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Higher Eafield Cottage
Eafield Road
Smithybridge
Rochdale

Green Belt Statement

PROPOSED TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION

Introduction

This green belt assessment has been written to support the associated Planning application for the above property.

The assessment will look to provide an overview of the site, its location and significance within the allocated green belt space as well as assess the proposals impact on the area and green belt while referencing relevant Planning Policy set forth by the Local Authority.

Site Analysis

The site is located off Eafield Road off Smithybridge Road, Rochdale. The site belongs to a small cluster of buildings including Higher Eafield Farm. The cottage style building is attached to the main farm building and offers separate parking and garden space with the rear of the proposal building set in from the rear of the farm house by 5.9m. The existing dwelling is constructed using a coursed stone façade with stone roof tiles. The frontage of the dwelling is open to the vast green space surrounding the River Roch with the rear facing directly over the adjacent farm yard area.

Planning Policy

RMBC provides guidance to developments within the Green Belt. A number of Local and National policy aids in the design of developments in the green belt as well as provides guidance to restrict inappropriate development on sites belonging to the green belt.

As per RMBC Unitary Development Plan (2016), policy G/D/2 outlines that the Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in order to maintain the framework of open land separating and surrounding the urban areas of the borough.

Additionally, Core Strategy policy G4 seeks to restrict development within the Green Belt to the limited types of development which are deemed appropriate by national planning policies unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF state that, as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF indicates that "a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt", subject to the following exceptions:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- **c) 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;**

- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - – not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - – not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Paragraph 79 of the NPPF also 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”.

Therefore, the main consideration in assessing the principle of development is whether the proposed scheme constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and, if so, whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated which may outweigh the presumption against development.

In respect of the above policy guidance, Section 5.20 of the of the Council’s adopted ‘Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development ’(2016) Supplementary Planning Document states that normally, in principle, extensions that result in up to a 35% increase in floor space or volume over and above the original dwelling would normally be considered appropriate and not disproportionate (this calculation would include previous extensions to the original dwelling, which is defined as the dwelling as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948). However, the guidance continues by outlining that within section 5.20 of the SPD that characteristics of sites and proposals will vary significantly and each case will be determined on its merits. There may be cases where a 20% increase in floor space or

volume may be considered disproportionate and harmful to openness in one context whereas a 40% increase in floor space or volume may be considered proportionate and not harmful to openness in another. However, extensions exceeding 50% of the original dwelling's floor space or volume will rarely be considered to be proportionate.

Proposal

The proposal looks to provide a two-storey rear extension to the host dwelling to form new dining area to the ground floor and a new bedroom area to the first floor of the property. The proposal looks to maintain a significant gap between the rear of the extension and the neighboring farm building and would match the existing materials found on the existing host dwelling.

Assessment

When applying Planning Policy to the proposal, it is key to first understand the nature of the proposal largely matches that of developments to houses in the immediate area, this would indicate that the proposed development is considered appropriate in principle.

As per Local and National green belt guidance and policies, the proposal development must not result in a disproportionate addition to the host dwelling; this is achieved by assessing existing and proposed development volumes in conjunction with floor space calculations and assessing the overall proposal on its merits. The proposal site host dwelling has not been extended since first construction, with this in mind the existing volumes and floor area are:

ORIGINAL VOLUME CALCULATIONS AND FLOOR AREAS

ORIGINAL DWELLING VOLUME: 332m³

ORIGINAL DWELLING FLOOR AREAS: 102m²

PROPOSED VOLUME CALCULATIONS AND FLOOR AREAS

PROPOSED DWELLING VOLUME: 470m³

PROPOSED DWELLING FLOOR AREAS: 145m²

VOLUME INCREASE = 41.56%

FLOOR AREA INCREASE = 42.15%

Based on the above assessment and the associated Local and National Planning Guidance for development in the green belt, it is vital to firstly assess whether the proposal results in a disproportionate addition to the host dwelling. Given section 5.10 and 5.20 of RMBC's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development '(2016)', the proposal does not

exceed the normally unacceptable 50% volume / floor space increase, however the proposed increased volumes and floor areas are over the generally acceptable 35%, in this case the proposal must be determined on its merits.

The proposal does not contribute in any way to urban sprawl within the green belt due the development belonging solely to an isolated private residence with no view to extend beyond the sites boundaries and the existing green space corridor located to the north of the site remains entirely untouched and unaffected by the proposal. The proposal would sit subservient to both the host dwelling and the neighboring property forming an infill style extension to the host dwelling. Given the sites locality and orientation no adjacent properties will be negatively impacted by the placement of windows or overshadowing.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment and the associated Local and National Planning Guidance for development in the green belt, it is the opinion of this report that the proposal is acceptable and does not constitute a disproportionate addition to the host dwelling.