

APPLICATION REPORT – 22/00852/LBC

Validation Date: 4 August 2022

Ward: Ecclestone, Heskin And Charnock Richard

Type of Application: Listed Building

Proposal: Application for listed building consent for extensions and renovations to listed farmhouse, conversion of barn to two dwellings and demolition of former farm buildings to enable the erection of two detached dwellings and two semi-detached dwellings

Location: Woodend Farm Parr Lane Ecclestone Chorley PR7 5RL

Case Officer: Mike Halsall

Applicant: Mr Steve Wastell

Agent: Mr Chris Weetman, CW Planning Solutions Ltd

Consultation expiry: 16 December 2022

Decision due by: 10 February 2023 (Extension of time agreed)

RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that listed building consent is granted, subject to conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION

2. The application site is located in the Green Belt at the end of a 280m long access track to the north of Parr Lane (shown as Red Lane on some mapping), approximately 850m to the east of the defined settlement boundary of Ecclestone.
3. The site contains a cluster of buildings consisting of Woodend Farm, a 17th Century grade II listed farmhouse, a curtilage listed barn with more recent extensions located to the north east of the dwelling and a further separate storage building located to the north of the dwelling. There is also an unauthorised detached garage which has recently been erected to the south east of the dwelling. Other than an agricultural building located immediately to the north of the application site, the site is surrounded by agricultural land.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4. The application seeks listed building consent for extensions and renovations to the listed farmhouse, the conversion of the barn to two dwellings and the demolition of the former farm buildings to enable the erection of two detached dwellings and two semi-detached dwellings. The unauthorised garage would also be demolished as part of the proposal.
5. This application does not require an assessment of the acceptability of the erection of the detached or semi-detached dwellings as such work does not require listed building consent. The application, therefore, relates to work to the listed dwelling and curtilage listed barn.
6. A separate application for planning permission has been submitted in parallel with this application, ref. 22/00851/FUL for the proposed development which includes a full assessment of the entire proposals at the site.

REPRESENTATIONS

7. No representations have been received.

CONSULTATIONS

8. Historic England: Have responded to state they have no comments to make on this proposal.
9. Ecclestone Parish Council: No comments have been received.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Impact on designated heritage assets

10. The principal statutory duty under the P(LBCA) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, which includes their setting. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should in coming to decisions consider the principle act which states the following;

Listed Buildings - Section 66(1)

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority 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.”

Great weight and importance is attached to this duty.

11. Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) refers to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The following paragraphs contained therein are considered to be pertinent in this case:

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

195. 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 any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

199. 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

201. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

202. 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

206. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and 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 the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

12. The Central Lancashire Core Strategy (2012) (the Core Strategy), 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.'

13. Policy bne8 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026 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.'*

14. The proposal has been amended since its original submission following discussions with the Council's heritage advisor to limit harm to the setting of the listed building and also to reduce the amount of glazing proposed in the extension to the listed building.

15. A summary of the Council's heritage advisor's comments are as follows:

The farmhouse

"Woodend Farm is an altered farmhouse building constructed in C17 and altered in C19. It is two storey with an L-shaped plan with a projecting two-bay crosswing at the left end, which was added later. Having seen the interior of the farmhouse whilst I am now largely content with the changes proposed to the interior of the listed building itself. The removal of the extensive dry lining found throughout the property will be a positive change. The proposed removal of internal walls and changes to the plan form will have little or no impact on the significance of the building. Any minimal impact is more than offset by the decision to remove the existing dry lined interior. All doors and windows should be changed to timber ones of a suitable design. The detail could be secured via a suitable worded condition."

The barn conversion

"The barn is located within the curtilage of the Grade II listed Woodend Farm, situated to the east. The Heritage Statement notes the presence of a granary in the main house suggests the barn could be contemporary to the main farmhouse, however, it is possibly a later rebuild. There is no information within the listing which relates to the barn's construction. Historic mapping shows that the main range of the barn has been extended since mid C19, appearing to have much of the same footprint we see today. The barn provides evidence of the farmhouse's association with agriculture. The barn was inspected on 14th February 2018, it was noted as being semi derelict."

The proposed plans retain the main range and north lean-to section of the barn and remove the later brick additions. The barn will be split into two, three-bed dwellings, both dwellings will be over two floors. The west elevation (facing into the farmyard) of the barn will be the principal elevation of the dwellings. The most recent site plan/layout shows the area in front of the barn being laid out as a setted courtyard.

Internally, new walls will be introduced throughout the barn to create additional rooms. The proposed scheme will use the existing footprint of the barn but the roof will be raised slightly to create the required additional headroom for a first floor. The barn will be re-roofed replacing the existing concrete sheeting with natural slate.

There is considerable benefit in stripping away the modern brick additions and repairing and converting the principle 'original' barn. I feel retaining this barn will help sustain the relationship between the two buildings and will contribute positively to the historic setting of the listed building. I support this element of the scheme and overall I feel the conversion of the barn into two dwellings will be a positive change to the setting of the farmhouse. If the application is to be approved I would suggest suitable conditions are applied to secure the methodology for the conversion work and the use of appropriate materials."

Conclusion

"Overall, as discussed above, I have no issues in regard to the alterations to the farmhouse or to the barn conversion and feel those aspects of the scheme would cause no discernible impact or harm to the significance of the listed building."

16. In light of the above comments, it is considered that the proposal conforms with S.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Chapter 16 the Framework, policy 16 of the Core Strategy and policy BNE8 of the Chorley Local Plan 2012 - 2026.

CONCLUSION

17. It is considered that the proposal would result in an enhancement to the character of the listed building and curtilage barn. The works meet the statutory test 'to preserve' the significance of the designated heritage assets. Therefore, the Local Planning Authority is not required to undertake any balancing exercise as per paragraph 202 of the Framework

Consequently, it is considered that the works meet the principal duty of the Act, the objectives of Chapter 16 of The Framework, policy 16 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and policy BNE8 Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026. The application is, therefore, recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE

Ref: 81/00947/FUL **Decision:** PD **Decision Date:** 16 December 1981
Description: Change of use from garage to farm shop

Ref: 22/00851/FUL **Decision:** PDE **Decision Date:** Pending
Description: Extensions and renovations to listed farmhouse, conversion of barn to two dwellings, demolition of former farmbuildings and erection of two detached and two semi-detached dwellings

RELEVANT POLICIES: 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 2012 - 2026 seek to protect and enhance the Borough's heritage. Also of relevance is the Framework (National Planning Policy Framework), section 16.

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 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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

Title	Plan Ref	Received On
Location Plan	N/A	26 January 2023
Proposed Site Plan	21/154/P01 Rev F	26 January 2023
Farmhouse - Proposed Plans & Elevations	21/154/P02 Rev A	18 October 2022
Barn - Proposed Plans & Elevations	21/154/P03	4 August 2022

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

3. Prior to any works taking place to the listed building or the section of the barn to be converted, details of all external facing, roofing and rainwater goods materials (notwithstanding any details shown on previously submitted plan(s) and specification) and a work methodology for the repair and treatment of the buildings, including internal finishes, 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.

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

4. No development, site clearance/preparation, or demolitions shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording and analysis. This must be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The programme of works should comprise the creation of a record of the house to Level 3 as set out in 'Understanding Historic Buildings' (Historic England 2016), and the farm buildings to level 2/3 (to include cross sections) as set out in Understanding Historic Buildings. It should include full descriptions of the building, inside and out, a drawn plan, elevations and at least one section (which may be derived from checked and corrected architect's drawings), and a full photographic coverage, inside and out. The record should also include a rapid desk-based assessment, putting the building and its features into context. This work should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (www.archaeologists.net). A digital copy of the report and the photographs shall be placed in the Lancashire Historic Environment Record prior to the dwelling consented being first occupied.

Reason: To ensure and safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological/historical importance associated with the buildings/site.