Proposed conversion of barn to dwelling

Lower Leaches Farm
Ashworth Road
Rochdale
OL11 5UN

Planning Statement and Heritage Statement

Prepared by Gemma Kennedy BA (Hons) MA Town Planning
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WBW Surveyors Ltd
Skipton Auction Mart
Gargrave Road
Skipton BD23 1UD
+44 01756 692 900
www.wbwsurveyors.co.uk

Application Site

The application site is Leaches Farm, located off Ashworth Road, in open countryside to the west of Wolstenholme, designated as Green Belt in the Rochdale UDP. The farm is located on either side of an access track, which goes on to serve a further development at Cockshouse. Higher Leaches Farm is on the northern side of the access track, and Lower Leaches Farm to the South.

To the south of the access track is a traditional farmhouse with attached stone barn, set under a continuous stone slate roof. Located to the west of the farmhouse and barn are two static caravans, and a timber chalet, which have been occupied for residential purposes for over 30 years.

To the north west of the farmhouse, across the highway, are a pair of traditional agricultural buildings. The eastern barn is of stone construction beneath a stone slate roof, with the western barn having a grey slate roof. The style and position of window openings in the western barn suggests that it was historically three cottages.

Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of Leaches Farm through the submission of three separate planning applications. This application relates to development at Lower Leaches Farm, proposing the conversion of the barn attached to the farm house to a four-bedroom dwelling. The scheme for conversion has been designed to maintain the character of the original barn, by reusing existing or former window and door openings, and therefore limiting the amount of new window and door openings required.

The dwelling would be served by a new access from the track to the north, providing parking to the north and east of the building, with the adjoining farmhouse retaining the original access to the east of the properties. A garden would be formed within existing boundaries to the front of the property, currently a partially grassed yard. As part of the proposed development an existing outbuilding to the south of the property would be brought within the residential curtilage of the proposed dwelling, to be used as an ancillary domestic outbuilding.

Heritage

The stone barn is not a designated heritage asset, as it is not Listed, and does not lie within a Conservation area. However, it is considered to be non-designated Heritage Asset by Rochdale Borough Council.

The application barn is attached to the farmhouse, and set under a continuous stone slate roof, with a lean-to catslide element to the front elevation. The barn is in a good state of repair, and whilst it has been subject to some limited alterations over the years (a window added in the side elevation, and openings infilled in the rear elevation), the barn makes a positive contribution to the historic character of the local area. The proposed development would both preserve and enhance the historic character of the barn, by installing traditional

timber doors and windows in the existing openings and ensuring that it is sensitively preserved and enhanced, and retained as a historic feature, within the rural landscape.

Conclusion

The proposed development would involve the conversion and re-use of a redundant agricultural building in the countryside to provide a dwelling, and through a sensitively designed scheme would enhance the immediate setting of the area. The Council is therefore requested to support the application.