

Planning Statement

Detached Dwelling to Replace Existing, Amended Details

Burnt House Farm, Turton Road, Tottington BL8 3QF

Planning permission (number 68433) was granted for a replacement dwelling on 22 March 2023. The applicant is not happy with the layout of the proposed house which has a bedroom on the ground floor. He has considered various different designs to provide all three bedrooms upstairs but I have advised him to retain the basic design of the house that has been approved. The third bedroom would now be above the lounge, allowing the footprint of the building to be reduced, but with a small increase in volume.

I was hopeful that the change could be dealt with as a revision to the approved scheme but the Planning Officer has advised that a full planning application is needed.

The building is a former farmhouse. The name is historic but it was seriously damaged by another fire in 2008. Part of the house remains, with four rooms over two floors. Walls of a larger two storey house, attached shippon and barn are still evident.

The previous planning approval has established that a replacement dwelling can be built on the site provided that the development is begun within three years of the date of permission and that all 19 conditions are complied with.

The previous application was accompanied by the agent's Planning Statement, Existing Plans and Elevations, Existing and Proposed Site Layouts and a Preliminary Ecological Assessment. These documents are resubmitted together with the revised house layout and elevations.

The Planning Officer may reconsult the bodies that were consulted before. Biodiversity Net Gain is a new concept. Places for Everyone has introduced additional requirements for new development.

Policy

The applicant is happy with the Planning Officer's Report on the previous application including its conclusions. It is not necessary to repeat the analysis of planning policy except where it has changed and where it is relevant to the revised house type.

The previous proposal was assessed against the policies of the old Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Since the decision was made the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Document (PFE) has been adopted and the principle of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) established. (See Below)

The Planning Officer determined that the original residential use had been abandoned, giving the land "brownfield" status as previously developed land. The principle of developing the site for residential purposes therefore needed to be assessed under paragraph 149(g) of the National Planning Policy Framework for "limited infilling or 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
- or not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting identified housing need within the area of the Local Planning Authority".

"Very Special Circumstances" would need to be proved to justify the development if there would be a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than existing or whether substantial harm would be caused to the openness of the Green Belt.

The Planning Officer examined the concept of "openness" and assessed the proposal in terms of its size, design and setting and concluded that "the proposed development would not have a greater harm on the impact on the openness of the Green Belt and therefore not require Very Special Circumstances". It would therefore comply with para 149(g) of the NPPF.

"The proposed development would therefore comply with Policies H2/2, EN1/1, EN9/1, OL7/2 of the UDP and the principles of the NPPF."

Justification

Before the fire, the original buildings were more extensive than what remains, including a larger two storey house, a shippon and a barn. The approved plans replicate the existing two storey building with the addition of a single storey element at the side where part of the original house would have been.

My client is unhappy with a layout that includes a ground floor bedroom projecting behind the house. The solution is to remove this projection and build a bedroom above the lounge. This substantially reduces the footprint of the building from 102 square metres to 89 with a slight increase in volume from 472 cubic metres to 483.

The two storey section and porch of the approved plans are reproduced in the plans now submitted, including the position of doors and windows. As before, the dwelling will follow the natural slope of the land. The new first floor section will have a vaulted ceiling, maintaining the step down from the main roof.

The elevations will have randomly placed “cottage style” windows like the previously approved dwelling, emulating traditional farmhouse builds and such buildings found in rural and countryside settings. The house will be built in natural stone with quoin detailing and a reclaimed slate or flag roof, with samples to be submitted in accordance with an anticipated condition.

To the north the land rises by approximately 9 metres which will screen the rear of the building from view. A post and wire fence has been accepted as an appropriate garden boundary.

To the west of the building there would be parking on a stone flagged surface, again with a sample to be submitted. As previously approved, the curtilage would be tightly drawn along the front of the property and the eastern side.

The revised proposal acknowledges the sensitive and considered approach of the previous architect to the design of the dwelling and how it would respond to and integrate within the landscape and its Green Belt setting.

Other Considerations

The Planning Officer's Report on the previous application refers to impact on residential amenity, highway considerations and comments from the Fire Officer and the Coal Authority. These considerations are equally relevant to the current proposal and should not need updating.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The Ecological Assessment is resubmitted. Based on its findings, the Planning Officer's Report made specific reference to bats, barn owls, other protected species, nesting birds, mammals and amphibians. Himalayan Balsam needs to be eradicated. The site is close to watercourses and SBIs.

Biodiversity Net Gain is a recently introduced requirement for most new developments "*to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development value of the site habitat*". As an individual self build house the development is exempt from compliance with the formal process of applying BNG. Nevertheless, the applicant's ecologist will be asked to provide details of measures to be carried out to improve diversity. (As may be expected she is currently committed to other projects requiring BNG input.)

The NPPF predates BNG. Section 174 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. GMEU were satisfied that mitigation could be achieved but current policy would suggest that additional work is needed.

Places for Everyone

PFE is a Joint Development Plan Document for Greater Manchester that was adopted in March this year.

Policies JP-G8 and JP-G9 include a commitment to “net enhancement of biodiversity resources” and show the site in the Green Belt where one of the aims is “habitat regeneration”.

Policy JP-H3 is concerned with the Type Size and Design of New Housing. The house will comply with national space standards. It will be built to an “acceptable and adaptable” standard as required by Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. This will include level access to an external floor and a ground floor accessible wc. “Lifetime Homes” standards include careful positioning of switches and sockets and adequate door widths.

Policies JP-S1 Sustainable Development and JP-S2 Carbon and Energy set out the vision for Greater Manchester to be carbon neutral by 2038. The house will be constructed and insulated in excess of current Building Regulations and will be designed with a Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery System. The applicant is an earthworks contractor and will be installing a ground source heat pump. An electric vehicle charging point will be provided.

Policy JP-C2 requires all new developments to have full fibre digital connectivity unless it is technically infeasible. The location prevents a full fibre connection. The applicant currently lives in Affetside and will continue to rely on satellite connectivity as he does now.

The new policies may require additional conditions to the 19 on the previous approval.

Conclusion

The site already has detailed planning permission for a new dwelling that can readily be implemented subject to compliance with the conditions. This permission confirmed that there would be no harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The revised scheme is closely aligned to what has been approved and there should be no obstacles to another grant of planning permission.