Proposed conversion of barns to two dwellings

Higher Leaches Farm
Ashworth Road
Rochdale
OL11 5UN

Planning Statement and Heritage Statement

Prepared by Gemma Kennedy BA (Hons) MA Town Planning
November 2018
Updated January 2019

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.

Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of Leaches Farm through the submission of three separate planning applications. This application relates to the development of Higher Leaches Farm, proposing the conversion of the pair of traditional barns to two three-bedroom dwellings.

The position of the existing boundaries surrounding the barns would be maintained, providing off-road parking and gardens within curtilages that would be commensurate with the size of the proposed dwellings.

Heritage

The stone barns are not designated heritage assets, as they are not Listed, and do not lie within a Conservation area. However, they are considered to be non-designated Heritage Asset by Rochdale Borough Council.

The scheme for conversion has been designed to maintain the character of the original buildings, by reusing existing or former window and door openings, and therefore limiting the amount of new window and door openings required.

The style and position of window openings in the western barn suggests that it was historically three cottages. The conversion of this barn would therefore include the reinstatement of windows within original stone mullions, with new window openings designed to correspond.

The barns make a positive contribution to the historic character of the local area, and the proposed development would both preserve and enhance the historic character of the barns, 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 redundant agricultural buildings in the countryside to provide two dwellings, and through a sensitively designed scheme would enhance the immediate setting of the area. The Council is therefore requested to support the application.