

Fylde Borough Council



The Conversion of Fylde's Traditional Farm Buildings

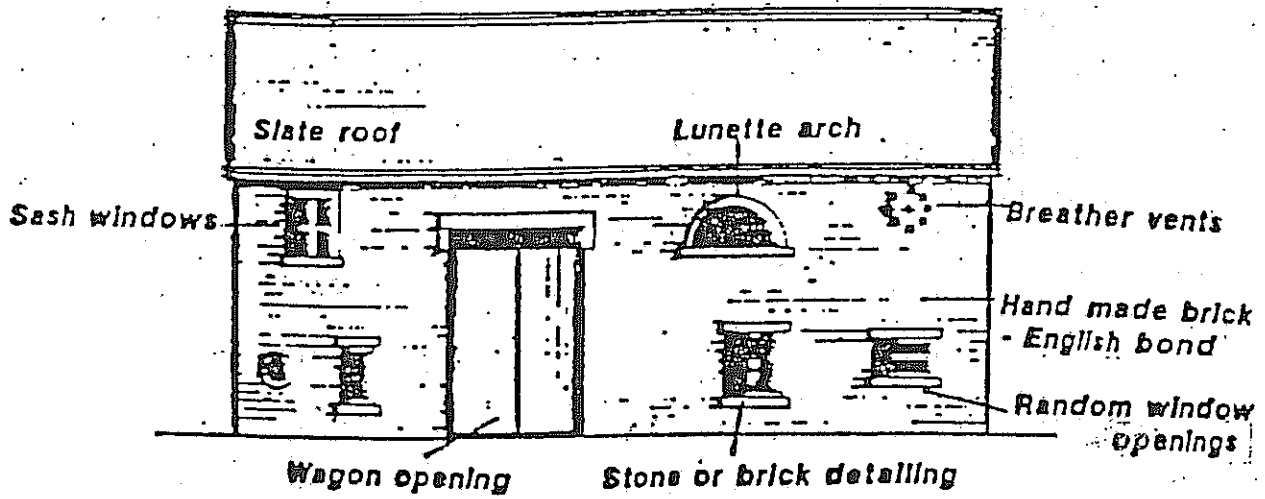
part three

DRAFT VERSION

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The traditional Fylde barn



INTRODUCTION

Over many years there has been a continuing demand for the conversion of agricultural buildings in the countryside, outside settlements, to alternative uses and in particular residential uses. The demand for dwellings in the countryside is probably stronger now than at any other time in the past. In the countryside areas there is, however, a strong presumption against new development unless it is needed for agriculture, forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area. An exception to this is the conversion of existing farm buildings to residential use.

In an effort to preserve the beauty and character of the countryside, it is essential that new uses are found for traditional farm buildings, when they are no longer needed for agricultural purposes.

There is no doubt, however, that the conversion of barns, particularly for residential purposes, presents a major architectural challenge, with lots of room for failure. Indeed there are examples of poorly converted buildings in the Fylde Borough area to support this view.

The Council's view is that some buildings have been altered so much that their original character has been destroyed. In fact they are often so altered as to render the original building almost beyond recognition. Such buildings would not be suitable for residential conversion.

Fylde has a rich vein of traditional farm buildings which were built by local people with local materials to suit local conditions. These buildings are predominantly simple, solid and unpretentious structures which possess considerable charm and character. As such they make an important and valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the area.





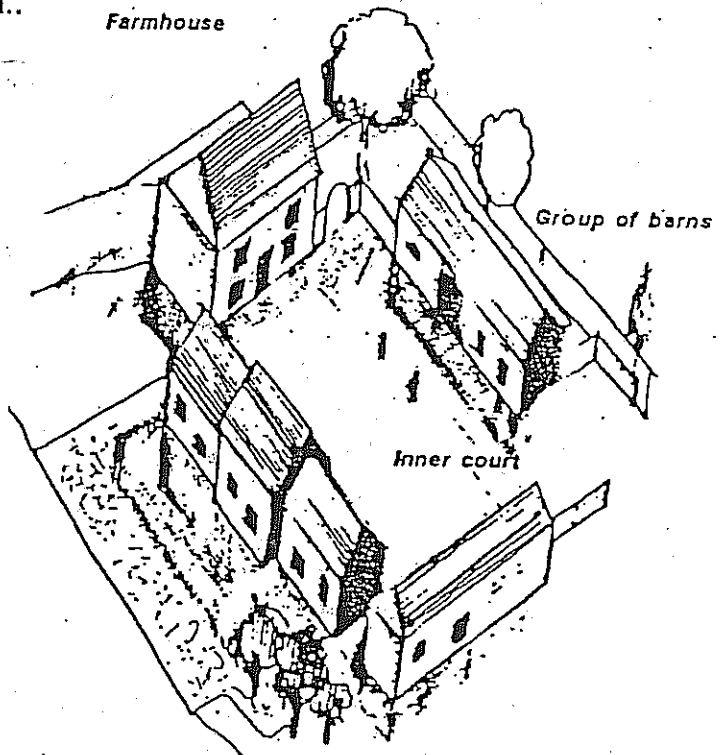
PLANNING OBJECTIVE

The appearance of the countryside as it is seen today is the result of an evolutionary process over a long period of time. Smaller farms have amalgamated and some have fragmented in a continuous process tied to the varying demands of the agricultural industry. Mechanisation has also had its effects on the character and appearance of the rural area..

Part of the value of the Fylde Countryside is the groups of trees and copses together with a scattering of traditional farms. The scale of these buildings, usually as a group their construction and their relationship with the land form often make them a particularly attractive element in the rural landscape.

Because of the visual importance of some of these buildings their retention may be desirable. In cases where such buildings are no longer required for their agricultural purposes the provision of new uses will often result in their long term retention.

However, because of the strict policies controlling development in the countryside, such building conversions should only be allowed where it is desirable to keep them, i.e. it is preferable to keep them rather than lose them because of their contribution to the rural scene or where such conversion for commercial purposes would benefit the rural economy.



A traditional group



The information below primarily deals with conversions to residential uses. The new Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 - The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development, states, however, that:-

"Local Planning Authorities shall consider the needs of their areas for business and residential conversions. Especially in areas where the creation of local employment is a priority, they may include policies in their development plans which do not allow residential re-use - unless either:

- a) the applicant has made every reasonable attempt to secure suitable business re-use and the application is supported by a statement of the efforts which have been made; or
- b) residential conversion is a subordinate part of a scheme for business re-use."

Fylde Borough Council has adopted the above principle and as such this will form part of the supplementary guidance.

Having considered the advice in PPG7, the Council is firmly of the opinion that in Fylde Borough there is a need to continue to have regard to the issues of the usefulness of the building for modern agricultural produce and the need (or otherwise) for a replacement building. The reasons for this are the potential for replacement buildings where the farmer intends carrying on the agricultural business and the visual impact of such new buildings; secondly the proximity of a number of large towns which will promote increased pressure for residential conversions; and thirdly, the small size of farms in the Borough and the relatively high number of rural buildings.



POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Department of the Environment has produced a document known as Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development. This gives general advice on the issues relating to development in the countryside.

There is advice contained within that document concerning the government's opinion on the conversion of buildings in the countryside to alternative uses including residential. Although it is general guidance which is applied to the whole of England and Wales, it is important for prospective developers to consider in particular paragraphs 3.14 -3.17 and Annex G.

The Lancashire Structure Plan and the Fylde Borough Local Plan together form the Development Plan. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority (Fylde Borough Council) to determine all planning applications in accordance with the policies of the plan, unless there are other material considerations which indicate otherwise.

Any prospective developer should, therefore, have regard to Policy 1 of the Lancashire Structure Plan and policies SP6 and SP7 of the Fylde Borough Local Plan. Policy SP7 of the Fylde Borough Local Plan lists various criteria by which proposals for the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings will be considered.

The purpose of this document is to expand on the criteria contained in Policy SP7 of the Fylde Borough Local Plan and give more substance to the policy principles.





THE POLICIES

Residential conversions can often be detrimental to the fabric and character of traditional farm buildings which in the best cases have attractive architectural features. Residential conversions often result in the loss of some features and introduce new features which are not consistent with the rural character of the building and as a result, the whole basis of preserving the building can be subsequently lost.

Residential curtilages created with converted buildings can often in themselves be out of character since they may contain washing lines, sheds, greenhouses and other residential paraphernalia. Conversion to commercial uses often allows a better opportunity for preserving the original character of the barn or building and in many cases there is no necessity for a defined curtilage.

Residential conversions also do not make any significant contribution to the rural economy whereas commercial use can generate employment opportunities and opportunities for small businesses thereby helping the rural economy. The following policy will, therefore, be an important consideration.



BC Policy 1 Alternatives to Residential Use

The conversion of farm buildings to a residential use will only be permitted where the new dwelling is required for:-

- a) the purposes of agriculture, horticulture or forestry,
- b) the conversion is necessary and a subordinate part of larger scheme for business purpose and
- c) where the re-use of the building for non-residential uses is not feasible or appropriate.

In relation to c) above the Council requires a supporting statement to be submitted with any application indicating the efforts that have been made to secure the use of the building/s for non-residential uses. The supporting statement should include details of the marketing of the building/s for a non-residential use for a minimum of 12 months and a statement setting out reasons why the building is not suitable for a non-residential use which contributes to the rural economy.

Many of the buildings, suitable for conversion will be traditional brick built buildings often but not always contained in a group. On larger farms later buildings have been erected and the traditional structure is either generally unused or one used for ancillary uses. The Council will need to be satisfied that the building's conversion will not result in the need for additional buildings which may give rise to further visual impact.

The Council considers that the Fylde countryside is particularly sensitive to new development and as a result, the Council will consult with the Chief Land Agency Manager of Lancashire County Property Services for him to assess the question of present uses and consideration of the need for any new building.

The Council will consider the present operations on the farm, use of existing buildings, current operations and future plans. The Council will be particularly concerned where buildings have been recently constructed and the traditional buildings have only recently become redundant. This may have resulted in constructive redundancy which is an attempt to abuse the system. This is referred to in particular in Annex G of PPG7.



BC Policy 2

The usefulness for agriculture and the need to replace

- i) In considering the acceptability of a conversion to alternative uses the Council will assess the current uses of the building and will consider the present and future operations of the farm and the past, present and potential future uses of the building and if the buildings can be economically converted (without the loss of important historical and architectural features) for modern farming requirements. A building that is still needed for agriculture would not be suitable for conversion if it led to the potential requirement of new building/s in the countryside, which would be detrimental to its character and appearance.
- ii) In the case of proposals for the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings adjoining operational farms, the suitability for the two uses to co-exist will be considered. In particular the impact of noise, smells and general activity on the occupiers of any dwelling will be an important consideration. Where residential amenity is likely to be affected permission will not be granted. An exception to this would be for an agricultural worker. A condition would be applied to restrict occupation to an agricultural worker.
- iii) In the limited number of cases where the replacement with a modern building is acceptable, the planning application should indicate its position. In general terms, if the land around the traditional buildings to be converted is to be still used for agriculture, agricultural permitted development rights will be removed.

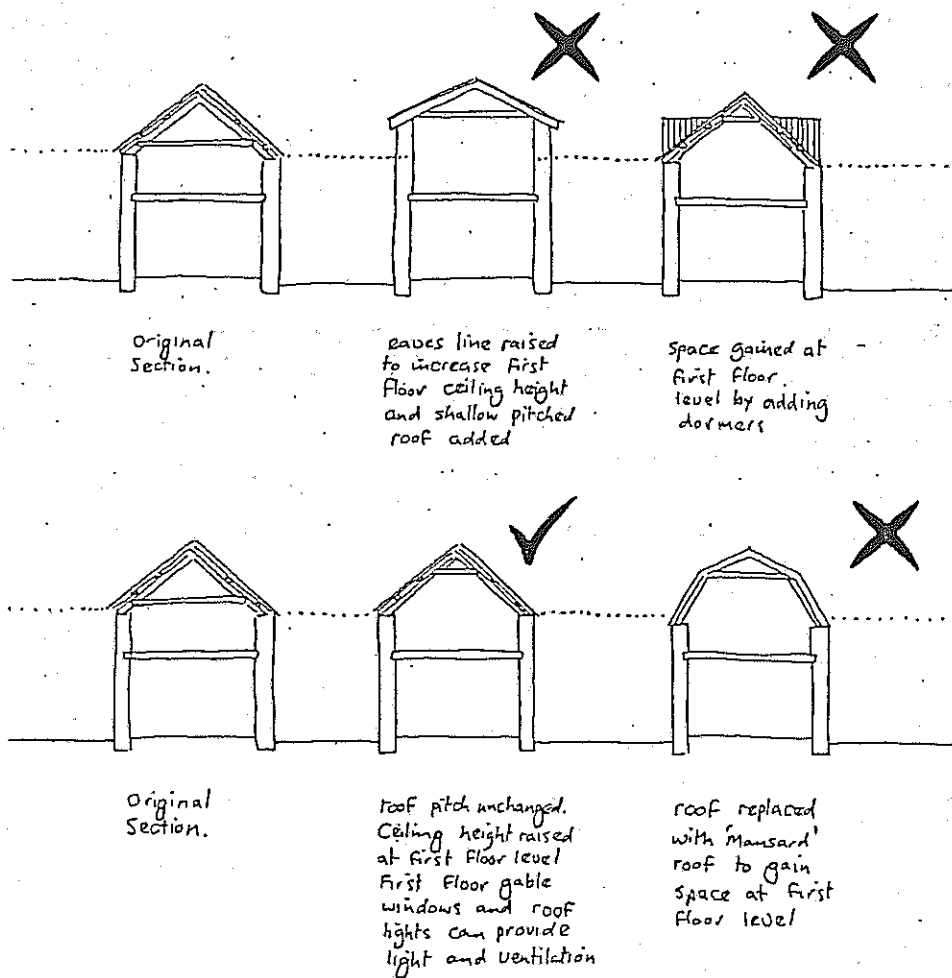
Where an owner wishes to convert a farm building to provide an alternative use, it is essential to ensure that at the outset that the building is structurally capable of conversion without substantial demolition and re-building.

The building should be a substantial brick or stone built building. Total demolition and re-building of the building will not be allowed.



It is accepted that if a building is particularly old and has historic merit its structural condition may be correspondingly fragile. Additionally, to provide better standards of accommodation damp proof courses, inner leaf block-work and additional foundations may be required.

In nearly all barn conversion schemes some demolition and re-building work is undertaken. Whereas total demolition and re-build will not be permitted it is accepted that up to 25% of a building's walls may need to be demolished and re-built. This should not be seen as an invitation for unnecessary demolition. A roof is in nearly every case removed and re-constructed. Every attempt should be made to retain the roof intact. Under no circumstances will eaves height be allowed to be increased.



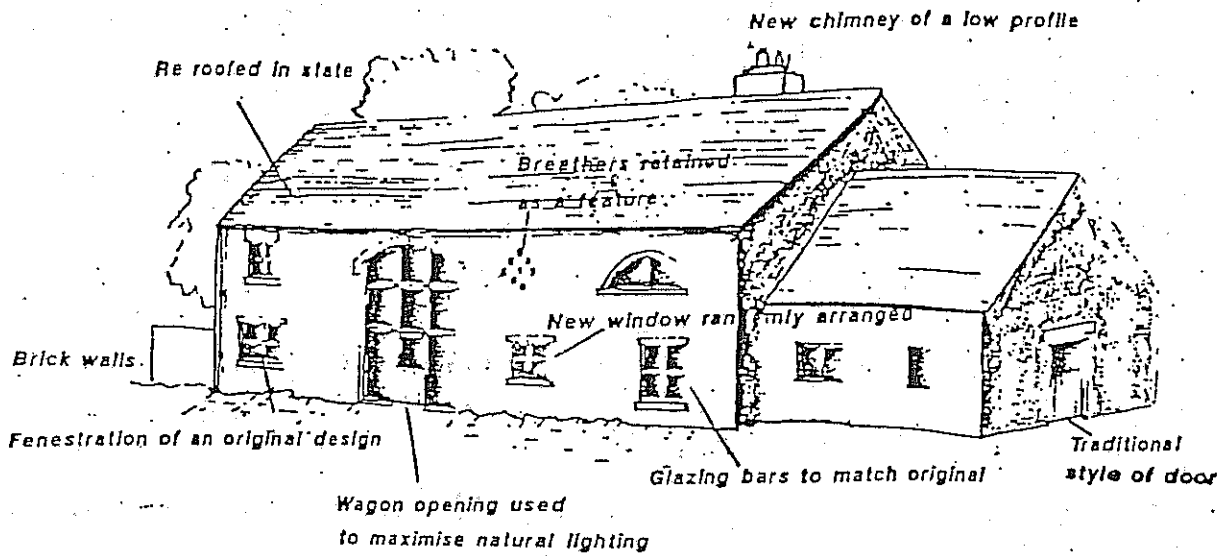
BC Policy 3 Design Process - Structure and Survey

Prior to the consideration of how a building ought to be converted an applicant should commission a survey by a suitably qualified person - showing the following:-

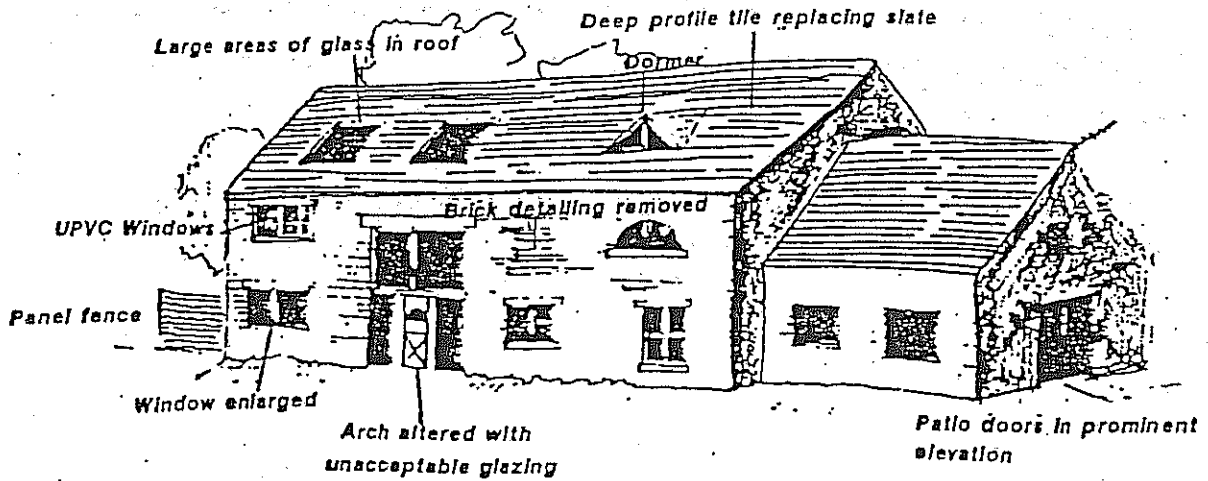
- i) A complete and accurate dimensional survey including external works. The survey should include plans, section, elevational details of roof covering and all existing openings and features. It should also assess and determine the levels of the building/s and adjacent roads and the availability of services such as water and drainage.
- ii) A structural survey to prove that the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion. The survey should identify on a plan any areas of demolition and re-building. A full method statement should be included to show how the conversion can take place without the need for more than 25% of any individual building walls to be taken down and rebuilt.
- iii) In exceptional circumstances, where a building or group of buildings make a significant contribution to the landscape character, is more than 75 years old and has important traditional, architectural features, the Council may consider a relaxation of the amount of demolition and re-building it will allow in order to preserve the setting of these buildings in the landscape.
- iv) A survey by a suitably qualified person to establish whether the buildings are inhabited by bats or barn owls.



An acceptable form of conversion



An unacceptable form of conversion



BC Policy 4 Design Process Retention of Features

As part of any planning application, the applicant shall include a "brief" incorporating a schedule of important features which would be retained as part of the conversion. This should include an explanation of how these features would be retained and protected during construction work.

It is important to think very carefully about the appearance of farm buildings before starting to convert them, if past mistakes involving insensitively and crudely converted buildings are to be avoided. Many of the traditional brick built barns have long-standing associations with their countryside setting and are part of the rural heritage of the Borough.

Often the buildings are not of exceptional architectural value, however, many date from the pre-mechanisation era of agricultural production when the land was worked by hand and animals.

The simplicity, form of building and the functional detailing are what constitutes architectural merit. Features such as "H" or diamond shaped breather vents, lunette arches, wagon openings and bull's eye windows are important in the assessment of a building's "architectural merit".

The historic value of buildings relates more to the historical importance of farming and the rural heritage of the Borough. Most common and the most attractive are groups of buildings usually next to a traditional farmhouse. Single buildings in isolation are likely to be less suitable for conversion. However, if they have attractive features, have stood for a long time in the landscape and create a visual target their conversion may be acceptable.



BC Policy 5 Design Process - Architectural and Historical Merit

Where the proposed conversion is put forward in relation to BC Policy 1 (c), the Council will only allow conversions of buildings which have historic interest, have been prominent features in the landscape for more than 75 years and has a number of traditional features. In considering the building's historic and architectural importance the Council will have regard to the following criteria:-

- 1) Individual and group character and value.
- 2) Materials of construction.
- 3) Traditional architectural detailing as indicated above. Barns not possessing such traditional detailing, materials or locational character are unlikely to be suitable for a residential conversion.

The resulting appearance of any conversion will be vitally important. an unsympathetic conversion may de-value the historic fabric of the building/s. Whilst in practice it may be unavoidable to restrict the provision of a small number of new openings, these should respect the proportions of the existing building. The following policies are important in considering the method of conversion. If the previous policies can be complied with then how the building is converted is going to be critical in achieving the retention of its character and identity with its former use.

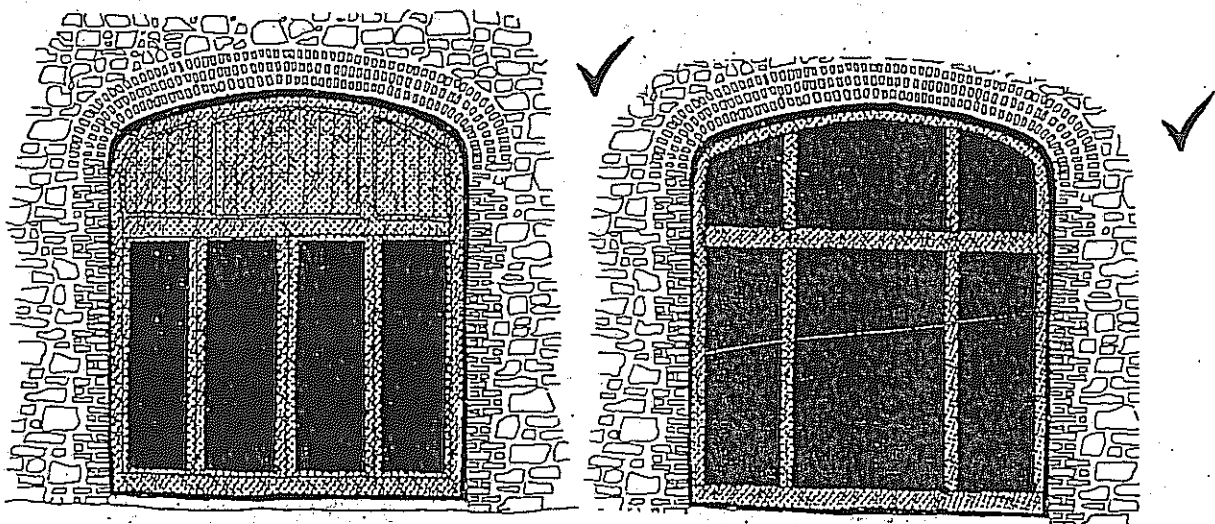


BC Policy 6

Design Issues - Methods of Conversion

Where the principle of development is acceptable permission will only be granted where the proposed detailing of the conversion is of a satisfactory standard and complies with the following criteria :-

- i) The external appearance of the building and its setting should be altered as little as possible in order to avoid destroying its existing character. Features such as 'H' and diamond shaped breathers, wagon openings, lunette windows, recesses and hay lofts should be retained as evidence of the building's former use.



Careful attention to detailing of openings to retain character

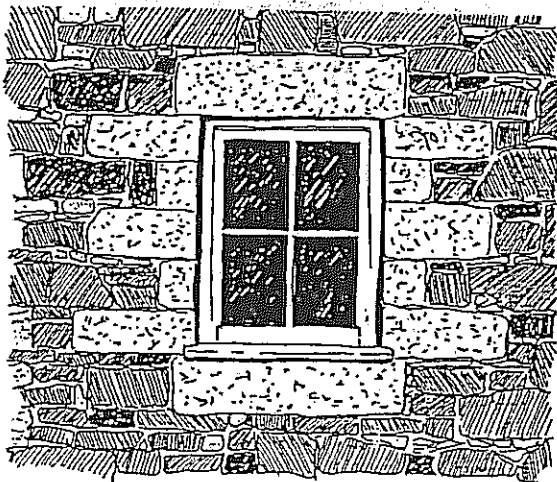
- ii) Any additions or alterations, if they are deemed to be acceptable, should, whenever possible, be carried out using traditional materials or where appropriate their nearest modern equivalent.
- iii) In cases where the building is to be sub-divided, its external appearance as a single building should be maintained.



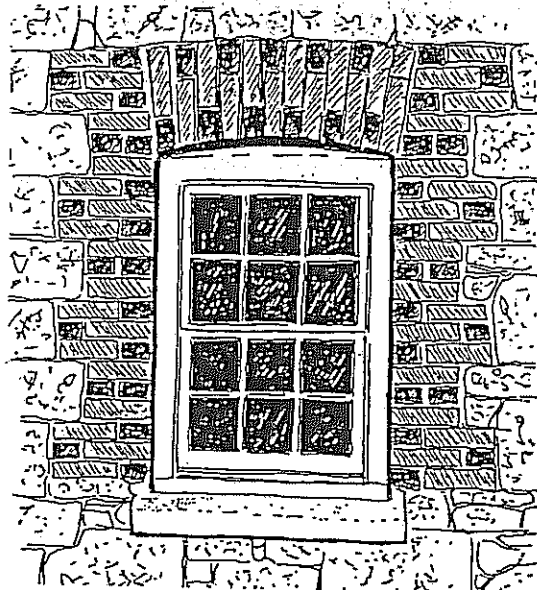
iv) The main structural elements, such as roof trusses and principle supporting walls, should not be interfered with unless the structural survey indicates that they cannot be retained due to structural damage. The method of conversion shall incorporate such features as part of the new development.

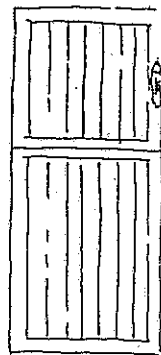
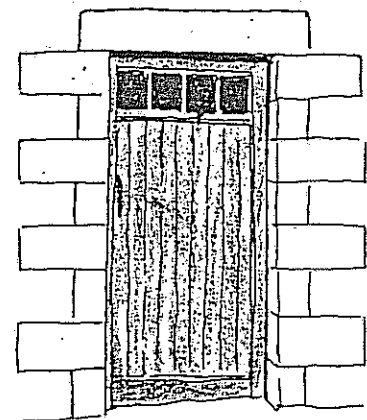
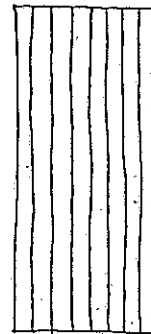
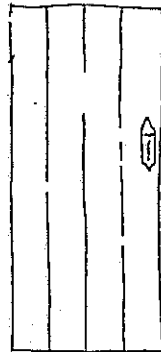
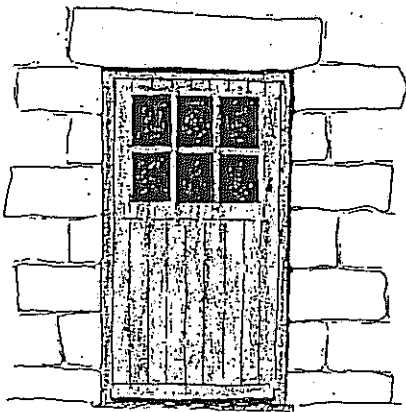
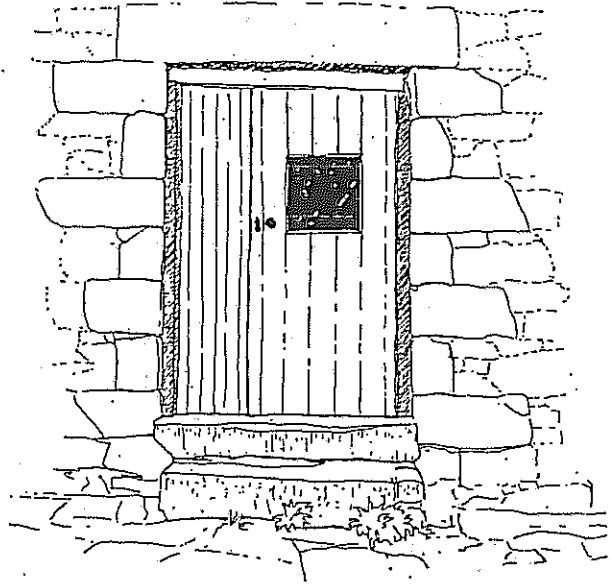
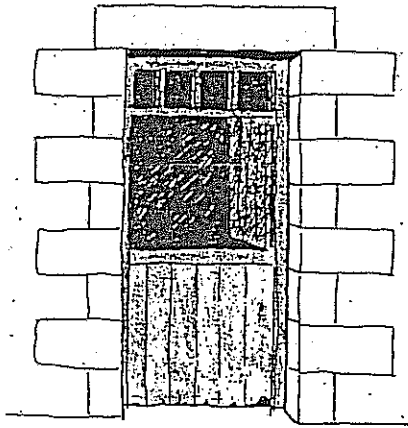
v) New window and door openings should generally be avoided, or where necessary, kept to an absolute minimum. The accommodation must, therefore, be organised to make use of the existing openings. A building is unlikely to be suitable for conversion where it requires a large number of new openings.

vi) New windows and door openings, if absolutely necessary, should reflect the scale, design and proportions of the existing openings. New windows and openings should be recessed or set in reveal and detailed to match the design of existing windows and doors. Altered windows and doors will not be allowed where they are over large or badly proportioned in relation to the existing.



*Careful attention to detailing
of windows*



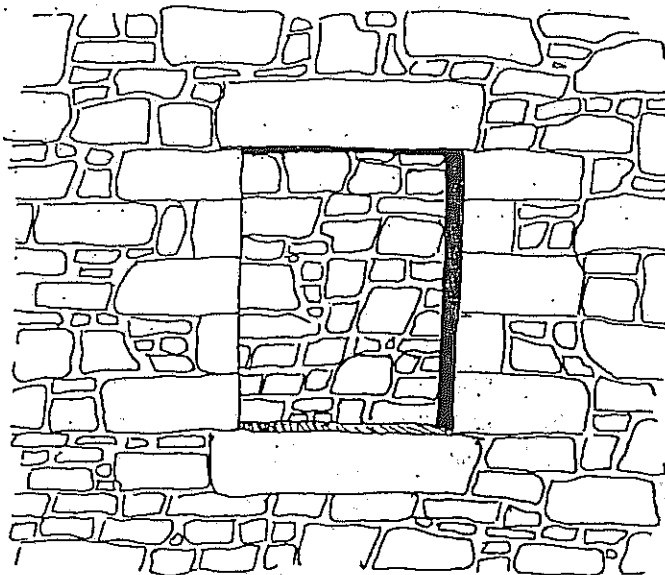


These examples illustrate the wide variety of suitable door styles



vii) In certain circumstances it may prove necessary to wholly or partially block off an existing opening. In such cases it is important to retain evidence of the opening by, for example, blocking up with a matching brick recessed by 5cm.

This illustrates how by recessing the infill and by using matching materials it serves to retain evidence of the original opening



vii Any re-building which has been agreed under the planning permission shall in terms of design and materials match that of the existing building. Wherever possible existing bricks/stone should be used to re-construct any walls that have been demolished. The developer should, therefore, agree before work commences a schedule of demolition and agree the procedures for storing and preserving materials on site. Pointing should generally be flush or slightly recessed rather than proud of the wall surface.

ix If at all possible the roof shall remain intact. If however, a new roof is required it shall be constructed in a traditional manner utilising re-claimed second hand grey slate. Modern tiles will be resisted.

BC Policy 7 Design Issues - Extensions

The Council considers that it is important that farm buildings are preserved in their original form, without the need for additions. It is, therefore, generally opposed to extensions, which often alter the appearance of a building.

The Council, therefore, considers that there be a presumption against the inclusion of extensions, in particular porches and conservatories, in association with the conversion of redundant farm buildings.

Where extensions are deemed to be essential, they must be in the form of a small secondary structure and reflect the style, character, appearance and materials of the existing building. In the majority of cases extensions will not be allowed.

As part of any approval of planning permission the Council will remove all permitted development rights so enabling the strict control of development and thus assisting in the retention of the traditional character of the buildings and their environs.

In order to retain the agricultural character of converted buildings it is essential that proper attention is given to the treatment of areas around them. Garden curtilages should not be excessive, as even when a barn is sensitively converted to residential use residential clutter will appear out of place due to the loss of open farm like setting.

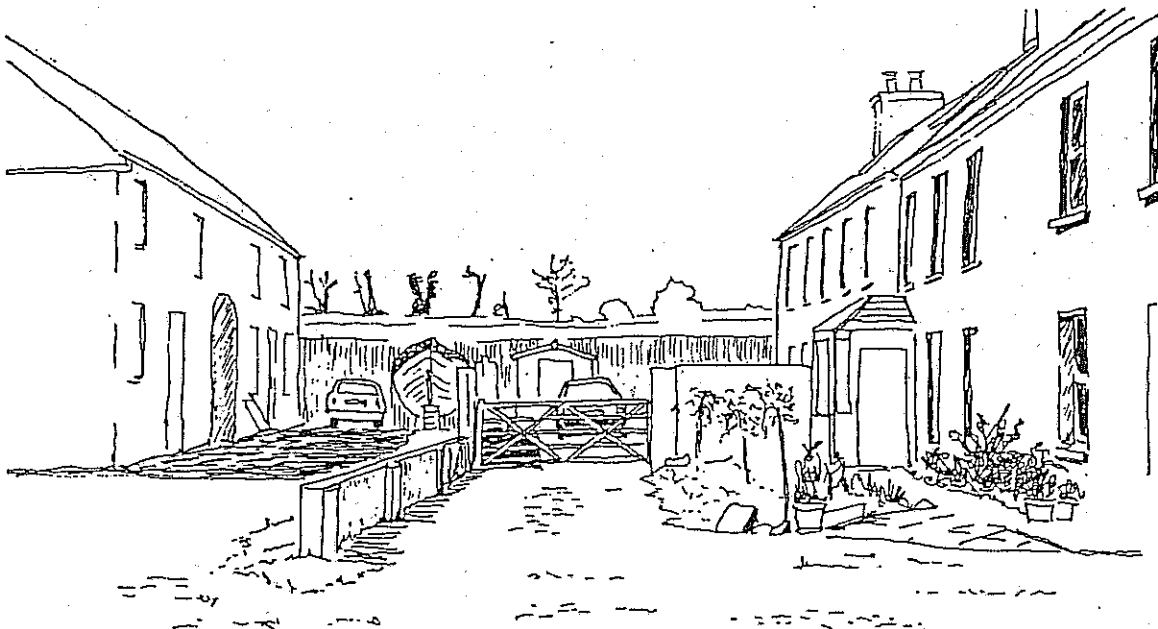


BC Policy 8 Design Issues - Curtilages

The curtilage of a converted barn, including any garden areas, should remain open and un-cluttered. The Council will remove permitted development rights which allow the erection of sheds, glass houses, play rooms and garages etc.

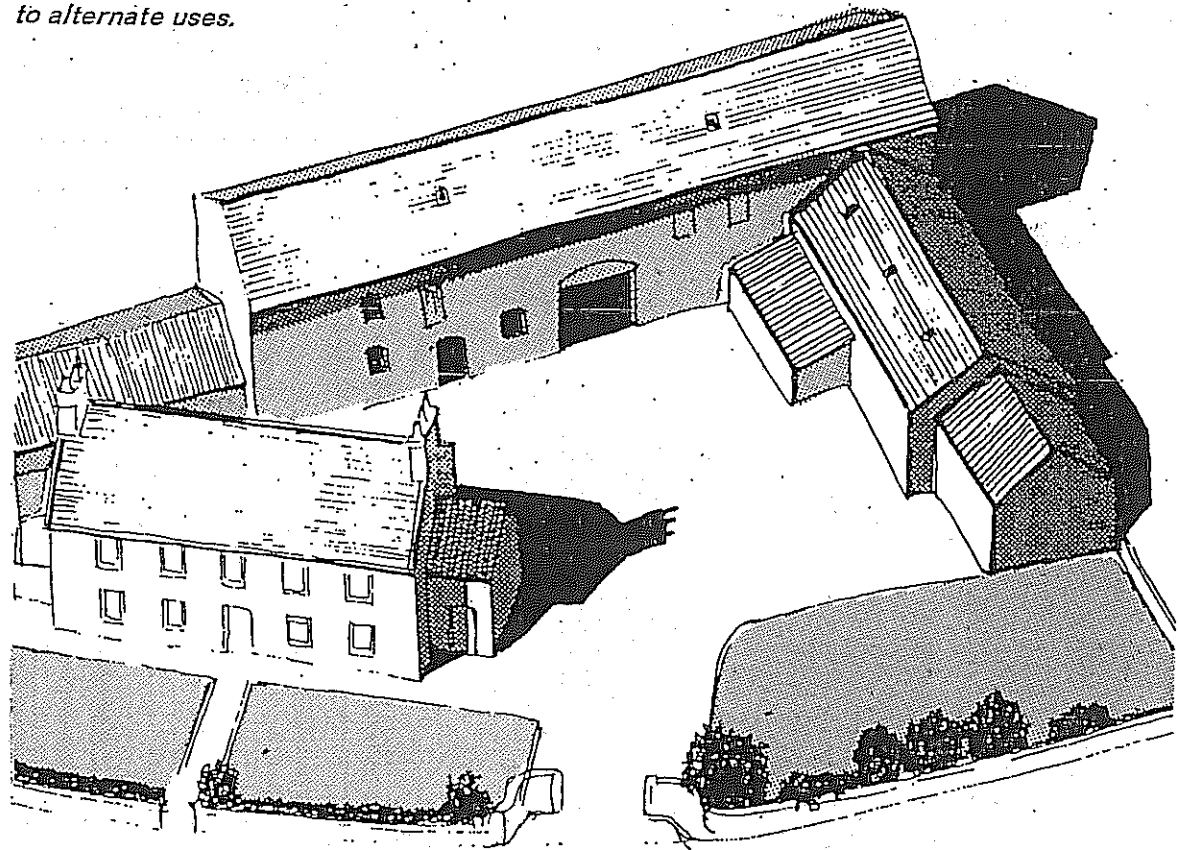
Proposals for external works, including landscape planting, should form part of a comprehensive scheme accompanying an application. This should include details of trees and hedges to be retained and indicate any new planting. Other features such as cobbled yards, stone troughs, walls and gateways should also be shown and retained.

The re-surfacing of yard areas and access roads shall be completed in traditional material, if at all possible or materials which are sympathetic to the conversion. Tarmacadam is not considered to be an appropriate material.



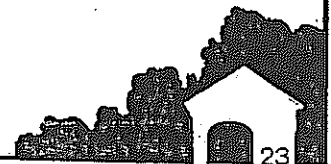
It is important to reduce the amount of residential clutter within existing courtyards.

Spaces within farm groups should remain uncluttered and unobstructed, where the buildings have been converted to alternate uses.

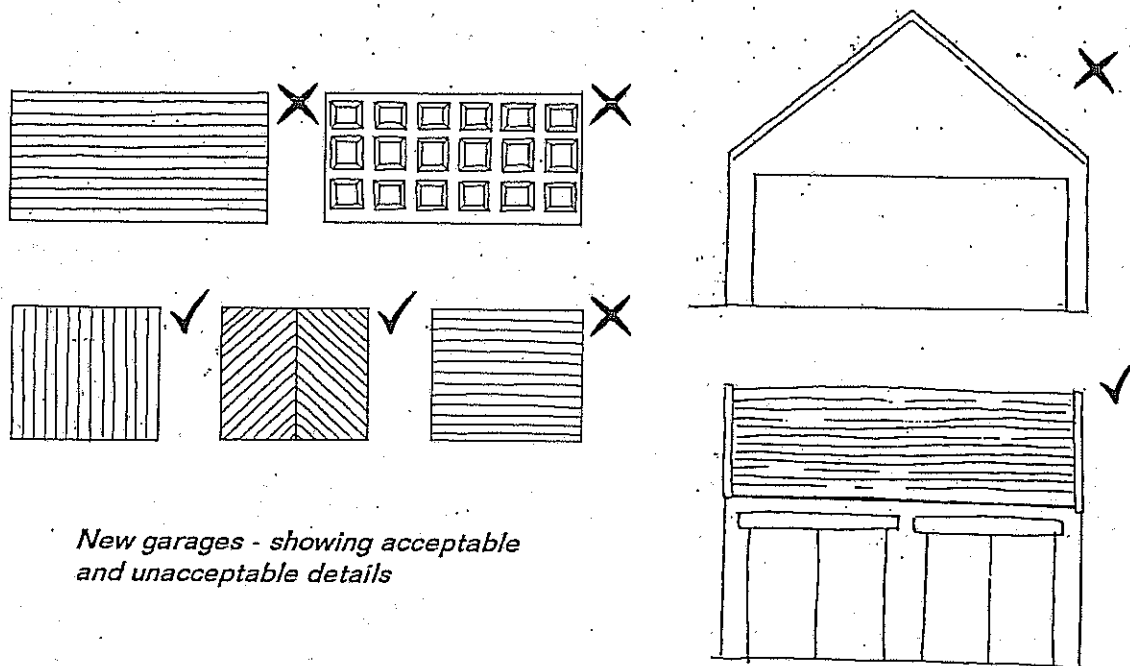


Curtilages should be identified by use of hedges, small post and rail fences or in some cases brick, stone capped walls. Interwoven timber fences or concrete panel fences or wooden panel fences will not be allowed.

Car parking areas should be sensitively located so as not to detract from the character of the buildings. Motor cars, too often, detract from the appearance of open yards and the building. It is important that efforts are made to conceal them as far as possible.



Garages should be and will be expected to be, incorporated in the fabric of the existing buildings. If it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that this cannot be achieved then any new garages, if essential, should be sited away from the buildings so as not to conflict with their character. Any new garage should be designed to reflect the character, design and appearance of the original building/s.



New garages - showing acceptable and unacceptable details

By their very nature most proposals for conversion are in rural areas where access to the site may be from roads which are designed to carry small amounts of traffic. Access to the site will require adequate visibility which may result in the loss of hedgerows.

Other services such as gas, water and electricity need to be considered, full details of the means of surface water and sewage disposal should be included with the application and in the case of septic tanks, porosity tests provided.



BC Policy 9

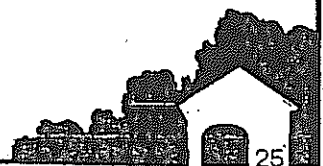
Other Considerations

In considering proposals for the conversion of redundant buildings, the Council will have due regard to the provision of suitable access arrangements including adequate visibility. Such details should be included in any planning application. The Council will wish to minimise the loss of hedgerows and trees and where this is vital, proposals for replacement should be included.

Adequate vehicle parking should be provided (usually two per dwelling) and areas provided for servicing and turning facilities. These areas will not be allowed to be constructed in Tarmacadam.

The Council will require to be satisfied at the application stage, that adequate water supply can be achieved and appropriate methods of surface water and foul sewerage treatment can be achieved.

Overheads wires or lines will normally be resisted and should be shown underground on the application plan.





CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the above policies are essential in the consideration of the conversion of traditional farm buildings. In terms of conversion to non-residential use many of the principles outlined in the above policies and in particular those that relate to the preservation of the fabric and character of the buildings should also apply to commercial conversions.

In conclusion, therefore, any applicant should include as part of their application, the following:-

- 1) Evidence of consideration of non-residential uses including any marketing information.
- 2) Details of any replacement building that may be required.
- 3) A full survey of the buildings and land including elevations and plans.
- 4) A structural survey of the building.
- 5) A method statement on how the building is to be converted without the need for substantial demolition and re-build.
- 6) Plans clearly identifying the areas of the building which require re-building together with a schedule of works.
- 7) A method statement on how traditional features are to be retained and how they will form part of the conversion.
- 8) Full detailed plans of the proposed elevations and floor plans.
- 9) Full access and drainage details.
- 10) Landscape plans including existing planting should be included and indicated with the submitted applications.
- 11) Written report giving evidence with regards to the occupation of the barns by bats and barn owls.



you wish to discuss the content of the documents or require
advice on any of the subject matter please contact:-

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Tel 01772 671488

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REVISED DEVELOPMENT BRIEF - 606 CLIFTON DRIVE NORTH, ST. ANNES ON SEA

History of the Site

The site was originally the property of the Blackburn Charity Organisation which built the Blackburn Convalescent Home as a substantial two storey property in sand dunes in 1915. It was subsequently extended on either side in 1924 by single storey extensions increasing its capacity to approximately 60 patients. More recently one of those extensions was partly demolished and further additions built to create its current form and footprint. In 1994 relatively modest extensions were approved on appeal and it was the current owner's intention to renovate the building, extend it and run it as a rest home.

Its Building and its Setting

The site is prominently located in an open section of dune land between the built up areas of St. Annes and Blackpool's South Shore. It immediately adjoins the Thursby Nursing Home, a building of a similar period which is actually closer to Clifton Drive. The Blackburn Home was built on a relatively flat plateau adjoining the dunes which are now under the protection of SSSI status and which form the main sea defence to the land. At the time of construction no formal garden area appears to have been established other than a hard surfaced corridor immediately adjacent to the seaward side of the building. The boundary with the dunes was demarked with a section of post and wire fencing some 75 feet from the face of the buildings and that is the extent of land now available.

The building has, over a number of years, deteriorated and action has been taken by the Council on a number of occasions to ensure its safety and protection from the elements. The building is not as such derelict but considerable monies would be required to renovate it to a level for re-occupation and to ensure it did not deteriorate again. The principle of re-development has, however, been established and could as yet be implemented should any party be interested in undertaking the project.

Planning Policy

Policy SP4 of the Adopted Local Plan - affords the refurbishment or replacement of institutional buildings within their own grounds - Policy SP5 of the Adopted Local Plan can afford new development in the green belt within the sites of institutions standing in extensive grounds - Policy SP3 of the Review to the Local Plan has now been amended and now reiterates the general advice of the current policy as well affording the rebuilding of single dwellings. It also refers to forms of other development as the Structure Plan policy below.

Lancashire Structure Plan Policy no. 4 allows for the replacement of single dwellinghouses, the reuse and re-development of major development sites identified in the adopted Local Plan and where shown appropriate, other forms of development which do not detract from the openness of the green belts not conflict with the prime purposes of the function of the green belt.

PPG2 Upon Green Belts - Affords the presumption of the rebuilding of single dwellings or major existing sites within a Green Belt; the PPG also reflects the policies to protect green belts against unnecessary and unwarranted development as well as a presumption to maintain the openness of the green belt.

The Principle of Development and Site Specific Considerations

Given the current Central Government advice upon building in the Green Belt and that in the on-going Review of the Borough Local Plan, a pragmatic view would be that consideration could be given to rebuilding on the site accepting a tolerance of the volume of the existing built development, however, not incorporating extensions approved but not yet built. Similarly the extent of the footprint of the new development must respect that of the existing building, although not essentially on the same site coverage of the existing building. Redevelopment should ideally take the form of one composite building unit although

its design might be fragmented to achieve satisfactory assimilation into the characteristic of its setting adjacent to the sand dunes. The existing building, however, could also be refurbished and extended upon the basis of already approved plans or remodelled taking account of the volume of the extensions approved in 1994.

However, in any redevelopment proposal it is considered that the volume and configuration of a new building and even its footprint on site could be handled in such a way that it responds much better to the undulating pattern of the adjacent dune area and as to its neighbour at the Thursby Home. It might have a central core with different storey heights and roof levels adjacent which may rise or fall away to respond to the physical landscape to which it should relate. The roof details should ideally be sloping or pitched but would not necessarily be in the form of the grand gables of the original building for which there is no significant precedent in this location.

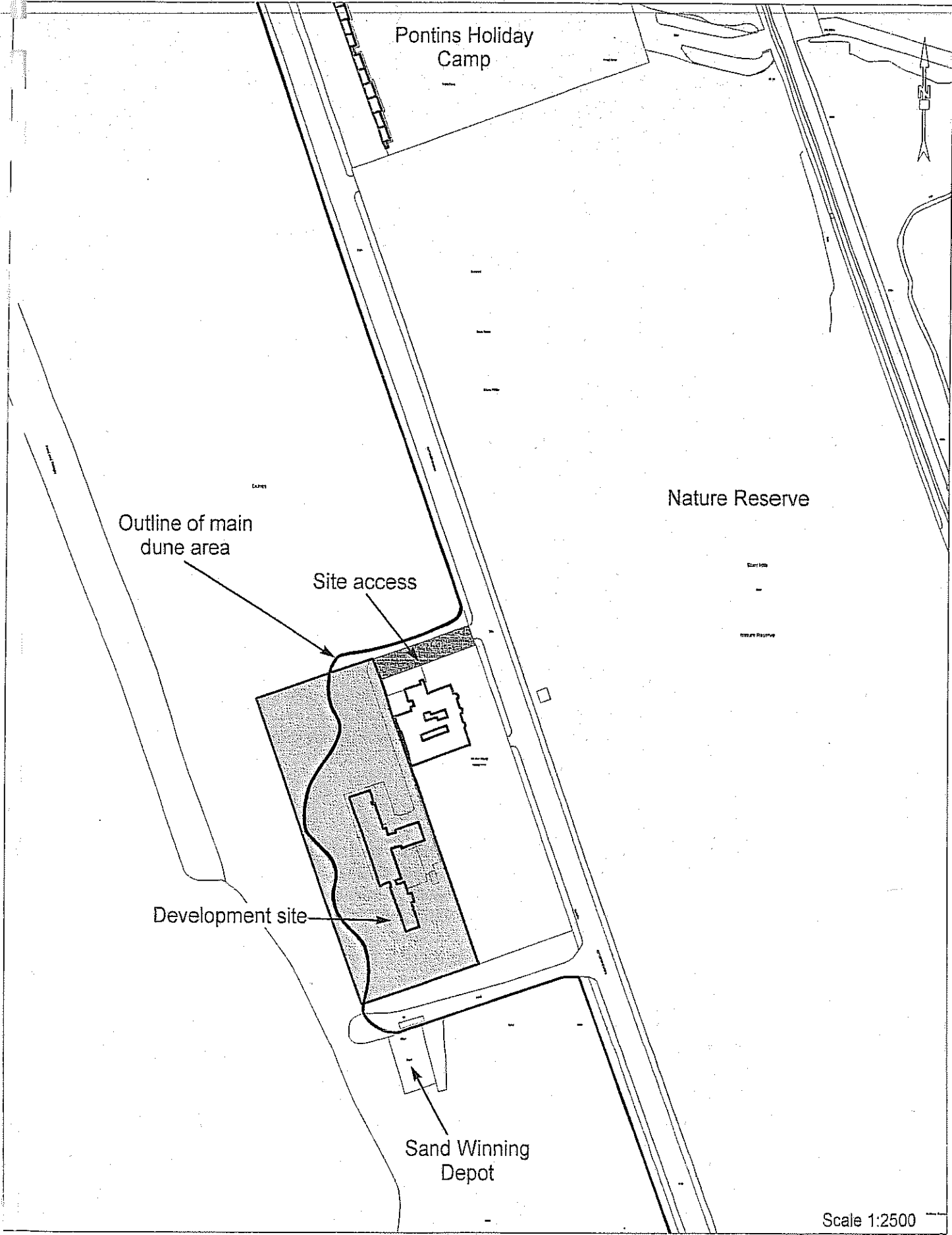
The proposed roof structure ideally presents the best opportunity to assimilate the building into the local landscape, much more so than vast amounts of unrelieved walls. This approach would be less urban in character and more appropriated to a prominent building location in a very open green belt.

Due to the exposed location of the site 'internal' courtyards for private amenity, protected from the prevailing winds, ought to be considered. Formal garden areas within the dunes area that are part of the site need very careful consideration and the use of timber boardwalks to protect the underlying dunes ought to be considered. The existing dunes are protected and the actual remodelling of any established dune area within the site would not be considered for purely cosmetic purposes unless deemed wholly advantageous in redefining the character and quality of the original dunes and helping to improve sea defences. Early discussions with English Nature would be imperative. Similarly discussion with Blackpool Borough and this Council's Cultural Services Unit, upon the management of the dune area would be beneficial.

The use of the private motor car at the property over the years given its nature of use has been relatively limited and as such and especially given its visual prominent location from the dunes and Clifton Drive, the solution for car parking needs careful consideration. The use of an underground car park would be ideal and this would also give security in a relatively isolated situation and protection from the elements and wind blown sand. Limited surface parking for visitors would need to be protected from sand blow and the surface treatment must be discussed. Vehicular access is out onto the Clifton Drive North which although very straight is heavily trafficked. Discussions with the County Council's Environment Directorate (Highways) are advised at an early stage. The Council will, however, be mindful of the traffic that a remodelled rest home or nursing home could generate in terms of visitors, goods servicing, doctors' calls and ambulance servicing.

Conclusion

To discuss any detailed proposal for this site, whether it be for redevelopment or renovation of the existing building, individual persons or developers are asked to contact Mark Evans at the Built Environment Unit at the Council Offices, Derby Road, Wesham, (Tel 01772 528056), prior to having plans drawn up.



Pontins Holiday
Camp

Nature Reserve

Outline of main
dune area

Site access

Development site

Sand Winning
Depot

Scale 1:2500

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

606 CLIFTON DRIVE NORTH (FORMER BLACKBURN HOME), ST ANNES

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Development
Brief
Land off Weeton Road, Wesham

Site Characteristics

Landscape

The site is a low lying field (4.5 ha), most of which is in agricultural use on the north western edge of Wesham. It is situated in an area of transition between the rural agricultural landscape and the urban landscape of the settlement. Most of the site is grassland but there is an area to the east which was formerly allotments but which is now overgrown with long grass and weeds.

To the west of the site beyond the Kirkham/Wesham By-Pass the landscape comprises large fields used for a mixture of arable and dairy farming. It is a very open landscape which is gently undulating, field boundaries are small and there are few trees. The site has features which link it to this landscape but the two are clearly separated by the road.

To the east and north of the site there is residential development. The backs of houses, garages and allotments are particularly noticeable on the eastern side.

The site itself has a feeling of enclosure created by the clear boundaries on all sides and the higher levels of the surrounding landuses. All of the boundaries have hawthorn hedges and the boundary along the By-Pass is planted with shrubs which have yet to reach maturity. The land is not level, within the site it dips and rises several metres in height over only quite small areas. The lowest area appears to be just north of the western corner adjacent to the By-Pass. However these changes in level do provide an opportunity to make the layout of the site more interesting. There is a small pond at the north end of the site which is surrounded by mature Willow trees. There is also a boggy area in the southern part of the site but this does not appear to be worthy of retention.

Land Use

For a number of years the site has been used solely for the production of silage. The adjacent busy roads and proximity of residential development would make it difficult to keep stock on this land. It is also used for dog walking and there is a well worn path around the edge of the site. However, this is not a public right of way. There is a small pond in the northern part of the site which does not appear to be used for fishing.

Adjoining Land Uses

The site has important and sensitive boundaries on all sides. It is highly visible from every aspect and because it is low lying, views into the site will be particularly important.

To the east is the Kirkham/Wesham By-pass, the main access to the M55 for the southerly part of the Borough. The By-pass allows extensive views of the site for motorists moving both north and south. An opportunity exists to improve the view of Wesham from this road by the careful design of a new development.

At the northern end of the site is the roundabout at the end of the By-pass. Views from the roundabout into the site are broken by an area of landscaping on the south side of the roundabout. However, there are extensive views over the site for motorists proceeding south along Fleetwood Road into Wesham.

To the south and west is Weeton Road which affords extensive views of the site for passing motorists. There are also a number of properties along the south side of Weeton Road with views to the north over the site.

The eastern side of the site has boundaries which abut the Fire Station, the Ambulance Station, the backs of properties on Queens Place and Morland Avenue, allotments and properties on Weeton Road. Views over the site from the east are from an elevated position, that is properties will be overlooked and this should be taken into account when designing the layout of the site.

Development Opportunities

The site provides an opportunity for a high quality development, adjacent to a residential area, with excellent access to the road and rail network on the rural edge of Wesham.

At present the western edge of Wesham (when viewed across the site from the By-Pass) is rather neglected and unkempt in appearance. The location of the site provides an opportunity to screen this neglected area and to create a high quality development with structural landscaping in this part of the settlement. There will also be attractive views out from the site, and attractive views across and into the site from all directions.

An opportunity exists to retain the existing natural features within the site in particular the pond at the North end. The hawthorn hedge around the boundary of the site should also be retained as far as possible.

Finally there are also opportunities to provide footpath/cycleway links which will enable residents of the development to walk/cycle out in the direction of Mowbreck Lane. These links will also be useful for mothers and children walking to the local primary schools on Fleetwood Road and Garstang Road North.

Development Constraints

The ground conditions of the site have not been surveyed, however the Kirkham area is not known for particularly poor ground conditions. Developers should acquaint themselves with the prevailing conditions on the land through on-site investigations and discussions with the Council's Building Control Section. The ground levels of the site vary considerably. This will result in the water table being much nearer the surface in some areas. This will have to be dealt with through an appropriate drainage scheme.

A 30m stand off will be required from the Kirkham/Wesham By-Pass in order to reduce the affect of noise from passing traffic. All dwellings must be located beyond this easement, however gardens, garages and public open space may be located within this area.

The 25" Hodder Aquaduct crosses the site. The layout of development will have to ensure that North West Water easement is maintained and that the main is fully protected.

The existing pond at the north end of the site should be retained and substantial landscaping should be extended from it north towards the roundabout at the end of the Kirkham/Wesham By-pass. Hawthorn hedges around the boundaries of the site should be retained as far as is possible. Those removed to create access should be replaced at the rear of the visibility splay.

Housing layouts will have to acknowledge the orientation of existing houses situated close to the boundary of the development site. Layouts should be designed so that all dwellings along the western and southern boundaries of the site face outwards. The housing development at the south end of the Kirkham/Wesham By-Pass is a particularly good example of how this approach would work in practice. The houses face the By-Pass and the easement contains access roads, gardens, garages and landscaping.

Access arrangements and requirements are outlined in the last section of this brief.

Off-site works may be required in relation to the provision of water supply and a foul drainage system.

Commencement of development of the site will be dependant on the advance improvement of the junction of Weeton Road and the Kirkham/Wesham By-pass.

General Approach to Site Development

1. The site represents the most northwesterly edge of Wesham. Its easterly and southerly edges will form a boundary with Wesham, and its westerly boundary forms a boundary with open countryside. For many motorists driving south from the Motorway, this development site will be the first settlement on the Fylde that they see, therefore it is very important that as a " Gateway to the Fylde " the development must be of an appropriately high standard. The site should be developed to achieve an attractive, high quality and visually stimulating scene particularly when viewed from the Kirkham/Wesham By-pass. This will involve houses facing outwards in a flowing rather than straight layout with substantial amounts of landscaping.
2. The existing Pond and surrounding land should be retained as shown on the plan. The developer may wish to locate the required amount of public open space within this area. See plan for further details.
3. Existing hedgerows should be retained.
4. To improve the appearance of the site when viewed from the west and south the fronts of houses should face outwards. This will ensure views into the site are not impaired by the range of domestic structures and outbuildings normally found in back gardens.
5. There should be good links for pedestrians and cyclists with Fleetwood Road and along the side of Weeton Road towards the centre of Wesham. This will encourage people to walk to the railway station and to walk or cycle to the schools.
6. Development should include a mixture of house sizes and densities, restricted to a height of 1 or 2 storeys. Larger blocks of flats would be inappropriate on this site as they would appear too bulky and dense when viewed from the surrounding countryside. Policy HL3 of the Review of the Fylde Borough Local Plan (Deposit Draft) states that 9 Affordable Housing Units should be provided on this site.
7. The site has been allocated for 114 dwellings using the new minimum density requirement of 30 per hectare from PPG3. In particular there should be substantial landscaping along the boundary of the By-pass in the stand-off area. Landscaped areas within the development should include heavy standard trees and shrubs of native species. Any verge planting should be situated away from underground services.

Infrastructure and Technical Requirements

Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

Vehicular access to the site must be taken from Weeton Road. No vehicular access will be allowed onto Fleetwood Road or the Kirkham/Wesham By-Pass. Improvements to the junction of the Weeton Road/Kirkham and Wesham By-Pass will be required before the houses are occupied. Such improvement may require the dedication of a small area of land within the development site to the County Council.

The access into the site should be 5.5m in width with 1.8m footways. The junction at Weeton Road should be formed with 10m radii. Spurs off the main access road should be of varying width between 4.1

and 5.5m to aid informality. A footway of 1.8 m will be required along the side of Weeton Road to give safe pedestrian access to the centre of Wesham.

Pedestrian access should also be provided to Fleetwood Road (adjacent to the Fire Station) and to Morland Avenue to provide a safer and quicker route to local primary schools.

Foul Drainage

The site must be drained on a separate system. Foul flows should be directed to the existing sewer in Weeton Road.






Surface Water Drainage

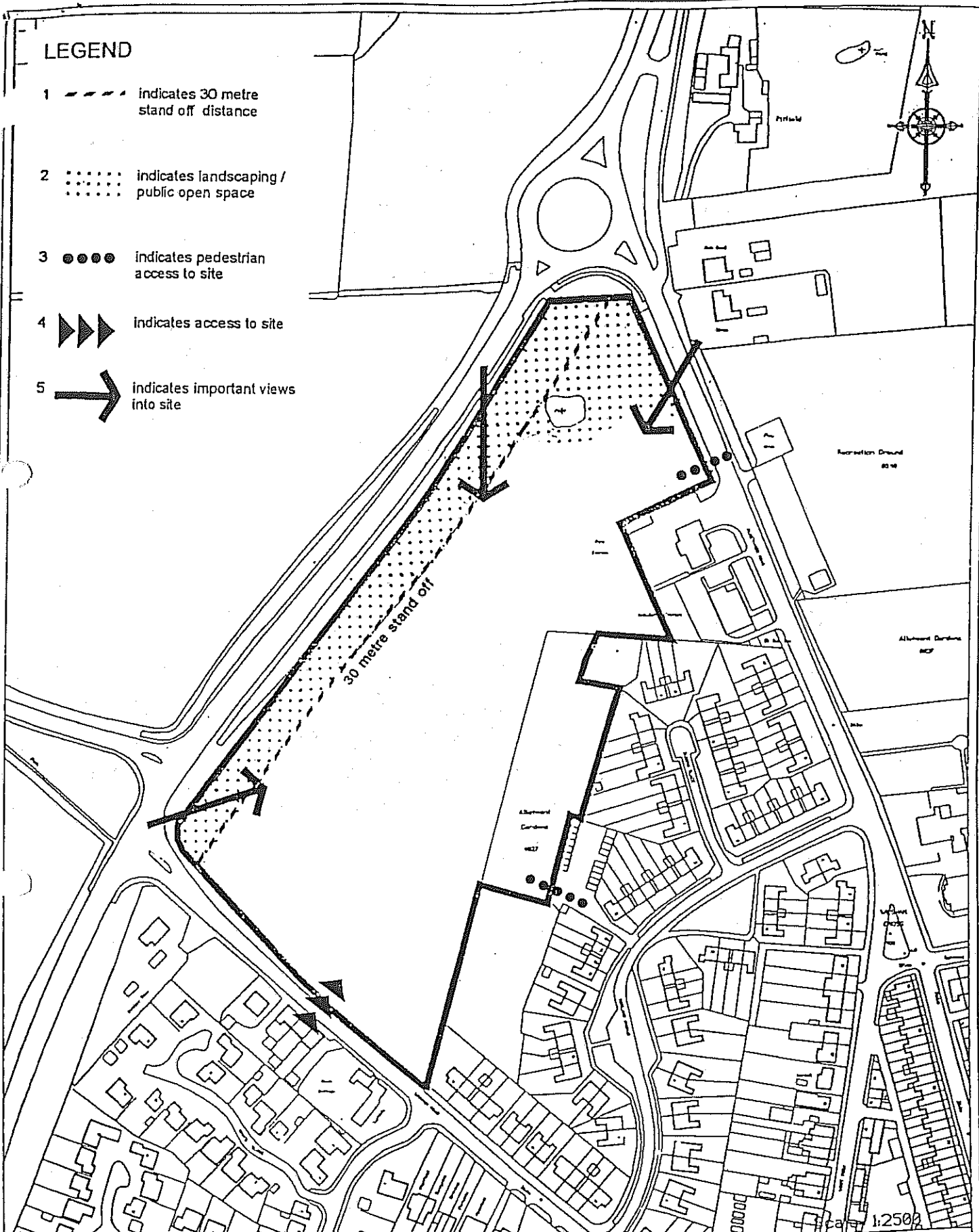
Surface water must be routed to the existing culverted watercourse which crosses the site and onto an open water course beyond the By-Pass to the west. Dependent on levels and site layout, it may be necessary to introduce pumping and on-site storage. There is an existing drainage pipe crossing the site approximately from north to south which will need to be protected. The precise route and ownership of this line is to be investigated by the developer.

Water Supply

Mains reinforcement may be required to serve the development for which the developer will be required to make a contribution. The Hodder Aquaduct crosses the site. Development will have to ensure that NWW easement is maintained and that the main is fully protected.

LEGEND

- 1  indicates 30 metre stand off distance
- 2  indicates landscaping / public open space
- 3  indicates pedestrian access to site
- 4  indicates access to site
- 5  indicates important views into site



FYLDE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN REVIEW
 POLICY HL.1 - HOUSING
 LAND OFF WEETON ROAD, WESHAM

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