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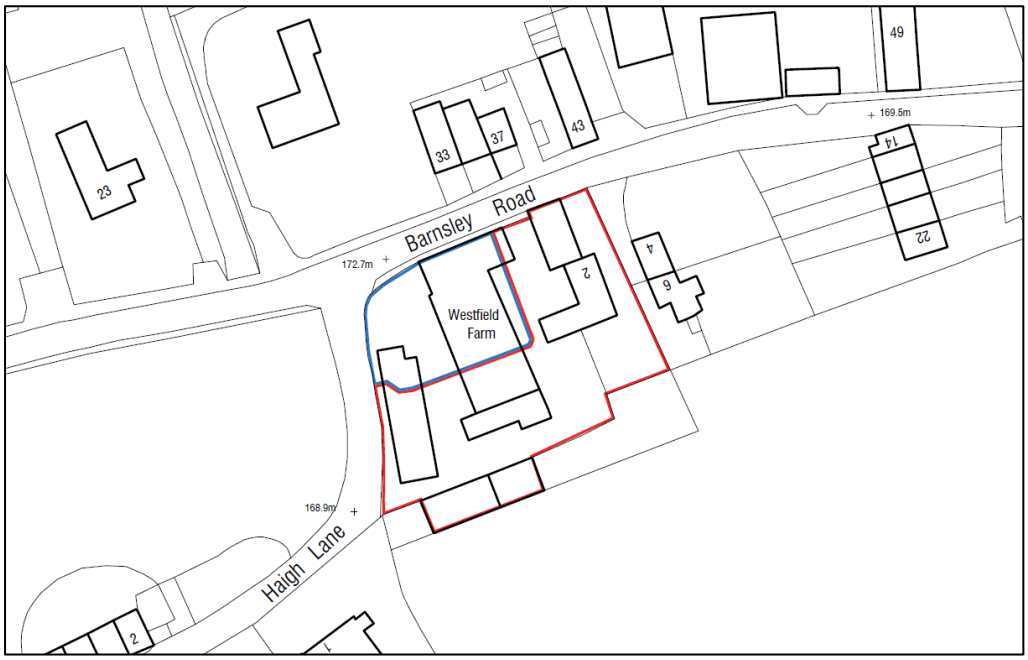
Planning Development

Planning Statement: Land at Westfield Farm, Barnsley Road, Flockton

Site Description

The application site comprises of a former farmstead which includes a two-storey brick, stone and rendered farmhouse and several stone-built barns and steel framed buildings. The site is located on the southern side of the A637 Barnsley Road adjacent to the junction with Haigh Lane. There are currently two access points into the site, both of which are from Barnsley Road. The site is situated towards the western end of Flockton. Residential properties are located to the north and east of the site, with open fields and countryside located directly south and west of the site.



Application Site (Extract taken from Location Plan)

Planning History

2019/92238 – Demolition of existing buildings, renovation of farmhouse and erection of 4 no. dwellings including garages and formation of new access – Approved

2022/93299 – Discharge of conditions 10 (phase 2 site investigation report), 11 (coal investigation and remediation statement), 14 (noise report) and 16 (bat survey and statement) on previous permission 2019/92299 for demolition of existing buildings, renovation of farmhouse and erection of 4 no. dwellings including garages and formation of new access – Split Decision

Policy Designation

The application site is mainly located on land which is unallocated on the Kirklees Local Plan Policies Map. A small strip of land along the southern boundary of the site is located within the Green Belt.

The Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the demolition and re-building of existing farmhouse with extensions and the erection of one dwelling (amended house type).

The 2019 approved application was for the demolition of the existing farm buildings, the renovation of the farmhouse and the erection of 4 no. dwellings. This application now seeks the complete demolition of the farmhouse and the erection of one new dwelling in its place (Plot 3). In addition, one larger dwelling is proposed at the rear of the site whereas previously two smaller dwellings were approved (Plot 4). Plots 1 and 2 on the previous approval remain unchanged and do not form part of this proposal.

Plot 3 would comprise of a part single storey and part two-storey five bed L-shaped dwelling. The dwelling would be positioned in the same location as the existing farmhouse at the eastern end of the site. The original footprint is however proposed to be extended to the south and to the north-west.

The ground floor would include a sitting room, open plan kitchen/dining room, study/bedroom five, utility room and attached double garage. The first floor would include four bedrooms, three bathrooms and a gym/home office which would be situated over the garage.

The roof of the dwelling would comprise of pitched sections of varying heights. A small lean-to canopy roof is also proposed over the front entrance. The dwelling is proposed to be constructed using regularly coursed natural stone walling with a blue slate roof. Windows would mainly consist of mullion style windows except for large glazing panels on the southern elevation plus a number of conservation style rooflights.

Hard and soft landscaping areas are proposed at the front, side and rear of the plot in addition to two off-street parking spaces.

Plot 4 would comprise of a split-level two/three-storey rectangular shaped dwelling. The dwelling would be positioned in the same location as Plots 3 and 4 on the 2019 application along the southern section of the site.

The lower ground floor would include an entertainment room, a pool, and a plant room. The ground floor would include a living room, open plan kitchen, dining and sitting room, utility room and attached double garage. The first floor would include five bedrooms and four bathrooms.

The roof of the dwelling would comprise of a cross gabled roof. The dwelling is proposed to be constructed using regularly coursed natural stone walling with artificial stone roof slates. Timber cladding is also proposed on the lower ground floor rear elevation. Mullion style windows are proposed on the front elevation with large, glazed windows proposed along much of the rear elevation.

It should also be noted that a Bat Loft is proposed to be incorporated within the roof space of the double garage. This has been done to address previous comments made in relation to bats/ecology on the site.

Two off-street parking spaces are proposed at the front of the dwelling with outdoor amenity space to be provided at the rear of the property.

Assessment of the proposals

Principle of Development

Planning permission was approved in 2019 for the demolition of existing buildings, renovation of farmhouse and erection of 4 no. dwellings including garages and formation of new access (LPA ref: 2019/92238). It is also important to note that a lawful start of this permission was implemented on the site through the demolition of some of the existing outbuildings in December 2022. A letter informing the Council of the lawful start was sent in on 7th December 2022 (See Appendix A).

The principle of development has therefore already been established and the previous scheme has now been implemented. This application now simply seeks to revise the previous approval by way of completely demolishing and re-building the farmhouse with extensions instead of renovating and extending it and erecting one larger dwelling along the southern part of the site instead of erecting two smaller dwellings.

Design and Visual Amenity

Local Plan Policy LP24 (Design) states that, *'Proposals should promote good design by ensuring: a. the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape.'*

The Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide SPD also sets out what the Council considers to be good, high-quality residential design through a number of principles. The relevant principles in relation to this scheme in terms of design and visual amenity are as follows:

Principle 2 – Context
Principle 5 – Built form and the building line
Principle 8 – Landscaping and edges
Principle 11 – Street Design
Principle 12 – Parking
Principle 13 – Materials and Detailing
Principle 14 – Windows and Doors
Principle 15 - Rooflines

Plot 3 involves the demolition and re-building of the existing farmhouse with extensions. The following points address why the proposals have changed, what the main revisions consist of and their suitability with regards to design and visual amenity:

- It was found following a Structural Survey of the farmhouse in May 2022, that the farmhouse is in a dilapidated state and that the external and internal damage noted to the main structure and extensions indicates that the cost to repair or preserve the building would be significant and far exceed the cost of a re-build, hence this application.

- The 2019 approved plans included the demolition of the adjoining outbuildings to be replaced with a garage and link extension. This part of the proposal remains unchanged other than the addition of a first floor above the garage to accommodate a gym/home office. The height of the garage would therefore be increased from 4.5m to 5.5m. This is considered to be acceptable with regards to visual amenity given the height of the main dwelling and adjacent height of Plot 2.

- The other main change proposed is the two-storey extension located at the southern end of the building. This extension to the original footprint would project out by a further 5.3m. The extension would extend into the existing outdoor amenity space associated with Plot 3, so would not affect the other plots. Ample outdoor space would still be available for Plot 3. The roof would be set down from the main house roof and the largely glazed southern elevation would reduce its overall impact from a visual perspective. The extension is considered to be proportionate in scale to the main part of the house.

- The proposed materials, architectural detailing and outdoor areas including parking remain largely unchanged from what was previously approved in 2019. The design of Plot 3 would still strongly resemble a farmhouse in overall style.

Plot 4 involves the erection of one large dwelling in place of two smaller dwellings.

- The siting, orientation and materials of construction remain largely unchanged from the 2019 approval.

- The roof would incorporate a cross-gabled design rather than a simple pitch roof style. This is considered to be more appropriate for the larger dwelling proposed and would provide a greater degree of visual interest.

- The proposed dwelling would be a split level two/three-storey dwelling rather than just two-storeys. This design would be in keeping with Plots 1 and 2 on the site which also comprise of two/three storey split level dwellings and would utilise the topography of the site more effectively.

- The front elevation of the dwelling would be quite traditional in appearance to complement the other dwellings on site, whereas the rear elevation would be more contemporary in design. This elevation would include large amounts of glazing which would enable future occupants to have a high quality outlook across the valley with plenty of natural daylight. Furthermore, this largely glazed elevation would help reduce the size of the dwelling from a visual standpoint.

Given the above, the proposals are considered to be acceptable and comply with Local Plan Policy LP24, paragraphs 126 and 130 in the NPPF and the relevant Principles in the Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide.

Residential Amenity

Principle 6 in the Housebuilders Design Guide SPD states that, *'residential layouts must ensure adequate privacy and maintain high standards of residential amenity, to avoid negative impacts on light, outlook and to avoid overlooking.'*

Plot 3 is proposed to be in the same location as the original farmhouse on the 2019 application with windows overlooking the shared courtyard to the front and windows looking towards the rear elevation of the neighbouring dwelling to the rear. Due to the existence of a residential dwelling in that location already, it was considered by officers that there would be no harmful loss of privacy and no significant overbearing or overshadowing impact from the development. As the positioning and height of Plot 3 remains unchanged, it is still considered that no undue harm would be caused to existing and future occupants by way of outlook, daylight or privacy.

Plot 4 is also proposed to be located in the same position as Plots 3 and 4 on the 2019 approved application. The separation distances of between 18m and 20m between Plots 1 and 2 at the front of the site and Plots 3 and 4 at the rear of the site were considered by officers to be acceptable. As the siting and location of Plot 4 remains unchanged, it is considered that these separation distances remain acceptable in relation to the residential amenity for all future occupants.

In terms of the residential amenity for future occupants, the proposed dwellings would benefit from a good amount of outdoor amenity space and four off-street parking spaces each. Both dwellings would enjoy a high quality outlook across the valley, with the large amount of glazing on the southern elevations allowing plenty of natural daylight to enter the properties. The design and size of the dwellings also meets internal space standards which will allow future occupants of the dwellings to enjoy a good quality of life and a high standard of living.

Given the above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and accords with Local Plan Policy LP24 (Design), paragraph 130 in the NPPF and the relevant Principles in the Housebuilders Design Guide.

Impact on openness of the Green Belt

The application site is located on land which is largely unallocated in the Local Plan other than a small strip of land along the south-eastern boundary of the site which is located within the Green Belt. Like the previous 2019 application, it is proposed that the small area of Green Belt that lies within the application site would be used as residential garden only. At present, this area of land is occupied by a 6.7 metre high building.

In this application the proposed garden space would belong to Plot 4 on the Proposed Site Plan. The garden area would comprise of mainly grass with a small section of good quality artificial stone flags. The existing boundary wall would be repaired and retained. Unlike the previous application however, this area of land is proposed to be dug out to make the land more level. This would allow future occupants of plot 4 to have a more useable garden space and it also enables plot 4 to have a lower ground floor level.

Paragraph 150 in the NPPF states that,

'Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These (include):

e) material changes in the use of land.'

It is considered that the removal of the existing building and the reinstatement of the ground to be used as a domestic garden would provide a significant improvement to the visual amenity and openness of the Green Belt. The Council agreed with this stance during the previous application provided permitted development rights were removed for any future development such as extensions

and outbuildings on this land. It is felt that this approach could be taken in this application too. The proposed digging out and levelling off of the land would not, in our opinion, create any additional impact to openness or visual amenity than what was previously approved.

The proposals therefore remain compliant with Green Belt policy.

Highway Matters

No changes are proposed to the access from the previous 2019 approval.

The two existing access points from Barnsley Road would be closed off. A new private drive measuring 4.8 metres wide would enter the site from Haigh Lane. Additional highway improvements are also proposed and would include the creation of a 2 metre wide footway to the northern and western site boundary, the widening of Haigh Lane to 5.5 metres, and increasing the kerb radii to 9.0 metres on the corner of Haigh Lane to avoid turning movements for larger vehicles.

The internal road layout would remain largely unaltered other than the re-location of the two-off street parking spaces for Plot 4. These spaces would be situated slightly further east in front of the new proposed double garage.

The Council's Highways Department had no objections to the previous 2019 approval. The proposed development is therefore still felt to be acceptable from a highways perspective and complies with Local Plan Policies LP21 (Highways and access) and LP22 (Parking) and the guidance within the Kirklees Highways Design Guide SPD.

Drainage

A Drainage Report has been produced by Haigh Huddleston & Associates and accompanies the application.

In relation to foul drainage, Yorkshire Water have confirmed that the foul drainage from the site can connect to the existing sewer to the east of the site. Due to the existing levels, it is likely that a gravity system will be achievable.

In relation to surface water drainage, if soakaway testing if unsuccessful it is proposed to outfall the surface water from the development to Flockton Beck towards the south of the site. This could be achieved either by making a direct connection to the south of the site over the field to the watercourse or by constructing a new surface water outfall within Haigh Lane to the west. A final option would be to agree a limited discharge into the Yorkshire Water public combined sewer.

Ecology

An updated Bat Survey Report and Statement dated October 2022 was submitted as part of the recent discharge of conditions application (LPA ref: 2022/93299 Condition 16). The report details what precautionary measures are proposed to take place regarding the works proposed to the existing buildings on site as some of them contain roosting bats.

A Bat Watching Brief dated November 2022, was later submitted to the Council, also as part of the discharge of conditions application. For clarity, both of these reports accompany this application. Part of condition 16 has now been discharged and the applicant awaits further comments from the Council which should hopefully result in the full condition being discharged shortly.

Land Contamination

A Phase II Geo-environmental report and a Coal Investigation Report was also submitted as part of the discharge of conditions application (Condition 10). Again, for clarity, the reports have also been included as part of this application. Officers have stated that whilst the details contained in these reports are considered acceptable to discharge Condition 10 on the previous approval, the condition cannot be fully discharged in relation to contaminated land until a ground gas risk assessment has been submitted for approval.

Coal Mining Legacy

A Coal Rotary Probing Report was also submitted as part of the discharge of conditions application (Condition 11). This condition has so far only been partly discharged too as no information has been submitted for consideration by Kirklees Environmental Health. This report is also included as part of this application.

Noise

A Noise Report was submitted as part of the discharge of conditions application (Condition 14). Officers concluded that the findings of that report were acceptable and as such the condition could be discharged with the implementation of the mitigation measures prior to occupation of the dwellings.

It is hoped that most, if not all, of the conditions relating to the discharge of condition application can be discharged in full prior to the determination of this application. This would then avoid the re-implementation of these conditions on this permission should approval be granted.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission for the demolition and re-building of the existing farmhouse with extensions and the erection of one dwelling (amended house type).

As discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this report, the revised proposals are considered to be acceptable with regards to design and visual amenity and would have no additional impact to Green Belt openness, residential amenity or highway safety than the previously approved application. It is also considered that there are also no constraints to the development in relation to drainage, ecology or land contamination.

It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be approved accordingly.

Robert Halstead Chartered Surveyors & Town Planners

January 2023