
Old Pump House Lepton Planning Statement

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April 2021

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in a support of a full planning application for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of two dwellings ('the Proposed Development') on land at the Old Pump House, off Wakefield Road, Lepton ('the Application Site').
 - 1.2 The proposal will help to regenerate and utilise an idle brownfield site, replacing over 12 ageing buildings of varying material, with two traditional two storey dwellings constructed from natural local materials.
 - 1.3 This Planning Statement provides a background to the Proposed Development, covering the Application Site and its surroundings, the planning policy context and the technical assessments which have considered the potential effects of the Proposed Development upon the Application Site and its surroundings.
 - 1.4 The Planning Statement has been prepared to assist Kirklees Council (the Local Planning Authority) in its determination of the application and should be read in conjunction with the suite of supporting material.
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2.0 Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The Application Site covers an area of approximately 1.13 acre and is located off Wakefield Road in Lepton, Huddersfield. The Site is occupied by a number of buildings and enclosures related to the commercial cattery business that has been in operation on the site. The business ceased operating in 2020.
 - 2.2 The buildings on site include: cattery enclosures, a grooming salon, a workshop and an ancillary barn. The buildings proposed for demolition (A-H; J-L and N) all relate to the former cattery business and are all permanent structures. The buildings are predominantly of linear form and extend towards to the north and east of the site and the existing dwelling.
 - 2.3 The former cattery buildings are illustrated in the Existing Site Plan and Gross Volume Plan. The total floor area of the cattery buildings are 818.779 m², whilst the existing volume is 2,214.662 m³.
 - 2.4 The Site is adjacent to a residential dwelling, but is predominantly surrounded by agricultural land, with a cluster of residential dwellings to the far east and west, with Wakefield Road to the south.
 - 2.5 Residential development within the surrounding area is predominantly comprised of two-storey traditional dwellings, including former cottages and barn conversions constructed from stone, atypical of the region.
 - 2.6 Access to the Application Site is currently taken from the existing bellmouth off Wakefield Road on the southern boundary, down the private unadopted access road.
 - 2.7 The Application Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not subject to any ecological or heritage designations. The Application Site is however within the Green Belt.
 - 2.8 The site is within open countryside, just outside of Lepton development boundary, a Local Centre within the Kirklees Council administrative boundary.
 - 2.9 The Application Site is accessible by public transport with the closest bus stop located on Wakefield Road (Stop ID: 45020677) 0.1 mile to the west.
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3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of buildings: A-H; J; K and N associated with the former cattery, as shown on the existing Gross Volume Plan and the erection of two detached dwellings. A new bellmouth from Wakefield Road and a shared driveway linking the proposed development to the existing spur road is also proposed.
 - 3.2 The Site Plan (Ref. (SK)01) has been provided to show the layout of the Proposed Development within the Application Site.
 - 3.3 The layout and design have been developed in response to the surrounding context and site suitability. A thorough assessment of the site and its benefits has allowed a design which will maximize the sites opportunities and characteristics.
 - 3.4 The Site Elevation Plans (Ref. (AL)102; (AL)103; (AL)201; and (AL)202) have also been provided in support of the Application to illustrate the proposed scale and massing of the two dwellings.
 - 3.5 The design and massing of the development will respect the prevailing scale of the surrounding built form. The proposed building height will be 2 storey, with Plot 1 containing , in keeping with surrounding context. The building form has been designed to embed within the surrounding landscape and have no more of an impact on the openness of the green belt than the structures that currently exist on site.
 - 3.6 It is considered the supporting drawing demonstrate a high quality design and one which accords with the prevailing development plan policies LP24 & LP35, which requires a high standard of design for all new development and for proposals to create a sense of place, through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality and surrounding aesthetic.
 - 3.7 A new vehicular access point will be established off Wakefield Road, adjacent to the existing bellmouth. This new bellmouth is required to achieve a highway compliant visibility splay for safe access and egress into the site. The new access will connect into the existing spur road into the estate. The original bellmouth will be closed off and landscaped. The layout of the proposed new access is illustrated in the submitted Site Plan.
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4.0 Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless other material consideration indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') and Planning Practice Guidance are material considerations in the determination of this planning application.

Adopted Development Plan

- 4.3 The Development Plan for Kirklees Council consists of the following documentation:
- Kirklees Local Plan – Strategy and Policies (2019); and
 - Kirklees Local Plan – Allocations and Designations (2019).
- 4.4 Kirklees Councils Local Plan covers the period 2013 - 2031 and was adopted by the Council in February 2019. The Local Plan sets out the vision and spatial strategy for the district during the plan period.
- 4.5 The Site Allocations and Designations Plan Policy Document was adopted by Kirklees Council alongside the Local Plan in February 2019. The documents identifies sites for development that will deliver the aims, vision and objectives of the Local Plan.
- 4.6 Table 1 identifies the key policies from the Local Plan that the development will be assessed against.

Table 1- Relevant Local Plan Policies

Policy	Description
Local Plan – Strategy and Policies	
Policy LP1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy LP2	Place Shaping
Policy LP3	Location of new development
Policy LP7	Efficient and effective use of land and buildings
Policy LP24	Design
Policy LP57	The extension, alteration or replacement of existing buildings

Policy	Description
Policy LP59	Brownfield sites in the Green Belt

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') sets out the Government's definition of sustainable development and identifies how planning policies for England are expected to be applied. The Framework is a significant material consideration.
- 4.8 The Framework is purposefully positive, opportunity focused and pro-growth in seeking to facilitate development which will contribute to meeting the wider Government objectives.
- 4.9 Paragraph 7 of the Framework explains that 'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' which can be summarised as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
- 4.10 Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that 'achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
 - b) social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - c) environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.*
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- 4.11 The NPPF does not affect the statutory status of the Local Plan as the starting point for decision making. Developments which accord with an 'up-to-date' Local Plan should be approved 'without delay.' Where there are no relevant Local Plan policies, local authorities should grant permission unless:
- (i) The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - (ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 4.12 Section 5 of the NPPF sets out the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Paragraph 59 states that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 4.13 Paragraph 145 of the Framework states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:
- 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
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– 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.

Further Considerations

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.14 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning. It is important to note that the guidance is guidance and does not provide additional policy. Notwithstanding this, it does provide a useful resource on interpreting policy.
- 4.15 Paragraph: 009 (Reference ID: 21b-009-20140306) states that it is for the decision maker to decide what weight is to be given to the material considerations in each case, and (subject to the test of reasonableness) the courts will not get involved in the question of weight.
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5.0 Compliance with Planning Policy

Principle of Development

- 5.1 **Policy LP1** (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning applications that accord with policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material consideration indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The following policy analysis demonstrates how the Proposed Development complies with the relevant Local Plan policies and is should be considered sustainable development.
- 5.3 **Policy LP2** (Place Shaping) states that all development proposals should seek protect and enhance the qualities which contribute to the character of a place.
- 5.4 The Application Site is predominantly occupied by a number of disused and/or derelict buildings, which provide no sense of place and generally detract from the overall character of the valley, diminishing the rural countryside aesthetic.
- 5.5 The Proposed Development will add to the character of the area by providing a well-designed house, built from natural local materials, in style and in keeping with the local aesthetic. The proposed dwellings have been designed to be wholly within the volume, footprint and area of the existing brownfield land and not detract or impact upon the surrounding greenbelt land. With the materials and the proposed boundary treatments the Proposed Development would be more in keeping with the local area than the existing buildings.
- 5.6 The proposals would result in a general improvement from a visual perspective through the tidying up of the site and the removal of various paraphernalia associated with the current buildings. It is therefore considered that the proposals would improve the character and quality of the site and surrounding areas.
- 5.7 **Policy LP3** (Location of new development) states that development should reflect:
- the settlement's size and function; and
 - spatial priorities for urban renaissance and regeneration.
- 5.8 The Proposed Development is helping to regenerate a previously developed and largely unused site, where the majority of existing buildings, associated with the cattery are in a state of disrepair and ill appearance. Thus its redevelopment for housing will help to meet the spatial priorities for urban renaissance within the District.
- 5.9 The Application Site is also suitable in size to comply with the design, scale and massing requirements for a residential dwelling within the countryside, without appearing overbearing or imposing upon the landscape.
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5.10 **Policy LP7** (Efficient and effective use of land and buildings) states that the Council will ensure the best use of land and buildings, by ensuring proposals:

- Encourage the efficient use of previously developed land in sustainable locations provided that of high environmental value;
- Encourage the reuse or adaptation of vacant or underused properties;
- Give priority to despoiled, degraded, derelict and contaminated land provided that it is not of high environmental value;

5.11 The Application Site and the existing buildings within are deemed to be of no landscape, environmental or heritage value.

5.12 The existing buildings within the Application Site are largely derelict, unoccupied and have not been in use since the closure of the cattery in 2020. Most of the buildings are in a state of disrepair or of a size and shape that could not be adapted for any useful and/or intended use. The proposed buildings are therefore proposed to be wholly demolished.

5.13 The Table below demonstrates the proposed and existing area and volume of development on site:

Combined area of buildings to be demolished	Combined volume of buildings to be demolished	Proposed Development Area	Proposed Development Volume
818.779 m2	2214.662 m3	354 m2	2102 m3

5.14 The table above demonstrates that the Proposed Development will see a reduction in both floorspace and volume to 464.779 m2 and 112.662 m3 respectively.

5.15 **Policy LP11** (Housing Mix and Affordable Housing) states that all proposals for housing will be of high quality and good design and contribute to creating mixed and balanced communities in line with the latest evidence of housing needs.

5.16 This Application is for only two dwellings and has been designed to a high standard and specification, in keeping with the local character and aesthetic. The plot is large for 2 dwellings, but the setting and Green Belt designation restricts development to a limited footprint within the site. Further development and/ or additional housing may also be considered over development, within what is as sensitive rural environment. Therefore, two large dwellings represent the most suitable, sustainable and viable development option.

Design and Layout

5.17 **Policy LP24** (Design) states that good design should be at the core of all proposals by ensuring the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape.

5.18 The submitted package of drawings demonstrate the strong emphasis on a design which is in keeping with the local form, scale and layout of the immediate surrounding development, complementing yet no detracting from the overall character and aesthetic of the locality.

5.19 In terms of residential amenity the dwellings have been designed so that they would respect the privacy of the future occupants by way of maintaining adequate space about buildings between the proposed and existing surrounding dwellings, and being of an appropriate scale to prevent overshadowing.

Transport and Parking

5.20 **Policy LP21** (Highways and access) states that new development will normally be permitted where safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and where residential cumulative impacts of development are not severe.

5.21 The Proposed Development includes the construction of a new bellmouth into the site from Wakefield Road. This new access is required in order to achieve safe highway compliant visibility splays into and out of the site.

5.22 A new access road will be created within the site, to the west of the existing dwelling, reducing the noise and visual impacts on the existing dwelling from vehicles entering or exiting the site, from the proposed dwellings to the rear. This road will also allow emergency vehicles better access and egress to the rear dwellings.

Green Belt

5.23 **Policy LP57** (The extension, alteration or replacement of existing buildings) states that proposals for the extension, alteration or replacement of buildings in the Green Belt will normally be acceptable provided that:

- in the case of replacement buildings, the new building must be in the same use as and not be materially larger than the building it is replacing;
- the proposal does not result in a greater impact on openness in terms of the treatment of outdoor areas, including hard standings, curtilages and enclosures and means of access; and
- the design and materials should have regard to relevant design policies to ensure that the resultant development does not materially detract from its Green Belt setting.

5.24 The Proposed Development will be smaller in volume than the existing development, by 112.662 cubic metres and will not result in a greater impact to the openness of the green belt, as the proposed development is within the footprint of the existing brownfield land, is partly sheltered, will be obscured from the surrounding Green Belt by the proposed boundary treatments and does not exceed the existing built area.

5.25 For further justification please see Section 6 for the full green belt assessment of the Proposed Development. This justifies that the 5 purposes of the Green Belt will not be harmed because of the Proposed Development.

- 5.26 **Policy LP59** (Brownfield sites in the Green Belt) states that proposals for infilling within existing brownfield sites or for their partial or complete redevelopment will normally be accepted, provided that:
- In the case of partial or complete redevelopment the extent of the existing footprint is not exceeded; and
 - Redevelopment does not result in the loss of land that is of high environmental value which cannot be mitigated or compensated for.
- 5.27 The Proposed Development will result in the complete redevelopment of the site. The Proposed Development does not exceed the existing footprint or volume of buildings on site (to be demolished). The site is not of high environmental value, containing no environmental designations or listed buildings.
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6.0 Green Belt Assessment

Harm to Green Belt Purposes

- 6.1 The five purposes of the Green Belt are of principal importance to its protection. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF identifies the five purposes which the Green Belt serves as set out below:

- 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;*
- e) *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

- 6.2 The Proposed Development is assessed against each of the five Green Belt purposes below:

To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

- 6.3 The Proposed Development comprises the redevelopment of an existing brownfield site. The Proposed Development does not increase the footprint or volume of the existing building and does not introduce any buildings or hard landscaping on to any land which has not been previously developed and will not open up any further land for development.

To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

- 6.4 The Application Site is previously developed and thus its redevelopment would maintain the existing reserves and not exacerbate the separation distance between neighbouring villages. Therefore, this function will continue, and the development will not compromise it. The Proposed Development is of a sufficient scale and character that it will have no impact on this purpose.

To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 6.5 The Proposed Development will not introduce any additional development into the countryside, but instead demolish all existing redundant structure, associated with the cattery, for a sustainable end use.

- 6.6 There is no capacity for future encroachment, as a result of the Proposed Development as the Application Site is surrounded by greenfield land in the Green Belt, where no justification could be provided for further development.

To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 6.7 There are no historic towns or listed buildings adjacent or within influencing distance of the Application Site. Therefore, the Proposed Development does not conflict with this purpose of including land within the Green Belt.

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

6.8 The Proposed Development will regenerate an existing brownfield site, which has been underused and is now vacant, detracting from the character and setting of the local area and providing no economic, social or environmental value. The Proposed Development therefore complies with this purpose by providing two dwellings, with the associated benefits that brings.

6.9 Summary:

Green Belt Purpose	Green Belt Assessment
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	No conflict
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	No conflict
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	No conflict
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	No conflict
To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	No conflict

Harm to Openness

6.10 The NPPF, at Paragraph 133, 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". The Framework does not specify a precise definition of openness, nor is this evident in any associated guidance.

6.11 The Application Site is partly enclosed from the east and south by the topography and the strong belt of vegetation running along Wakefield Road, restricting nearly all views of the site from the south. Several mature trees border the perimeter of the existing dwelling and adjacent fields, with the exception of the northern boundary. This provides a sense of seclusion and enclosure from the surrounding locale. Only a limited number of small trees and hedgerows will need to be removed to facilitate the new bellmouth, access road and dwellings. Therefore no impact should be felt on the perceived openness of the Application Site and the surrounding area.

Harm to Permanence

6.12 The scheme is not proposing to remove the Application Site from the Green Belt. The boundaries of the Green Belt are not to be amended. Subsequently, permanence is not a relevant issue due to the Site and surrounding land maintaining its green Belt boundaries.

Inappropriate Development

- 6.13 Paragraph 146 of the NPPF details a number of forms of development which are not inappropriate in the Green Belt providing they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These include:
- a. Mineral extraction;
 - b. Engineering operations;
 - c. Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - d. The re-use of buildings 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.
- 6.14 The Proposed Development involves the re-use of previously developed land within the green belt for a new housing that cannot be contained within the existing built structures, which are either too dilapidated or too misshapen to be used for any other purpose than the existing use.
- 6.15 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable within Green Belt by virtue of the fact the site is previously developed land. The scale of the proposed development is less than that which has been approved on the site and therefore has a lesser impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.16 The proposed development has been designed to ensure that the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is no greater than the existing buildings, and to ensure there is no encroachment into the countryside. The buildings are designed with local natural materials and are in keeping with the character of the area.
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7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of full planning application for two dwellings ('the Proposed Development') on 1.13 acres of land at the Old Pumphouse off Wakefield Road, Lepton ('the Application Site').
 - 7.2 The application is supported by a package of drawings which details how the Proposed Development could be achieved on the Application Site in consideration of Kirklees Council's relevant policies alongside national legislation, guidance and standards.
 - 7.3 Sections 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
 - 7.4 The Proposed Development comprises policy compliant development which is in conformity with the Development Plan for Kirklees and this has been demonstrated through the policy analysis which supports the proposals.
 - 7.5 The technical assessments and reports which support the application demonstrate the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the Application Site and the surrounding area. These reports identify that the Proposed Development would not give rise to any significant adverse impacts.
 - 7.6 In consideration of Paragraph 8 of the Framework, the Proposed Development is sustainable development across all three dimensions and should be approved without delay.
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