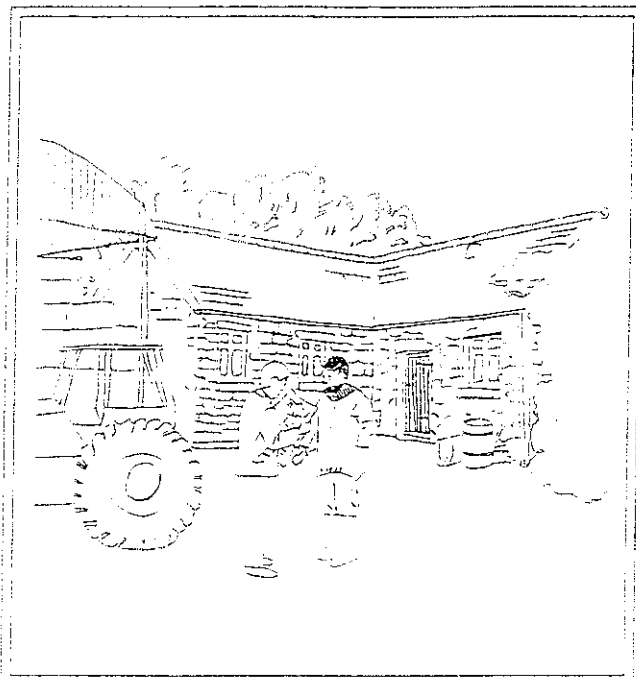


*SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE*

PLANNING POLICY NOTE  
& DESIGN GUIDANCE

**AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AND ROADS**



One of a series of Guidance

Notes produced by

Ribble Valley Borough Council

**VERSION 1**

Adopted  
March 1997



Ribble Valley Borough Council

# AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AND ROADS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The area covered by the Ribble Valley is predominantly rural in character and has some beautiful scenery. Indeed over two thirds of the Borough is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty reflecting the high landscape quality. The countryside is a very important resource and the importance of protecting these areas from unnecessary or inappropriate development is recognised nationally.
- 1.2 The main industries in rural areas are farming and forestry and these have a major influence on the appearance of the countryside. The development and maintenance of a healthy farming economy is essential to the national interest and the appearance of the countryside.
- 1.3 From time to time new agricultural buildings will be required for the efficient running of a farm. It has to be accepted that modern farm buildings are designed to be functional and that farming methods often require large industrial style buildings which can sometimes appear intrusive and out of place in the countryside.
- 1.4 All new agricultural buildings and access tracks/roads are subject to planning control either as full planning applications or as determinations as to whether the prior approval of the Planning Authority will be required for the siting, design and external appearance of the building. The latter determination now brings buildings and roads which formerly would have been erected under permitted development rights under planning control. Other structures such as slurry tanks and silos will be subject to the same considerations.
- 1.5 Permission will not be granted nor prior approval given for the erection of agricultural buildings where by reason of siting, design or external appearance the building would have a seriously detrimental impact on the visual character of the areas. In the case of full applications the impact on any adjacent residential property will also be seen as a material consideration.
- 1.6 In order to benefit from permitted development any proposal must:
  - (a) be on agricultural land which means land in use for agriculture for the purposes of a trade or business
  - (b) be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit

## 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

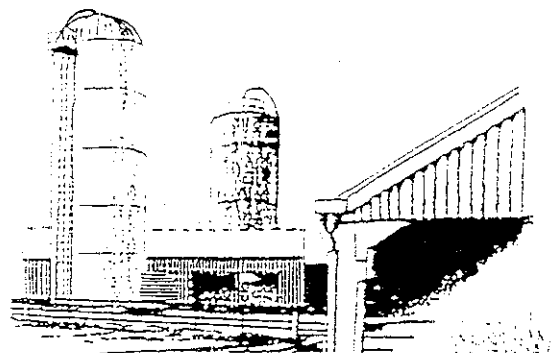
- 2.1 The aim of this guidance is to maintain and improve the appearance and quality of the open countryside and ensure any new developments sympathetic to the surrounding environment
- 2.2 The document elaborates on policies within the DWLP and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications
- 2.3 The guidance note has the following objectives:-
  - To inform developers and the general public of the Council's approach towards new farm buildings and roads throughout the Borough
  - To assist applicants identifying those designs/siting likely to receive planning permission
  - To achieve a co-ordinated approach throughout the Borough

## 3 POLICY

### NEW AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AND FARM TRACKS

In instances where prior approval or planning permission is required for an agricultural building or a new access track consent will only be given if:-

- 1 Where the proposal is within the AONB it is consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. The Council will also look for the way any development contributes to conservation of the natural beauty of the area;



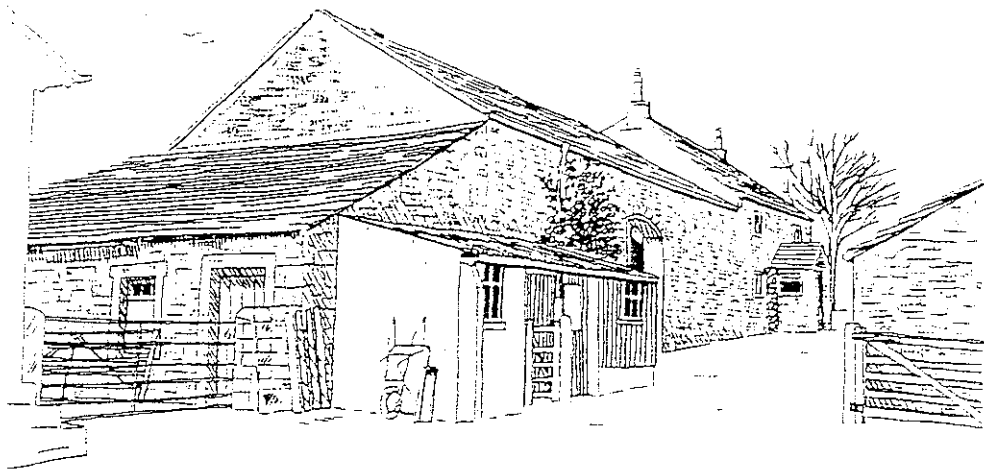
*Landscaping can often be used  
to minimise the visual impact*



- 2 The building is located within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings unless it can be proved/demonstrated that a more isolated location is essential to meet the needs of the enterprise;
- 3 The building or development in terms of scale design choice and colour of materials is sympathetic to its surroundings;
- 4 The proposal where necessary incorporates provisions for additional planting/landscape treatment to help minimise its impact on the local environs;
- 5 The proposal does not have any undue adverse visual impact on the surrounding landscape;
- 6 Maximum use shall have been made of all existing available buildings  
In considering the 'maximum use' of buildings regard will be taken as to the possible use of such buildings and it is acknowledged the use of modern machinery and methods of housing livestock may preclude the economic use of some existing buildings

#### 4 SITING AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

##### 4.1 Siting



*Traditional farmyard siting*

It is recognised that the farmer will have practical and organisational considerations to take into account in deciding where the buildings should be sited. They include ease of access for machinery, vehicles and livestock; shelter; need for appropriate ventilation and sun/shade requirements; security and drainage needs. However the following advice should be considered in the siting of any buildings:

- The siting should try to avoid the removal of or concealment of features of interest such as ponds, trees, hedges or walls and buildings
- New buildings should be sited where possible within existing groups unless the visual impact of a modern building would create significant visual harm to traditional buildings
- Whenever practical in planning for new buildings, the opportunity should be taken to rationalise the use of existing buildings on the farmstead and to remove unsightly buildings or those in poor state of repair or use the new building to screen any existing unattractive buildings
- Take into account of main viewpoints into or through the site and avoid excessively prominent sitings close to main roads
- Where the landscape is undulating, any building should be sited in folds or hollows to avoid breaking the skyline
- Any new buildings should take advantage of any existing vegetation to screen the building or to soften its appearance
- Avoid "unneighbourly" siting if there are nearby residential properties unconnected with the farm business. Particular care should be exercised in relation to activities which will generate smell or noise

#### 4.2 Form and Design

Agricultural buildings must be designed for agricultural purposes and if carefully designed need not harm the appearance of the countryside. The choice of shape and colour can help to avoid damaging impacts on the countryside. In designing new buildings or extending existing ones the following should be considered:

- The use of multi-span structures which reduce the bulkiness of the roof and enable the gable elevation to be in more than one plane
- To vary the standard rectangular form
- Breaking up large flat expanses of walls by using materials of a different colour texture (eg brick or stone plinth below cladding, timber doors)

etc)

- Using different coloured materials for the walls and roof.
- Introduction of features to break up the scale and massing of the building. Roof overhang reduces the apparent scale as a horizontal shadow line is created.
- Doors, windows and ventilation units should be in proportion to the whole building.
- Dividing the building into two smaller units. This may enable buildings to be more easily incorporated into an existing group.
- Where possible, brand advertising such as that on silo/slurry tanks should be avoided.

#### 4.3 Materials

The type and colour of external construction materials will greatly affect the impact the building has on the landscape as well as cost, ease of construction and maintenance liability to the farmer.

In the AONB and prominent locations it may be more important to ensure a high quality of material and promote the use of natural materials. In such areas the introduction of stone as a walling material may be necessary and any blockwork should be rendered/painted appropriate colour.

The use of different materials and colours of roof and walls can help reduce the apparent scale of a building.

The colours chosen should be compatible with the rural setting, not to camouflage the building, but to allow it to relate to the existing buildings. Selective colour choice can reduce the impact, e.g. if the roof of a building is coloured darker than the walls its visual impact on its surroundings is reduced. Also traditional farm buildings usually have darker roofs. However, where the building is located against the sky line, lighter coloured roofs may be preferable.

- The use of reflective materials should be avoided.
- Dark brown or dark green colour coated steel cladding for walls is normally satisfactory for new farm buildings.
- Avoid a large expanse of a single colour for walls - a suitable blend of materials or shades is preferable.

- On site painting is not normally recommended because it often results in a poor appearance and one which becomes worse as the paint fades or flakes
- In many instances the use of dark blue or slate grey corrugated fibre cement or an appropriately coloured cladding is considered to be acceptable. The use of fibre cement has the additional benefit of allowing for the growth of lichens mosses etc which will be likely to weather any new roof thereby reducing its impact

## 5 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW FARM ROADS

5.1 New farm roads can have a significant impact on the countryside particularly where the land is undulating or features of interest are removed.

### 5.2 Siting

The following advice is given:-

- Avoid causing harm to features of interest such as trees woodland ponds the settings of listed buildings or ancient monuments etc;
- Wherever practicable new farm roads should follow established field boundaries and contours to avoid having a scarring effect on the landscape;
- Consider the impact on any neighbouring dwellings not connected with the farm business;
- Junctions of new farm roads and public roads will have to satisfy the requirements of the Highway Authority who may request an alternative siting or specification for reasons of highway safety or maintenance;
- Where public footpaths or bridleways would be crossed account should be taken of any potential danger or inconvenience to riders or walkers

### 5.3 Surface Materials

Darker surfaces tend not to be as noticeable in the landscape as lighter ones

- Black bitmac or tarmac is normally the preferred surface material. However in situations when this is not practical the track should be stoned and light coated limestone should normally be avoided. Where this is a traditional feature in the local landscape it may be sometimes appropriate

- When concrete or crushed aggregate is used two strips with a central grass verge would be preferred