

APPLICATION DETAILS

Background

At the meeting of Committee on 3 November 2008, Members considered the attached report and decided to defer the determination of the application in order that further clarification could be sought with regard to the history of the site.

Update

Relevant Planning History

1980/264: Planning permission for the retention of the commercial riding school with hardstanding, car parking for customers at Old Clough Stables, was granted in 1980. It was proposed that the hardstanding/car parking area would be located on the northerly side of the stables.

1986/203: Planning permission for the change of use of part of the existing stable block, approximately 6.7m x 4.4, from business to residential accommodation in connection with the riding school was granted in 1986. According to the applicant, the approved development was implemented and the use of that part of the stable block has continued as dwelling since then. Furthermore, the applicant points out that a further part of the stable block was converted to two bed rooms to be used as part of the approved residential accommodation. Although the use of the two additional bed bedrooms without the benefit of planning permission remains unauthorised, given the time period lapsed, this could be considered as lawful.

1990/421: Planning permission for the conversion of part of the existing stables and extension to form a dwellinghouse and erection of additional replacement stables was refused in 1990 and an appeal dismissed 1991. In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector pointed out that the amount of construction and alteration involved would result in almost entirely new building which could not be justified in this location close to a large housing area where alternative accommodation is available. Furthermore, the Inspector pointed out that the proposal if constructed would result in a large building on a hillside open to view from a wide area which would detract from the quality of the landscape in a specially protected area contrary to the aims of the local policies.

From the Inspector's appeal decision, it is clear that the site is located on a hillside and any significant alterations affecting the exterior of the building would have a detrimental impact and as such would detract from the character of the area. As stated in the attached report, the proposed development would result in the increased height of the roof with a solar panel installed in the easterly facing roof plane and construction of a new enlarged porch. Given the prominent position of the site on a hillside and the nature of the proposed alterations affecting the exterior of the building (the current proposal), it is considered that the proposed development would be visually obtrusive and harmful to the character of the area which is unacceptable. I therefore recommend that planning permission be refused for the reasons stated in the attached report.

To enhance the appearance of the building, the applicant believes that the building could be clad in natural stone and roof, in part or whole, changed from flat to pitch. Whilst these works would require planning permission, it should be pointed out that an increased bulk of the building and height of the roof would be visually obtrusive and would detract from the quality of the landscape of the area which is unacceptable.

1. THE SITE

- 1.1 The application site is a rectangular blockwork building with a mono pitched roof cladding situated on the south side of a narrow lane which leads from Burnley Road to some scattered buildings comprising farm houses, cottages etc in the area. There is a small entrance porch attached to the north-easterly gable of the building. A timber shed and portacabin are also located on the northerly side in line with the front elevation of the building. According to the details provided in the application, currently the building is used partly as residential and partly for the stabling the horses.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

1980/264: Proposed riding school with hardstanding, car parking for customers, Old Clough Stables, New Road, Weir - Approved

1986/203: Proposed change of use of part of existing stable block from business to residential use in connection with riding school, Old Clough Stables, New Row, Weir. - Approved

1990/421: Extension to form dwelling house and erection of additional replacement stables, Old Clough Stables, New Row, Weir – Permission refused and Appeal dismissed.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal involves the conversion of the north–westerly part of the building from stables to residential, replacement of the existing porch with a new porch in front and formation of a car parking/hardstanding area in front. It is proposed that the newly converted part of the building would be used as an extension to the existing dwelling (6.7m x 4.4m) permitted under previous planning permission ref. 1986/203. The proposed extension would help provide additional bed rooms and other associated residential facilities.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the existing window/door openings at the building, the subject of this application, would be blocked up and new windows provided on its northerly, easterly and westerly elevations. In addition the ridge height of the existing mono pitched roof would be raised between 2 to 3.5m and a solar panel, approximately 7m long and 1.1m wide, installed in the easterly facing roof plane. It is proposed that the existing rendered and painted exterior walls would be retained and the new roof built in natural blue slate. The exterior walls of the porch would be built in natural stone.

3.3 The application has been submitted with an engineering report which concludes that in general terms, there are no structural reasons to deter satisfactory upgrading and renovation subject to the adequate use of structural restraints and details in accordance with good modern practice.

3.4 In support of the application, the applicant states:

- The existing building can be converted without any concern as to its physical suitability
- Its impact on the countryside will be beneficial as the current appearance of the building is not good.
- It will enhance the local economic environment. It includes an office and is really a live/work place.
- It is sustainably located. It is close to the main bus route from Waterfoot to Burnley.
- Not all the existing stable building will be used and part will remain.

4 **POLICY CONTEXT**

National

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS3 – Housing (2000)

PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Development Plan

Regional Spatial Strategy (Adopted 2008)

Policy DP 1 – Spatial Principles

Policy RDF2 – Rural Areas

Policy DP7 – Promote Environmental Quality

Policy L4 – Regional Housing Provision

Policy EM1- Environmental Assets

Rossendale District Local Plan.(1995)

DS5 – Development Outside the Urban Boundary & Green Belt

DC1 - Development Criteria

DC4 - Materials

Other Material Planning Policy Considerations.

LCC Parking Standards

RBC Core Strategy

RBC Interim Housing Policy Statement (July 2008)

RBC Housing Market Assessment (September 2007)

PPG13 – Transport

5. **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

LCC (Highways) - No highway comments

6. **REPRESENTATIONS**

A site notice was posted on 3 October 2008 and the relevant neighbours were notified by letter on 23 September and 15 October 2008 to accord with the General Development Procedure Order. The site notice has been posted to go

above and beyond the regulatory requirement to ensure a high level of Community engagement to accord with PPS1.

Two letters raising objection to the proposal have been received from the residents of Higher and Lower Old Clough Farms. The points raised are:

- The property has been derelict for approximately 15 years and since December 2006, the stables have remained vacant.
- The stables are built on open countryside which adds to a feeling of spaciousness.
- The stables if converted into a dwelling would be out of character with the area.
- The proposed dwelling would alter the building lines, invade privacy, affect and extra traffic on the lane.
- The building will be too close to my residence.
- The applicants do not live down our lane and the proposal would cause more traffic problems.
- Stable block on the lane has caused problems when having deliveries.

7. **Planning Issues**

Principle

- 7.1 In the adopted Local Plan, the application site lies within a Countryside Area, wherein Policy DS5 would preclude development other than for the purposes of agriculture, forestry or other uses appropriate to a rural area, unless for the rehabilitation and re-use of buildings providing that they comply with policy DC1. PPS7 is supportive of re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside. However, it indicates *“reuse for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations and for some types of buildings”*.
- 7.2 The existing permitted dwelling including the porch in front has a gross floor area of approx 39.38 sq m and a volume of approx 123.00cubic m. The proposed extension, proposed new living accommodation including the new porch would result in the formation of additional floor area of approx 117.19 sq m and a volume of approx 502.85 cubic m. These figures do not take into account the unauthorised use of part of the stables currently being used for residential purposes (two bed rooms). Although there is no specific guidance as to when additions to a dwelling become disproportionate a figure commonly applied as a general rule-of-thumb is 50%, relative to the volume of original dwelling. On the basis of these considerations, it is clear that the proposed development far exceeds in size (approximately 408%) what is normally considered proportionate as an extension to a dwelling in the countryside. It is therefore considered that the proposed extension is oversized and constitutes an inappropriate development in the countryside.

Design/appearance: Impact upon the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding area.

- 7.3 The application site is located in a prominent position within the countryside. As such the existing building is exposed to views from the surrounding land. Although the current building is somewhat unattractive and unsightly, however, due to its modest size, height and appearance, it is considered complimentary to the rural character of the area and appropriate development in the countryside.
- 7.4 The proposed development would result in an increase in the ridge height from 3.4m to 5.5m when viewed from the access lane and from 4.3m to 6.7m when viewed from the easterly side. Due to the increased ridge height, the height of the roof would be raised. In addition to a number of new windows in the easterly, westerly and northerly elevations, a solar panel (approximately 7m long and 1.1m wide) would be installed in the easterly facing roof plane. A new pitched roofed porch, approximately 2.9m x 2.1m would be built attached to the northerly elevation of the dwelling.
- 7.5 In view of the increased height of the roof and construction of the new porch, it is considered that the proposed building would be of a greater bulk and overpowering to the detriment of the subdued character/appearance of the existing building. The proposed new windows, solar panels and car parking/amenity open area, due to their position, scale and design, would urbanise the character of the building to the detriment of the rural/open character of the area. It is considered that the proposed development, due to its prominent location/position, height and bulk, would be visually obtrusive and harmful to the intrinsic character of the area which is distinctive of the landscape character tract in which it is located.
- 7.6 PPS7 has amongst its objectives for rural *“To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural area through the promotion of good quality, sustainable development that respects and where possible, enhances local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside”*. However, in terms of its form and design detailing, the proposed extension would result in a development that would not reflect the essential character of the application building. It is considered that the proposed extension, due to resulting size, design and height of the roof, would detract to an unacceptable extent from the character and appearance of the remainder stables building and from the essentially open and rural character of the area. This, it is considered, would be in conflict with the aims/objectives of PPS1 and PPS7 and policies DP7, RDF2 of the Adopted Regional Spatial Strategy and saved Policy DS5 and the criteria of saved Policy DC1 of the Adopted Rossendale District Local Plan.

Housing Policy

- 7.7 Since the proposal would not result in the creation of an additional dwelling, it is considered that the proposed development does not conflict with the Council's Interim Housing Statement (July 2008).

Highway Safety

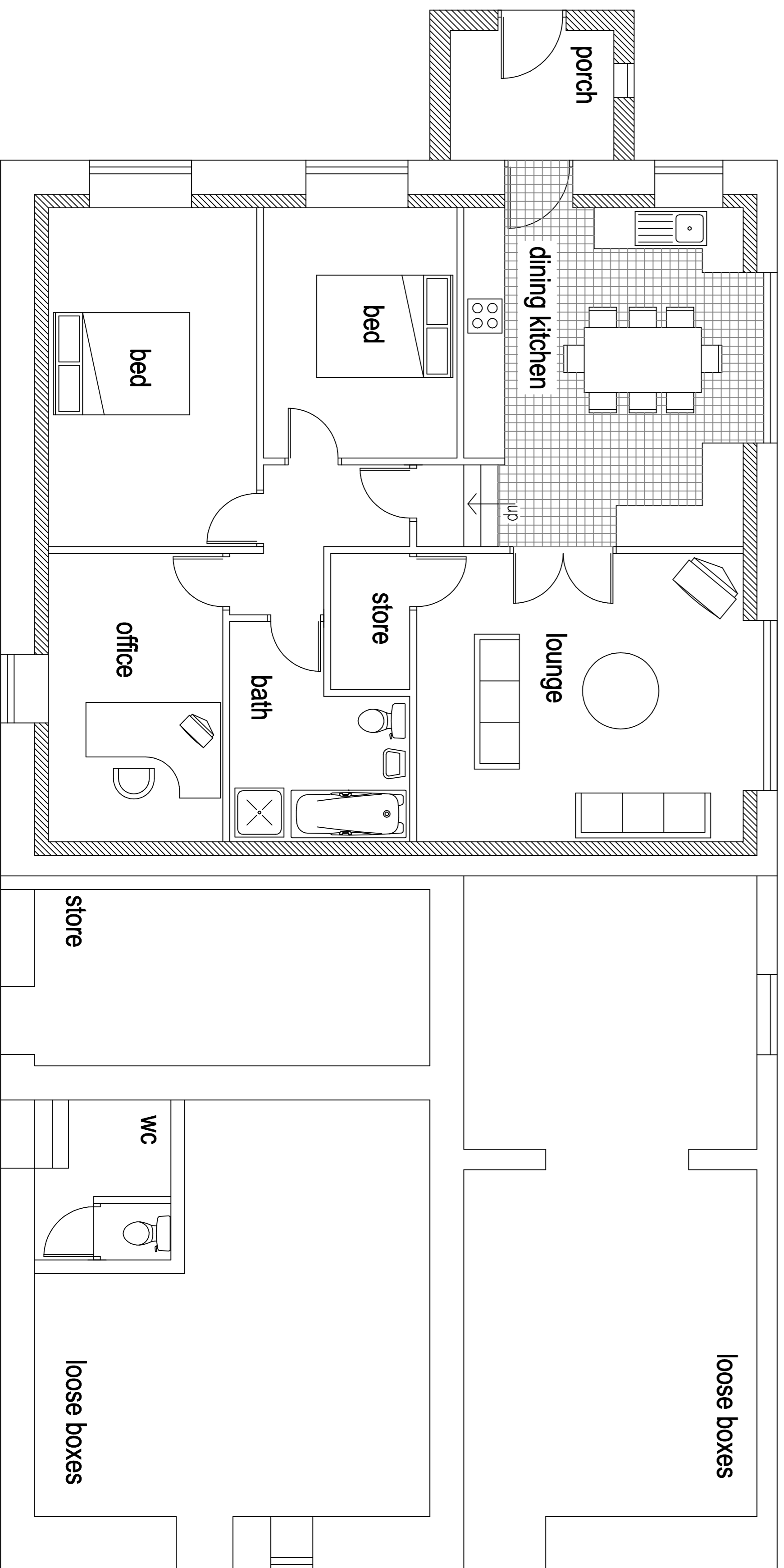
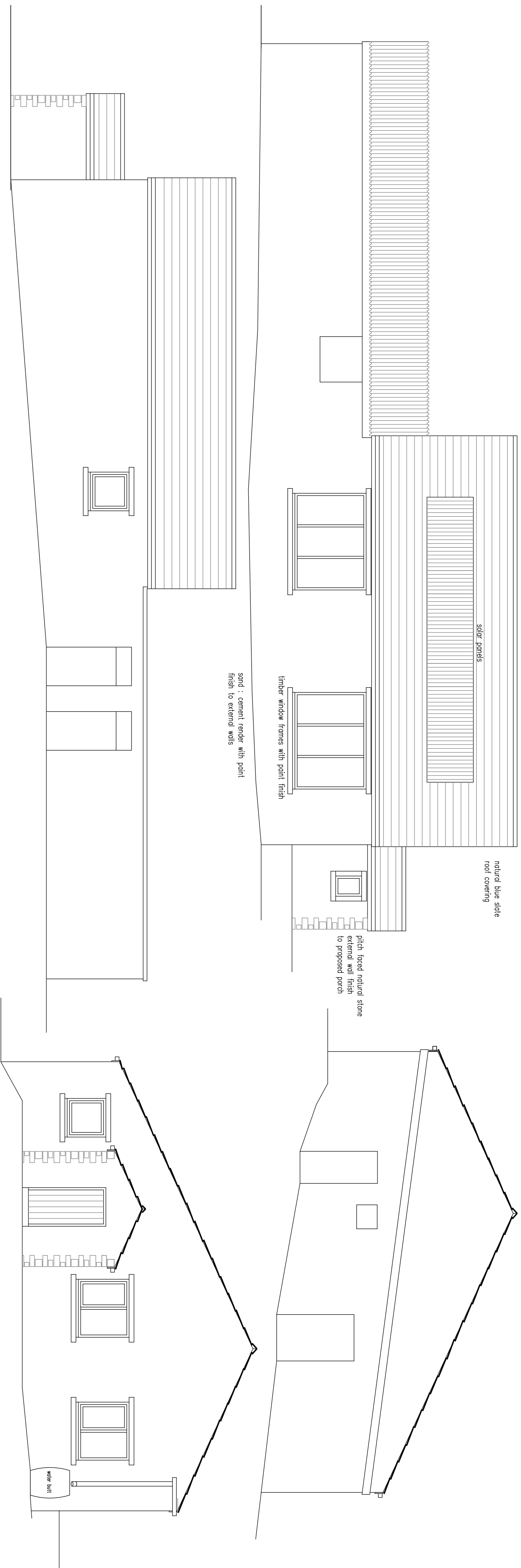
- 7.8 The proposal includes the provision 2 no. car parking spaces/ turning area and amenity open space on the northerly side in front of the dwelling. The car

parking area and hardstanding would be prepared with a consolidated limestone surface. It is proposed that the car parking/amenity open space area would be enclosed with a 1m high dry stone boundary wall along the access lane. The Highway Authority is satisfied with the proposed access and car parking provision and therefore has raised no objection to the proposal.

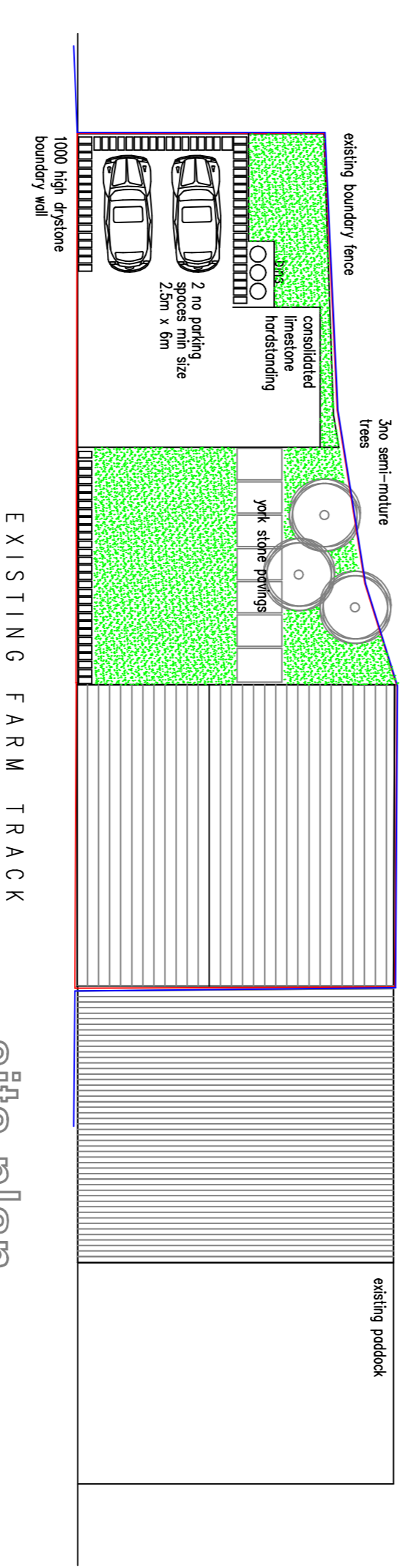
8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is recommended that planning permission be refused for the following reasons.
1. The proposed extension, by reason of its siting/design form and detailing, would be unduly prominent and unacceptably erode the essential character of the building, together with the area's local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside. The proposed development would be contrary to the aims and objectives of PPS1 and PPS7, Policies DP7, RDF2 of the Adopted Regional Spatial Strategy and saved Policy DS5 & the criteria of saved Policy DC1 of the Adopted Rossendale *District Local Plan*."

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floor plan



site plan

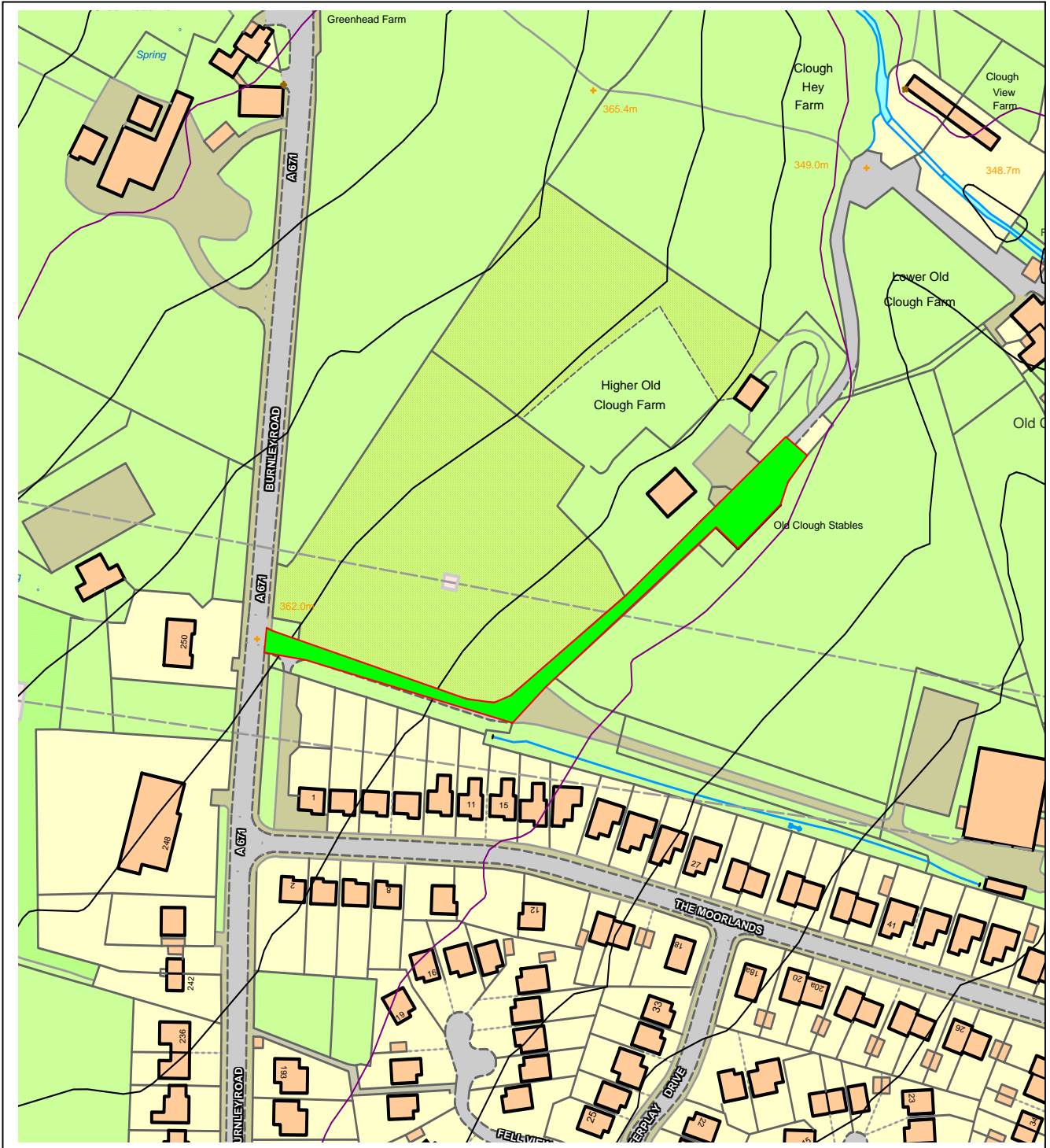
as proposed

proposed alterations and improvements to existing dwelling including partial change of use at

**Old Clough Stables and cottage
New Row
Weir
Bacup**

scale 1:50 @ A1
0m 5m
1:50 linear scale

2008/0636



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