



Heritage Statement

131 – 133 Holcombe Road

Proposed Engineering Works to Rear and Side Garden including the reinstatement of a collapsed embankment and parking area, together with associated landscaping and creation of terraced garden spaces.

October 2022

Background

131 – 133 Holcombe Road is located within Burys large, designated area of Green Belt and outside the conservation area of Holcombe which is approximately a mile to the North of the site and is noted as a unique example of a pre industrial settlement, with a variety of important Listed buildings including the Peel tower.

There are no listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the property or recorded TPOs.

The LNRs lie at some distance to the east of the site and cannot be viewed from the property.

131 – 133 Holcombe Road is a substantial stone built semi detached property, with a clear frontage onto Holcombe Road. It enjoys a large but steeply sloping garden to the rear and parking area directly to the Western side. There are no long views from the ground surrounding the property as the garden is abutted by a small area of woodland to the West.

In 2021, during works to install gabion retaining structures around the parking area and following a very frosty dry March/April the ground had become unstable and after a period of prolonged rainfall in May collapsed. This left the area unsafe and near the road.

This resulted in various on-site meetings and communications with the Council planning and Building Control departments allowing temporary measures to be taken to prevent further collapse.



It is recognised that the property lies within the Manchester Green Belt, and the nature and character of the site must be carefully considered.

The land to the rear was approved as part of the residential curtilage of 131-133 Holcombe Road in 2015, where it became part of the garden for this property. However, given the topography and overgrown nature of the space it was difficult to use and enjoy especially by young family members.

This application seeks to address both above issues and provide a safe, structurally sound solution to the parking area to the West of the property, together with landscaping works to create a usable family friendly garden space within the existing curtilage, appropriate to its location within the landscape.

Green Belt

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2) – Green Belts (Published 1995, amended 2001)

3.1 PPG2 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open”, PPG2 (2001). The five purposes of including land in the Green Belt listed are:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
 - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land
- 3.2 PPG2 also recognises the positive role that land identified in the Green Belt has in fulfilling the following land use objectives:
- to provide opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
 - to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation near urban areas;
 - to retain attractive landscapes, and enhance landscapes, near to where people live;
 - to improve damaged and derelict land around towns;
 - to secure nature conservation interest; and
 - to retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.

Although important, the Green Belt land use objectives are not a material consideration for the inclusion of land within the Green Belt, or for its continued protection.

The most important attribute of Green Belts are the purposes of including land in the Green Belt (paragraph 3.1), regardless of their landscape quality.

3.3 PPG2 sets out criteria based policy advice for new buildings in the Green Belt.

The list includes the following categories of development as normally being acceptable in the Green Belt: agriculture and forestry; essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation; limited extension or replacement of dwellings; and limited infilling in existing villages.

3.4 PPG2 regards development including engineering and other operations, and the making of any material change in the use of land New Buildings & Associated Development in the Green Belt Development Control Policy Guidance Note 8 – New Buildings & Associated Development in the Green Belt - January 2007 5 as inappropriate development unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

3.5 PPG2 also states that the visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt which, although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land in the Green Belts, might be visually detrimental by reason of siting, materials or design.

3.6 In cases where development is regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, PPG2 states that it is for the applicant to show why permission should be granted.

Pre Application

A pre application submission was made to discuss initial design proposals for the property, and a detailed response was made by Mr Dean Clapworthy on the 11th February. Within which it was recognised that the salient points of this application are of course the impact on the Green Belt, the character and appearance of the area, neighbouring amenity and highway safety.

It was also noted that engineering works do not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

The further points raising concern regarding some of the proposed design elements have been carefully considered and addressed to better sit the scheme within the surrounding landscape and reduce its visual impact from Holcombe Road, which had previously been perceived as having an adverse impact on the Green Belt.

Proposals

Parking Area.

The retaining structure to the rear of the parking area will be 1200mm high and faced with stone to match the main house. This will be visually softened with planting in front of it, and a specialist Geotextile webbing applied to the slope above which will be heavily planted with a variety of shrubs (see planting plan).

To the top of this and set back will be a traditional 1100mm high garden fence to offer both security and screening from the road. This will be visually softened by the shrub planting.

Mature trees will still be visible to the rear of the property, so the long view will be unchanged, with additional proposed tree planting within the garden and adjacent to the boundary fence.

The proposals for this location provide a safe parking area for the house, where vehicles can manoeuvre so they can enter and leave in a forward gear in line with the highway's requirements (vehicle tracking shown on the plan).

The structural solutions will support the ground to the rear and create a safe usable environment.

The proposed landscaping will soften the visual appearance when viewed from Holcombe Road, creating a more natural planted environment more suited to a property within the Green belt.

Garden and Terraces.

The proposals for the garden split the sloping site into 3 tiers. These have been carefully laid out to work with the contours and minimise the retaining structures required.

As you can see from the plan the retaining elements are essentially used in key locations, and are all softened by adjacent planting or form step changes.

The surrounding garden is heavily planted along the northern and western boundary to maintain the existing 'wooded' feel.

A central sloped lawn is located across tier 2 and the lower tier is immediately adjacent to the house which forms the patio space, much of which is occupied with an existing patio to be replaced.

As part of Tier 1, a deck is proposed to utilise part of a very steeply sloping area of the garden next to the house.

This lies adjacent to the boundary with the neighbour and in this location both a solid screen to the eastern balustrade of the deck is proposed together with specific planting to help prevent any issues with overlooking in this location. (see planting plan)

Summary

The proposals meet with the requirements and ambitions of development within this green belt area of Holcombe road, providing a safe structurally sound solution for the collapsed bank adjacent to the parking area.

The proposed planting softens the visual appearance of any engineering works and helps the elevated garden space blend into the natural environment which benefits from the mature woodland to the rear of the site. Shrubs have been carefully selected to help maintain a natural look throughout the garden areas and enhance the overall wildlife value and biodiversity with the site, stone will be used to match with the existing house to help the proposals blend into the streetscape and wider character of the area.