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Residential and Commercial Planning : Planning Applications, Appeals and Enforcement

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

PROPOSED DETACHED GARAGE AT BRANCH ROAD FARM, LITTLEBOROUGH

JULY 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is produced in support of a planning application for the construction of a detached garage at Branch Road Farm. The plans represent an amendment to the approved scheme under application number 21/00942/FUL for the reconstruction of a partially demolished barn to a 4 bed dwelling and a replacement single storey extension.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to provide an evaluation of the site and surroundings, together with a review of local and national planning policies before presenting a case in support of the application.

2. THE SITE AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is in a rural location to the south of Littleborough and is situated on the north side of Branch Road. It comprises a farmhouse and an attached barn along with associated outbuildings.
- 2.2 An application to convert the attached barn to a 4 bedroom dwelling including a replacement single storey rear extension was granted in 2019.
- 2.3 Due to structural issues, the barn was partly demolished resulting in a new application for the rebuild of the partly demolished barn to form a 4 bed dwelling with replacement single storey extension, which although initially refused, was then granted in October 2022 – application ref 21/00942.

- 2.4 An application for a triple garage and store was refused in May 2024 on the grounds that the proposal would be inappropriate development resulting in a loss of openness to the Green Belt and domestic encroachment into previously undeveloped land. It would also be considered that the development would cause less than substantial harm to the non-designated heritage asset through the provision of a detached garage and garden store that would be domestic in appearance and detract from the agricultural appearance of the former barn and the visual amenity of the site and its setting.

3. THE APPLICATION

- 3.1 The revised application omits the previous plans to alter the domestic curtilage of the dwelling and reduces the proposed building to a double garage instead of the triple garage and store previously proposed. The garage is accordingly re-sited within the existing approved red line area.
- 3.2 Materials are also confirmed to be constructed in natural stone with natural stone slates and oak framed doors.

4. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Local Policy

- 4.1 The statutory development plan consists of the Unitary Development Plan and Core Strategy
- 4.2 The site is allocated as Green Belt.

- 4.3 Policy DM1 requires all development proposals to demonstrate that they are of a high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area; are compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents; do not adversely affect the amenity of residents through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy; provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, maneuvering, and servicing arrangements.
- 4.4 Policy G4 seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- 4.5 Policy P2 aims to conserve, enhance and promote key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings.
- 4.6 Policy P3 requires all new developments to adhere to high standards of design.
- 4.7 Policy G/D/2 of the UDP advises that the green belt will be protected from inappropriate development in order to satisfy the purposes and objectives for the green belt.

National Policy

- 4.8 The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2023. The Framework is a material planning consideration on any development proposal and highlights that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development with a presumption in favour of sustainable development which can amongst other things protect and

enhance the natural and built environment. As such the Framework suggests local planning authorities should approve development proposals that accord with statutory plans without delay.

4.9 Paragraph 142 states that *"The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence"*.

4.10 Paragraph 143 states that there are five purposes for including land in the Green Belt, these being;

- i. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;*
- ii. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;*
- iii. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- iv. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- v. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

4.11 Paragraph 154 advises that the construction of new buildings should be considered as inappropriate development except with limited exceptions which include the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

4.12 Paragraph 200 of the Framework advises that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than

is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 4.13 Paragraph 205 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

5. CASE IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 Paragraph 142 of the NPPF makes it clear that the most important aspects of the Green Belt are their openness and permanence. It is stated at paragraph 143 that there are five purposes for including land in the Green Belt. In this instance, the development would have no relevance to the setting and special character of historic towns, nor does it by definition relate to the sprawl of large built up areas. The proposed development would not undermine urban regeneration schemes within the area and would not result in neighbouring towns merging into one another. Therefore, the only relevant factors in this instance are those of encroachment into the countryside and any potential effect on openness (issues raised in the refusal of the previous application).

- 5.3 In relation to encroachment, and taking account of the extant planning permission, the approved curtilage under application number 21/00942/FUL). Considering this there would be no encroachment into the countryside arising from the proposals.
- 5.4 In addressing the nature of the development – and impact on openness – there is no stated definition of what does or doesn't constitute impact, it is by necessity a subjective assessment. However, Green Belt openness relates to the occupation of space by built development and therefore by definition with a new building to be constructed there would be some impact on openness.
- 5.5 Local policy and paragraph 154 of the Framework advise that extensions or alterations to buildings are not inappropriate provided that they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Although a free standing building, the proposal for a garage would appropriately be assessed under the scope of "extensions and alterations".
- 5.6 The garage and store would occupy a footprint of 36m², which is a 33% reduction on what was proposed in the previous application at 54m². The development would provide secure garaging for the approved dwelling. The garaging would be in lieu of the outdoor parking spaces for the approved layout and would represent betterment in this case as there would be no need for the spread of 7 parking spaces shown on the approved plans for the 2021 application.
- 5.7 The amended proposal would represent a modest sized addition with the visual impact of the proposal not being disproportionate nor out of scale with the approved dwelling and would not have a significant impact on the openness of the green belt.

- 5.8 On this basis the proposed garage and store would not now be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would accord with the policies in the Framework and in the Core Strategy and UDP.
- 5.9 In terms of the approved scheme for the re-construction of the dwelling, there are no changes proposed to what has already been approved and considered acceptable by the local authority with regard to green belt assessment and compliance.
- 5.10 In design terms the proposed building has been amended to be in keeping with the design and materials of the rebuild of the barn and the overall character and appearance of the surroundings. Materials have been amended to proposed natural stone slates and oak framed doors. The proposal is now considered to comply with Policy DM1 and P3.
- 5.11 With regard to heritage matters, the former barn and the adjoining farmhouse are included on the Council's published list of non-designated heritage assets, of both architectural and heritage interest. The effect of the demolition of the majority of the structure was assessed as resulting in substantial harm to the non designated heritage asset, with the historic interest, in terms of how the building was constructed and its original use and ties to the farmhouse, subsequently lost. However, architecturally, the front elevation of the barn contained the most features of historic interest and this was shown to be, and continues to be, retained in the re-construction proposals for the dwelling.
- 5.12 As a result the scheme under 21/00942/FUL was supported and approved by the LPA and the proposals in this application do not change in anyway the plans for

the reconstruction of the dwelling. The proposal is concerned only with the construction of a detached garage towards the side and the rear of where the new dwelling will be located and as such away from the front aspect which forms the remaining heritage interest on the site.

- 5.13 With that in mind there is no conflict with the relevant policies in the Framework or in the Core Strategy in relation to heritage issues.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 For the above reasons the applicant considers that the proposals put forward are acceptable and compliant with local planning policies, as well as national policy in the NPPF.

- 6.2 On that basis it is requested that planning permission is granted.