

Reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture:

20. The proposed agricultural building extension would serve an agricultural holding covering approximately 8 hectares and comprising 15 fattening cattle, a flock of 20 breeding ewes and lambs which are purchased annually.
21. The planning history of the site demonstrates that the site is an established agricultural farming enterprise and several previous planning permissions have been granted for the erection of agricultural buildings. These include planning references 15/01253/FUL for the erection of an agricultural building to house cattle and sheep and 11/00931/AGR, which was a prior notification for the erection of an agricultural store.
22. These permissions demonstrate that the farm is well established as an agricultural enterprise. The current proposal involves an extension to an existing building rather than the erection of a new building and the extension would cover an existing outdoor feeding area in order to prevent pollution arising from the mixing of rainwater with silage and feed.
23. The extension would also allow the applicant to accommodate more cattle, whilst meeting animal welfare and farm assurance standards.
24. On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposed building would be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

Design, siting, appearance and scale of the proposed extension

25. The proposed extension of the agricultural building would project onto an existing grassed area to the north of the building and this area is screened from adjoining land by an approximately 3m high grass bank. It is considered that the siting of the extension in this location would be the most appropriate available option given the configuration of the existing yard and buildings to the south.
26. The proposed extension would project by approximately 6m from the north facing side elevation of the existing building and would have a length of approximately 15m. It would have a mono-pitched roof with a maximum height of approximately 3.6m. This would enable the extension to fit in with the form of the existing building and the proposed materials would also be appropriate resulting in an extension that would be a subservient and sympathetically designed addition to the original building.
27. The proposed extension would not be prominently visible from beyond the site and as a result it would not harm the appearance of the site or character of the area. The nearest neighbouring property at 'Crossfield's Cottage' would be approximately 95m to the north west of the proposed extension. As such it is considered that the proposed development

would be too far distant from the nearest neighbouring property to have any material impact upon its setting.

Other matters

28. One representation of objection to the proposed development was made. The objector raised concerns about the public right of way, which passes through the site. The proposed extension would not be built on the public right of way, therefore it would be unaffected by the proposed development.

CONCLUSION

29. The proposed extension is considered to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and therefore represents an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The siting and design of the extension is considered to be acceptable.

30. The proposed development is, therefore, considered to be acceptable and as such is recommended for approval.

RELEVANT POLICIES: 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 2012-2026 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.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE

Ref: 11/00931/AGR **Decision:** PAAGR **Decision Date:** 24 November 2011
Description: Application for agricultural prior notification for the erection of an agricultural store

Ref: 15/01253/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 1 March 2016
Description: Erection of an agricultural building to house cattle and sheep

Ref: 80/00320/OUT **Decision:** REFOPP **Decision Date:** 19 May 1980
Description: Bungalow (Outline)

Ref: 77/00331/FUL **Decision:** PERFPP **Decision Date:** 24 May 1977
Description: Porch

Suggested Conditions

1. 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.

2. The external facing materials, detailed on the approved plans, shall be used and no others substituted unless alternatives are first submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, when the development shall then be carried out in accordance with the alternatives approved.

Reason: To ensure that the materials used are visually appropriate to the locality.

3. The building hereby permitted shall be used for agricultural purposes only (as defined in Section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990); in conjunction with the remainder of the holding as identified in the supporting information submitted with the application. It shall

be removed and the site reinstated to its original condition by a scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority if at any time it ceases to be used for this purpose.

Reason: To ensure that the building is used solely for agricultural purposes connected with the working of the holding.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans below:

Title	Plan Ref	Received On
Location Plan	N/A	18 September 2017
Proposed Plans	N/A	18 September 2017

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning