

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/25/2270/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	CONVERSION OF BARN TO DWELLING
3.	Location:	BARN AT ARLECDON FARM, ARLECDON
4.	Parish:	Arlecdon and Frizington
5.	Constraints:	ASC;Adverts - ASC;Adverts, Coal - Standing Advice - Data Subject To Change, Key Species - Bounds of Sensitive Area for Hen Harriers
6.	Publicity Representations &Policy	Neighbour Notification Letter: YES Site Notice: YES Press Notice: NO Consultation Responses: See report Relevant Planning Policies: See report
7.	Report: Site and Location This application relates to a detached barn which was formerly in agricultural use associated with Arlecdon Farm. The barn lies to the rear of the farmhouse which fronts onto a private road which provides access to the building group. This lane also serves Alexandra Cottage to the east. Arlecdon Farm is located on the northern edge of Arlecdon village. Relevant Planning History	

Conversion of traditional redundant barns to three dwelling units, withdrawn in January 2016 (application reference 4/15/2527/0F1 relates);

Conversion of traditional redundant barns to two dwelling units, approved in June 2016 (application reference 4/16/2104/0F1 relates).

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission to convert the existing barn to form a three bedroomed dwelling. The barn will be split into two floors, with the ground floor to include two bedrooms, one with en suite, a bathroom and boot room and the first floor to include an open plan kitchen/dining/living room.

Externally, the barn will be re-roofed with existing and matching slates and the lean to building to the rear will be removed. 5 Velux roofs will be installed within the roof.

The application will include a small yard area and off street parking.

Consultation Responses

Arlecdon and Frizington Parish Council

No response received.

Highways and Local Lead Flood Authority

As this falls under our Service Level Agreement (SLA), this application does not need to be submitted to the Local Highway Authority or Lead Local Flood Authority; subject to the highway and drainage aspects of such applications being considered in accordance with the Agreement. The highway and drainage implications of this application can therefore be decided by the Local Planning Authority

Natural England

No response received.

Council Ecologist

The County Ecologist accepts that this development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain.

Suggested Planning Conditions

Breeding Birds

Works should be completed outside of the breeding bird period (March – August inclusive). If this is not possible a breeding bird check should be carried out no more than 48 hours prior to

the planned development to ensure no birds and their nests are present. If active nests are discovered an appropriate buffer zone should be established and works within that area ceased until the young have naturally fledged.

Small Mammals

All development work should be carried out with care to avoid these small mammals such as hedgehogs. Contractors should be briefed about the potential presence of hedgehogs and Works should be supervised during initial clearance of the Site to avoid injury to any disturbed individuals.

Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure badgers are not trapped during work.

All excavations left open overnight or longer should be checked for animals prior to the continuation of works or infilling. Back filling should be completed immediately after any excavations, ideally back filling as an on-going process to the work in hand.

Stored materials should be raised (i.e. stored on pallets) in order to ensure that wildlife such as hedgehogs do not shelter in the piles.

Barn Owls

The County Ecologist approves the nest box design submitted as part of the application. The following mitigation scheme must be implemented to reduce the risk of impact on the local barn owl population. In accordance with current guidance (Barn Owl Trust, 2015), these measures are required to offer satisfactory mitigation for the loss of a potential historical nest located within the barn conversion.

- Alternative nest provision in the form of a barn owl box to be erected on site before works commence (see Figure 3 of the bat report produced by Lakeland Ecology (June 2025)). This will offer nest / roost provision during works and reduce disturbance impact. This should be installed on site as soon as possible (at least 30 days prior to commencement of any potentially disturbing works on site). The nest box should be ideally placed within the interior of the long barn (which is not proposed for works under this scheme), with access for barn owls restored through the barn owl hole. Alternatively, the barn owl box should be positioned on a mature tree or pole in a sheltered, disturbance free location within close proximity to the barns.

- To ensure that nesting barn owls are not disturbed by the works and no offence is incidentally committed there must be a survey of the barns conducted pre-works to confirm 'current use'. The survey must be conducted by a suitably qualified person, no more than 3 days before the start of the conversion works.

- The conversion works must not commence between 1st March and 31st August or at any time while barn owls are nesting and until temporary alternative nesting provision has been made.
- To provide long-term compensation for the loss of the roost, a new and permanent nest feature should be provided on site. The proposed plans indicate that built-in barn owl nest boxes with the access through the existing owl holes will be provided along the southwest gable of the barn conversion (one box per converted barn).
- Contractors must be made aware of the presence of barn owls when works commence. The alternative nest provision should be protected from any disturbance during the works.

Bats

The County Ecologist approves the bat access slate design submitted as part of the application to comply with conditions previously set out for the application.

A bats-specific lighting scheme will be designed during construction and operation to minimise light impact. This should be in line with the guidance note for Bats and Artificial Lighting (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023). This must be submitted to the council prior to the start of development.

As stated in Section 4.4 of the bat report produced by Lakeland Ecology (June 2025) the following methodology and timing for works must be followed to ensure that no bats are harmed and that the identified roosts are not damaged, destroyed or obstructed. If this cannot be followed, then a European Protected Species Licence from Natural England will be required:

- An Ecological Clerk of Works to be employed to oversee the commencement of the development.
- The roosts R1, R2 and RH must be retained, and no pointing or any structural works must be conducted to the gaps within building B2 where the roosts were identified.
- The access to the identified roosts must not be obscured by scaffolding, building materials or any other temporary structures / features used during the conversion works.
- Any works located within a 2m radius from the identified roosts should proceed with care; use of power tools that can create excessive noise or vibration should be reduced wherever possible within the section of the stone wall directly adjacent to the identified roosts (within 2m radius).
- The external walls of the building continue to provide roosting suitability for bats once the conversion works have been completed. External crevices requiring pointing can be retained by placing a pipe or tube (25mm diameter) in the gap and pointing around this (remove the



Cumberland Council

tube immediately after the mortar has set). See Appendix IV for the additional guidance on the retention of the gaps in the external stonework.

- Contractors must be made aware of the identified roosts and the potential for bats to be present. Contractors must be provided with this methodology.
- External works must avoid the period around dusk/dawn, and no artificial light should be directed at the roof area or identified roosts.

Additionally, the conversion works to the barn should avoid commencing in the peak bat hibernation season (November – February). Although the risk of hibernating bats using the buildings is considered low, this precautionary recommendation is made due to the extreme vulnerability of hibernating bats to disturbance.

If bats are seen or suspected while work is in progress, work must pause immediately, and a licenced bat ecologist contacted for further advice.

Enhancement Features

Two bat boxes to be installed within the barn conversion, such as:

- Vivara Pro WoodStone Bat Box
- Low Profile WoodStone Bat Box
- 2F Schwegler Bat Box Three bird boxes are to be integrated within the barn conversion to provide opportunities for breeding birds such as:
 - Schwegler No. 17 swift nest box
 - Schwegler 1SP sparrow terrace
 - WoodStone Swallow Nest Bowl

United Utilities

No response received.

Public Representation

This application has been advertised by way of a site notice and neighbour notification letters issued to 4 no. properties.

No responses have been received as a result of these advertisements.

Planning Policy

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

On 1st April 2023, Copeland Borough Council ceased to exist and was replaced by Cumberland Council as part of the Local Government Reorganisation of Cumbria.

Cumberland Council inherited the local development plan documents of each of the sovereign Councils including Copeland Borough Council, which combine to form a Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland.

The inherited the local development plan documents continue to apply to the geographic area of their sovereign Councils only.

The Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland comprises the Development Plan for Cumberland Council until replaced by a new Cumberland Local Plan.

Copeland Local Plan 2021 - 2039 (LP):

Cumberland Council continued the preparation of the LP as commenced by Copeland Borough Council.

The LP was adopted by Cumberland Council on the 5th of November 2024 replacing the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 and the saved policies of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2016.

The following planning policies are relevant to this proposal:-

Strategic Policy DS1: Settlement Hierarchy
Strategic Policy DS2: Settlement Boundaries
Policy DS4: Design and Development Standards
Policy DS5: Hard and Soft Landscaping
Strategic Policy DS6: Reducing Flood Risk
Policy DS7: Sustainable Drainage
Strategic Policy H1: Improving the Housing Offer
Strategic Policy H2: Housing Requirement
Strategic Policy H3: Housing Delivery
Policy H13: Conversion and Sub-Division of Buildings to Residential Uses including Large HMOs
Strategic Policy N1: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Strategic Policy N2: Local Nature Recovery Networks
Strategic Policy N3: Biodiversity Net Gain
Strategic Policy CO4: Sustainable Travel
Policy CO5: Transport Hierarchy
Policy CO7: Parking Standards

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
Cumbria Development Design Guide
Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit (CLCGT)
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (CHSR)

Assessment

Principle of Development

Policy DS1 of the Copeland Local Plan sets out a settlement hierarchy which defines where development will be supported. Arlecdon is defined as a Local Service Centre where windfall and infill development is supported.

Strategic Policy DS2 of the Copeland Local Plan identifies settlement boundaries for all the settlements included under the settlement hierarchy. This policy states that development within the designated settlement boundaries will be supported in principle where it accords with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Application Site falls within the designated settlement boundary for Arlecdon.

Policy H13 of the Copeland Local Plan supports the conversion and sub-division of buildings to residential use within settlement boundaries subject to the following criteria:

- a) The development does not result in unacceptable levels of harm to residential amenity (noise and disturbance) for occupiers of the converted property and/or those occupying neighbouring properties;
- b) Future residents have adequate levels of natural lighting and privacy;
- c) The development does not have an adverse impact upon the privacy of neighbouring residents through direct overlooking;
- d) Off street parking is provided or sufficient parking is available within close proximity of the site;
- e) Adequate external amenity space is provided, including for waste and recycling bin storage without harming the visual amenity of the area where possible;
- f) Cycle space is provided, where possible;
- g) Safe access is available from both the front and rear of the property, where possible; and
- h) The development does not result in an over-concentration of HMOs, taking into account the cumulative impacts of HMOs and subdivided properties within the vicinity of the site.

Consideration will also be given to the loss of the original property and whether this supports the Housing Strategy informed by the Council's SHMA and Housing Needs Study.

The principle of converting this barn to create a residential use has already been established by the previous permission on this site (reference 4/16/2104/0F1)

The application has been supported by an updated visual structural inspection report. This concludes that the barn walls are generally structurally adequate but will require the following:

- The rebuild of the left hand gable of the barn;
- The provision of a refurbished roof structure;
- Re-pointing the walls;
- The replacement of all timber inserts and lintels with precast concrete elements;
- The rebuild of the bulged masonry flank wall.

Consequently, the recommendation is that less than 20% of the existing wall areas will require re-building and that the building is generally structurally sound and suitable for conversion.

The conversion of the barn is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to the consideration of the criteria set out in Policy H13. These are assessed below..

Scale, Design and Impact on Amenity

Policy DS4 of the Copeland Local Plan requires all new development to meet high-quality standards of design. This includes creating and enhancing locally distinctive places, the use of good quality materials that reflect the local character, including high quality and useful open spaces, providing high levels of residential amenity, adopting active travel principles, creating opportunities for social interaction, and effective use of land whilst maintaining amenity and maximising solar gain.

Policy H13 allows for the conversion and re-use of buildings for housing within the settlement boundaries where certain criteria are achieved.

Permission has previously been granted at this site to convert the existing barn to residential use. This application seeks permission to change some of the design details.

The external alterations have been kept to a minimum with the addition of limited window openings to allow natural light into habitable rooms. These changes are considered to be modest and conserve the traditional appearance of the barn.

The proposed barn conversion will accommodate the residential use within the existing footprint of the existing barn with no external extensions.

The application form states that UPCV will be utilised within the openings of the barn. This is not considered to be appropriate and would detract from the traditional character and

appearance of this traditional building, A planning condition is proposed to secure the use of timber windows and doors as part of the conversion.

There are no facing elevations to habitable rooms in the property, therefore ensuring that there will not be an issue with overlooking or loss of privacy. As the conversion is limited to the existing structure and does not involve any extensions there will be impact on loss of light to the neighbouring dwelling. A small amenity space has been provided to the rear and side of the barn to ensure space for bin storage and outside space for the occupants.

Permitted development rights will be removed so that the materials and building cannot be altered without planning permission to safeguard the character of the building and ensure that there is not a detrimental effect on the neighbouring dwellings, in line with Policy H13 of the Copeland Local Plan.

It is considered that the proposed curtilage is of a suitable scale and will not create adverse harm to the landscape character due to its position within the existing farm yard area. Off street parking spaces will be amalgamated into this area.

Based on the above and the inclusion of appropriately wording conditions, it is considered that the development conserves the traditional appearance and character of the building and will respect the neighbouring amenity. It is considered to comply with the requirements of Policy DM13 of the Copeland Local Plan.

Access & Highway Safety

Policy CO7 of the Copeland Local Plan states that proposals for new development will be required to provide adequate parking provision, including cycle parking and accessible parking bays, in accordance with the Cumbria Development Design Guide (or any document that replaces it) where appropriate.

Furthermore, Policy H13 of the CLP requires that a safe access to the front and rear of the property is available, adequate off street parking is within close proximity to the site and cycle space is provided if possible.

The access road to the barn is existing, routing from the main road running through Arlecdon. This provides direct access to the site and will be unaffected by the proposal. The access road currently serves other properties within the vicinity, and it is considered that the addition of a further residential property is unlikely to have a material impact on the existing road network.

The Highway Authority have reviewed the application and raised no objections.

On this basis the proposal is considered to be compliant with the Policy CO4, CO7 and H13 of the Copeland Local Plan, and provisions of the NPPF.

Flood Risk & Drainage

Policy DS6 seeks that development will not be permitted where: there is an unacceptable risk of flooding and or, the development would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Policy DS7 requires that surface water is managed in accordance with the national drainage hierarchy and includes Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate.

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1.

Surface water for the development will be disposed of to a soakaway.

Foul water from the development will be discharged to the mains sewer. These drains have previously been installed and inspected by Building Control.

A condition will be utilised to ensure the development is drained and managed correctly.

The LLFA have offered no objections to the development as it is not considered to increase the flood risk on the site or elsewhere.

On this basis the proposal is considered to be compliant with the Policy DS6 and DS7 of the Copeland Local Plan, and provisions of the NPPF.

Impact on Biodiversity and Ecology

Policy N1 of the ELP seeks to ensure that new development will protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and defines a mitigation hierarchy.

Policy N3 requires that all development, with the exception of that listed in the Environment Act must provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels, following the application of the mitigation hierarchy set out in Policy N1. This is in addition to any compensatory habitat provided under Policy N1. It is stated net gain should be delivered on site where possible and where on-site provision is not appropriate, provision must be made elsewhere in accordance with a defined order of preference.

In England, BNG is now mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Applications must now deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain of 10%, resulting in more or better-quality natural habitat than there was before the development. Some developments are however exempt from these BNG requirements.

The development will not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat and 5 metres of on-site linear habitats; therefore, the development falls below the biodiversity net gain threshold and a ten percent biodiversity net gain is not required to be delivered.

The building to which this application relates falls within the planning and development trigger list for bat surveys contained within the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys Good Practice

Guidelines. The application is supported by a Preliminary Daytime Roost Inspection and Emergence/Re-entry Survey.

This concluded and recommended the following mitigation:

- The adjacent building is considered to be of value to the local bat population and all future works to any building should consider that bats may be present;
- If bats are seen, works must pause and further advice sought;
- There is evidence of a barn owl on site. Pre-works checks should be undertaken to ensure that there is no risk of disturbing the nesting barn owl;
- The proposed site design should secure long term roosting provision for the barn owl;
- There is evidence of breeding birds on site so any works during the bird breeding season must consider the protection laws.

Based on the recommendation so the report, the Applicants Agent has provided details of a proposed owl box. The installation of this box can be secured by a planning condition. Conditions are also proposed to ensure that the development is completed in accordance with the proposed mitigation measures set out. An informative will also be included within the decision notice to ensure that if any bats, or evidence of this species, are found during construction works the applicant informs the relevant bodies.

Subject to the planning conditions set out above the proposal is considered to achieve the requirement of Policies N1 and N3 of the Copeland Local Plan, and the provisions of the NPPF.

Planning Balance & Conclusion

This application seeks to convert a redundant barn into a residential property within the curtilage of an existing farmstead. The site lies within the settlement limits of Arlecdon which is designated as a Local Service Centre within the Copeland Local Plan.

The principle of converting this barn to create a residential use has already been established by the previous permissions at this site. This is considered to carry significant weight within the planning balance.

Amendments to the external appearance of the building, in relation to the proposed new openings, are considered to safeguard the traditional character of the building. It is considered that there is unlikely to be a demonstrable issue with overlooking, loss of light or any other loss of amenity. This is considered to carry significant weight within the planning balance.

The development utilises an existing access to create off street parking which is not considered to have a significant detrimental impact on highway safety. No objections have been received from the Highway Authority.

Conditions will be utilised to secure biodiversity and ecology mitigation.

	The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable form of sustainable development which is compliant with policies of the Copeland Local Plan and the provisions of the NPPF.	
8.	Recommendation: Approve (commence within 3 years)	
9.		
Case Officer: Sarah Papaleo		Date : 19/09/2025
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst		Date : 10/10/2025
Dedicated responses to:- N/A		