

Stid Fold Barn: Green Belt Assessment & Statement

Introduction

This Green Belt assessment is prepared for the proposed conversion of Stid Fold Barn just off Barn Field Lane, Wardle, Rochdale, OL12 9PN, into a single three bed dwelling with a single storey extension.

The existing barn property is part of a farmstead belonging to Stid Fold Farm and is situated close to two other properties, all of which lie within the greenbelt.

Assessment

Paragraph's 142 and 143 of the NPPF state:

142. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. 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.

143. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

The applicants recognise the importance of the Green Belt and the policies within the NPPF to protect its characteristics as outlined above. When considering the Green Belts main objectives listed in paragraphs 143 it is determined that the proposed conversion and single storey extension has minimal and negligible impact to these 5 statements as it consists of a single dwelling which is a conversion of an existing structure.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states: *"154. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:*

- 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), including buildings, 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 (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

i. mineral extraction;

ii. engineering operations;

iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;

iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and

vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

It is determined that the proposed conversion of Stid Fold Barn meets the exemptions listed above parts (c) and (g, iv) as highlighted in bold text. The proposal is the alteration of a building which does not result in disproportionate additions and is the re-use of a building which is of permanent and substantial construction. A structural report has been obtained for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling and supports the viability of the existing structure being converted to a dwelling. It is also evidenced to be a permanent and substantial construction as it has remained in its position for over 150 years. The re-use of the barn would ensure its long standing viability and upkeep and prevent it from falling into further state of dis-repair.

The SPD sets out that extensions which deliver up to a 35% increase in floor space or volume would in most cases be considered appropriate and not disproportionate. The single storey extension in the proposal represents a 19% increase in volume which falls under the previously mentioned 35%. A heritage statement was also sourced as part of

the proposal and whilst not specifically considering green belt policy it was determined as below:

“4.4 The extension is clearly subordinate to the historic barn in scale, height and form and is read as an ancillary addition rather than a competing structure. Its siting and reduced mass ensure that the legibility of the original agricultural building is preserved in both close-range and longer views.

4.5 As revised, the extension is considered to result in no more than a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the curtilage-listed barn and its setting.”

Pre-application advice was sought with a double storey extension previously proposed. This single storey extension proposal has been put forward as a direct result of the advice received through the process.

It is also put forward that the site has a long standing history of domestic buildings and domesticated storage buildings. See submitted files: *Stid Fold Barn – Evidence of previous dwellings and structures*. There is a ruin to the east of the barn which lies within the site boundary. This ruin is proposed to remain untouched. The ruin however was once a former cottage and took up more volume than it currently occupies with the roof having collapsed at some point in its history and walls which have collapsed.

Investigations on Google Earth and conversations with locals and owners also show that the site had a storage/shed unit in the north east of the site and just north of the barn itself. These have since been pulled down due to dis-repair. The site has some litter, dis-carded farming and machinery, piles of scrap, timber, hay wrappings, pipes and discarded timber. The conversion of the barn and site would aid in the removal of such.

The pre-application process also advised on the curtilage of the site within the green belt, deeming the original curtilage to be in-appropriate and suggesting a reduction which removed the change of use to the land north of the barn. The curtilage has been reduced to encompass the natural stone wall boundaries of the site which surround the existing barn and excludes any change of use to the land north of the barn.

The landscaping makes use of the much of the existing hardstanding where possible and adds minimally to drive as little change to the agricultural look and feel of the site as possible. Some domestication will be inevitable, but this is kept to a minimum through the reduction of the curtilage.

Conclusion

In conclusion it is determined that some harm would be caused to the green belt as a result of the conversion of Stid Fold Barn with single storey extension however this harm would be outweighed by the benefits of providing a future long term use for the property. It is also determined that the conversion and single storey extension meets the

exemption requirements set out in paragraph 154 in that it is the alteration of a building that does not result in disproportionate additions and is the re-use of an existing building of permanent and substantial construction