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REVISED PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Conversion and New-Build Residential Development

The Lord Raglan Public House,
Mount Pleasant, Bury BL9 6SP

October 2021



RTPI

mediation of space - making of place

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the conversion of the Lord Raglan Public House to form four apartments, together with the development of terraced houses on the former car park. There is also a Listed Building Consent application for alterations to the building.
- 1.2 The property is a prominent building within the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area and is a Grade II Listed Building. It has also been Listed as an Asset of Community Value in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.3 A pre-application enquiry was submitted to the Council in respect of the site in March 2018. This has informed the preparation of the application and the details submitted with it.
- 1.4 An initial planning application was submitted in July 2019, which was subject to consultation responses raising detailed matters as well as points of principle.
- 1.5 Revised applications were submitted in February 2020 (Full permission Ref. 65428 / LB Consent Ref. 65331) and discussions have taken place over time in relation to the design and detail of the scheme. This statement has therefore been revised to reflect the latest scheme proposals which comprise the conversion of the public house to form four apartments and the erection of four dwellings on the car park.
- 1.6 The purpose of this statement is to explain the proposals in detail and to set out how the site will be developed in accordance with local and national planning policies. Heritage matters in relation to the Listed Building and the site's location in the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area are dealt with in the accompanying Heritage Statement.
- 1.7 It should be read in conjunction with the proposed plans and other documents submitted in support of the application.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Lord Raglan is a detached, two storey stone building with cellars and an attic, dating from the nineteenth century, situated to the north of the former cotton mill complex and factory village known as Mount Pleasant, at Nangreaves 4km north of Bury.



Lord Raglan, Whitewashed



Lord Raglan, Front Elevation restored

- 2.2 Known locally as 'The Rag' it is said to have been originally used as a butcher's shop and store on the busy turnpike road between Bury and Burnley, later becoming a hostelry, although the origins of this are not clear. The original date of the building is also in some doubt, in places ranging from 1825, although attributed to the late nineteenth century in the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 2.3 A single storey section stands to the south of the building which appears to have been extended during the early part of the twentieth century. The front porch and rear staircase are also later additions, and the single storey element on the north-western corner appears to have been altered and/or replaced.
- 2.4 At basement level there are storage cellars accessible from lower ground at the rear along with access to a lower-level kitchen area. At ground floor, the pub is divided into three spaces used as a bar/dining rooms. Above, there are five private rooms at first floor level, and an attic room with windows on each gable end. A new staircase extension at the rear provides access to basement, ground and first floors.
- 2.5 The building fronts onto Walmersley Old Road which is cobbled as far as the pub and there are small seating areas to either side of the porch. At the rear is a pleasant outdoor seating area overlooking open countryside, and a small yard area. To the north is a car park, raised above the adjoining field level and sloping up to the north, with concrete posts and railings around the perimeter. The car park extends to around 1200sqm, with space for around 50 customer cars.
- 2.6 The site is surrounded by open countryside to the north, east and west forming the exposed shoulder of Snape Hill below Harden Moor. To the south lies the Mount Pleasant mill complex, now converted entirely to residential properties.
- 2.7 A regular (approx. hourly, Mon–Sat) bus service to/from Bury stops at the bus terminus on Walmersley Old Road, some 500m to the south of the site.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The Lord Raglan has been occupied by the same licensee since 1952, the Leyden family, who retired in October 2017. On their retirement, and in the absence of anyone to carry on, the pub was closed and placed on the market for sale. The property was marketed by a variety of estate agents, including those specialising in the licensed trade.
- 3.2 The applicants propose to demolish the C20th flat-roofed section at the northern end of the building and to convert the property to form four two-bedroomed residential apartments over the ground/first floors and attic.
- 3.3 All the apartments would be accessed from the existing front entrance and the existing external staircase at the rear of the property would be used to access the two apartments at first floor level. Otherwise, the main structural elements would remain largely unchanged. New partition walls would be used where necessary to divide rooms, with insulated panels between adjoining apartments. All existing windows would be retained and a new matching window would be inserted into the rebuilt northern elevation following the removal of the existing flat-roofed section.
- 3.4 An improved vehicular access would be formed on the northern side of the building leading to a parking area at the rear with four parking spaces.
- 3.5 The existing car park will be replaced with four two-storey, three-bedroomed terraced dwellings each with two parking spaces at the rear accessed from a new entrance next to the public house (Unit 1); and through an undercroft in the centre (Units 2, 3 & 4). The dwellings are proposed to front directly onto the roadside, with gardens and bin storage at the rear.
- 3.6 The new dwellings would be built with a simple vernacular appearance, including locally sourced materials to closely match the existing buildings in the conservation area. The new dwellings now closely reflect the properties to the south which were sensitively designed some years ago to replace a former mill building. Features such as stained timber sash windows and the archway between are characteristic of the local area.

4 PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 4.1 Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Development Plan comprises the adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan (1997). The emerging Local Plan is still being formulated and has recently been subject to consultation on proposed Policy Directions. The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework has continued to evolve now becoming known as 'Places for Everyone', although it remains at consultation stage.

Local Planning Policy

Adopted Unitary Development Plan

- 4.2 The UDP's Strategic Objectives for Housing involve identifying sufficient land for housing to meet the housing requirement; developing a housing stock which is within and well related to the urban area and resisting development on protected open space; meeting the needs and demands of the Borough's population; and improving quality, amenity conditions and the environment of residential areas in the borough.
- 4.3 Housing development will be assessed in relation to a number of factors identified in Policy H1/2 including:
- the need to direct development towards the urban area;
 - the availability of infrastructure;
 - the need to avoid the release of peripheral open land, unless this can be shown to be consistent with urban regeneration; and
 - the suitability of the site in land use terms with regard to amenity, the nature of the local environment and surrounding land uses.
- 4.4 The form and layout of new development should make a positive contribution to the form and quality of the surrounding area and demonstrate acceptable standards of layout in accordance with the criteria in Policies H2/1, H2/2 and H2/4 (for conversions).
- 4.5 Policy EN1 is a Strategic Policy which seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the character, of the Borough's built environment. Policy EN1/1 does not permit development which would have a detrimental effect on public views and areas of environmental interest, while Policy EN1/2 relates to the character and townscape of towns, villages and other settlements. Provision of incidental open space and landscaping is required by Policy EN1/3.
- 4.6 Policies EN6 and EN7 require the retention protection and enhancement of the natural environment/Features of Ecological Value and to limit the environmental impact of pollution. Policy EN9/1 relates to the Special Landscape Areas Identified on the proposals map where new development will need to be sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of its visual impact.
- 4.7 New buildings in the Green Belt are subject to Policies OL1/2 and OL1/3 which restrict development to certain classes, including limited infilling in existing villages (including Nangreaves) which is in scale with the village and would not affect its character or surroundings.
- 4.8 In relation to the Conversion and Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt, Policy OL1/4 requires

that development (including any extensions) should not have a materially greater impact on openness; not conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it; accommodate suitable access and likely traffic generation and services.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.9 The National Planning Policy Framework has been updated during the course of the Planning and Listed Building applications (latest version July 2021). Guidance on Heritage and Green Belt matters remains largely unchanged, but there is now greater emphasis on the importance of achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places. It encourages the use of local design guides and design codes to reflect local character and design preferences. Paragraph 11 continues to identify a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the Framework.
- 4.10 Chapter 5 underlines the Government's objective of boosting the supply of homes, encouraging land to be brought forward where it is needed, including an assessment of the size, type and tenure needed for different groups in the community.
- 4.11 The contribution from small and medium sized sites is recognised, and local authorities are encouraged to support the development of windfall sites. Para 120 states that local authorities should give substantial weight to the use of brownfield land for homes and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.
- 4.12 Paragraph 126 attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, and further that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. New development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area over its lifetime. Good architecture should be visually attractive, and development should be sympathetic to local character and history, whilst not preventing or discouraging innovation and change.
- 4.13 NPPF attaches great importance to Green Belts, the fundamental aim of which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Inappropriate development within Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances, including where any harm resulting from the proposal is outweighed by other considerations.
- 4.14 The construction of new buildings will normally be inappropriate, although exceptions include extensions and alterations of buildings, limited infilling in villages and limited infilling or partial/complete redevelopment of previously developed land (which would not have a greater impact on openness than the existing development).
- 4.15 Development should maintain a sense of place using building types and materials to create attractive, distinctive places to live which are safe, inclusive and accessible. Where proposals may affect heritage assets, applicants should describe the significance of the asset(s) affected, proportionate to the assets' significance. Where substantial harm is caused to a designated heritage asset, local authorities should refuse permission. Where there is less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against public benefits.
- 4.16 Paragraph 208 confirms that proposals for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, may outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

5 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The Planning application proposes residential development including the conversion of the Lord Raglan public house to form four apartments, and the construction of a terrace of four dwellings on the pub car park.
- 5.2 The application is accompanied by a number of technical reports and assessments which, along with the submitted drawings and design illustrations, seek to describe the nature and form of the development in detail, and how it will be successfully assimilated into its environment.

Principle of Proposed Use

- 5.3 The application site is not specifically allocated or identified on the UDP proposals map, so it would form a housing 'windfall' site where development proposals would be assessed in accordance with the criteria in Policy H1/2. Although the site is not closely related to the urban area it does lie within/on the edge of an existing settlement which benefits from infrastructure services (electricity/water/sewage etc.) as well as public transport. It is located within around 1.5km of Walmersley Neighbourhood Shopping Centre and around 3.5km from Ramsbottom town centre.
- 5.4 In response to the applicants' pre-application enquiry, the Council confirmed that:

"The proposed development would be located in the rural area, but there are residential properties to the south and southwest of the site. As such, the proposed development would not conflict with the surrounding land uses. Appropriate infrastructure would be available and as such, the proposed development would be acceptable in principle. Therefore, the proposed development would be in accordance with Policy H1/2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and the NPPF"

- 5.5 The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, last published in April 2018, identifies the application site as having "Constrained potential" for housing development (Ref. HL/2925/00). The site thus falls into category 5 where there is some potential to deliver housing, provided any policy constraints can be overcome. The final category (7) contains those sites which are not considered to be suitable for housing at all because of site and/or planning policy constraints. It is apparent therefore that principle of the site's development has been previously considered by the Council and found not to be wholly unsuitable.

Absence of Housing Supply

- 5.6 The site's development should also be viewed in the context of the availability of sites to meet the Council's supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements. In terms of Local Housing Need, it is apparent that the borough has insufficient supply of housing sites to demonstrate a five-year supply. On submission of the applications, the Council was only able to demonstrate 2.3 years of supply, when a 20% buffer is applied in accordance with NPPF Para 73 (where there has been a significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years). This figure has now fallen to only 1.7 years¹. For these reasons it is considered that there is an urgent and increasing need

¹ Bury Council Five year supply statement, 2020

for flexibility in overcoming policy constraints in order to provide deliverable sites for new housing which are both suitable and achievable.

Green Belt

- 5.7 In terms of policy constraint, the site is located wholly within the Green Belt, but is situated within/on the edge of Nangreaves, which is identified as one of the villages in Policy OL1/3 where limited infilling development may be permitted. Development which does not comprise limited infilling will normally be considered inappropriate, except where it is for agriculture or forestry, essential for outdoor sport & recreation or the limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings. Inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be permitted in “*very special circumstances*”.
- 5.8 In this case, it is considered that the provision of new residential properties on the existing car park area will provide an essential contribution to enable the retention and refurbishment of the public house to take place. Without the proposed new development, the conversion of the public house would be unviable on its own. This ‘*enabling development*’ and the contribution towards the public benefits achieved by refurbishing and retaining the listed building, together constitute the “*very special circumstances*” required to be demonstrated by the applicant in proposing Green Belt development, in accordance with the guidance in NPPF.
- 5.9 The conversion of the existing public house would itself be assessed against Policy OL1/4, which allows conversion and re-use of buildings provided they do not impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In fact, the conversion of the property in the manner proposed in the application would result in a *reduction* in built form, through the removal of a C20th flat roofed extension to the north of the property. Land within the existing curtilage of the public house would be utilised for associated parking for the apartments.

Enabling Development

- 5.10 The scheme forms two distinct components – the conversion of the listed building, and the development of houses on the car park.
- 5.11 As demonstrated above, the conversion of the listed building complies with Policy OL1/4 and will secure the retention and long-term re-use of the building. However, it is apparent that the conversion of the listed building alone would not be commercially feasible given the costs involved and the likely return to be achieved. In addition, the absence of viable offers for continuation of its existing use (or any other community use) demonstrates that a new residential use is the only real way in which the asset can be conserved.
- 5.12 A development appraisal previously undertaken for the initial scheme demonstrated that the conversion of the pub alone would not be profitable, and that the profit achieved by a six-unit scheme would be below ideal levels. A reduction to four-units prejudices this profitability even further, however the development is expected to proceed at this level given the considerable investment which has already taken place in pursuing the scheme to this stage.

- 5.13 Enabling development is not considered by the Bury UDP, but it is addressed in NPPF as a means by which securing the future conservation of a heritage asset, may outweigh the disbenefits of departing from established policies (e.g. Green Belt).
- 5.14 In this case, the development of four dwellings on the car park, which are reflective of the form and scale of development in the existing settlement, will not materially harm the heritage values of the asset. They will form a cohesive development with the conversion, which will secure its long-term future in a sympathetic manner.
- 5.15 In assessing the Planning Balance, it is considered that securing the future of the listed building is an important public benefit which outweighs the limited harm, in visual terms, of a terrace of buildings reflecting the character of the existing settlement, and the redevelopment of an existing previously-developed and unsightly car park.
- 5.16 Finally, the amount of enabling development proposed is the absolute minimum necessary to secure the future of the listed building. Any fewer dwellings on the car park would further reduce the viability of the overall development to a point where it would no longer offer a sustainable return on investment.

Asset of Community Value

- 5.17 In recent years, structural changes in the licensed trade have resulted in the loss of many traditional pubs from villages, towns and cities. Factors include smoking restrictions, alcohol off-sales encouraging drinkers to stay at home, and the greater popularity of larger town centre bars/restaurants.
- 5.18 In the past, many traditional pubs have been owned and operated by the owners, with little commitment in the form of mortgage or secured loans, and little profitability. In many cases, once this tenure has come to an end, the properties do not offer the form of commercial return that is sufficient to cover a purchase price and the cost of refurbishment to modern standards and expectations as well as a reasonable margin of profit to encourage investment.
- 5.19 Following the retirement of the former owners in October 2017 and the closure of the pub, the Lord Raglan public house was listed as an Asset of Community Value on 11 December 2017 pursuant to a nomination by The Raglan Community Hub (RCH) – a registered community benefit society with local membership.
- 5.20 A notice of the proposed disposal of the property was served by the owners on 2nd July 2018 leading to an interim moratorium period of six weeks for interested community associations to express an interest in preparing a bid for the property. An expression of interest was received, extending the moratorium period to 2nd January 2019.
- 5.21 It is understood, however, that only very limited funding was available to RCH, insufficient to support a serious bid for the purchase of the property. The owners have therefore contracted to sell the property to the applicants, for development in the manner proposed in the application.

- 5.22 NPPF Para 92(c) states that planning policies should “*guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day to day needs;*” and should “*ensure that established shops facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.*” The NPPF is silent on the weight to be accorded to ACVs in determining planning applications.
- 5.23 The adopted UDP, however, contains no policies to protect community facilities. Public Houses are not listed as a community facility in the introduction to Chapter 11, which are defined therein as “*education facilities, social services, health services, libraries and arts, community centres and halls, childcare facilities, Police, Fire and Ambulance services, and the Post Office.*”
- 5.24 A Non-Statutory Advice Note published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in October 2012 to accompany the Asset of Community Value Regulations 2012 states at paragraph 2.20:
- “it is open to the Local Planning Authority to decide whether listing as an asset of community value is a material consideration if an application for change of use is submitted, considering all the circumstances of the case.”*
- 5.25 In this case, it is apparent that whilst there is local support for the retention of the building as a public house, this is not so substantial as to lead to a realistic potential to purchase and run it as a community facility. In the absence of any definite proposals, it is not considered that significant weight should be accorded to this matter as a material consideration in the determination of the planning application.

Openness of the Green Belt

- 5.26 Whilst the development of the terrace of dwellings on the car park would undoubtedly affect the openness of the Green Belt it would remain closely related to the built form and character of the adjoining historic factory village. UDP Green Belt Policy OL1/2 allows limited infilling in villages in accordance with Policy OL1/3, which includes Nangreaves, provided it is in scale with the village and would not adversely affect its character or surroundings
- 5.27 As explained in the accompanying Heritage Statement, there are two examples of historic ‘outlying’ terraces immediately to the west of the village (Nos 35-40 & 41-51 Mount Pleasant) which are substantially separated from it yet considered to form a part of the immediate surroundings. In a similar way, the proposed terrace on the car park land would not be seen as adversely affecting the character or surroundings of the village.
- 5.28 As explained above in relation to “*Enabling Development*”, the proposed terrace on the car park land forms an integral part of the development of the site and would contribute directly to the refurbishment and retention of the listed Lord Raglan public house. This part of the development, whilst potentially conflicting with Green Belt policies, would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset in accordance with Para 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This is an important material consideration which outweighs the disbenefits of any departure from Policy OL1/3.

Heritage

- 5.29 The Lord Raglan is a Grade II listed building and along with its car park, is situated in the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area. The conversion of the building can be undertaken without causing substantial harm to its character, and would ensure its retention and long-term maintenance. Its refurbishment and change of use accords with UDP policy EN2/3. The terrace of dwellings in the car park would not cause substantial harm to the setting of the listed building, and would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policies EN2/1 and EN2/2.
- 5.30 More details concerning heritage matters are set out in the accompanying Heritage Statement.

6 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

- 6.1 This section addresses the form and scale of the proposed development, and how the design solution has been arrived at.
- 6.2 An initial application scheme, submitted in July 2019 showed the alteration and conversion of the public house and the development of six dwellings on the car park.

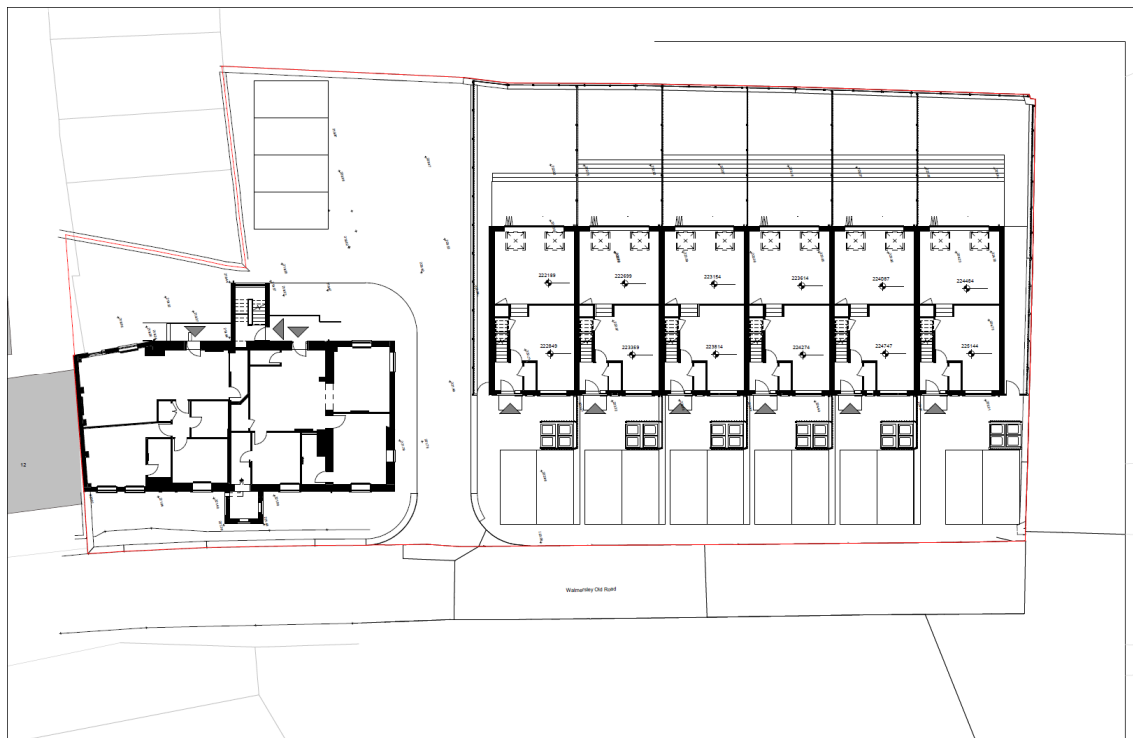
Conversion of the Listed Building

- 6.3 The listed building was proposed to be altered to form four residential apartments, with parking at the rear. Following consultation, it was suggested that the provision of additional structures on the rear of the listed building were not desirable, and a boundary wall along the front of the building would block its view and would be an alien feature in the conservation area. The application was subsequently withdrawn.
- 6.4 A new application, registered in April 2020, simplified the conversion of the listed building, involving only very limited changes to the plan form, appearance and materials. Whilst it would involve the removal of the northern flat-roofed extension, this appears to be a later replacement of an earlier wing which has since been demolished. Any remaining original footings may be of interest and can be preserved in-situ or by recording during the course of development.
- 6.5 The new external elevation in this location would be expected to match the construction, appearance, materials, coursing and form of the original building in all respects, whilst seeking not to dominate the building or its setting. Stonework removed would be reused in the construction of the new elevation.
- 6.6 The construction and layout of the existing building lends itself to a new residential use as apartments, which would maintain the asset in its most complete form, without the requirement for new openings e.g. to accommodate equipment or machinery for a business use or substantial extension to accommodate e.g. public assembly. Indeed, the upper floor is already in ancillary residential use as a manager's apartment, thus its character would be barely affected.
- 6.7 This part of the development has been welcomed in a response from Bury Council's Conservation Officer (16th June 2020), which stated:

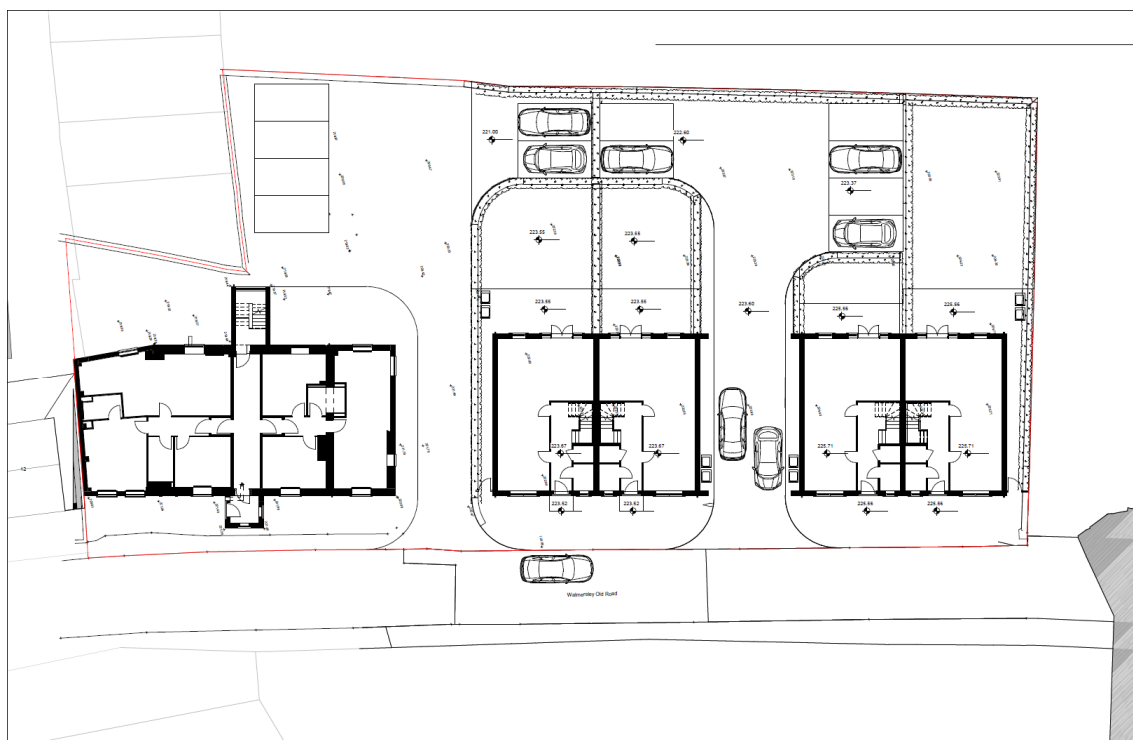
"The conversion of the Listed Lord Raglan would be acceptable in that it would be brought back into a viable use. Its historic, communal, evidential and aesthetic values would not be impacted by the proposed conversion as only internal alterations would be carried out and as far as is understood would only result in the adaptation of the building which would be reversible and the soft strip or removal of 20th century fixtures and fittings. As such its group value would not be affected nor would its conversion impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The loss of the 20th century extension is also welcomed".

New Dwellings on the Car Park

- 6.8 The provision of six dwellings on the car park to the north of the public house was proposed in the 2019 application and maintained in the 2020 resubmission. However the scope and scale of the development was not welcomed in heritage terms, and it has therefore been the subject of substantial revision during the course of the application.



Original six-unit scheme, April 2020



Revised four-unit scheme, October 2021

- 6.9 The scheme has been reduced from six dwellings to four and reassessed in terms of its relationship with its surroundings, including designated heritage assets (principally the public house and the character of the conservation area).



Original six-unit scheme, April 2020



Revised four-unit scheme, October 2021

- 6.10 Both the scale and massing of the dwellings have been substantially reduced and the footprint refined to follow that of the existing dwellings on Walmersley Old Road, with a similar width and height, maintaining the established building line and set back. The ridge line has been simplified and the roof pitch reduced slightly in order to reduce the overall building mass. Front boundary treatments have been amended to reflect the existing character of the area and bin/cycle storage has been replaced at the rear.
- 6.11 Most notably, parking provision has also been incorporated at the rear of the properties, accessed partly via a characteristic archway, reflecting the archway features on Walmersley Old Road to the south.
- 6.12 Stained timber sash windows with a squarer proportion are now proposed, along with the removal of door canopies. Fencing has been replaced with stone walling, and throughout the development materials/stone and roofing slates will match the existing properties in the village.
- 6.13 The new development will represent a sympathetic extension to the existing built form of the factory village. It has been designed to assimilate in terms of form, appearance and layout and can be seen as an organic northward extension of the village.

Conclusions

- 6.14 The conversion of the existing building and the resulting development on the car park area has been designed to make a positive contribution to the form and quality of the surrounding area and thus accords with Policy H2/1.
- 6.15 It also meets the criteria listed in Policy H2/2 in terms of car parking provision, accessibility amenity space and landscaping/screening where required. In terms of the site's location, the

terrace of new dwellings is clearly visible in the landscape, however its close relationship to the existing historic factory village means that it can be assimilated without causing a detrimental effect on visual amenity. It thus accords with Policies EN1/1 and EN1/2.

- 6.16 As a development which has been designed to be sympathetic to its surroundings, it is not considered to be unduly obtrusive and thus accords with Policy EN9/1 in respect of the Special Landscape Area within which it is situated.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the conversion of the Lord Raglan Public House to form four apartments, together with the development of four terraced houses on the former car park. The statement explains the proposals in detail and sets out how the site will be developed in accordance with local and national planning policies.
- 7.2 The Lord Raglan is a Grade II Listed Building situated within the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area and has been Listed as an Asset of Community Value. It is currently vacant, having closed in 2018.
- 7.3 The application site is not specifically allocated or identified on the UDP proposals map, although it lies within the Green Belt. Very special circumstances are required to justify new development in the Green Belt, although the conversion of the existing public house would be assessed against Policy OL1/4, which allows conversion and re-use of buildings provided they do not impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.4 The development of the site would therefore form a housing ‘windfall’ site where development proposals would be assessed in accordance with the criteria in Policy H1/2. The Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identifies the application site as having “Constrained potential” for housing development.
- 7.5 The Council is only able to demonstrate 1.7 years of housing supply on specific deliverable sites to meet their housing requirements. There is therefore an urgent and growing need for flexibility in overcoming policy constraints in order to provide deliverable sites for new housing which are both suitable and achievable.
- 7.6 The development will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area and remains closely related to the built form and character of the adjoining historic factory village. Furthermore, the new terrace of dwellings would comprise ‘enabling development’ to secure the future conservation of a heritage asset and provide public benefits in accordance with Para 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework and thus outweighs the disbenefits of departing from Green Belt policies. This constitutes the “very special circumstances” for allowing development in a Green Belt location.
- 7.7 Although listed as an Asset of Community Value, the Lord Raglan has been closed for three years, and there is no realistic or viable prospect of it being reused as a pub or for any other community use. The adopted UDP contains no presumption in favour of the protection of pubs as a community facility and it is not considered that significant weight should be accorded to this matter as a material consideration in the determination of the planning application.
- 7.8 For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the Council’s Unitary Development Plan taking account of guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, which is a significant material consideration. Planning permission and Listed Building Consent should therefore be granted.