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Planning Development

Planning Statement: 33 Gawthorpe Lane, Lepton, Huddersfield, HD5 0NY

Site Description

The building subject to this application is a two-storey stone built barn which is attached to the rear elevation of the dwellinghouse, No. 33 Gawthorpe Lane. A single storey lean-to brick extension extends from the northern elevation of the barn. The roof of the barn is pitched and there are currently a number of existing openings in the east and west elevations. The barn is accessed via a driveway from Gawthorpe Lane. The application site is situated in a semi-rural location and is largely surrounded by open fields and countryside.



East elevation of the attached barn subject to this application

Planning History

There is no recent 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 Policies Map. The site is also within the Valley Slopes Biodiversity Opportunity Zone and the SCR with Sandstone and/or clay and shale Mineral Safeguarding area.

The Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the conversion, extension and alteration of the barn to one dwelling with associated parking and landscaping.

The existing single storey lean-to brick extension on the north elevation is proposed to be demolished and replaced with a single storey lean-to natural stone extension with a stone slate roof. The barn would be converted into one 3-bed dwelling with accommodation over two floors. Existing openings are proposed to be used where possible and altered where necessary. Four new window openings are also proposed plus two new rooflights on the eastern elevation.

The existing driveway from Gawthorpe Lane would be used to access the new dwelling. Two car parking spaces are proposed adjacent to the eastern elevation. The land immediately adjacent to the building is proposed to be used for garden / outdoor amenity space.

Assessment of the Proposals

Green Belt Impact

Paragraph 154 in the NPPF states:

‘Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

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;

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are: iv. The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction.’

Local Plan Policy LP57 in respect of extensions and alterations to existing buildings also states:

a. In the case of extensions the original building remains the dominant element both in terms of size and overall appearance;

c. 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

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.’

Local Plan Policy LP60 in respect of the re-use and conversion of buildings also states that proposals will normally be acceptable where:

‘b. the resultant scheme does not introduce incongruous domestic or urban characteristics into the landscape, including through the treatment of outside areas such as means of access and car parking, curtilages and other enclosures and ancillary or curtilage buildings;

c. the design and materials to be used, including boundary and surface treatments are of a high quality and appropriate to their setting and the activity can be accommodated without detriment to landscape quality, residential amenity or highway safety.'

Referring to paragraph 154 c) and Local Plan Policy LP57a., the proposed single storey lean-to extension on the northern elevation would replace an existing single storey lean-to extension. The proposed extension would be sited in the same location and there would be no increase in size. As such, the extension would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building which would remain the dominant element in terms of size and overall appearance.

Referring to paragraph 154 h) iv) a Structural Assessment accompanies the application. The written assessment and photographs demonstrate that the building is of permanent and substantial construction and that the building is wholly suitable for conversion without any significant re-building or repairs.

In relation to Local Plan Policies LP57c. and LP60b., the outside areas are proposed to be tidied up and appropriately landscaped. The landscaping is proposed to be simple in design comprising hard surfaces for parking and a pathway around the building, interspersed with grassed areas. The curtilage proposed is proportionate to the size of the dwelling and any additional boundary treatments would comprise of low dry stone boundary walls to match the existing. The existing access from Gawthorpe Lane and driveway would be used to serve the new dwelling.

Regarding Local Plan Policies LP57d. and LP60c., the extension would be constructed using natural stone with a natural stone slate roof to match the existing building. The timber cladding proposed above the arched openings on the east and west elevations would be in keeping with the style and character of the building. Likewise, the new window openings would also be in keeping with the existing openings in terms of size, positioning and surrounds.

The proposals are therefore considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt which accords with paragraph 154 in the NPPF and Local Plan Policies LP57 and LP60.

Housing Supply and Delivery

Paragraph 61 in the NPPF states, *'To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.'*

Nationally, the new Government ¹ has acknowledged the housing crisis with the immediate decision to re-introduce compulsory house targets and the "urgent steps" pledge to build 1.5 million homes within this parliamentary term.

Kirklees Local Plan now exceeds five years old and the confirmed position for the Council is that there is no longer a five year supply of specific deliverable sites. Furthermore, housing delivery in Kirklees has also fallen below 95% of the Local Authority's housing requirement over the previous three years and is at 54%.

The proposed development would provide one additional dwelling for the local area. It is currently available (as the applicant wishes to carry out the conversion), and as the following sections of this report will demonstrate, the building is considered highly suitable for residential conversion.

¹ Government News Story "Chancellor unveils a new era for economic growth 8th July 2024"

Given the above, the proposed development in terms of housing supply and delivery is considered to be strongly supported and in accordance with the aims of aims of Chapters 2 and 5 in the NPPF.

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 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 visual amenity are as follows:

Principle 2 – Context

Principle 12 – Parking

Principle 13 – Materials and detailing

Principle 14 – Windows and doors

Principle 19 – Waste

The design of the proposed conversion has been carefully considered to take account of the local context. The replacement extension would be constructed of natural stone with a stone slate roof. This is considered to be much more in keeping with the existing building than the current lean-to brick extension. The existing openings in the building are proposed to be retained and altered appropriately where necessary, and the number of new openings has been kept to a minimum to enable the original character of the barn to be preserved. The size, shape and positioning of the new openings would result in sympathetic additions that complement the appearance of the existing building. The use of timber cladding above the arched windows would also harmonise with the overall aesthetics of the building.

Two car parking spaces are proposed to be located adjacent to the eastern elevation of the building. The location of the parking spaces at the side of the dwelling will enable the street frontage to remain unchanged and free from parked cars. The bins for both dwellings would be located adjacent to the existing driveway. This location is considered suitable as it is close to the highway for collections and close to the existing buildings, helping to protect visual amenity.

The curtilage for the new dwelling is considered to be proportionate in size and would be located directly adjacent to the building. The simple hard and soft landscaping proposed would not overtly urbanise the development, enabling the building to retain its rural character and setting.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable regarding design and visual amenity and complies with Local Plan Policy LP24, paragraph 135 in the NPPF and Principles 2, 12, 13, 14 and 19 in the Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide SPD.

Residential Amenity

Local Plan Policy LP24 states:

'Proposals should promote good design by ensuring: b. they provide a high standard of amenity for future and neighbouring occupiers.'

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

The following principles in the Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide are also considered to be relevant:

Principle 6 – Maintaining high standards of residential amenity

Principle 16 – Internal space standards

Principle 17 – Outdoor space

The only existing residential dwelling within close proximity to the proposed development is the dwelling owned by the applicant, No. 33 Gawthorpe Lane. There are two windows on the north elevation of No. 33 that would overlook the parking area and front garden of the proposed dwelling. Given the orientation of the buildings, any overlooking from the applicant's windows into the windows of the new dwelling and vice versa would be limited. The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in relation to privacy.

Given the siting and location of the proposed dwelling, and the number of windows within the building, the proposed development would enable future occupants to have a good outlook and access to high levels of natural daylight.

Future occupants of the proposed dwelling would also be able to enjoy a good degree of outdoor space, proportionate to the size of the dwelling, and a good degree of internal space which complies with the internal space standards for 3-bed dwellings for up to six people (recommended 102sq.m vs proposed 122sq.m).

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

Highways Matters

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 the residual cumulative impacts of the development are not severe.'

The existing access from Gawthorpe Lane that currently serves the application site is proposed to be used by the new dwelling. Visibility from this access point is considered to be reasonably good in both directions relative to the lower speeds associated with the narrow width of Gawthorpe Lane.

Two designated parking spaces are proposed for the new dwelling to be located adjacent to the eastern elevation. The number of spaces proposed aligns with the guidance in Key Design Driver 20 in the Kirklees Highways Design Guide SPD for 3-bed dwellings. There is adequate turning available within the site to ensure that vehicles can exit the site in a forward gear. A bin storage area for both dwellings

would be located adjacent to the existing driveway. This location is considered suitable as it is close to the highway for collections.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable with regard to highway matters and accords with Local Plan Policies LP21 and LP22, the guidance within the Kirklees Highways Design Guide and the aims of Chapter 9 in the NPPF.

Ecology – Bats

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and BNG Assessment has been carried out by Quants Environmental Ltd and accompanies the application. The main findings and recommendations of the Bat Roost Assessment are summarised as follows:

- No evidence of bats was found during the survey. However, the building does provide moderate bat roost potential.
- The site and surrounding area provide moderate quality habitats for foraging and commuting bats. The vicinity of the site is likely to support reasonable numbers of bats such as Myotis and Brown Long-Eared bats.
- Dusk emergence surveys x2 are therefore recommended. **These will be carried out and submitted during the course of this application.**
- No evidence of nesting birds was observed during the survey. However, a range of birds including Wren and House Sparrow could nest within the building, garden and walls at the site.
- Where possible, any works affecting potential bird nesting areas should be undertaken outside of the main bird nesting period (March to August inclusive).
- Bat and bird boxes/bricks are also recommended to be provided on the building.

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

Biodiversity Net Gain

Government Guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain states at Paragraph 002:

“The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain has been designed as a post-permission matter to ensure that the biodiversity gain objective of achieving at least a 10% gain in biodiversity value will be met for development granted planning permission. Once planning permission has been granted, unless exempt, a Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of that development.”

As the Guidance also confirms (Para 024), “the biodiversity gain condition has its own separate statutory basis, as a planning condition under paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The condition is deemed to apply to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England.”

In accordance with Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the minimum information needed to accompany the application is contained within the application form accompanying this application.

In terms of addressing the issue of biodiversity net gain, the pre-development biodiversity value of the site is 0.41 habitat units which comprises of modified grassland and vegetated garden land. It is proposed that 12 small rural trees are planted within the red line boundary, which would result in a post-intervention biodiversity value of 0.46 habitat units or a 13.12% biodiversity net gain.

As such, the information provided with this application is considered to address relevant statutory requirements and complies with Local Plan Policy LP30, the aims of Chapter 15 in the NPPF and Principle 9 in the Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide SPD.

Coal Mining Legacy

A Coal Mining Risk Assessment has been produced by Rogers Geotechnical Services Ltd and accompanies the application.

The report concluded that there are potential risks of instability at the site resulting from the working of shallow coal. Further investigation is therefore recommended prior to development taking place to determine the presence of such workings. It is considered that further investigations can be conditioned should the application be approved.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in compliance with Local Plan Policy LP53 and paragraphs 196 and 197 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:

- Installation of an air source heat pump
- Triple glazed windows
- Electric vehicle charging point
- Water efficient fixtures and fittings

The proposals would therefore have a positive impact on climate change and accord with Local Plan Policy LP24 and Principle 18 in the Kirklees Housebuilders Design Guide SPD.

Drainage

The existing cottage is connected to main foul water drains and it is therefore proposed that the barn would also connect to the mains drains for foul water sewerage. Surface water can run to soakaways in the adjacent fields and grassland.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable and complies with Local Plan Policy LP28.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission for the conversion, extension and alteration of the barn to one dwelling with associated parking and landscaping.

As discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this report, the proposals are considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt which would also preserve openness.

The proposals are also considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity, residential amenity, highway safety, ecology, biodiversity, drainage and climate change mitigation.

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

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