

69778 – Land Opposite 6 Eccles Street, Ramsbottom.

Erection of 1 no. dwelling with access, driveway, parking and landscaping.

The application site is within Ramsbottom conservation area.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities in the exercise of their planning functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

The proposed dwellinghouse would be sited in a pocket of open land which slopes upwards towards the west from Eccles Street. The site is bordered to the east by Eccles Street and early 21st century housing development and beyond and to the north and south west mid to late-19th century dwellinghouses which are of a vernacular design, form, layout and materials being terraced two storeys constructed from local stone with pitched slate roofs.

The modern housing on Eccles Street whilst differing from the vernacular with regard to form and orientation and exhibiting some contemporary architectural features such as porches, a detached garage and front facing projections do reference the vernacular built environment with stone construction and pitched roofs.

The proposal would represent a very contemporary design sited on open land. It would be in a visually isolated location and therefore visually dominant in relation to Eccles Street within a rural part of Ramsbottom conservation area. It would bear no reference to the character or appearance of the conservation area with regard to its vernacular built environment.

The design of the proposal is very contemporary with flat roofs and vertical cladding in contemporary materials. It provides no architectural interest

consisting of a cluster of boxes giving a very utilitarian feel reminiscent of shipping containers.

As such the proposal represents an incongruous feature within that part of the conservation area and would not enhance or better reveal the significance of the character and appearance of the conservation area as required by paragraph 206 of the NPPF. The applicant does reference the existing negative features on the site, outbuildings and other dilapidated features which would be removed from the site if the proposal was approved, however this could be achieved without the proposed development.

The proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area nor better reveal its significance as required by paragraph 206 of the NPPF. As such it represents less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area which is considered to be at the higher end of that spectrum. The perceived public benefit of the addition of one new dwelling to the housing supply does not outweigh the harm identified to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The application cannot be supported in heritage terms as it would either not comply with or be contrary to paragraphs 199, 202 and 206 of the NPPF and adopted Bury UDP policies EN2/1 – Character of Conservation Areas and EN2/2 – Conservation Area Control.

Mark Kilby

Conservation Officer

18/8/23