

Planning Department
Wyre Council
Civic Centre
Breck Road
Poulton-le-Fylde
FY6 7PU

Our Ref: CB/3368
Date: 13 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Pad End Barn, Pinfold Lane, Inskip
Retention of ancillary domestic storage building constructed following demolition of previous building on site

This application relates to the above and seeks the retention of the building which currently exists on site. The application is supported by proposed plans and an associated ecological assessment prepared by Ecology Services. This letter has been prepared in support of the application and should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and associated ecology report.

Description and Application Background

The application proposal relates to an existing domestic storage building and car port. The building was completed in May 2020 and was a replacement for a previous building on the site. This previous building had also previously been used for domestic storage in association with the adjacent barn conversion.

The proposed building extends to approximately 94sqm internally with a mezzanine floor of approximately 62sqm and a car port overhang of approximately 35sqm. The building is portal frame construction and finished with corrugated green metal sheet cladding with the car port finished in timber boarding at the upper level. Access to the building is provided by a roller shutter door together with a pedestrian door located on the front elevation of the building. The building is located within the curtilage of the residential property, Pad End Barn, to the west and is used in association with that property.

In terms of the buildings specific use and layout at ground floor the building is a domestic workshop with locked domestic store at the rear. The mezzanine level is accessed via a staircase providing access to a home office and games room, storage room together with a utility and WC. The applicant works from home and it is utilised as their home office when not working out of their office elsewhere in the Borough.



Permission to convert the host dwelling to residential use was granted in 2003. A subsequent permission to use buildings for residential accommodation and erection of a porch link was granted in 2003 referenced 02/03/00661. The plans associated with the planning permission granted in 2003, and included below in figure 1, clearly identify the location and extent of the previous building on the site.

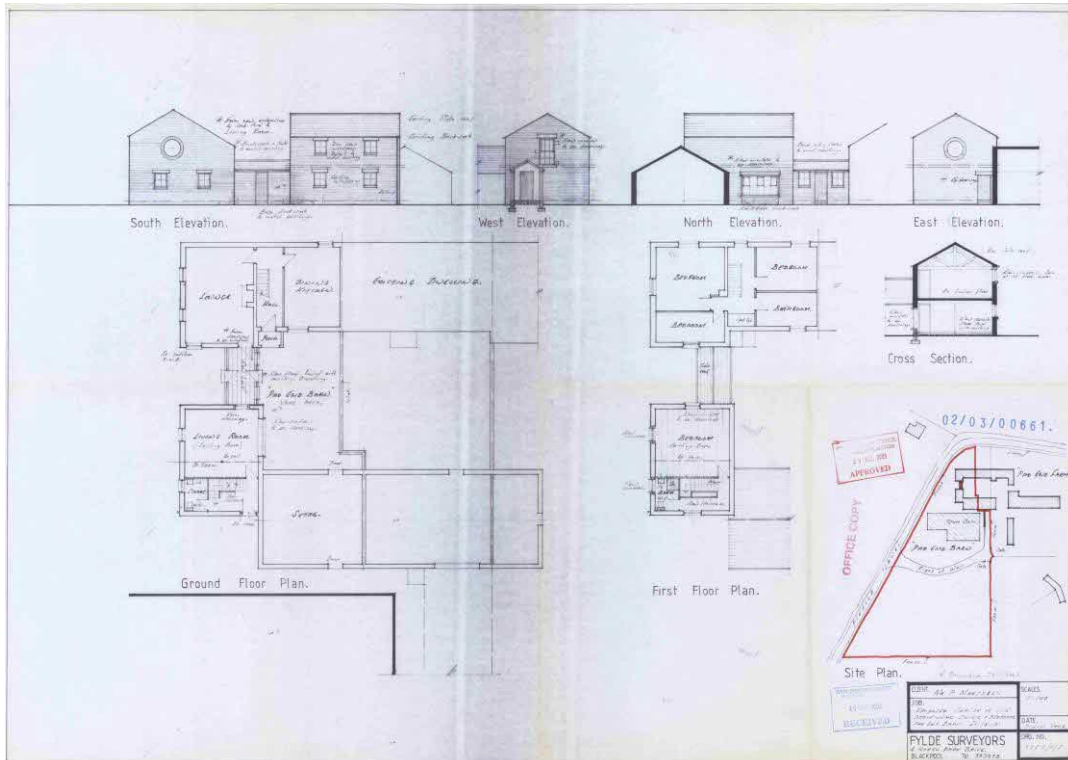


Figure 1: plan approved under reference 02/03/00661

The replacement building was constructed during lockdown when the applicant had a necessity to work from home to maintain their business but did not have suitable space within their home for an office. The application premises was constructed on the understanding that the previous building on site could be replaced without the need for formal planning permission. It was on this basis that the work was undertaken. At the time, in 2020 there was a necessity to provide space at the property and, given the circumstances with Covid restrictions limiting people's movement and physical contact and meetings with people at that time engagement with any parties was difficult.

Planning Policy

The application site is located in the Wyre Countryside as identified in the Council's policy map. Policy SP4 of the adopted Local Plan provides the policy context for proposals in the Countryside. Policy SP4 provides a very limited list of acceptable developments, the application proposal does not fall into any of these specified forms of development it is located within the curtilage of a dwelling and replaced a building previously located on the site. The previous building, similar to this proposal was utilised for domestic storage in association with the dwelling at Pad End Barn but was older and not suitable as workspace as required by the applicant, hence the necessity for its replacement. The building was located within the red edge boundary of that approval and the building utilised accordingly.

Policy SP4 specifies that development in the countryside should not harm its open and rural character. Clearly the proposed development does not have any unacceptable impact particularly in the setting of



previous building which existed on the site. The only public viewpoint of the proposed development is from Pinfold Lane where the building can be glimpsed as vehicles travel along this quiet rural road. The design and appearance of the building reflects that of a traditional agricultural building constructed of materials one would expect to see in a location such as this. The proposal clearly complies with this key aspect and the purpose of policy SP4 to protect the character of the rural area of the Borough.

It is acknowledged that Policy SP4 does not refer to domestic storage buildings as part of the list of permissible development in point 2 of the policy, however the location of the proposal is entirely linked to the existing dwelling and therefore could not be located anywhere else. Further to this Policy SP4 makes no allowance for any form of domestic buildings within the curtilage of properties within the Countryside. The application building provides the space that the applicant requires to meet their requirements in terms of personal storage and office space. The Council has acknowledged in other decisions made elsewhere that Policy SP4 does not include for ancillary domestic buildings but recognises that it would be unreasonable to conclude such a form of development is unacceptable where the core requirement of policy SP4 is not harmed.

As identified above owing to its location, visibility and use of traditional materials the development delivers on the key requirement of Policy SP4 and ensures that the character of the countryside is protected.

In terms of bio-diversity DEFRA and Natural England have jointly published advice in respect of protect species and development. This guidance advises that the Council should assess whether a planning application would harm or disturb protected species with National Planning Policy Framework highlighting a principled approach in paragraph 180. This is also reflected in policy CDMP4 with a requirement to minimise environmental impact and protect protected species accordingly.

In advance of the submission of this application the applicant has assessed the existing situation in relation to the building, ecology and in particular protected species. This was undertaken firstly to establish the existing situation and then to understand whether any works could be implemented which would enhance the ecological value of the proposal and the wider site more generally.

The assessment was undertaken by suitably trained ecologists Ecology Services Ltd and has been submitted as part of the application. The assessment identifies that existing bat boxes on the site have potential evidence of use, in form of droppings, by Pipistrelle bats. The assessment also identifies that the sound of a Barn Owl was heard from one of the bird boxes whilst fresh pellets were also noted. It is acknowledged that further survey work is required in respect of bats but there can be no doubt that the building is suitable for bats and likely to be used by bats in some capacity as identified by the initial survey work. Both bats and owls are protected species which require full protection.

Further to the existing situation a number of ecological enhancements have been identified by Ecology Services these include:

- The installation of additional bat boxes.
- Part of adjacent building to be converted to a bat loft.
- Proposed planting scheme for scrub land.
- Utilisation of brick piles to provide hedgehog houses.

The applicant is committed to delivering these additional improvements enhance the ecology of the site and secure long-term benefits for protected species, which are evidenced to already be utilising the site in some capacity, although the total extent is unknown at present. It is considered that both



the existing ecology associated with the development together with intended enhancements weigh in favour of the application. The proposed ecological enhancements can be secured by way of a legal agreement with the applicant who would be willing to commit to over the long-term.

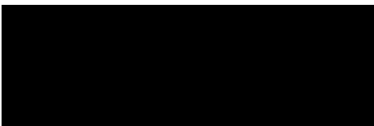
Summary and Conclusion

It is considered that the application proposal delivers a domestic storage building which replaces a building which previously existed on site. The building is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and meets the policy expectation, in this regard, set out in policy SP4. Wyre Council has previously acknowledged that domestic outbuildings are acceptable in the countryside notwithstanding the specific list of permissible uses in policy SP4. The application proposal has the further benefit of ecological enhancement measures identified in the ecology report which weigh in favour of the proposal together with the existing use of the building by protected species which would be protected by the application proposal.

Ultimately it is concluded that the application should be approved.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



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Associate

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