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Planning Development

Planning Statement: Slate Pitts, Chain Road, Holt Head, Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, HD7 5TY

Site Description

The application site comprises of a detached dwelling and associated land and buildings. The dwellinghouse is a part two and part single storey property, constructed of stone, which is partly rendered. The roof of the dwelling is pitched in sections and flat in other sections. At the rear of the dwelling there is an attached metal clad building and a detached timber outbuilding and shipping containers.

As per the planning history below, the whole site was granted a Certificate of lawfulness for an existing use of land as haulage contractors. Whilst the house itself was used as a normal residential dwelling, the use and ownership of the property has not changed for many decades (going back beyond 1995).

The property has private outdoor amenity space to the front, side and rear. Access to the property is via a driveway from Chain Road. The application site is situated in a rural location with no direct neighbouring properties.



Application Site from Chain Road

Relevant Planning History

87/03231 – Single storey living room extension – Approved

95/93351 – Certificate of lawfulness for an existing use of land as haulage contractors - Granted

Policy Designation

The application site is located in the Green Belt in accordance with the Kirklees Local Plan Policies Map.

The Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of two no. dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.

The proposed development includes the erection of one part single storey / part two-storey 3-bed dwelling (plot 1) and one single storey 3-bed dwelling (plot 2).

Plot 1 would be located towards the front / southern part of the application site and plot 2 would be located towards the rear / northern part of the site. Both dwellings would include an integral garage and private outdoor amenity spaces comprising of a mix of hard and soft landscaping. The proposed dwellings would be constructed using coursed natural stone with artificial stone slates proposed for the roofs. Stone coloured concrete render is also proposed on part of the external walling for both dwellings.

The existing access from Chain Road is proposed to be used to access both properties. A new driveway extending along the southern and western part of the site would link plot 2 to the main point of access onto Chain Road. The new driveway includes a turning head. Existing and new stone walling would border the site and provide separation between the two plots.

Assessment of the Proposals

Green Belt and the principle of development

As detailed above, whilst the house itself has been occupied as a normal dwelling for many decades, the overall site associated with the house (see location plan for the 95/93351 application) was granted a Certificate of lawfulness as a haulage contractors (the owner occupiers of this business resided at the property).

It is reasonable to conclude however that the site has a mixed lawful use of residential and haulage contractors. For Green Belt assessment purposes, the site is classed as 'previously developed' in accordance with the NPPF and Local Plan Glossary definitions because:

- 1) The haulage contractor use is a brownfield (previously developed) land use.
- 2) The dwelling is not within a 'built-up' area and is also not excluded from being included within the definition of previously developed land.

Paragraph 154 in the NPPF states:

'A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

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.'

Local Plan Policy LP59 also states:

'Proposals for infilling within existing brownfield sites or for their partial or complete redevelopment will normally be acceptable, provided that:

b. in the case of partial or complete redevelopment the extent of the existing footprint is not exceeded; and

c. redevelopment does not result in the loss of land that is of high environmental value which cannot be mitigated or compensated for.

In all cases regard should be had to relevant design policies to ensure that the resultant development does not materially detract from its Green Belt setting.'

In this case, the shipping containers are excluded from the calculations below, as they are considered to be 'temporary' as per the above relevant NPPF paragraph.

Referring to Local Plan Policy LP59 b. the following is relevant:

- a) The total floor area covered by existing buildings is 634 sq.m.
- b) The total volume of the existing buildings is 2085 cu.m.

This is broken down as shown on the submitted Existing Floor Layout plan and the Existing Elevations plan, and in the table below:

	Area (sq.m)	Volume (cu.m)
Main Dwelling	180.6	461.78
Front Garage	89.0	293.44
Rear Garage	109.6	542.76
Eastern Conservatory	20.7	53.2
Western Conservatory	11.7	30.58
Games Room	78.13	351.5
Workshop	16.2	45.15
Outbuildings	127.68	306.4
Total	634	2085

The total floor area covered by the proposed dwellings is 413.5 sq.m.

The total volume of the proposed dwellings is 1419.5 cu.m.

The proposals in terms of total floor area and volume to be covered by built development would therefore be significantly reduced from the currently existing volume and floorspace.

Referring to Local Plan Policy LP59 c. it is considered that the redevelopment of the site would not result in the loss of land that is of high environmental value. A large section of the site is currently occupied by the dwelling and associated outbuildings, none of which are considered to be of high architectural merit.

The remaining land is currently hard and soft landscaped areas in association with the dwelling. It is envisaged that the soft areas of landscaping for the new dwellings would be enhanced. In addition, biodiversity net gains are also proposed on the land directly north of the application site. The proposed development would therefore improve the environmental value of the overall site.

With regards to Green Belt openness (And Green Belt setting referred to in Policy LP59), it is considered that the proposed development would not have a greater impact than the existing development for the following reasons:

- The overall floor area covered by built development on the application site would be reduced.
- The overall volume of built development on the application site would be reduced.
- The height of the proposed dwellings respects the varying heights and form of the existing development on site. This is reflected in the design of both plots in that plot 1 at the front of the site is a part single storey and part two-storey dwelling, and plot 2 at the rear of the site is a single storey dwelling only.
- The layout of the proposed development also closely reflects the existing layout on site and has been carefully considered in relation to the footprint being kept as tight as possible within and around the existing development area, thereby safeguarding the Green Belt from any further encroachment whilst also enabling appropriate separation distances between the two plots with regard to residential amenity objectives.
- The design of the proposed development in relation to scale, materials, roof style, fenestration, and architectural detailing, would be sympathetic to the surrounding landscape character and would not materially detract from its Green Belt setting. By contrast, the existing development on site (in particular some of the relatively unsightly buildings) does not compliment or harmonise with the rural setting.
- The residential curtilage for both plots would be no larger than what is considered reasonable for the size of the dwellings proposed. Furthermore, neither curtilage would extend beyond the existing residential curtilage.
- The proposed hardstanding areas have been kept to a minimum and the amount of soft landscaping proposed has been increased from what previously exists. The boundary treatments proposed would be in keeping with the rural nature of the site.
- The existing land directly north of the application site is currently grassland. Biodiversity enhancements are proposed for this area of land which will help preserve and maintain Green Belt openness.

Given the above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in relation to national and local Green Belt policy in that the redevelopment of the site would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

Design and Visual Amenity

Local Plan Policy LP24 states:

‘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.’

Paragraph 135 in the NPPF also sets out various design objectives, including the need to ensure that developments are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

The Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide Supplemental Planning Document (SPD) also sets out what the Council considers to be good, high-quality residential design through a number of principles. The relevant principles in this application in relation to design and visual amenity are:

Principle 2 – Context

Principle 12 – Parking

Principle 13 – Materials and detailing

Principle 14 – Windows and doors

Principle 15 – Rooflines

The proposed development comprises of 1 no. part single storey and part two-storey dwelling and 1 no. single storey dwelling with associated parking and landscaping. The design of both dwellings incorporates both traditional and contemporary architecture and design features. Careful consideration has also been given to ensure both dwellings form a coherent design that is suitable for the rural location.

The scale, roof styles and materials of construction (coursed natural stone, stone coloured render to the rear, and artificial stone slates) would be in keeping with neighbouring dwellings close to the application site, and the cedar boarding on plot 2, and the solar panels and large bi-fold doors on both plots would provide modern contrasting elements. The mix of square windows and rectangular windows and the varying roof heights, particularly on plot 1, would enable the development to blend in with the local context and environment.

Both dwellings are 3-bed properties. Plot 1 includes a double integral garage and plot 2 includes a single integral garage. There is also space for additional parking to the front of both dwellings. The existing access from Chain Road would be used to serve both dwellings, although a new driveway that would run from the front of the site to plot 2 at the rear of the site is proposed. Areas of soft landscaping are proposed adjacent to either side of the new drive with garden areas largely surrounding both plots. As a result, the development would harmonise well with the local landscape.

The boundary treatments, which would comprise of natural dry stone walling of varying heights, would also be in keeping with the existing boundary walls found within the local area.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to design and visual amenity and complies with Local Plan Policy LP24, paragraph 135 in the NPPF and the relevant principles in the Housebuilders Design Guide SPD.

Residential Amenity

Local Plan Policy LP24 states:

‘Proposals should promote good design by ensuring: c. extensions minimise impact of residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers.’

Paragraph 135 in the NPPF sets out various design objectives, including the need to maintain a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The following principles in the House Builders Design Guide SPD are also considered to be relevant in relation to residential amenity:

Principle 6 – Maintaining high standards of residential amenity

Principle 16 – Internal space standards

Principle 17 – Outdoor space

There are no neighbouring dwellings within close proximity to the application site that would be affected by the proposals.

The layout of the site and positioning of both plots has been carefully considered to ensure that both future occupants would have a high level of residential amenity. A separation distance of 12.6m exists between the rear elevation of plot 1 and the front elevation of plot 2. This is reduced to 9.7m from the corner of the ground floor lounge of plot 1 and the north-east corner of plot 2. These separation distances are considered to be acceptable given the siting and orientation of both properties to one another, the positioning of habitable and non-habitable room windows on these elevations, and the boundary treatments proposed. As a result, neither dwelling would cause undue harm to the residential amenity of the other dwelling’s occupants by reason of privacy, daylight or outlook.

In relation to the residential amenity for future occupants of each of the dwellings, both plots would benefit from a good amount of private outdoor amenity space which is proportionate to the size of the dwellings. Both plots also include ample parking provision, and the number and positioning of the windows would allow plenty of natural daylight to enter both properties. Furthermore, the design and size of both dwellings 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.

The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to residential amenity and complies with Local Plan Policy LP24, paragraph 135 in the NPPF and principles 6, 16 and 17 in the Housebuilders Design Guide SPD.

Highways

Local Plan Policy LP21 states:

‘New development will normally be permitted where safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and where residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe.’

The existing access from Chain Road is proposed to be used for both dwellings. Visibility from the site access along Chain Road is good in both directions. The increase of one dwelling on the site when compared to the lawful position of a mixed residential and haulage contractor’s use, would not have any discernible impact on traffic generation in the local area. Indeed, it is likely that overall traffic volumes associated with residential development would be lower, with the added highway safety benefit of HGV’s no longer entering or leaving the site.

At least two off-street parking spaces are proposed for each dwelling. This parking provision is considered to be acceptable and complies with the guidance for 3-bed dwellings in the Kirklees Highways Design Guide SPD. There is also adequate turning available within the site which would allow cars to enter and exit Chain Road in a forward gear.

A bin storage area is proposed to the western side of plot 1 and to the front of plot 2, with a bin presentation and collection point located adjacent to the site access.

The proposals are therefore deemed to be acceptable with regard to highway matters and are in accordance with Local Plan Policies LP21 and LP22, the guidance in the Kirklees Highways Design Guide and the aims of Chapter 9 in the NPPF.

Biodiversity

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment has been produced by Knight Sky Ecology and accompanies the application. The report made the following conclusions and recommendations:

- No evidence of a bat roost was encountered during the preliminary roost assessment.
- A number of roost features were observed in the dwelling, and these were categorised as moderate in their suitability to support bats.
- The demolition of the dwelling would result in the loss of all potential bat roost features. A minimum of two dusk emergence surveys are therefore recommended. **The surveys are to be carried out shortly, the results of which will follow in due course.**
- Bat boxes within the site are recommended.
- No direct evidence of nesting birds was observed, but the dwelling did have suitable features to support nest sites. Any works that may impact bird nests should be undertaken outside of the main nesting bird season of March to August (inclusive).

An Ecology Technical Note and a Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool has also been produced by Knight Sky Ecology and also accompanies the application. The key points are summarised below:

- The combined biodiversity value of the existing habitats is 0.4409 habitat units. The habitats of measurable value that would be lost as a result of the proposed development is the area of grassland, the sparsely vegetated land and the garden.
- There is a Leyland Cypress hedge on the north side of the site. This hedgerow has a biodiversity value of 0.0101 hedgerow units. It is to be retained.
- The habitats to be created with a measurable biodiversity value are limited to vegetated gardens only. The post-development value would equate to 0.02809 habitat units (a loss of 0.16 units from the existing).
- In order to achieve a 10% net gain, off-site habitat creation is required. Land within the existing land holding to provide net gain has been provided north of the application site. This area comprises of modified grassland.
- The most feasible and ecologically desirable solution to achieve biodiversity net gain is to plant broadleaved trees. A total of 19 native, broadleaved trees are required to be planted in order to achieve a 10% net gain.

- The combined value of the on-site and off-site habitats post-development would be 0.7573 habitat units.
- Hedgerow planting would include one native species hedgerow along the boundary of the garden. The combined value of the retained and created hedgerows post-development would be 0.06 hedgerow units.

In conclusion, the proposed development would result in a net gain of biodiversity value comprising **0.0764 habitat units (11.22%)** and **0.0499 hedgerow units (493.81%)**. The 10% biodiversity net gain will therefore be met.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in relation to biodiversity and complies with Local Plan Policy LP30 and the aims of Chapter 15 in the NPPF.

Climate Change

A Climate Change Statement is submitted as part of the application. Climate change mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposals. These include:

- The installation of solar panels
- Energy efficient building materials and lighting
- High-quality insulation
- Smart metering
- Water efficient fixtures and fittings
- The installation of rainwater harvesting tanks

The proposals would therefore have a positive impact on climate change and accords with Local Plan Policies LP24 and LP26.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of two no. dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.

As discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this report, the proposed development is considered to be appropriate with regards to national and local Green Belt policy in that the redevelopment of the site would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

The proposals are also considered to be acceptable in relation to visual amenity, residential amenity, highways, biodiversity and climate change.

It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is approved. If you require any further details regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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