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Planning Development

Planning Statement: Land off Wakefield Road, Grange Moor, Huddersfield

Site Description

The application site comprises of a triangular shaped parcel of land on land off Wakefield Road, Grange Moor. There is a small, existing copse at the northern end of the site and a larger wooded area in the south-eastern part of the site. The remainder of the site comprises of grassland. An access track runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site which then leads north up to the A642 Wakefield Road. The surrounding area comprises of open fields and countryside with scattered development.



Northern End of Application Site and Location of Proposed Agricultural Building

Planning History

There is no planning history associated with the application site.

Policy Designation

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

The Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of one no. agricultural building.

The proposed building would be located in the northern part of the application site. The building would be L-shaped in design and measure 22.7m (l) by 18.4m (w) at its widest point. The building would have a shallow pitched roof with a height of 3.3m to the eaves and 4.25m to the ridge.

The building would be constructed using vertical Yorkshire boarding (dark oak finish) for the external walls and corrugated steel with polycarbonate panels for the roof. Access doors in matching materials are proposed on all elevations including three livestock access doors on the north-east elevation.

A new access is proposed at the northern end of the site and would comprise of two no. wooden farm gates. A further wooden farm gate is proposed at the entrance to the main field where the agricultural building would be located. A new Crataegus Monogyna (common hawthorn) hedge is also proposed to be planted along the eastern boundary of the application site.

The building would be used for the storage of hay, straw and animal feed; the storage of plant and other machinery / equipment; and will be used as a shelter for goats with kidding pens for baby goats.

Assessment of the Proposals

Green Belt

Paragraph 154 in the NPPF states the following:

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

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry.'*

Local Plan Policy LP54 also states that:

'Proposals for new buildings for agriculture and forestry will normally be acceptable provided that:

- a. The building is genuinely required for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;*
- b. The building can be sited in close association with other existing agricultural buildings, subject to the operational requirements of the holding it is intended to serve. Isolated new buildings will only be accepted exceptionally where there are clear and demonstrable reasons for an isolated location;*
- c. There will be no detriment to the amenity of nearby residents by reason of noise or odour or any other reason; and*
- d. 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.'*

Referring to point a. of Policy LP54, the proposed agricultural building is genuinely required for the applicant's agricultural business. The applicant breeds goats which they sell privately at either rare

breed auction sales or to butchers for their meat. They also sell goats milk soap, which they make themselves, at craft markets, farmers markets and agricultural shows. The applicant currently has 30 adult goats and 10 goat kids.

The applicant currently owns the land subject to this application (8 acres) as well as renting another 8 acres of land off Storrs Hill Road, Horbury (see Appendix A). It is the applicant's intention that the 30 adult goats are moved to the application site. The applicant would continue renting the land at Horbury to cut and bale it for hay for the goats.

The proposed agricultural building is required to provide shelter for the goats, indoor space for kidding pens and a straw bedded loose house for when the kids and nannies have bonded, safe and secure storage for machinery (including a tractor), hay/straw bales, animal feed and goat care items. The applicant does not have any buildings on their rented land and is unable to get permission from the landlord to put a building on that land.

Referring to point b. of Policy LP54, the proposed agricultural building would be located in the northern part of the site. There are no other agricultural buildings located within close proximity to the proposed building. However, given the design and relatively small scale of the building, the topography of the site, and the adjacent copse of trees, the building would be well screened and not easily discernible from the surrounding areas. The previous tenant of the land used the land to house livestock and therefore the use of the land for agriculture is well established. In addition, there is already an access track from Wakefield Road which serves the site.

Referring to point c. of Policy LP54, there are no residential dwellings within close proximity of the application site, and as a result the proposed development would not cause any undue harm to nearby residents by reason of noise, odours, or any other reason.

Finally, referring to point d. of Policy LP54, the design and materials of the proposed building would be sympathetic in nature to its Green Belt setting. Design and visual amenity are discussed in more detail in the following section of this report.

Given the above, the proposed development is deemed to be acceptable and complies with both national and local Green Belt policy.

Design and Visual Amenity

Local Plan Policy LP24 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.'

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

The proposed development would comprise of a modern and functional agricultural building, constructed using materials that would be blend in, and harmonise with its locality and rural setting (vertical Yorkshire boarding with a dark oak finish for the external walls, and corrugated steel metal sheeting with polycarbonate panels for the roof).

The building would be L-shaped in design and measure 22.7m (l) x 18.4m at its widest point. The height of the building would measure 3.3m to the eaves and 4.25m to the ridge. The scale and massing of the building is also therefore considered to be acceptable and would not result in a prominent or incongruous feature.

Furthermore, due to the topography of the land and the natural screening in the form of the adjacent copse of trees north of the building, the existing hedge along the western boundary, the proposed Hawthorn hedge along the eastern boundary, and the large, wooded area at the south-eastern end of the site, the proposed building would be well screened and relatively inconspicuous.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in relation to design and visual amenity and complies with Local Plan Policy LP24 and paragraph 135 in the NPPF.

Highways

Local Plan Policy LP21 states that,

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

The proposed agricultural building would be accessed via the existing access track that leads from the application site up to Wakefield Road, opposite The Kaye Arms public house. The previous tenant of the land used the same track to check on their livestock on a daily basis and to tend to the land e.g. cutting / bailing hay. It is considered that given the nature of the proposals, the use of the track would remain similar and as such, the proposed development would not increase the volume of traffic using the track or entering or exiting the track from Wakefield Road. The proposed development would not result in any notable additional traffic in the area.

In terms of highway betterment, it is the applicant's intention to relocate the gate at the northern end of the track which would then allow a vehicle and a trailer to safely pull off the road before reaching the gate. In addition, the applicant would be happy to purchase and install a convex traffic mirror opposite the access entrance/exit which would make it safer for vehicles pulling out of the access road onto Wakefield Road. This could be the subject of a planning condition, or details could be agreed as part of the application process.

The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to highway matters and accords with Local Plan Policy LP21 and the aims of Chapter 9 in the NPPF.

Biodiversity

A Biodiversity Technical Note, Biodiversity Metric Calculations and a Habitat Condition Assessment have been produced by Knight Sky Ecology and accompany the application. Key points of note are summarised below:

- Two small trees were felled within the application site prior to the site visit. Therefore, the BNG assessment has been applied retrospectively and accounts for the trees that were present within the site prior to clearance.
- The application site (red line boundary) comprises of the existing hardstanding access track, a modified grassland margin, broadleaved plantation woodland and the north-west corner of a silage field. The field sward was a species poor, rye-grass ley.

- The biodiversity value of the existing habitat is 0.27 habitat units.
- A hawthorn hedgerow bounds the pasture field. The biodiversity value of the hedgerow within the development boundary is 0.08 hedgerow units.
- The proposed development would result in a total net habitat unit change of -0.12 (-43%). However, there is a sufficient area of land within the existing field and land holding to provide net gain. The most feasible and ecologically desirable solution to achieve BNG net gain is to plant broadleaved trees. A total of 12 native broadleaved trees are required to achieve the 10% net gain.
- The tree planting would result in a combined post-development value of 0.3 habitat units.
- A hedgerow is proposed to be planted along the existing fence line. The combined value of the hedgerows post-development would be 0.23 hedgerow units resulting in a net gain of 0.15 units.

In conclusion, the proposed development would result in a net gain of biodiversity value comprising **0.03 habitat units (10.88%)** and **0.15 hedgerow units (177.73%)**. 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.

Other Matters

Residential Amenity

There are no residential dwellings within close proximity of the application site, and as a result the proposed development would not cause any undue harm to residential amenity.

Coal Mining Legacy

A Coal Mining Risk Assessment has been produced by Rogers Geotechnical Services Ltd and accompanies the application. The report concludes the following:

Mining has clearly taken place in the local area and beneath the site itself. However, it can be concluded that any illicit coal voids within shallow underground coal workings below the site pose minimal risk to future developments. Therefore, deep rotary boreholes sunk into underground mine workings are not considered necessary in this instance.

Notwithstanding the above, there is potential for small scale surface workings to have taken place in the most northern section of the site. As such, a mining investigation (trial pits and/or windowless ample boreholes and dynamic probing) is recommended and should be targeted towards the most north-eastern section of the proposed building footprint.

It is also recommended that a geotechnical investigation is undertaken to enable foundation design which should include gas monitoring.

The applicant notes the recommendations made and will carry out further investigations subject to the consultation response by The Coal Authority and the outcome of this application.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of one no. agricultural building.

As discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this report, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regards to Green Belt policy and design and visual amenity. It is also considered that there are no significant constraints to the proposals in relation to highway matters, biodiversity or coal mining legacy.

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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