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Chartered Surveyors, Planning
Consultants & Land Agents

FULL APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A LARGE DUTCH BARN AND ERECTION OF A TWO STOREY DWELLING HOUSE.

at

Esteban Barn, Altcar Lane, Downholland.

(Planning Statement)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Wignalls Chartered Surveyors in support of a full planning application for the demolition of a large dutch barn and in its place, the erection of a two storey dwelling house at Esteban Barn, Altcar Lane, Downholland (The Site). The application is submitted on behalf Mr and Mrs. Disley (The Applicant).
- 1.2 The Site is located within West Lancashire Borough Council. The Site is located on Altcar Lane and comprises of a dutch barn, which is accessed via a minor access road from the east of Altcar Lane (B5195). Adjacent to the site and within the same ownership, is a residential barn conversion currently occupied by the Applicants. The property sits within a cluster of other barn buildings and associated agricultural dwellings which are now mostly utilised as residential properties.

2.0 PLANNING HISTORY OF THE SITE

2.1 Planning history relevant to this site includes:

- 2021/1227/FUL - Variation of Condition No 2 of planning permission 2013/0465/FUL to build in accordance with approved plans. Granted
- 2013/0465/FUL - Part demolition, conversion and extension to existing barn to form a single detached dwelling. Granted.
- 2015/0460/CON - Approval of Details Reserved by Condition No's. 4, 5, 8, 12, 14 and 16 of planning permission 2013/0465/FUL relating to the paint colour of all doors, window and door frames, details of all rainwater goods, foul and surface water drainage details, survey of the site in relation to bats, barn owls and nesting birds, bat and barn owl survey and details of window and door frames. Part Approved/Refused.
- 2015/0468/NMA - Non-material amendment to planning permission 2013/0465/FUL - To omit proposed external stairs and door to first floor of proposed extension and replacing with a window. Approved.
- 2015/0637/CON - Approval of details reserved by condition No. 8 of planning permission 2013/0465/FUL relating to foul and surface water drainage details. Approved.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing dutch barn which is adjacent to Esteban Barn and in its place, a two storey dwelling house. The proposed dwelling will measure:
- 13.8m (length)
 - 9.2m (width)
 - 4.8m (eaves height)
 - 7.5m (ridge height)
- 3.2 The building subject to this planning application was originally to be demolished under planning application 2013/0465/FUL, which granted planning permission for part demolition, conversion and extension to an existing barn to form a single detached dwelling. The barn has now been converted and extended and has been occupied for some time by the Applicants.
- 3.3 During the works the dutch barn was only partially demolished to accommodate the extension to the barn whilst half of the barn was retained. As a result, in 2021, the Applicants sought planning permission to retain the dutch barn by applying to vary condition 2 of planning permission 2013/0465, to ensure that the development was built in accordance with the approved plans. This application, planning reference 2021/1227/FUL was approved by the LPA.
- 3.4 The application building, the dutch barn, is within the approved residential curtilage of Esteban Barn and has been used by the Applicants for the storage of items in conjunction with the barn conversion, residential / ancillary storage and for a short period of time a static caravan which the Applicants occupied whilst the building works were taking place (now removed).
- 3.5 The proposed two storey dwelling house will be located on the same footprint as the dutch barn and will be no greater in height or volume than the existing dutch barn.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the West Lancashire Local Plan (WLLP) provide the policy framework against which the development proposals will be assessed.
- 4.2 The site is located within West Lancashire and is designated under the following policies under the current adopted West Lancashire Borough Council Local Plan 2012-2027:

- Greenbelt
- Landscape Character
- Mineral Safeguarding Area

4.3 In addition to the above, the following policies have been considered:

- National Planning Policy Framework
 - Achieving sustainable development
 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 - Promoting sustainable transport
 - Achieving well-designed places
 - Protecting Green Belt land
- West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD
 - Policy SP1 - A Sustainable Development Framework for West Lancashire
 - Policy GN1 - Settlement Boundaries
 - Policy GN3 - Criteria for Sustainable Development
 - Policy EC2 - The Rural Economy
 - Policy RS1 - Residential Development
 - Policy IF2 - Enhancing Sustainable Transport Choices
 - Policy EN1 - Low Carbon Development and Energy Infrastructure
 - Policy EN2 - Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Natural Environment
- Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Development in the Green Belt (Oct 2015)
- Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Design Guide (Jan 2008)

5.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT (GREEN BELT DEVELOPMENT)

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD (WLLP) provide the policy framework against which the development proposals will be assessed.
- 5.2 Policy GN1 of the adopted WLLP states that 'development proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed against national policy and any relevant Local Plan policies'.
- 5.3 Section 13 of the NPPF is relevant to protecting Green Belt land. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF is relevant to this development proposal and states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt area. The policy lists seven exceptions (criteria a-g) to this.
- 5.4 Exception (g), which is relevant to this development, lists one of the exceptions to paragraph 149 being the:
- "limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously development land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:*
- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or*
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority"*
- 5.5 Previously developed land is defined in Annex 2: Glossary of the NPPF as: "Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape."
- 5.6 The dutch barn is within the approved and established residential curtilage of Esteban Barn and has been used in connection with its residential occupation. The dutch barn can therefore be defined as being located on 'previously developed land' for the purposes of paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

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- 5.7 To also comply with paragraph 149 of the NPPF it is also necessary to carry out a judgement to whether the proposed development would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than that of the existing development.
- 5.8 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF sets out both the fundamental aim of Green Belts and their essential characteristics. Green Belt policy encourages development to be concentrated where current buildings exist.
- 5.9 As mentioned previously, the proposed two storey dwelling will be located on the same footprint as the existing dutch barn. The proposed dwelling will not have a greater ridge or eaves height than the existing dutch barn nor will it enlarge the cubic volume of development to what currently exists. The proposed property will result to no further expansion in built development to that of the dutch barn that currently exists on site.
- 5.10 In terms of the residential curtilage of the proposed two storey property this will utilise an existing garden area currently used in relation to the occupation of Esteban Barn. The development would not result to any further encroachment on to open Green Belt land than what currently exists.
- 5.11 Overall it is considered that the proposed development complies with paragraph 149 (g) of the NPPF in that it would allow for redevelopment of previously developed land and for the reasons set out above would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

6.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT (SUSTAINABILITY AND LOCATION)

- 6.1 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby".
- 6.2 Paragraph 80 of the NPPF is also relevant in establishing the principle of the development and states that local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances (as per criteria a - e within paragraph 79).
- 6.3 The NPPF does not offer any definition of the term 'isolated'. However through appeal decisions it has become apparent that the term 'isolated' is interpreted as to the physical separation of the site from any settlement, whether it is surrounded by agricultural land and is served by suitable roadways to enable sustainable means of travel.

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- 6.4 It should be noted an isolated location is not the same as a sustainable one. A sustainable site is one that is considered to be close to or within walkable distance of local services such as doctors, schools, public transport or health facilities and one that does not rely heavily on the use of a private motorised transport.
- 6.5 The site although is located within land designated as Green Belt, could be described as being in a semi rural location. Although the site benefits from being surrounded by open fields, the site is within metres of other residential properties and scattered farmsteads. It is worthy of highlighting that the LPAs Planning Officer during the determination of application 2021/1227/FUL described the site as being within a 'small hamlet of residential properties'.
- 6.6 It is noted that a written pre-application response from the Council in relation to the development site stated that "The site is considered to be remote from day-to day facilities and there is a lack of basic services within the vicinity of the site".
- 6.7 It is our view that this is an incorrect statement and it is argued that the site is within local facilities, the majority of which can be walked to, including:
- o School bus route on Altcar Lane
 - o Site is adjacent to public footpath 8-8-FP13 which routes to Mairscough Lane where there is a bus stop. The bus stop includes routes from Southport to Liverpool and is a regular service Monday to Sunday (300 bus service). This bus stop is approx. 800m from the application site.
 - o Bus route (315 bus service) from Ormskirk to Southport on Black-a-Moor Lane, approx. 430m from the site.
 - o Scarisbrick Public Arms approx. 700m from the site
 - o Farmer Teds Adventure Park approx. 530m from the site
 - o Downholland Business Park approx. 800m from the site where there is a gym, café, car servicing garage etc.
 - o Downholland / Haskayne Church of England Primary School on Black-a-Moor Lane is less than 1km from the site.
- 6.8 It is also worthy of noting that other sites within the local area have also not been deemed as being 'isolated' or 'unsustainable' on obtaining planning permission for housing development:
- o Downholland Business Park (approx. 500m to the north east) under planning application reference 2019/0481/OUT.
- 6.9 Given the distance of the site from day to day facilities and services it is considered that the proposed new dwelling would be located in a sustainable location where future occupants do not have to rely on the use of vehicles to access local facilities. The location of the development is such that it will enhance and maintain the vitality of rural communities and is considered to be in compliance with paragraph 79 of the NPPF.

7.0 DESIGN AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1 Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan provides criteria relating to design and layout of the development, and states that development should relate well to the adjacent buildings, the area generally and natural features of the site in terms of siting, scale, orientation, design, detailing and material.
- 7.2 The Council's SPD Design Guide states that new development should be of a scale, mass and built form, which responds to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings. Care should be taken to ensure that buildings do not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene because of their height, scale or roofline.
- 7.3 The design and external appearance of the development is assessed at length within the submitted supporting document 'Design and Access Statement'. The proposed two storey dwelling will be located on the same footprint as the existing dutch barn and displays the same eave and ridge height. Although the application building has been used for domestic purposes for some considerable time, historically it is agricultural in form. The design of the proposed dwelling has taking this into consideration and maintained the shape and form of dutch barn. Materials will include, Graphite Grey aluminium windows, reclaimed red brick and a slate roof (materials can be shown on site on request). It is considered that the design, materials and siting of the proposed two storey dwelling will remain complementary to that of the existing residential barn adjacent to the site.
- 7.4 Therefore it is considered that the development would comply with the requirements of Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan and Councils Supplementary Planning Document - Design Guide.

8.0 IMPACT UPON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 8.1 Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan (2012-2027) DPD allows for development provided it retains or creates reasonable levels of amenity to occupiers of the neighbouring and proposed properties.
- 8.2 Careful consideration is therefore required to protect the privacy and other amenity of both neighbouring occupiers and occupiers of the proposed dwellings. Development should provide a good standard of accommodation and not prejudice neighbour amenity.
- 8.3 The nearest neighbouring property to the proposed development is Esteban barn which is within the Applicants control / ownership.

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- 8.4 Other properties within the cluster of housing development close to the application site includes Elderberry Barn (some 20m south east of the site); Altcar Lane Farm (some 25m to the south) and 'The Bungalow' (some 36m south west of the site). It is considered that given the positioning / siting of the neighbouring properties together with the distance from the proposal, that the development would not result to any amenity implications to the occupants of neighbouring properties.
- 8.5 Overall it is considered that the development complies with Policy GN3 of the WLLP in terms of residential amenity.

9.0 HIGHWAY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD states that development should incorporate a suitable and safe access and road layout design in line with latest standards. Policy IF2 sets out the required parking standards.
- 9.2 Details of on-site parking and turning for each dwelling (both the proposed and existing property, Estebarn) have been shown on the submitted site layout (proposed) drawing. Each dwelling will provide three parking spaces within the designated curtilage in the form of garaging and driveway areas.

10.0 ECOLOGY

- 10.1 Policy EN2 of the WLLP states that where there is reason to suspect that there may be a priority species, or their habitat, on or close to a proposed development site, planning applications should be accompanied by a survey assessing the presence of such species and, where appropriate, making provision for their needs. This allows the LPA to screen the project against the Habitats Regulations and relevant national and local policy.
- 10.2 It was established during written pre-application discussions that due to the nature and location of the building it will be necessary to carry out an ecological survey of the site and building to establish the presence or absence of any protected species.
- 10.3 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out on the site by Pennine Ecological in August 2022 which has been submitted to support the planning application. This appraisal concludes that there will be no impact upon statutory sites or protected species as a result of the development proposals and no further surveys are required. The Applicant is aware of the Ecologists recommendations and will implement them as part of the development proposals.

11.0 TREES AND LANDSCAPING

11.1 There will be no impact upon trees as a result of the development. Landscaping has been carried out on the site as part of the development approved under 2013/0465.

12.0 DRAINAGE

12.1 Details on the drainage of the site is provided within the planning application forms. It is understood that on planning approval that a planning condition may be added with requirements for a drainage strategy / full details.

13.0 CONCLUSION

13.1 The Applicant seeks planning permission to demolish the existing dutch barn which is adjacent to Esteban Barn and in its place, erect a two storey dwelling house. It is considered that the development is in principle compliant with paragraph 149 (g) of the NPPF and would not have a greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. The proposal is appropriate for the location. The development would not result to any additional adverse impact on highway safety, residential amenity or on drainage within the local area. The proposed development is viewed as being compliant with the NPPF and Policies GN1, GN3, RS1, IF2 and EN2 of the West Lancashire Local Plan DPD and as such we kindly request that full planning permission is permitted.