



Supporting Planning Statement
Hall Ing Quarry, Hall Ing Road, Brockholes,
Holmfirth
Erection of Underground Dwelling

Introduction

This statement has been produced by *AKPlanning* in support of a planning application for the erection of a single underground dwelling. In particular it will address green belt policy and the appearance and impact of the proposals.

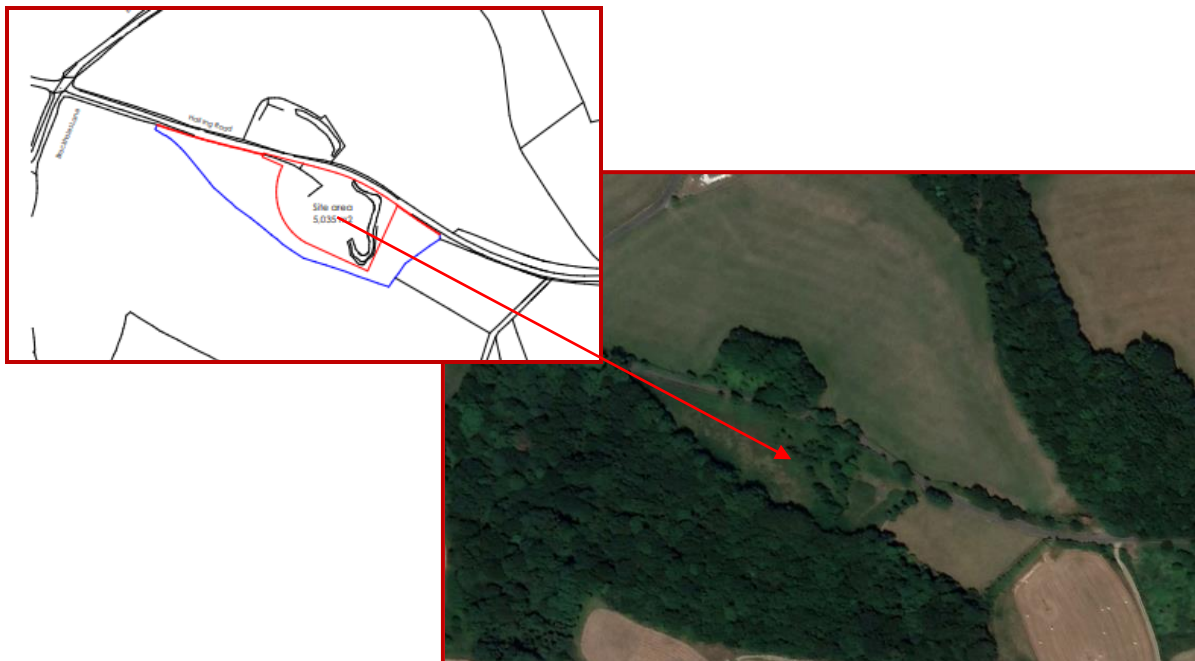
It will explain the history of the site on how this has a strong relevance to this application and the proposed new dwelling.

Site and Surroundings

The site is a former sandstone quarry occupying an area of around 3,000m² and is located approximately 1.5 kilometres northwest of Thurstonland village and 2 kilometres east of the centre of Honley. The immediate surrounding area is rural in character with only a few isolated residential properties, the closest being off Brockholes Road approximately 250 metres north of the site.

The quarry void and associated spoil heaps are clearly evident but the site has naturally regenerated over time and is vegetated with immature trees and general scrub which helps to soften the impact of the historic excavations. Generally the surrounding land falls to the west and although the site is situated on a hillside it is well screened by existing mature woodland to the south and by Runlet End Wood to the north.

Access to the site can currently be gained directly from Hall Ing Road via field accesses to the west and east of the quarry void. The surrounding highway infrastructure consists of rural roads.



Relevant Planning History

2005/62/94541/W0 - Landfill of former quarry site (withdrawn)

2006/62/90415/W0 - Landfill of former quarry site (refused 5 May 2006)

2007/62/91816/W0 - Landfill of former quarry site and formation of 2 No. passing bays (refused 21 July 2007)

2008/62/91269/W0 - Landfill of former quarry site and restore to agricultural land and highway improvements to provide vehicle passing areas (approved 6 April 2009)

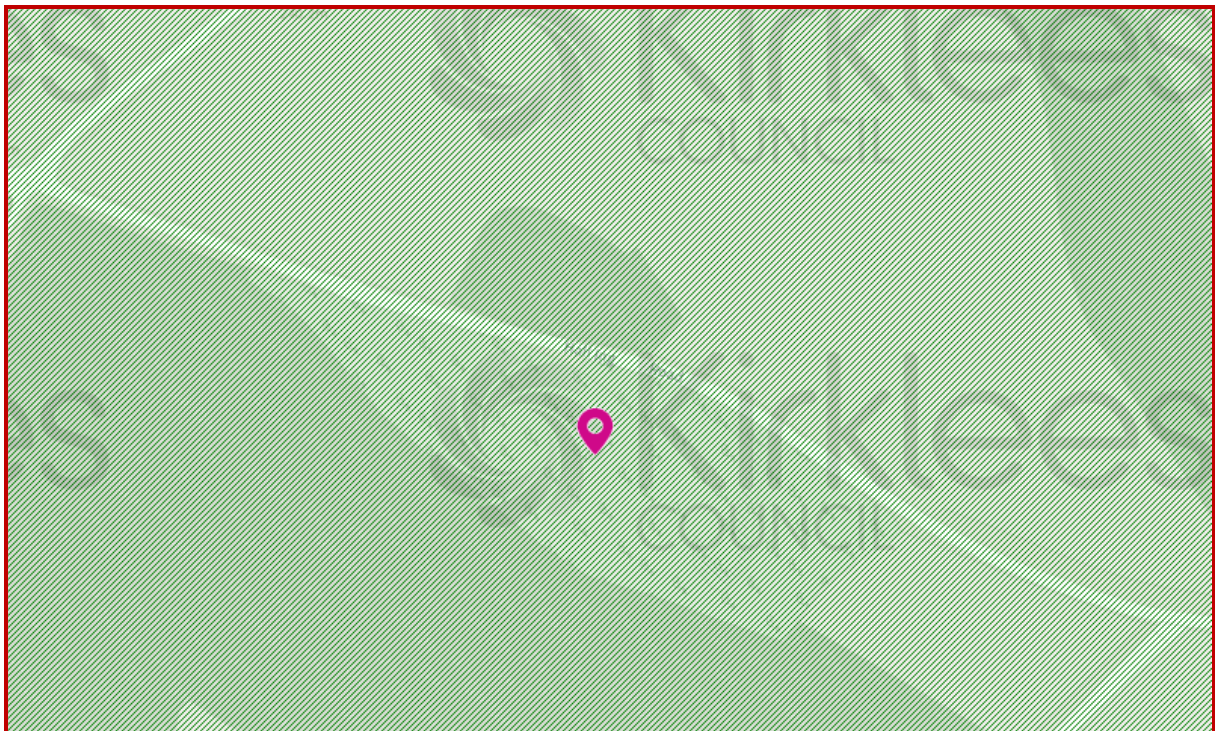
2012/62/91042/W0 - Landfill of former quarry site and restore to agricultural land and highway improvements to provide vehicle passing areas (approved 18 December 2013).

2016/62/93268/W0 LANDFILL OF FORMER QUARRY SITE AND RESTORE TO AGRICULTURAL LAND AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS TO PROVIDE VEHICLE PASSING AREAS Granted 6th April 2017

As can be seen the site has a 20-year history of applications for landfill that Culminated in an approval on the 6th of April 2017.

Planning Policy

The site lies within the Greenbelt as shown on the extract from the Local Plan below:



National planning policy is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), this contains the following relevant policy; -

152. *Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.*

153. *When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.*

154. *A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt...*

By definition, and in accordance with this policy the erection of a new dwelling within the Greenbelt must be considered inappropriate. It is therefore incumbent upon ourselves to provide very special circumstances to allow for the approval of this application for a single dwelling.

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF does allow for the development of isolated homes in the countryside that accord to the following criteria: -

84. *Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:*

(a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

(b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;

(c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;

(d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building;
or

(e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

- is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
- would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

Of particular relevance to this application is part e. Dwellings that meet the criteria at Item E are informally known as 'exception houses'. The tests set out in this item are a very high bar which means it is very uncommon that applications are considered to meet these criteria.

The Kirklees Local Plan policies reflect the advice in paragraphs 152-154 of the NPPF insofar as they require the demonstration of very special circumstances to allow a grant of a planning application for a new dwelling.

There is no Local Plan Policy reflecting the possibility of a paragraph 84, part e exception.

Very Special Circumstances

Historic agricultural practices have led to continuous changes in the landscape and these have been reflected in the architecture of these practices – new forms of dwellings, building types, materials, layout and organisation, and position in the landscape have reflected changing agricultural practices.

The countryside is however, a conservative place in terms of radical changes. There is little innovation with regard to modern designs and sustainability challenges. New development has been a fossilisation of what looks appropriate or 'fits in' with design in rural areas such that new design merely apes the past.

The benefit of this NPPF test and of the high-quality schemes it produces is that they continuously develop the language of rural design and help create a twenty-first century vernacular. The 21st century should have its own form of architectural expression – reflecting our own issues about sustainable development, solar gain, passive heating, environmental impact, sourcing of materials and energy, and new forms generated by the possibilities of developing building technology. Part e allows for this innovation.

The history of this site shows that it is not a natural landscape form insofar as it has been previously quarried. Planning permission has, as recently as 2017, been granted for landfilling the site. The site history is a material consideration in any subsequent planning application. Given the site history this old quarry would be a good place to consider providing a paragraph 89 part e exception dwelling.

If the landfill was to be carried out there is no doubt that it would cause significant disruption to the local community and the local highway network by virtue of the landfill operations. This would include up to 16 HGV movements per day as well as noise and disturbance from the landfill site itself.

This would last for a minimum of 12 months.

A landfill scheme with 16 HGV movements per day could mean up to 4,000 vehicle movements in and around the site over a 12-month period. In addition, the noise and disturbance created by working five days per week for six hours per day for 50 weeks would be significant.

It is our case that this disturbance is a material consideration in this application and in part can be considered very special circumstances to allowing an alternative proposal which would not have any impact on the local community.

If planning permission is granted for this single dwelling It will remove any likelihood of the landfill operations commencing and it is our contention that this is a community benefit that can be considered as very special circumstances.

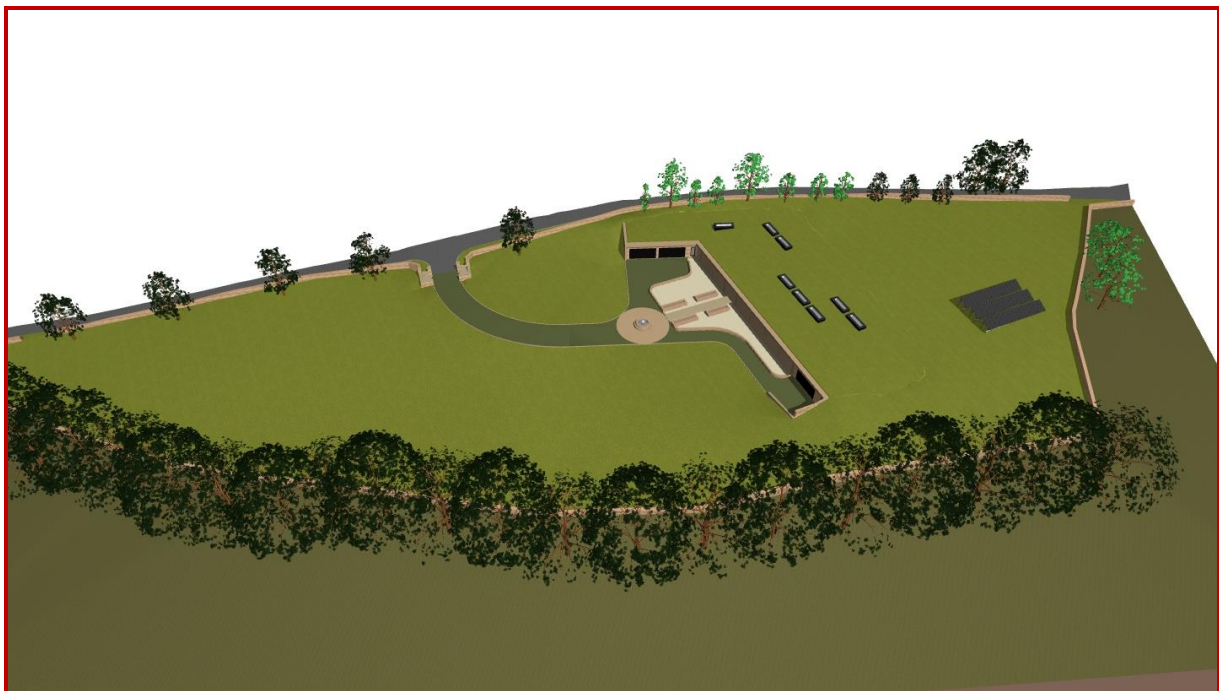
In and of itself the erection of a single dwelling instead of 12 months of landfill operation can be seen as a significant benefit but this is not the only very special circumstance.

We also consider that the design of the new dwelling is outstanding on the new dwelling it can be considered as an exception dwelling under paragraph 84 part e.

As we have stated we consider that the proposal establishes a 21st century vernacular by addressing the current issues of sustainability, solar gain, passive heating, environmental impact, sourcing of materials and energy, and new forms generated by the possibilities of developing building technology.

The design ethos for this new dwelling has been to provide a low impact, earth sheltered dwelling.

The image below shows how little of the building will be visible.



The access will be from a single point down to a simple single storey frontage. This will then lead to a dwelling that is covered in earth.

Such a design respects the existing topography and will allow for significant greening of the land.

The planting to the roof / covered areas will match the species already found nearby to ensure the site looks as natural and unchanged as possible.



The frontage will be largely glazed with local stone features. Insulation will be provided by the roof and heating etc. will be via heat pumps.

This is a modern building for the 21st century that takes advantage of an existing man-made landscape. It does not seek to mimic the local vernacular except in the use of local natural stone. It makes use of modern technology to provide energy.

The combination of the history of the site and the innovative design does, in our opinion, provide very special circumstances to allow for the erection of this single dwelling.

Conclusion

The site lies within the Greenbelt where it is incumbent upon ourselves to put forward very special circumstances to allow for a grant of planning permission. A combination of the history of the site and the impact that this would have on the community and the innovative design is, in our opinion, a very special circumstance case that allows for the grant of planning permission.

*AKPlanning
147 Lane Top
Linthwaite
Huddersfield HD7 5SG*

*Contact: Andrew Keeling
E-mail: andrew@akplanning.co.uk
Mobile: 07500965645*



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Chartered Town Planner