

Design and Access Statement

The partial demolition and conversion of the existing kennels and cattery into five dwelling houses including the removal of the existing roofs and construction of new roofs together with the construction of a detached dwelling. Excavation of ground levels and deposition of spoil and construction of stone gabion boundary wall including diversion of footpath.
Springbank Luxury Boarding Kennels, Birch Hill Lane, Wardle, OL12 9LZ. (Part retrospective)

SITE

The site comprises an established kennels which has operated since 1997 and the cattery was incorporated in 2005. A former pigeon cote has been demolished and a detached dwelling house approved under planning application reference 18/00674/FUL has been partially constructed. The owner of the kennels currently lives at 2 Woodend Lane, to the north of the application site. The site is situated in the Green Belt as per the council's adopted UDP. In early 2020, the Coronavirus 19 pandemic necessitated the closure of the kennels and cattery resulting in a devastating effect on the viability of the business. The changes to society created small home businesses where individuals were offering dog / cat welfare care facilities and staff from the kennels moved on to other opportunities. Due to the restrictions on holidays both national and international, there was no call for the kennels or cattery and the owners reluctantly have had to close the business permanently.

PROPOSAL

Upon commencement of the detached dwelling house in May 2020, the applicant realised that the natural stone and slate external materials requested by the LPA were visually preferable to the render finish and concrete tiles of the existing kennels and cattery. As such, with the advent of the Covid lockdown, they decided to use the period to improve the appearance of the existing buildings, by the replacement of the render with a natural stone outer skin facing. However, as detailed above, it became apparent that the business would not be able to continue and they decided to proceed with the removal of the roofs in anticipation of the planning application for change of use into dwellings, not realising that the enabling works they were undertaking required planning approval.

The roofs of the existing kennels and cattery have been removed and the link between the two principal buildings demolished. The two main buildings are to be converted into five, 2 bedroom dwellings incorporating new room in the roof attic trusses to create first floor accommodation. The partially constructed detached dwelling is to be completed. The existing yard area is to be re-graded to improve the existing access and to create parking and garden areas for the new dwellings.

DESIGN & APPEARANCE

The detached dwelling was approved to have natural blue slate roof coverings and natural stone walls facings as the LPA considered that to match the concrete tiles and rendered finish of the kennel buildings would not be appropriate with the site's rural setting. As such, the external skin of the kennel and cattery walls is to be removed and rebuilt with natural stone and the roof trusses covered with natural slates to match the detached dwelling. The footprint of the buildings will remain as existing, with the exception of the demolition of link between the buildings. The external appearance of the converted buildings will be in keeping with the previously approved detached dwelling.

SITING

The proposed dwellings will be sited on the footprint of the existing kennels and cattery and the siting of the detached dwelling was established under the previous planning approval.

LANDSCAPING

The private garden areas will be provided with turfed lawns with final planting to be provided by the individual occupiers.

The access road, parking and turning areas will be surfaced with black permeable tarmac laid to falls to drain towards the private garden areas.

Perimeter footpaths will be natural stone pavings.

ACCESS & PARKING

The site is accessed via an unadopted lane from Westmorland Drive and Birch Road.

The existing access point from Birch Hill Lane will be utilised and an internal driveway and 2no. parking spaces per dwelling will be provided.

Birch Hill Lane has serviced the existing kennels and cattery since 1997 and it is estimated that during the week 15 vehicles per day (staff and customers) visited the site and at weekends this would increase to 20-25. In addition there have been numerous commercial vehicles visiting site in connection with the kennels business. Three passing bays are available along the access lane.

It is submitted that the proposal will result in a reduction in traffic movements to and from the site.

REFUSE COLLECTION

The business currently uses a private refuse collection but it is anticipated that this will change to the local authority for the houses. Currently, refuse collection vehicles visit the residential properties at Woodend Lane and Bank Barn Lane.

The new residents will be responsible for taking their own wheelie bins to the refuse collection point at the site entrance.

DOCUMENTATION

Bat Report

A bat report was submitted with the application for the erection of the detached dwelling house, (copy attached) which, whilst concentrating on the original pigeon cote, did mention under item 3.3.2 -

*'No other bat activity was heard or observed, and at no time were bats seen to have emerged from the pigeon cote, **the nearby buildings**, nor from any of the hedgerows, trees and shrubs around the site.'*

As mentioned previously, the applicant has already removed the roofs of the kennels and cattery and it would therefore be superfluous to require a new bat report to be prepared.

Ecological report

The site does not support any trees or grassed areas being virtually 100% brownfield with buildings and bare earth vehicle parking and turning areas and as such it is submitted that an ecological report is not required.

As this is a retrospective application it is exempt from the requirements of Biodiversity Net Gain.

Coal Mining Report

A coal mining report was submitted with the application for the erection of the detached dwelling house (copy attached) and is regarded to be suitable for this application. There are no new foundations proposed for the conversion of the kennels and cattery.