APPLICATION NUMBER: 19/01179/FUL

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
19/01179/FUL	Rachel Carney	4 February 2020

Address: Whitfield Barn Calderbrook Road Littleborough OL15 9NP

Proposal: Change of use and conversion of existing barn and outbuilding to form a new dwelling including part rebuilding of existing storage buildings and extension to existing dwelling - Resubmission of 18/01061/FUL

PUBLICITY	**Weekly list expired?**	y	**Site notice expired?**	y
	Neighbour letters expired?	y	**Press Notice expired?**	y

DELEGATION	**Significant departure from local plan?**	n	**Contrary to national policy?**	y
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	n	**Contrary to previous decision?**	n
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	n	**Called in or Planning Panel objection?**	n

COMMENTS	**Planning Panel comments received?**	n
	Neighbour comments received?	n

EIA	**Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?**	n/a

CONDITIONS	**Pre-commencement conditions proposed?**	n
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	n/a

RECOMMENDATION	REFUSE

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: AT **DATE: 06.02.2020**

SITE

The application relates to a partly dilapidated barn and adjacent Whitfield Farm Barn, an existing residential property and holiday let that is a former barn conversion (granted planning permission in 1995).

The barn subject to the current application is a red brick and stone structure that is in a partially ruined state with a significant portion of the building missing its roof and some walls. The remainder of the building has a stone roof.

The barn is sited on sloping topography with the northern elevation set at a lower level where a base coursing of stone is visibly set below the main red brick structure. A further lean-to stone structure is situated to the west of the barn.

The existing barn contains some openings to its main portion and these have been blocked up. A personnel and barn door remain to the barns south elevation and these open onto a cobbled and paved courtyard that is set between the barn and the existing dwelling on the site.

The application site is set within the Green Belt and comprises part of a small cluster of dwellings/former farm buildings. There are a number of public rights of way that run to the east and south of the dwelling.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes change of use of the existing barn and outbuildings to form a single dwelling as well as storage for the provision of the existing property. The proposed dwelling would be set out over three floors and the lower ground (sub-basement) floor would involve extension of the existing basement level into the hillside (to the west) and the excavation and levelling of land to the east to expose the sub-basement level. The sub-basement accommodation would comprise a dining kitchen, utility room, WC and store cupboard. New windows would be installed to the east elevation and to the north elevation, an existing former garage opening is to be utilised for a glazed door and full height windows.

To the ground floor, in the main barn area, living accommodation would comprise a living room, entrance hall, bedroom and en-suite bathroom. The living room would be served by bi-fold doors with outer sliding barn doors to the east elevation and these would access onto a proposed terrace area. The terrace would replace an existing lean-to roof and be enclosed by a balustrade of 0.8m height. Other openings to this section of the ground floor would comprise, to the north elevation, the use of two retained windows to serve the living room and hall. A new door is proposed to provide access to the house and the entrance hall and a new window would serve the bedroom. New external steps are also proposed to the north elevation, providing external access from the property entrance down to the sub-basement level. To the south elevation the existing large barn doorway is to be boarded over to replicate the existing doors and an existing window is to be retained to serve a store room.

First floor accommodation would comprise two additional bedrooms, one en-suite bathroom, a family bathroom, hall and atrium. Fenestration to this floor would comprise the retention of single windows to the east and west elevations. Three new roof lights would also be installed to the southern roof slope and the existing barn door opening to the south is to be glazed at an upper level.

The application would also include the formation of an external flagged access path that would run around the northern and eastern elevations of the property and include steps to account for the change in levels. Two off street gravel parking spaces are proposed to the west elevation of the property and the existing courtyard, septic tank and site access are to remain unaltered. The application also includes the

land that is adjacent to the existing barn and it is stated that while this would be included as part of the proposed dwelling, it would remain unaltered. Existing fencing and planting to the boundary of this land is to be retained as existing and a new timber fence (details of which have not been provided) is proposed to the southern boundary of the site.

The proposal also includes the conversion and construction of the more dilapidated section of the building (currently with no roof and missing walls) into four separate stores that would be for the use of the existing property. The stores would each have doors to the west onto the existing courtyard and store 3 and 4 would have single windows to the east elevation with store 4 also having a window to the south, overlooking the terrace for the proposed dwelling. Stores 2, 3 and 4 would all be rebuilt from the dilapidated remains and a pitched slate roof would be added. Store 1 would be linked to the existing property by a connecting door and this store would comprise a glazed structure.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – February 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
C3 Delivering the right type of housing
C6 Improving health and well being
P1 Improving image
P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3 Improving design of new development
G4 Protecting green belt land
G6 Enhancing green infrastructure
G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
G9 Reducing the impact of pollution
T2 Improving accessibility
DM1 General development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/2 Green Belt

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

18/01061/FUL - Change of use and conversion of existing barn and outbuilding to form a new dwelling and storage buildings and extension to existing dwelling. Refused May 2019 for the following reasons:

1. *Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate the full extent of the structural works required to undertake the proposal for the barn conversion. The submitted structural report identifies a significant amount of structural work and rebuild required for basic conversion but fails to identify any further works and/or impacts on the structure of the building required*

through the excavation of the sub-basement level and the installation of the perimeter glazing strip. These works, alongside the development of residential curtilage, would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt which is harmful by definition and would also result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been submitted to outweigh the harm that would arise to the Green Belt, the harm as a result of poor design and unacceptable living environment for existing and future residents. The application is therefore contrary to policy G4 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. *The design and layout of the fenestration would fail to given sufficient regard to the historic and agricultural context of the barn building and detract from its existing character and insufficient information has been submitted for the design of the extension to Whitfield Farm Barn. The application would result in unacceptable harm to visual amenity and cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building and non-designated heritage assets. No public benefits have been demonstrated to outweigh the identified harm to setting and the application would be contrary to policies P1, P2 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.*

3. *The large hall window to the south west elevation of the barn would result in close overlooking of principal windows of Whitfield Farm Barn, resulting in an unacceptable living environment for future and existing residents. This would be harmful to residential amenity and contrary to policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.*

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering
There is sufficient space on the site to accommodate the dedicated parking requirements of the proposed property.

The existing access will be maintained and utilised as part of the proposed development.

Rochdale Borough Councils Highways Service has no objections regarding this proposal.

Env Health - Noise/Odours
No comments received to date

Tree Officer
No comments received to date

Conservation Officer

Summary

This application is recommended for refusal.

Significance Assessment

Whitfield Barn is a relatively attractive 20th century building which has been developed over a number of phases to present us with a combination barn and lean to shippon structure at the lowest level. The original building can be easily identified

at the lower levels which are constructed of sandstone with the upper level being entirely of brick construction with a stone slate roof.
Through studying historic maps it is concluded that the barn building itself was constructed between 1892 & 1904 giving the building some historical value.
The barn is located within the setting of The Stables, a non-designated heritage asset which can be found upon the First Edition O.S. Map and within the setting of Whitfield Farmhouse and Whitfield Cottage, both Grade II listed buildings.

Following the recently refused application, 18/01061/FUL, a resubmission with amendments has been submitted.

Despite the information presented within the Heritage Statement it is maintained that the barn does form part of the setting of the designated heritage assets as setting is not defined by visual connections alone. Attention is drawn to the NPPF, PPG & Historic England's "The Setting of heritage Assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3" all of which explain the concept of setting. Furthermore, the outcome of Steer v SSCLG [2017] EWHC 1456 highlights that visual connection is insufficient to define an assets setting.

It is also disappointing that the applicants Heritage Statement fails to identify the barn as a non-designated heritage asset.

As previous, the change of use of the barn to provide a residential dwelling will cause less than substantial harm to the designated and non-designated heritage assets (NPPF, paragraphs 196 & 197).

A Structural Report has been submitted within this application which details the requirement for considerable intervention to facilitate the conversion. This includes partial demolition and rebuilding of elements of the building on every elevation and entire roof replacement which has the potential to cause substantial harm to the non-designated heritage asset (NPPF, paragraph 197). The proposed works are not detailed within any of the proposed elevations or supporting documentation and there is considerable concern that the proposed remedial works go beyond repair of the building.

The most recent submission has removed some of the unsympathetic window and door openings however, the scheme still looks to provide additional openings. The size, design and number of these will alter the building's character through the domestication of the agricultural building and the inclusion of the balcony on the south east elevation again over gentrifies the site.
The boarding of the threshing door does seem to be a lost opportunity to increase natural light levels within the building and it is considered that a more bespoke design option could have been explored for this element. Overall, the proposed development would result in the character of the building being entirely overhauled which would result in substantial harm being caused to the non-designated heritage asset (NPPF, paragraph 197).

To conclude, due to the level of intervention required, the lack of information presented and the unsympathetic nature of the scheme, this application is recommended for refusal.

Impact Assessment

The proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the designated and non-designated heritage assets (NPPF, paragraph 196 & 197).

Public Benefit Assessment

There are no public benefits identified as a result of this proposal.

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

No Drainage Proposals were submitted.
No sewerage proposals were submitted.

Provided links on drainage guidance

Advised that a foul treatment permit will be required from the Environment Agency hand guidance provided.

Advised that the site will need to be serviced by a small sewage plant.
Recommended drainage conditions have been provided.

Environmental Control (Landfill Gas)
Phase 1 report required

Gtr Manchester Ecology Unit

I would offer no overall objections to the above application on either nature conservation or arboriculture grounds, although I would recommend -

- The bat survey is a little dated, so although no bats or signs of bats were recorded I would recommend that a precautionary updated bat survey is undertaken prior to commencing any works. Bats are mobile in their habits.
- Although the mature sycamore trees nearby are likely to be to far away from any conversion works for harm to occur, nevertheless as a precaution protective fencing should be installed around the trees for the duration of any approved works

Rights Of Way Officer
No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised with a site notice, press notice and neighbour notification letters. No letters of representation have been received in respect of this application.

ANALYSIS

The application site is located within the Green Belt in the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. The National Planning Policy Framework provides policy on Green Belt development and 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 permanence'.*

The NPPF lists the five purposes of the Green Belt:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 145 states that Local Planning Authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets one of the listed exceptions which are:

a) Buildings for agriculture and forestry
b) The provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments
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
g) Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously development land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
    a. Not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt that the existing development; or
    b. Not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting and identified housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Paragraph 146 goes onto list other forms of development that are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

a) Mineral extraction
b) Engineering operations
c) Local transport infrastructure
d) The re-use of building provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction
e) Material changes in the use of land
f) Development brought forward under a community right to build order.

In the applicants submitted Heritage, Planning, Design and Access Statement paragraph 146 of the NPPF is referenced and it is stated that the existing building would be increased by approximately 12% in volume and that this is well within the 33% guideline figure when assessing extensions to existing buildings within the Green Belt.

The Heritage, Planning Design and Access Statement also refers to paragraph 145 of the NPPF in respect of the rebuilding of the stores.

The application also states that there is an additional consideration, that being that there is a fall-back position and that the majority of the scheme could be carried out under Part Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order which allows the change of an agricultural building to a use falling within planning use Class C3. This matter will be addressed in the ‘other considerations’ section of the report.

When considering the application presented, as recognised by the applicant, it is noted that it comprises two parts, the development of a new property (the barn conversion) and the conversion of the stores to provide an extension to the existing dwelling.

In first assessing the barn conversion the LPA considers that the development to form the new property would not meet any of the listed exceptions and it would as such comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The correct criterion to use in this application would be d) – the reuse of a building provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction. The application, would not fall under the development of previously developed land (criterion g) as the NPPF definition clearly excludes land that is or was last occupied by agricultural buildings. Having viewed the history of the site, including the application from 1995, it is clear that the original use of this site is agriculture. The 1995 application did not change the use of the barn and stores subject to the current application and there is no evidence on site to suggest a change of use since that time. As such, the barn is considered to remain under the definition of agriculture and they can therefore not be considered as brownfield land.

Assessing the application against criterion d), a structural report has been submitted. This report highlights a number of structural defects to the building which include, but are not limited to;

<u>Barn</u>

- North East Elevation
    - Bulging of the wall. Brickwork should be dismantled and reconstructed to remove the bulge.
    - Where brick is spalled it should be dismantled and replaced with existing bricks or new to match existing.
    - Reuse of existing bricks may be possible through turning them.
- North West Elevation
    - Bulging of lower wall beyond acceptable tolerance. Area will need to be propped, dismantled and reconstructed using existing bricks were possible or new to match existing.
    - Area of spalled bricks in retained element of wall should be dismantled and replaced with suitable existing bricks of new to match existing.
- South West Elevation
    - Take down and replace area of existing brickwork at wall plate level that is unacceptably weathered and where inward bowing has occurred. Replace with existing turned brick if suitable or new to match existing.
- South East Elevation
    - Remove roof of existing stone lean to allow for proposed terrace.
    - Brick gable to main barn to have weathered bricks removed and replace with existing turned bricks of new to match existing.
    - Gable to be propped and area of bulging to be removed and reconstructed using existing bricks where suitable or new to match existing.
- Roof
    - In poor structural condition particularly roof timbers due to fungal and infestation attack.
    - Stone roof covering required removal and existing roof structure dismantled.
    - New roof structure using timber rafters and purlins and where necessary steel beams to be erected.
    - Roof covering to use existing stone slates and new to match where necessary.
- Underpinning
    - Existing walls to be underpinned in matching brick outer leaf with dense concrete block inner leaf built off new concrete foundation

    - Damp proofing and thermal insulation required.
- Internal
    - New internal floor levels to be formed and concrete floor laid and thickened at external walls to protect foundations.
    - New inner leaf required and tied to external walls to enhance structural stability.

Given the above it is clear that there are significant structural issues with the barn and that these will require remedial treatment in order to facilitate any conversion. The current structural survey also addressed some of the insufficient information on the previous application and confirms that underpinning would be required to create the sub-basement level.

Further to the above, it is considered that the structural survey has identified that the works proposed cannot be undertaken without major reconstruction works. The survey as such demonstrates that the buildings on site are not of permanent and substantial construction (capable of conversion), and as such it is considered that the application would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Moving onto the other element of the development it is noted that the application indicates that the proposed dwelling would use the land to the north and east as part of the proposed dwelling i.e. residential curtilage. This is identical to the previous application

Examining the history for the site the application (95/D32216), the land to the north and east of the barn (now identified under the current application) was not included as part of that application (apart from a small section to the east of the store that was identified as a landscaped slope). There have also been no later changes on the land to change its use from agricultural/grazing land, and after undertaking a site visit the land does not currently appear to be used for domestic purposes. The land, along with the curtilage for Whitfield Farm, has been segregated from the surrounding fields by fencing and vegetation as indicated on the plans. However, the fencing off of land does not change its use and the grass still has an unkempt, hummocky field like appearance with no evidence of residential activities. This land as such is not considered to currently comprise residential curtilage and the development would therefore result in a change of use of the land, which itself would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

In addition to the harm that would arise due to inappropriateness, paragraph 133 of the NPPF establishes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and that the essential characteristic of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

In assessing the impact on openness it is considered that through the domestication of the barn buildings and associated land there would be a clear impact on openness. Whilst the full impacts on visual amenity will be assessed in full below, it is clear that the current building, whilst not aesthetically pleasing, does have a very utilitarian appearance that is typical of agricultural buildings. To change this appearance to one of a domestic dwelling would increase its prominence on the site and subsequently impact on openness. Furthermore, the change of use of the land to residential curtilage would result in the further extension of domestic activities into the Green Belt and the likely addition domestic paraphernalia (such as washing lines, children's play equipment, barbecues, seating, domestic planting, fencing etc) that would further impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Moving on to the conversion/rebuilding of the stores to provide extensions to the existing building it is again noted that these are also former agricultural buildings, but

they were included within the original red line boundary for the barn conversion 95/D32216 and as such they already comprise part of the residential curtilage.

In assessing the acceptability of this element it is noted that the stores are currently in a dilapidated state, with no roofs and only partial walls. The submitted structural survey does not include a survey of the dilapidated store buildings and it is clearly visible that they are structurally unsound. The submitted plans also indicate that the stores would be rebuilt in brick to match existing and this indicates that the applicants recognise that this element of the development would involve new build, rather than conversion.

As the development would comprise new build to an existing use it can fall under exception c) of paragraph 145 of the NPPF and which details that development may not be inappropriate if it comprises 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. The NPPF does not then define what it considers to be 'disproportionate', but the Council Supplementary Planning Document – Standards and Guidelines for Residential Development, establishes that this should be limited to a third. In assessing the current proposals against this it can clearly be seen that the additions (solely to the existing dwelling) would not result in more than a third of the existing volume and as such this element is considered to be acceptable in terms of Green Belt policy. The proposal to extend the existing dwelling would therefore fall within the exceptions to inappropriate development, as defined under paragraph 145 of the NPPF.

Further to the above, it is considered that the development to the barn to provide the new dwelling would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is harmful by definition. Furthermore, this element of the development would also harm the openness of the Green Belt. The NPPF directs LPAs to ensure that substantial weight is afforded to any harm to the Green Belt and 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (paragraph 144).

A Court of Appeal judgement in Redhill Aerodrome Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government establishes that 'any other harm' in paragraph 144 of the NPPF includes non-Green Belt harm that is to be taken into account in the weighing exercise of the planning balance as to determining whether or not very special circumstances exist which would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by inappropriateness and any other harm.

This Court of Appeal judgment is an important reminder that under paragraph 144 of the NPPF, when considering any planning application concerning proposed development in the Green Belt, local planning authorities should continue to ensure that substantial weight is given to harm to the Green Belt and any other harm.

The subsequent sections of the report will consider the other relevant material considerations for this application to identify whether the proposed development would give rise to any other harm before moving on to consider whether very special circumstances exist to clearly outweigh the harm.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy requires development proposals to demonstrate high quality design. In addition, paragraphs 124 and 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and

are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

Consultations have been undertaken with the Council's Conservation Officer as the application site is sited less than 50m from two Grade II listed buildings (Whitfield Farmhouse and Whitfield Cottage). The stables (Whitfield Farm Barn) immediately adjacent to the application site are considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.

It is noted that Whitfield Barn (the application site) is a relatively attractive 20th Century building which has been developed over a number of phases to result in a combination barn and lean-to shippon structure at the lower level. The original building can be easily identified at the lower levels which are constructed of sandstone, with the upper level being entirely of brick construction with a stone slate roof. When examining historic maps it is apparent that the barn was erected between 1892 and 1904, giving the building some historical value.

The barn is also located within the setting of The Stables, a non-designated heritage asset which can be found upon the First Edition O.S Map and within the setting of the afore mentioned Whitfield, Farmhouse and Whitfield Cottages, both Grade II listed.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Policy P2 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will protect the Borough's heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings.

Paragraphs 192, 193 and 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework set out that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 193 is clear 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. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

Paragraph 196 states that, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Through consultation with the Conservation Officer it is considered that the proposal to convert the barn to residential would cause less than substantial harm to the designated and non-designated heritage assets at and surrounding the site, through the site's further removal from agricultural use.

Firstly considering the submitted Supporting Statement, the Conservation Officer has stated that despite the information presented, the LPA maintain that the barn does form part of the setting of the designated heritage assets as setting is not defined by visual connections along. In respect of this regard should also be given to the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance & Historic England's "The Setting of heritage Assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3", all of which explain the

concept of setting. Furthermore, the outcome of Steer v SSCLG [2017] EWHC 1456 highlights that visual connection is insufficient to define an assets setting.

In assessing the design of the development, it is noted that the scheme has been amended from the previous refusal, particularly through the removal of a previously proposed perimeter glazed strip. However, there are still concerns regarding the detail proposed, particularly in respect of the additional openings and addition of the balcony which it is considered would alter the building's character through the domestication and gentrification of the agricultural building, thus meaning that only the south west elevation would be recognisable as a barn.

The Conservation Officer has also raised concerns over the boarding of the threshing door (to the south west elevation) and while it is recognised that this treatment is to address previously identified concerns with overlooking (addressed below in residential amenity section of report) it is considered that a more bespoke design option could have been explored for this element and the current solution is unacceptable.

In summary the proposed development through the placement and design of fenestration and the inclusion of a balcony would result in the character of the building being entirely overhauled and this would result in less than substantial harm being caused to the non designated heritage asset.

The Conservation Officer has also raised concerns over the amount of structural work required, as detailed in the submitted structural report. As previously stated in the Green Belt Section of the report, this would including partial demolition and rebuilding of elements on every elevation and an entire roof structure replacement. This would however is not detailed on the submitted plans or supporting documentation and the Conservation Officer has raised concerns that the remedial works required, which go beyond repair, would jeopardise the character of the building.

Moving onto the works proposed to the area identified as 'stores', it is considered that the design of the brick built section would be acceptable. Whilst the stores are currently in a very dilapidated condition, their original design and layout can be seen and the proposal would be in keeping with this original form. Additionally, whilst the proposed glass link would clearly be a departure from the original form, it is considered that this would represent an acceptable contemporary addition, which due to its minimal scale would result in no undue harm to visual amenity or the setting of heritage assets.

Further to the above it is considered that there are concerns with the fenestration details proposed as the design fails to given sufficient regard to the agricultural context of the site and the existing appearance and character of the barn. This would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets and this harm has not been mitigated through public benefit. The application would as such have a harmful impact on visual amenity and local heritage assets and be contrary to policies P1, P2 and P3 of the Core Strategy and policy in the NPPF.

Ecology

Policy G7 of the Core Strategy requires developments to protect existing biodiversity including trees and vegetation. The NPPF also requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

A bat survey and arboricultural survey have been submitted in support of the application and consultations have been undertaken with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) in respect of both matters.

GMEU have assessed the submitted reports and in respect of bats they have noted although that survey reports no evidence of bats, the survey is a little dated and as such, given that bats are mobile in their habitat, a precautionary bat survey should be undertaken prior to the commencement of any works.

GMEU have also commented on the arboricultural matters at the site and it is noted that there are 4 no. trees adjacent to the site access and the proposed parking spaces would extend beneath the crown spread of these trees. An arboricultural report has been submitted with the application and this has identified the trees under which the parking is proposed (and immediately adjacent to) as category B and C (none of the trees are protected by a TPO). In order to protect these trees the report identifies that tree protection methods (fencing) will be required and that the existing sett-paving will need to be carefully removed, preferably by hand. The required construction for the parking spaces will be using a 3-dimensional cellular reinforced no-fines gravel on a geotextile membrane that will permit aeration and unimpeded flow of surface.

GMEU have raised no objections to these protection measures and advised that the trees are too far from any conversion works for harm to occur.

These works are protection methods are considered to be acceptable and should the application be approved, an appropriately worded condition will be required.

Further to the above, subject to appropriate conditions requiring an updated bat survey and appropriate tree protection it is considered that the impacts on biodiversity and landscape are acceptable and in accordance with policy G7 of the Core Strategy and policy in the NPPF.

Residential amenity

Policy DM1 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy requires development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact upon the amenities of future residents and occupiers. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Further to the above are the considerations of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development'. The SPD establishes that the following minimum space standards will be applied to all new residential developments and development which affect existing residential properties:

- 21m between directly facing principle windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level and 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage.
- 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.
- 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.

Under the previous application one relationship was identified as being harmful and that was the relationship between the south west elevation and the existing dwelling (Whitfield Barn). In this regard the previous application proposed glazing of the existing barn door and the subsequent large opening that would have been formed would have resulted in unacceptable overlooking, at a distance of 12m.

Under the current application the treatment of the original barn door has been amended so that it would be mostly timber boarded with just a narrow strip of glazing to the upper level. With this alteration the main opportunities for overlooking have been removed and given the use of area served by this opening (hallway) it is considered that the narrow strip of glazing that would be retained would be acceptable and not result in any harmful loss of privacy.

In respect the extension to Whitfield Farm Barn, this is considered acceptable in terms of residential amenity with no harmful overlooking or overshadowing caused.

Further to the above it is considered that the previously identified harm has been appropriately addressed and the application is now acceptable in this regard and in accordance with policy DM1 and the SPD – Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development and policy in the NPPF.

Highway safety

Policy DM1 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy requires all development proposals, provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring and servicing arrangements, taking into account the proposed use and location.

Policy T2 of the Core Strategy sets out that development proposals are required to satisfy the Council's accessibility hierarchy and are required to provide parking in compliance with the Council's Maximum Car Parking Standards set out in Appendix 5 of the CS.

Highway Services have been consulted on the application and they have confirmed no objections to the application with sufficient parking provision and appropriate access arrangements. .

It is also noted that the development runs close to a designated Public Right of Way but this would not be directly affected by the development.

Further to the above the application is acceptable in respect of highway safety and policies DM1 and T2 of the Core Strategy.

Contamination

Policy G9 of the Core Strategy requires that any risks associated with contaminated land are identified and addressed. In this regard consultations have been undertaken with the Council's Public Protection Team (Contamination Officer) who has advised that upon any approval a Phase I contamination report will be required. This is considered to be a reasonable request and a report can be conditioned.

Other considerations

The Heritage, Planning, Design and Access Statement claims that there is a fall-back position and that the majority of the scheme could be carried out under Part Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order which allows the change of an agricultural building to a use falling within planning use Class C3.

In respect of this matter development is not permitted under part Q.1 (i) if it would result in building operations other than

i) the installation or replacement of

aa) windows, doors, roofs or exterior walls, or

bb) water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services,

to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse; and

ii) partial demolition necessary for the building to carry out building operations.

Under the conditions listed under Q.2 the applicant must also apply to the Local Planning Authority for determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required into a number of matters which include design and external appearance.

It is not appropriate to fully assess the acceptability of this application as a prior approval and if the applicant's wish to pursue that route, an appropriate application is required. However, from the assessment undertaken in this application it is clear that the Council consider that the proposal would result in significant demolition of the existing building and this may fall foul of the requirements under part Q.1 (i). Also, the LPA have clearly identified concerns in respect of the current design, thus meaning any application may also fail under part Q.2

Conclusion

The application has addressed reason for refusal no. 3 of application 18/01061/FUL and removed the harmful overlooking that would have previously been created. However, the proposal would still result in less than substantial harm to the setting of adjacent designated and non-designated heritage assets and no public benefits exist to outweigh this harm. The design and layout of fenestration is also considered unacceptable, with the proposal failing to give sufficient regard to the agricultural and historic context of the barn building and its existing character.

Additional information received with the application has also confirmed the previous concerns in respect the amount of structural works required in order to convert the building and the barn itself is not considered to be of permanent and substantial construction. The proposed development would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is by definition harmful. No 'very special circumstances' have been demonstrated to outweigh the harm caused to openness and the other harm as detailed above. The application is therefore considered to be unacceptable and the recommendation is for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION **REFUSE**

1. The submitted structural report identifies a significant amount of structural work and rebuild required for basic conversion, including, but not limited to, the substantial re-building of the external walls, the erection of a new roof structure and underpinning of external walls. These works alongside the development of residential curtilage would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt which is harmful by definition and would also result in harm to openness of the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been submitted to outweigh the harm that would arise to the Green Belt, along with the harm as a result of poor design. The application is therefore contrary to policy G4 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The design and layout of the fenestration would fail to given sufficient regard to the historic and agricultural context of the barn building and detract from its existing character and insufficient information has been submitted for the design of the extension to Whitfield Farm Barn. The application would result in unacceptable harm to visual amenity and cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building and non-designated heritage assets. No public benefits have been demonstrated to outweigh the identified harm and the application would

therefore be contrary to policies P1, P2 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The proposal would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area nor does it comply with the development plan and therefore does not comprise sustainable development. There were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable and it was therefore not possible to approve the application.

Notes for Applicant:

INFORMATIVE:
For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following drawings :-

- Location Plan
- Topographical Survey of Existing – Drawing no. WF01/0918/01
- Existing Site Plan – Drawing no. NMB01/1119/03
- Proposed Site Plan – Drawing no. WF01/1018/03
- Existing Floor Plans – Drawing no. 15-068-02B
- Existing Elevations and Sections – Drawing no. 15-068-03A
- Proposed Floor Plans – Drawing no. NMB01/1019/01A
- Proposed Elevations – Drawing no. NMB01/1019/02

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