

APPLICATION NUMBER: 24/00225/FUL

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.

24/00225/FUL

CASE OFFICER

Rosalind Gralton

DETERMINATION DATE 14.05.2024 EXT OF TIME 26.07.2024

Address: Harwood Fields Farm Castle Hill Road Heywood BL9 6UL

Proposal: Conversion and extension of part of an existing stables building (inc. demolition of the remainder of the stable block and associated structures) to form one dwelling

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?	N
	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?	Y

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N/A
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

SITE

The site relates to a single storey building, currently used as an equestrian stables located within the Green Belt. The building is of solid wall construction, with a lean-to corrugated metal sheet roof. Natural stone covers the majority of the external of the building. The building has large existing openings to the front which are the stable doors. The building is a long stable building measuring 33m in length.

The building is part of a wider site comprising of buildings which are agricultural in appearance, associated with the Robinson's Equestrian Centre adjacent to the site, as well as multiple residential dwellings, many of which have been converted from former barns on the site.

The site is characterised by large areas of hardstanding, natural stone buildings and agricultural buildings of various materials and ages.

The topography of the land generally rises to the north of the site, with the structural survey of the building detailing the change in levels is 1m.

A large car park associated with the equestrian centre is located south of the proposed site, adjacent to the horse riding arena area.

The dwellinghouses are generally located together toward the eastern side of the site, away from the agricultural and equestrian processes further west.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks permission for the change of use of stable building, including part demolition and extension of the building.

The proposed dwelling would be a 4 bedroom detached dwelling, constructed in natural stone utilised from the part demolition of the original building. The roof would be replaced and extended to form a dual pitched roof, with a ridge height of 7.2m and an eaves height of 4.8m. The dwelling would measure 15.2m in length.

Glazing would be introduced to all elevations with entrances on the eastern, western and southern elevations.

A large private amenity space is located to the side and rear. Two parking spaces are provided as part of the development.

Proposed materials include natural stone, natural blue slate tiles, and wooden casement windows. No details of doors are provided.

No details of proposed bin storage are included.

The agent has submitted a calculation of a volume reduction of the building of 39% on the original building.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY**National Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024.

The following policies are relevant:

JP-S1 Sustainable Development
JP-S2 Carbon and Energy
JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-J1 Supporting Long-term Economic Growth
JP-G1 Landscape Character
JP-G8A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
JP-G9 The Green Belt
JP-P1 Sustainable Places
JP-P3 Cultural Facilities

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO2 – Creating successful and healthy communities

C1 – Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places

SO3 – Improving Design, image and quality of place

P1 – Improving image
P3 – Improving design of new development

SO4 – Promoting a greener environment

G4 – Protecting Green Belt
G9 – Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

SO5 – Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

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

None direct to the specific stables are relevant. The surroundings include barn conversion dwellinghouses, and multiple householder applications have been determined on these.

The closest most relevant application includes

14/00700/FUL - Conversion of agricultural building to form two dwellings – Grant subject to conditions 23/12/2014

To the south directly

08/D51430 - Change Of Use From Agricultural Buildings To 20 Stables And Tack Room And Construction Of Menage - Revised Proposal D50403 – 26/10/2009

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering

No objections.

Rights Of Way Officer

No objections. Three rights of way within the vicinity, HeyFp50, HeyFp51 and bridleway HeyBp48. No routes should be obstructed at any time prior, during or following construction of development.

Env Health - Noise/Odours

Following the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment, the Environmental Health Officer was consulted on the proposals. No objections raised subject to condition of validation testing prior to occupation.

Gtr Manchester Ecology Unit

No objections. Recommended conditions including biodiversity, bird nesting season restrictions, external lighting. Suggested informative attached to decision notice.

Tree Officer

No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by neighbour notification and site notice.

2 objection letters were received. 3 supporting letters were received. No additional comments were made on the supporting letters. Comments from the objectors are summarised below.

- Site is already over populated and over planned
- 50 cars travelling up the road twice a day
- No need to build more
- 90 stables existing in addition to the homes
- People live in sheds and 7 businesses already on site

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the Green Belt as allocated under the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. The National Planning Policy Framework, 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 proposed development comprises two key elements – the conversion of an existing building within the Green Belt, and alterations and extensions to it, to facilitate that conversion. The development is assessed against the following Green Belt policy:

Paragraph 154 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:

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;

Also relevant to this application, Paragraph 155 states:

‘Certain other forms of development 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:

d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

Directly relating to the proposed extensions, Paragraph 149 (c), sets out an exception to inappropriate development, for extensions and alterations of buildings in the green belt, where it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

As such, to be “appropriate” development in the Green Belt, the building must be capable of conversion and the conversion must not harm openness, and the alterations / extensions must not be disproportionate.

The submitted Green Belt Statement states the applicant seeks to use exception ‘(d) of Paragraph 155, which states exceptions to inappropriate development apply where in the case of the re-use of buildings where the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, **and** the proposal would not conflict with the purpose of the green belt or cause substantial harm to the openness of the green belt.

The application is supported by a structural survey, prepared by Michael Pooler Associated Ltd, dated November 2023, reviews the structural integrity of the stables for conversion purposes. The survey details the building is of solid wall construction with a lean to corrugated metal sheet roof, and was originally completed in natural stonework. The building is occupied as an equestrian stables, with the occupants of the stables to be located elsewhere across the site in the instance of conversion. The conclusion of the report states there are no structural reasons why satisfactory refurbishment cannot be carried out without substantial repairs. The LPA accepts the findings of this report. However, no details of the necessary repair / rebuilding is shown on the submitted elevation drawings, and as such it is not clear to the LPA the extent of works that are being sought. For this reason it is necessary to condition that such detail is submitted for approval before works to the elevations begin.

As part of the proposals, part of the building would be demolished and part would remain and be extended. The original building would have a volume of 1396m³. The part to remain and be extended would have a volume of 855m³. The agent has submitted a calculation of a volume reduction of 39%. The Council’s Guidelines and standards for Residential Development SPD, at paragraph 5.20 states normally, 35% increase in floor space or volume over and above the original dwelling, would be considered the maximum of appropriate and not disproportionate, however caveats that the characteristics of properties and proposals vary, and therefore in some instances may be considered disproportionate. While the extensions to the buildings

are not ignored, and will be assessed below in relation to the impact on openness, based on volume calculations alone, the proposed extensions would not be considered disproportionate.

Notwithstanding the above, the converted building; irrespective of any proposed extensions, as stated in Paragraph 155 must not conflict with the purposes of the greenbelt, and must preserve its openness. As such, the impact on openness of the green belt as a result of the proposed conversion must be assessed.

As part of the re-use of the building, the proposal would result in some level of domestication of the building similar to that of the surrounding converted domestic properties, with the addition of private amenity space.

The main physical change to the building is the increase in roof volume, as a result of the pitched roof replacement of the single pitched design. While this would impact the visual openness of the green belt, the spatial openness would not be affected by this element. While the roof extension would increase the scale of the building to a two storey detached property, overall it is considered acceptable.

The building's eastern, northern elevations are currently a blank elevations, however evidence is seen of former window openings. The northern elevation proposes two window openings, with the majority of window openings to the southern elevation, consistent with the stable door openings of the existing building. The west elevation does introduce two new openings, however these are consistent with that on the eastern elevation.

The proposed material palette of the building would be natural stone retained from the part demolition of the stables. The roof would be natural blue slate, and windows would be wooden casement windows. No details are provided of doors, and therefore a condition would be attached to the decision notice to secure these prior to installation.

The proposals would only be visible by the adjacent rights of way in oblique views, from HeyFp50 – running east/west to the north of the site. Multiple agricultural buildings and existing dwellings are in closer proximity to these locations, and it is not considered the proposed development would result in any unacceptable visual amenity impact from these viewpoints.

It is considered the proposed conversion and extension of the building would comply with the exceptions contained within Paragraph 154 (c) and Paragraph 155 (d) of the NPPF. As such, the proposal would not result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposal would result in the re-use of an existing building within the Green Belt which has demonstrated it is capable of conversion without conflicting with the purpose of the green belt, and the proposed extensions and alterations to the building would not result in disproportionate additions over and above that of the original building. The proposals are therefore considered to preserve the openness of the site and not conflict with the purposes of the land within it, and would comply with Policy JP-G9, Policy G4 of the Core Strategy, Saved Policy G/D/2 of the UDP, and the NPPF.

Visual amenity / Character of the countryside

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 135 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture,

layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. Policy P2 states that the Council will protect and enhance the Borough's character, including the quality of its countryside. New development is required to integrate successfully.

The site is a stable building with a rural character, however is situated between domesticated barn conversion dwellings to the east, and buildings with an agricultural and equestrian use to the north, south and west. The site is situated in the middle of the existing buildings, with views from the PROW limited to the eastern elevation only.

As assessed above, the material palette, with exception to the details of doors, would be appropriate in context of the character of the wider site. Subject to a condition these details are acceptable.

The proposed building, subject to conditions, would be in keeping with the appearance of the original stables, and would not detract from the setting of the building within the green belt.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable, and in accordance with Policy JP-P1 of the PfE Joint Development Plan, policies DM1 and P1, P2 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and policies contained within the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states planning decisions should create places which are 'safe, inclusive, and accessible, promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers'. Policy G9 of the Rochdale CS states all development is required to 'not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.'

Given the close proximity of the site to the adjacent agricultural building, which holds a bio-mass boiler, a Noise Impact Assessment was submitted and the Council's Environmental Health Officer was consulted. No objections were raised by the Officer, subject to a condition requested, with details of the internal and external noise levels to be achieved, and validation testing be carried out and approved by the LPA prior to occupation of the dwelling. As a result, no concerns are raised in relation to the impact of the development on noise of proposed occupiers and adjacent neighbouring properties.

In relation to the positioning of windows, and the proposed outlook the occupiers would receive, the building is within very close proximity to the adjacent building housing a bio-mass boiler. No habitable room windows are proposed on the northern side elevation, and habitable room windows are provided by the eastern, western and southern elevation only.

The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD refers to Space Standards at Section 4.1, and states the following:

'The following minimum space standards will be applied to all new residential developments and developments which affect existing residential properties:

- (i) 21m between directly facing principal 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 (Figure 2);*

- (ii) 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room (Figure 3);
- (iii) 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room (Figure 4).'

Section 4.3 states exceptions to these minimum standards are acceptable in some circumstances and applications are considered on their own merits.

A 30m distance is present from the western elevation to the nearest agricultural building, a 19m distance is present from the eastern elevation to the facing residential dwellings, and a 5m distance is present from the southern elevation to the facing agricultural building, which when considering the topography of the land, would be single storey.

While the southern elevation has a 5m distance to the single storey facing elevation, given the context of the site, it is not considered this would result in an undue impact upon the residential amenity of the occupiers given the retaining walls providing a private amenity space. As a result, no unacceptable overlooking impact is present.

Highways

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 Core Strategy.

The Council's Highways Officers were consulted on the application, as a result of the site being far removed from the adopted highway no concerns were raised in relation to detrimental impact on highways movement or safety. No commentary was offered in relation to parking. An amended site plan was received which shows two identified parking spaces, which meet the maximum standards required within the Rochdale Core Strategy and are considered acceptable.

Ecology

Core Strategy policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity. Policy JP-G8 of PfE states development will be expected to achieve a net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%.

A preliminary bat roost assessment and bird survey were provided as part of the application. The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit were consulted on this as part of the application. The report concluded a negligible potential to support roosting bats however a potential to support nesting birds. As a result recommended conditions were secured in relation to external lighting, compliance with bird nesting season restrictions, biodiversity enhancements and informative to highlight the legal protection of some species. The Council officer concurs with the outcome of this consultation and the proposed conditions and informatives are attached to the decision.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This permission relates to the following plans and documents:

Amended proposed site plan w parking – Drawing number SR-24-09-23-B2
Amended floor plans and elevations – Drawing number SR-24-09-23-C2
Location Plan – SR161123.A
Engineering Report 9179 ref 24.11.2024 MP/CH – Prepared by Michael Pooler Associates Limited

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with these drawings and documents hereby approved unless otherwise required by the conditions below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application, no works to the elevations or roof of the building shall take place until samples (on site) and full specifications of materials to be used externally on the building(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including:

- Windows to be timber or aluminium
- Doors to be timber
- Roof lights to be conservation style (set flush with roof)
- Rainwater goods to be cast metal painted black
- Cladding to be timber such as larch
- Roof to be natural slate

Such details shall include the type, colour and texture of the materials and samples shall be displayed on the site for inspection. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Insufficient details have been submitted with the application, and in the interests of amenity and in compliance with policies P1, P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. No above ground works shall take place until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements for the site including, but not limited to, the provision of bird boxes, bird bricks, bat boxes and bat bricks to be integrated to the fabric of the buildings hereby approved, bug hotels, hibernaculum, wildflower seeding and hedgehog habitat (including provision of 'Hedgehog Highways') has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of the dwelling and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, the development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until full details of both hard and soft

landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the formation of any banks, terraces or other earthworks, hard surfaced areas and materials, planting plans, specifications and schedules (including planting size, species and numbers/densities), existing plants / trees to be retained and a scheme for the timing / phasing of implementation works. The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme for timing / phasing of implementation or within the next planting season following first occupation of the development hereby permitted, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or shrubs planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: Insufficient details have been submitted with the application, and to ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with Core Strategy Policy G6 and G7 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. The car parking, servicing and other vehicular access arrangements shown on the approved plan '*Amended proposed site plan w parking – Drawing number SR-24-09-23-B2*' to serve the development hereby permitted shall be made fully available for use prior to the development being first brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for their intended purpose.

Reason: To protect the amenity of nearby occupants and to accord with policies G9 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No external lighting shall be installed on the building or elsewhere on the site unless a scheme for such lighting has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall thereafter be fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and the conservation of protected species and in compliance with Policies P3, G9, DM1 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. No site clearance shall take place, including works to trees or shrubs or demolition, between the 1st March and 31st August in any year, unless a detailed bird nest survey has been carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist that shows that no active bird nests are present.

Reason: In order to prevent disturbance to any nesting birds that may be present in accordance with Policies G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, policy JP-G8 of Greater Manchester Places for Everyone and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. No works to the elevations of the building (except demolition) shall take place until plans to show the extent of necessary rebuilding and repair works having regard to the submitted Engineering Report 9179 ref 24.11.2024 MP/CH – Prepared by Michael Pooler Associates Limited have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Insufficient detail is provided on the submitted drawings, and in order to comply with Green Belt policy G4 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, JP-G9 of Greater Manchester Places for Everyone and the National Planning Policy Framework.

10. The dwelling hereby approved shall not be occupied until such time as the demolition of the parts of the buildings as shown on the Existing Site Plan are complete and the repair works to the exposed elevations have been undertaken in accordance with details approved under condition 9.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the occupiers of the proposed development.

11. No works to the elevations of the building (excluding demolition) shall commence until full details of existing and proposed ground levels and proposed building finished floor levels (all relative to ground levels adjoining the site) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, notwithstanding any such detail shown on previously submitted plan(s). The development shall be carried out strictly in conformity with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the appearance of the locality and in the interests of the amenities of local residents.

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

Notes for Applicant:

Under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) it is a criminal offense for a person to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird, or damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst that nest is in use or being built. Additional care should be taken through the nesting season which runs from 1st March to 31st August inclusive. If any nesting bird is found or suspected which would be affected by the development, work should cease immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted for advice at the expense of the applicant. Planning permission does not provide a defence against prosecution under the aforementioned act.

Report Author Rosalind Galton