



SHEEPGATE FARM COTTAGE

Planning Statement

PLANNING STATEMENT

Supporting the Planning
Application for the Proposed
Alteration and Renovation of
Sheepgate Farm Cottage

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement ("statement") has been prepared by the applicants in support of a detailed planning application ("planning application") by Niall Gunn & Rosalind Thorpe ("applicants") for the extension and remodelling of the existing dwelling ("proposed development") at Sheepgate Farm Cottage, Bradshaw Road, Tottington, Bury, BL8 3PL ("application site").
- 1.2 The planning application has been submitted to Bury Council which is the Local Planning Authority ("Council").
- 1.3 The statement sets out the contexts for the proposed development, describes the planning application site and its hinterland, defines the extent and details of the proposed development, sets out the planning framework applying to the application site and proposed development and assesses the proposed development against relevant planning and land use considerations particularly planning policy.
- 1.4 In addition to the statement the planning application is supported by a drawings pack
- 1.5 The scope of the statement is as follows:
 - In section 2 we describe the application site and its hinterland and cover its planning history.
 - In section 3 we set out background on and cover the impetus for the proposed development.
 - In section 4 we describe the proposed development.
 - In section 5 we set out the planning framework applying to the application site and proposed development.
 - In section 6 we set out our assessment of the planning application and proposed development against planning and land use matters of relevance including national and local planning policy.
 - In section 7 we set out our conclusions on the matters covered in the statement.

2. APPLICATION SITE AND RELATED CONTEXTS

Site Profile

Location and Address

2.1 The application site is located on a private lane to the North of Bradshaw Road at the transition with Hall Street

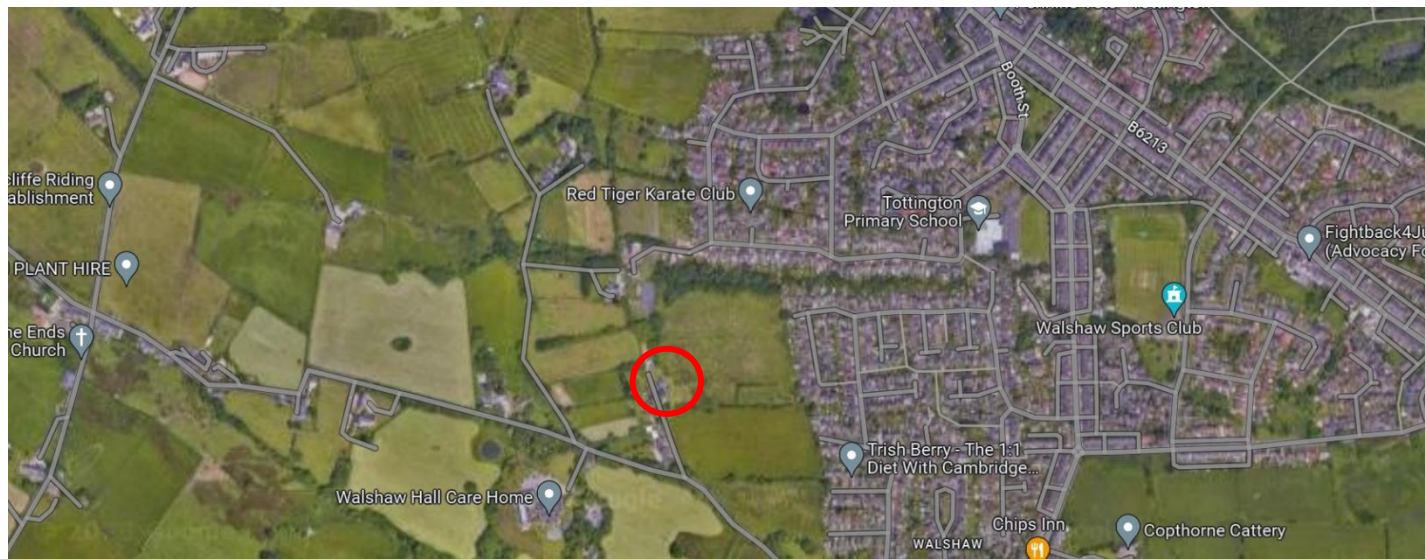


Image 1: Google extract showing location of application site

- 2.2 The site's address is Sheepgate Farm Cottage, Bradshaw Road, Tottington, Bury, BL8 3PL. It should be noted that although the address is Tottington the property is arguably closer to Walshaw to the South-East.
- 2.3 The Google extract that follows shows the location of the application site:

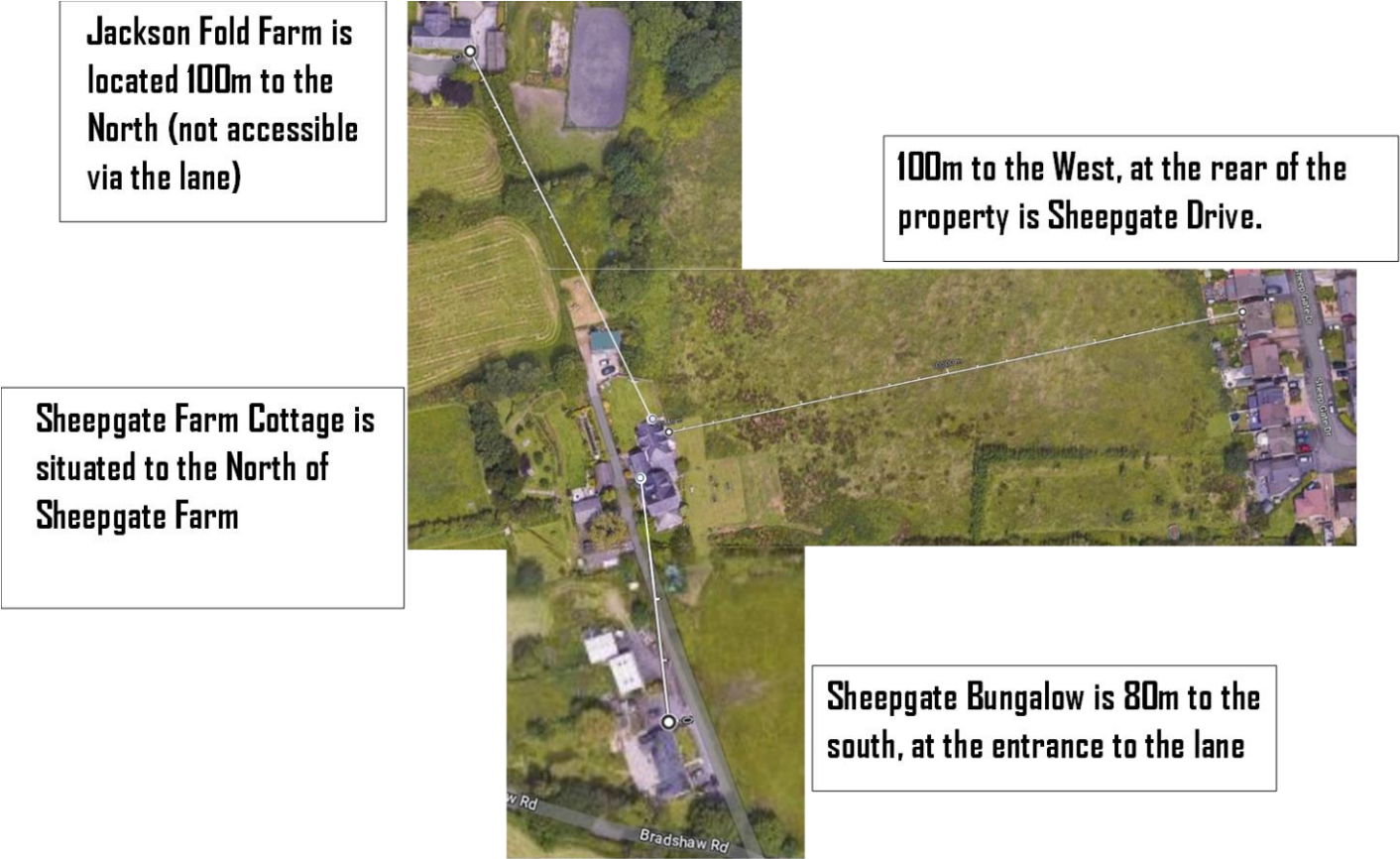


Image 2: Google extract showing location of application site

2.4 The red line application site boundary of the existing property is shown on the following plan:



Image 3: Site location and extent of site



Image 4: Photographs of the existing property

Size

- 2.5 The application site extends to 0.22 hectares (0.56 acres), and includes the house, a garden area, a driveway and a large detached garage with a small field area to it's rear (see image 3).

Existing Use and Profile

- 2.6 As can be seen from the photographs above, the application site accommodates a mixed single and two-story detached dwelling located on the north side of Bradshaw Road. The property essentially consists of 3 principal sections, a 2 storey stone-built cottage to the front ['the cottage'], a single storey brick-built barn style building to the rear ['the barn'], and a 2 storey brick extension to the north side of the barn. ['the extension']. Due to the adjoining corner structure being single storey, there is currently no 1st floor access between the two bedrooms in the 2001 side extension and the two bedrooms in the original cottage. The first floors are accessed via separate staircases, the extension's being in the hallway and the cottages being in the 'barn'. Because of this segregation this property is not an ideal layout for a young family.

Profile – The house is in poor condition overall and is in desperate need of a full refurbishment. An inexhaustive list of ongoing issues includes:

The boiler is a 2001 Vaillant Turbomax Plus Combi, but is connected to a water storage tank with integral immersion heater. The water is therefore only heated when either the central heating is switched on, or the (non timed) immersion heater is manually switched on. Hot water is not possible unless the tank is pre-heated with either method.

There is no central heating in the 1st floor of the cottage.

90% of the windows are of wood construction and many the frames and sills are rotten.

The majority of the double glazed window units have blown.

The render on the boundary wall overlooking the neighbours property is in disrepair.

There are leaks in the 'barn' roof.

There is black mould around the internal window cavities in both floors of the cottage.

The wiring in the 2001 extension is the newest.

The applicants have held off doing these works individually with the intention to commission a full remodel/refurbishment of which this application forms part thereof.

Boundaries and Adjoining Uses

- 2.7 See image 2. The site sits at 170m AOD and is bounded (and substantially over-shadowed) by Sheepgate Farm to the south, the original farmhouse that Sheepgate Farm Cottage was once attached to. Other substantial detached dwellings in the area include Sheepgate Bungalow, some 80m to the south at the mouth of the lane and Jackson Fold Farm, a detached farmhouse to the north accessed via Jackson Fold Lane, the next lane off Bradshaw Road. The next nearest dwellings are on the other side of the field to the rear of the application site, 100m to the west and part of a sprawling housing estate.
- 2.8 The land to the rear of the property is in an irregular ownership situation. To the current occupiers knowledge, several years prior to moving in, this field was split up via land registry into a series of housing plots, which were mis-leadingly sold off privately as an "investment opportunity" on the basis that planning permission may be (had been?) granted as part of the Manchester Spatial Framework. This permission was never granted, with a site for nearly 3000 houses in the greenbelt areas around Walshaw and Elton reservoir being identified by Bury council as their preferred location for new development. As such, there is no single owner of this adjoining land and no practical use or access by any 3rd parties, with the strip directly behind the applicant site currently owned by the next-door property, Sheepgate Farm.

Access

- 2.9 Vehicular access to the site is via a private lane off Bradshaw road, and pedestrian access can be achieved via a footpath that is accessed via the equestrian facility at the top of Moorside road. Pedestrian access via Hall Street/Bradshaw road is not advised due to the absence of any foot-path.

Wider Hinterland

- 2.10 The application site is semi-rural in profile. It is located on the edge of the residential suburb of Walshaw although its postal address is Toitittington which lies further to the north-west. As such the majority of development in the area is residential in use and is in the form of large detached properties, many of which have land in addition to garden areas. Undeveloped land in the immediate vicinity is officially in use for agriculture, however with the exception of annual harvesting of hay, it remains un-used. Slightly further afield land is used for grazing, although there are other open/outdoor uses including horse livery and stabling uses.
- 2.11 The site and adjoining land is largely of a gentle slope down to the west.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The site's planning history is as follows:

Application ref	Decision date	Description	Decision
59402	12/12/2015	Conversion of existing garage/store to form specially adapted care provision accommodation for annex to Sheepgate Farm Cottage.	Refused
36481	07/06/2000	Single story extension at the rear and first floor extension	Conditional Approval
16850	26/03/1985	Detached Garage and Stables	Approved
14606	26/05/1983	Single Story Extension at Side	Approved



Image 5 – Sheepgate Farm circa 1970

- 3.2 The full original photograph (included below) shows the houses on Sheepgate Drive are under construction in the distance, where planning was approved June '68. hence the 1970 date estimate. It can be seen here that the original cottage and 'barn' portions of what is now Sheepgate Farm cottage were once integral to Sheepgate farm, and part of the same dwelling. The subdivision was achieved via the removal of the central section indicated by the arrow.
- 3.3 It can also be seen that the cottage at this time had 2 large apertures and a doorway to the front.
- Whether or not the deleted section could be taken into consideration with regards to the volume of the original dwelling is at planning discretion, but it has not been used in volume calculations.

Full photograph



Image 6 – Aerial View of Sheepgate Farm and immediate vicinity

3.4

At some point between the above photograph being taken and the approval of planning application 14606 [1983], the property was split to form Sheepgate Farm Cottage.

HM Land Registry Title for the bulk of the applicant plot shows a transfer date of December 1982. It is therefore reasonable to consider the physical split as having occurred around this time.

On the basis of its chronological proximity to the approval of the single storey extension in May 1983, the applicants contend that this extension was part of the same scope of works as the subdivision, and as such it is reasonable to consider the structure as built circa 1984 (drawn on the right) to be the original dwelling for volume calculation purposes.

Note the largest aperture in the bottom right of the ‘cottage’ has been partially infilled to create a door with side window, and the door on the left has been replaced with 3 windows.

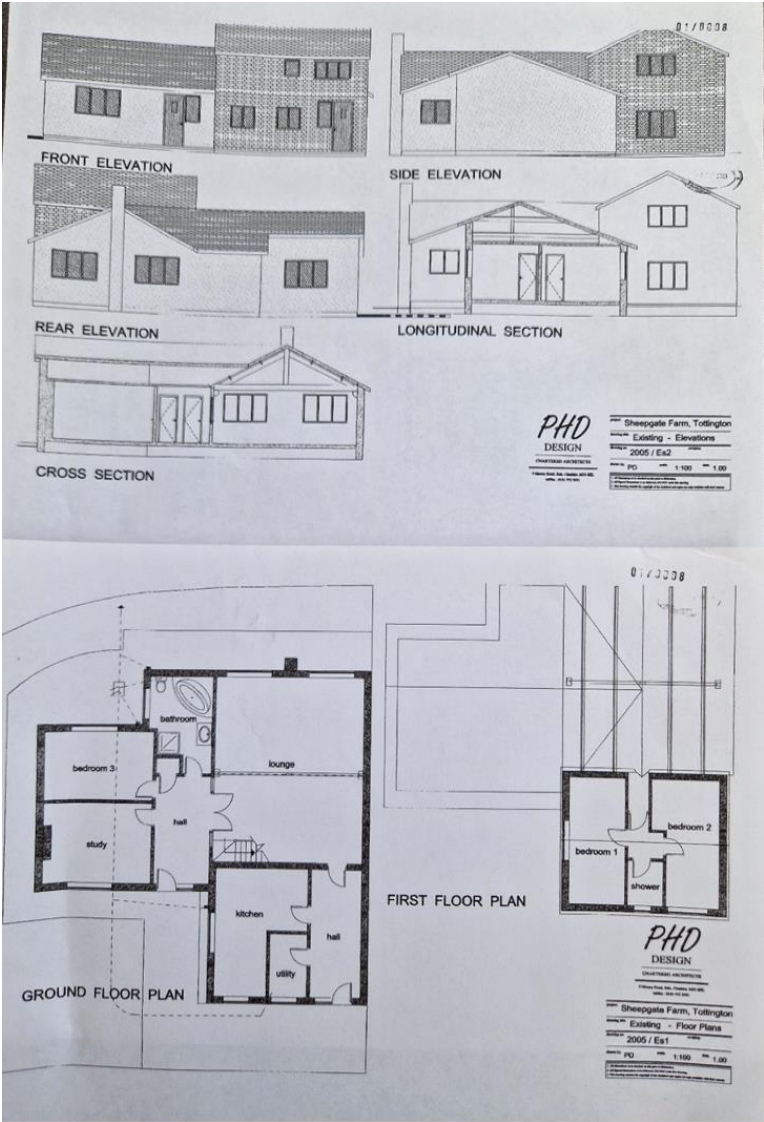


Image 5 – ‘Existing’ Building Elevations contained in application 36481 [2000] showing building as approved in Planning Application 14606 [1983]

4. BACKGROUND TO PLANNING APPLICATION

- 4.1 The applicants, Niall Gunn & Rosalind Thorpe and their 3 young children, moved to Sheepgate Farm Cottage in 2017. When they purchased the property it had already been extended by the previous owners to suit their needs and design related expectations.
- 4.2 The previous occupants had a severely disabled daughter, and the extension built in 2001 which replaced the side extension approved in 1983 served to add a downstairs bedroom, sitting room and bathroom (with raised bath) for convenience. Whilst this layout suited the previous occupants, it has only served to add to the impracticalities of this property for normal family life.
- 4.3 Subsequently the applicants made small changes to the property such as internal redecoration and new external landscaping to the side of the property, with a view to making more meaningful alterations when finance and necessity allowed.
- 4.4 The applicants are from the local area and their children attend school locally. They have decided that this is the location they would like to settle in. Accordingly, they wish to make a number of changes to the layout, design, accommodation and appearance of their property to make it suitable for a growing family.
- 4.5 It is also important to highlight that although the property was extended previously, this was done in a way that did not consider the house design as a whole. The property therefore does not flow in a conventional way and as such needs re-designing to be able to accommodate rooms and spaces that will deliver contemporary living accommodation and designs and standards to match.
- 4.6 The applicants requested local architects RPG to design improvements which will enable the property to be presented as a well-designed and striking home which reflects the other substantial detached properties located along Bradshaw Road but which also meets their family's living requirements.
- 4.7 Building on the points made above, and whilst it is acknowledged that the points made below are relative, the applicants wish to improve their house because of number of inherent layout, design and accommodation issues as follows:
 - The flow of the internal spaces is not ideal – there are two bedrooms in the cottage and two bedrooms in the extension, with no first floor link between the two. It is not safe to have young children accommodated unaccompanied in a separate part of the property without adult supervision, whilst at the same time there is not enough space to have the entire family accommodated in a single part of the property.
 - The roof structure is composite in nature and includes a significant valley where the barn roof meets the cottage.
 - Poor connection to the garden from the kitchen both visually and physically.
- 4.8 The design constraints and objectives were therefore as follows:
 - Minimum 4 bedrooms all accessible from one staircase/landing
 - Ensuite bathrooms should be added in preference for family bathroom
 - Footprint of proposed development should not be materially increased
 - Overall height of proposed development should not be materially increased
 - Openness of the greenbelt should not be adversely affected
 - Make the most of the open views
 - Dining kitchen to overlook garden with outside access provided.

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Main Elements

- 5.1 The proposed development covered under the planning application comprises the remodelling of the existing property to incorporate a first-floor extension above the existing single storey element.
- 5.2 The external changes to the property largely affect the first-floor elements of the existing building but do not affect the overall height and footprint of the property which will not be any greater than the existing.
- 5.3 The bulk of the proposed alterations fall in the centre of an existing cluster of buildings and outbuildings, do not increase the bounding box of the existing development and are several metres lower than the existing highest part of the cluster being the adjacent Sheepgate Farm.
- 5.4 The existing access and landscaping to the front of the property will remain as existing with grassed/flagged area accessed via wooden gate.

5.5 The existing property includes a triple garage, and 2 driveways which can accommodate 4 cars. The bin storage is located along the north side wall of the cottage. The bins will remain in this location.

Key Features

- 5.6 The proposed layout includes moving the kitchen, currently in the ground floor of the cottage, to the ground floor of the side extension which currently houses an office (formerly bedroom), a children’s play room (formerly sitting room) and a downstairs bathroom as detailed in section 3.2.
- 5.7 It is proposed that the ridge of the cottage roof is to be turned through a 90° angle, raised slightly to match the ridge height of the extension and then extended to the back of the ‘barn’ structure, which is currently 1.5 storeys high. This will allow a first floor space to be created above what is currently the vaulted ceiling lounge, and will transform the roof profile into a classic right angle L section, with no valley as is currently configured. The additional space above the lounge will serve as a new master bedroom with en-suite and walk-in wardrobe. This will provide 4 double bedrooms, all with ensuite bathrooms.
- 5.8 The reconfigured property and new ground and first floor layouts are shown on the following plans:

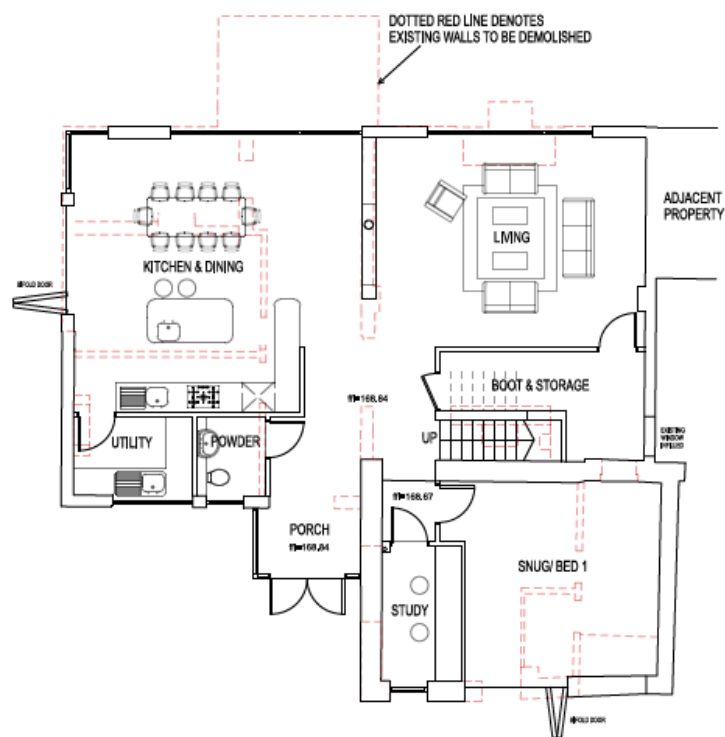


Image 5: Proposed ground floor layout

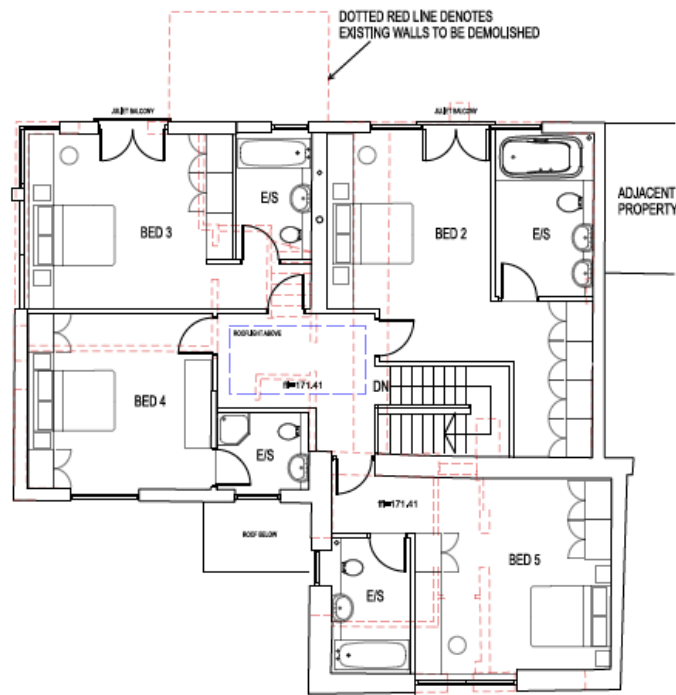


Image 6: Proposed first floor layout

External Detailing and Related Features.

- 5.9 In terms of external details and design protocols, the existing property appears disorderly, with no architectural consistency across the elevations. The proposed scheme redesigns the elevations to create some commonality in the design.
- 5.10 The upper sections of the cottage will be remodelled using stone as per existing. The brick extension is to be rendered in a similar tone to the neighbouring property.
- 5.11 The elevations below show the external details (**note – window configurations shown here are from an earlier proposal – see plans for latest configuration**):

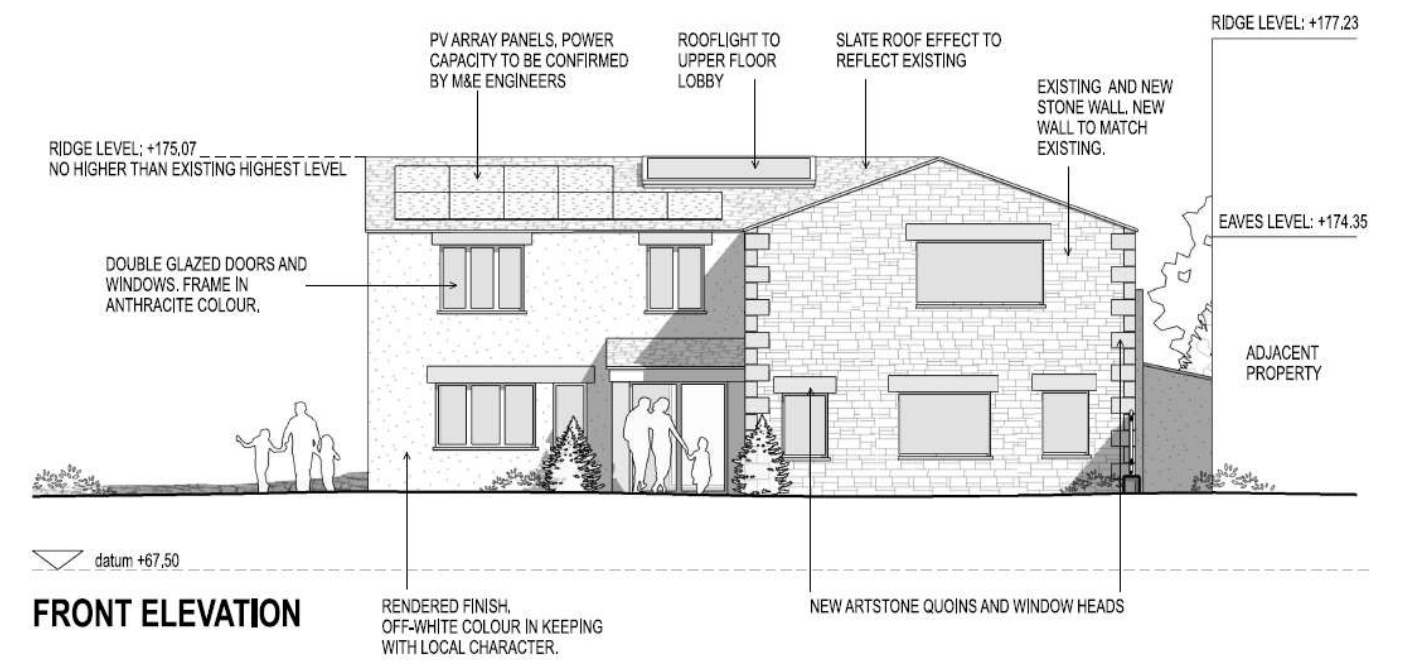


Image 7: Drawing of front elevation of property

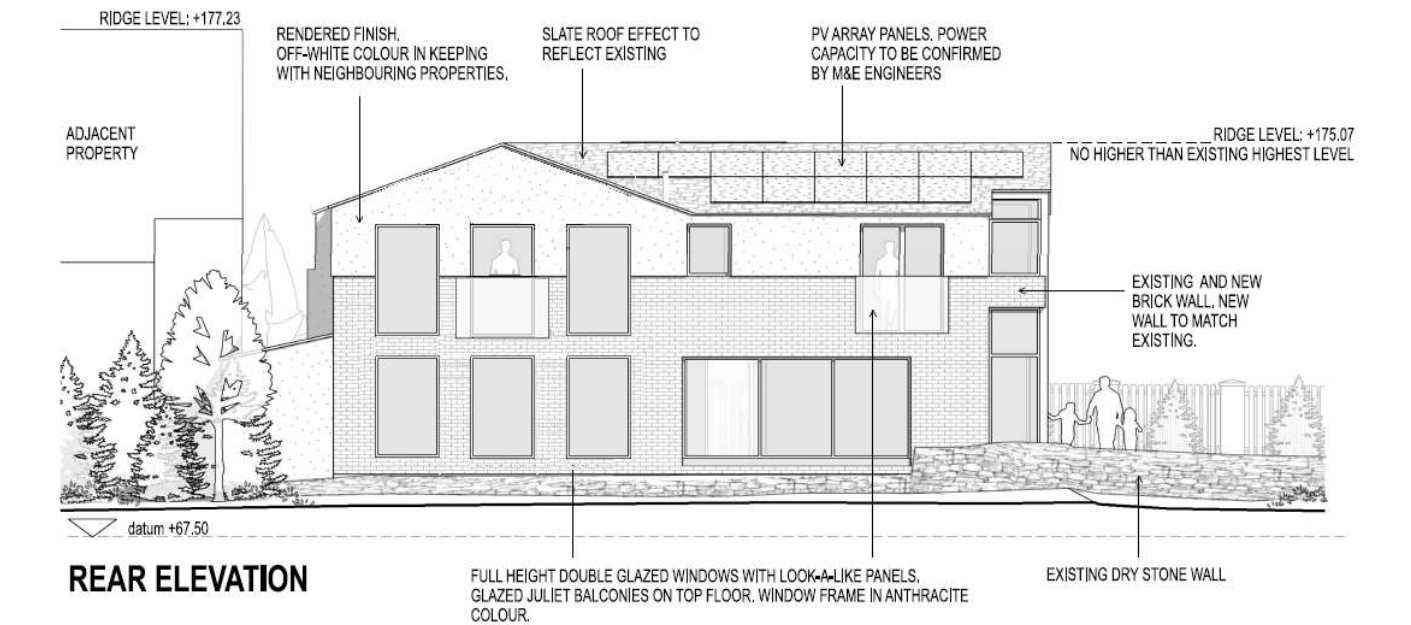


Image 8: Drawing of rear elevation of property

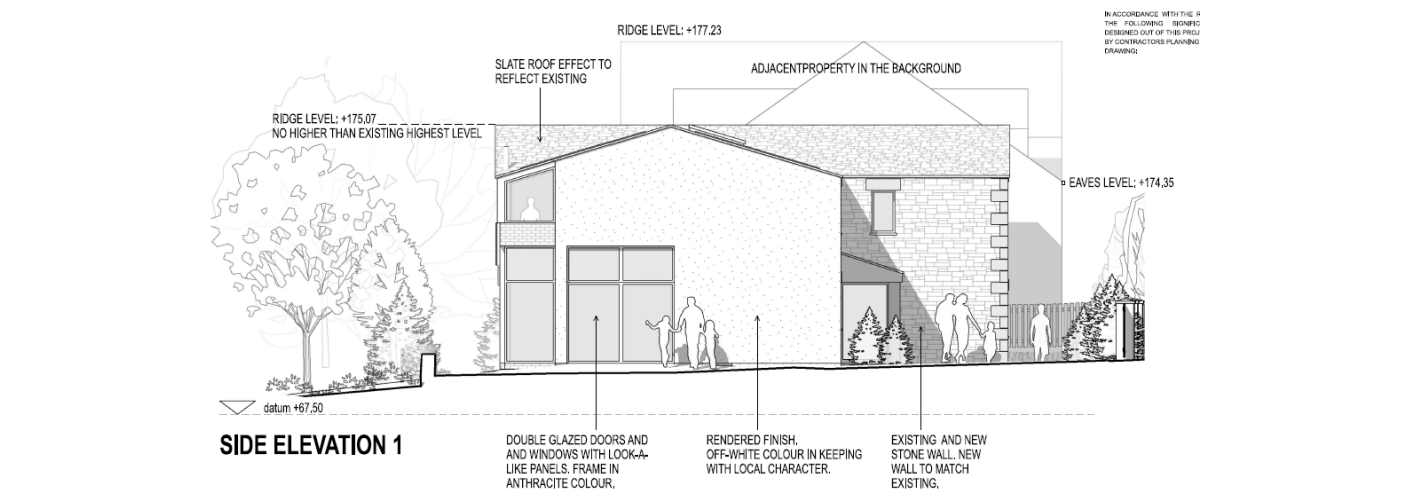


Image 9: Drawing of side elevation of property

Other Design Considerations

5.12 In order to maintain existing volumes whilst solving the 1st floor access issue, it is proposed that volume elsewhere may be sacrificed to accommodate the first floor extension over the ‘barn’. This would involve the complete removal of a conservatory and a chimney at the back of the house, and potentially a proportion of the garage.

Front/Rear Elevations

5.13 Below image shows transition images of the old and new front elevations, with the old elevations displayed in bold and the new elevations shown transparent with additions to the silhouette shown as a boxed area.

(Note window configurations shown in these images are not accurate to final design)



Image 10 – Front Elevation Transition

It is worth noting that from the rear of the property, this additional silhouette is sat against a backdrop of nearby trees.



Image 11 – From Sheepgate Drive



Image 12 – 3D satellite image (Google)

5.14 As demonstrated in image 10, it is contended that the addition to the front/rear elevation is minimal and both sympathetic and reasonable with regard to the openness of the greenbelt.

Side Elevations

5.15 Below image shows transition images of the old and new side elevations, with the old elevations displayed in bold and the new elevations shown transparent with additions to the silhouette shown as boxed area. In addition the profile of adjacent property Sheepgate Farm is highlighted here via dotted lines.



Image 13 – Side Elevation Transition

5.16 It is worth noting here the relative height of adjacent Sheepgate Farm to the south of the applicant property.

5.17 It can clearly be seen in image 13 that the modest additional massing from this elevation is almost entirely within the backdrop of the property next door. As such it is contended that the addition to this elevation causes minimal impact on the openness of the greenbelt.

Windows and Doors

5.18 Due to the significantly taller neighbouring property to the south, natural light is not abundant at Sheepgate Farm Cottage. It is desired by the applicants to make the best of the views available, whilst also letting as much light into the property as possible. The proposed design with larger windows to the rear and a sky light over the landing will hopefully allow improvements in this respect.

Access and Circulation

5.19 The proposed development will continue to be accessed via the private lane.

Drainage and Services

5.20 The development will mostly utilise existing foul and surface water drains that serve the existing property. Other required services are already available and serving the existing property.

5.21 As the site is within Green Belt, a relevant consideration is the requirement that further development should not be disproportionate in size to the original building. Part of the applicant’s design brief was to minimise the volumetric increase for this reason, and this has been achieved by a reduction of volume in other areas. Because the proposal is not to increase the size of the development as a whole, comparisons with original volume become less relevant, however, the footprint and volume of the current and proposed buildings still need to be understood. Volume calculations of current and proposed developments have been carried out by RGP from 3D models, the result of which is shown below:

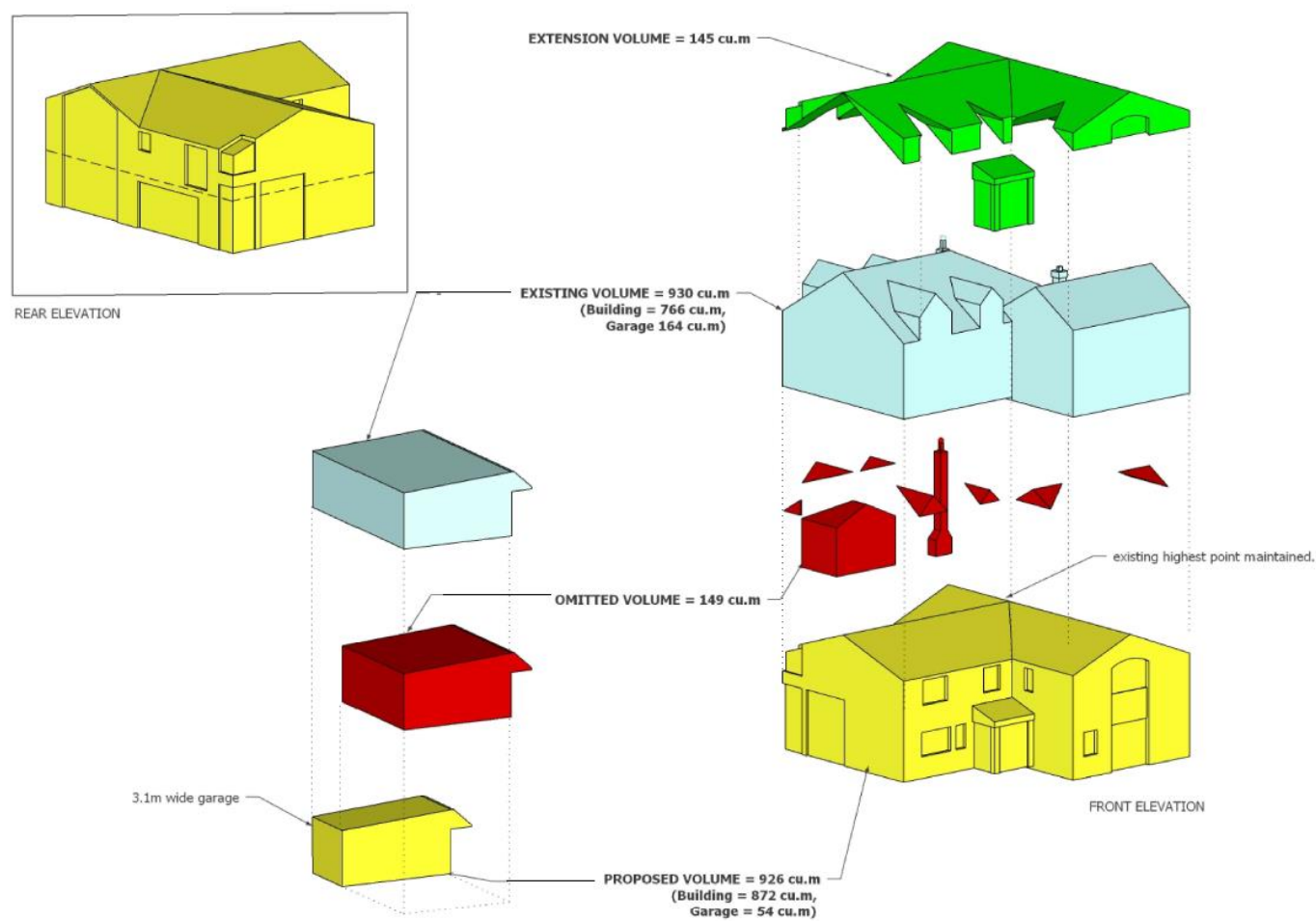


Image 14 – Volumetric Schematic

5.22 Calculated Volumes

- The volume of the original property as defined in 3.4, was 624 cubic metres (based on plans)
- The volume of the current development as existing now is 766 cubic metres (excluding garage)
- The volumetric increase from original dwelling to current state is <23%
- The proposed volume excluding garage is 872 cubic metres which represents an increase of <40% from the original building.

Planning permission for a detached garage and stables was granted in 1985, which is likely to have coincided with the completion of the subdivision works. Whilst only the garage was constructed, it was done so concurrently, and it is therefore reasonable to include the garage as part of the original development as a whole.

Looking at the applicant site as a whole;

- The existing volume including garage is 930 cubic metres
- By downsizing the existing garage the overall volume of proposed development can be reduced down to the current volume, or alternatively to the 33% threshold advised as considered proportionate.

5.23 The proposed scheme would therefore achieve a net zero increase in existing volume or a small net increase but remaining within proportionate definition.

6. PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Background

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that where in making any determination under the planning acts regard is to be had to the development plan and the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise.
- 6.2 Material considerations can be anything to do with the purposes of planning and includes all typical planning and land use factors that have a bearing on whether a planning application should be granted.
- 6.3 It should be noted that national planning policy guidance has the status of a material consideration in planning decisions, although it can be given greater weight where there is the absence of a comprehensive and fully up to date development plan.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.5 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ("the framework/NPPF") published in February 2019.
- 6.6 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies applying nationally.
- 6.7 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (paragraph 7).
- 6.8 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraphs 10 and 11). For decision taking this means: approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: the application of policies in NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in NPPF taken as a whole.
- 6.9 The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed (paragraph 12).
- 6.10 Regarding delivery of new housing, so as to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, which is a key tenet of NPPF, a sufficient amount and variety of land needs to come forward where it is required, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay (paragraph 59).
- 6.11 At paragraph 61, NPPF confirms that planning policy should deal with the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community, including, inter alia, people wishing to commission or build their own homes.
- 6.12 NPPF also confirm that it is not just large sites that can deliver housing. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built out quickly, which is another benefit (paragraph 68). We would say that this is relevant in the context of sites for self-build homes.

- 6.13 Chapter 13 deals with Green Belt and confirms that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts (para 133). The fundamental aim of Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence (para 134). Green Belt serves five purposes:
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
1. Regarding development proposals affecting the Green Belt, NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (para 143).
2. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (para 144).
3. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt (para 145). Exceptions to this are:
- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry; .
 - b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
 - 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;
 - d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
 - e) limited infilling in villages;
 - f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
 - g) limited infilling or the 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 an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.
- 6.17 On achieving well designed places, NPPF confirms that achieving well-designed buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process (paragraph 124).

Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.18 Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG") was first published in March 2014. This is an iterative online resource that complements NPPF and provides additional and more in-depth advice and guidance where necessary.

Development Plan

- 6.19 The statutory development plan relevant to the determination of this planning application is the Bury Local Plan. This comprises the Bury Unitary Development Plan ("BUDP"). The BUDP was adopted on 29 August 1997 some 23 years ago.
- 6.20 The council is working to replace the adopted UDP with a new document to be called the Bury Local Plan ("BLP") but this is not yet publicly available.

Bury Unitary Development Plan

- 6.26 Potentially relevant policies from the BUDP are as follows:
 - a) Policy H2 - Housing Environment and Design - the council will encourage good design in all residential development.
 - b) Policy H2/3 - Extensions and Alterations - applications for house extensions and alterations will be considered with regard to the following factors: the size, shape, design and external appearance of the proposal; the character of the property in question and the surrounding area; the amenity of adjacent properties; and visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of motor vehicles.
 - c) Policy H5 - Housing Improvements - the Council will continue to support the improvement of the housing stock and its environment.
 - d) Policy OLI - Green Belt - the Council will maintain a Green Belt, ensuring that it fulfils the following strategic purposes: 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 further 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. The policy also lists appropriate developments and confirms when and what development would be inappropriate along with exceptions to this. As this is superseded by NPPF guidance on the same when applying this policy we take our lead from NPPF.
- 6.27 Policy ENI/2 • Townscape and Built Design • the Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the particular character and townscape of the Borough's towns, villages and other settlements. A number of factors are listed which are to be considered whether proposals are acceptable, The BUDP allocation map confirms that the application site is unallocated for development. Instead, and like adjoining land, it forms part of a larger area of Green Belt. This is illustrated through the plan extract that follows; the application site is illustrated through a red dot:

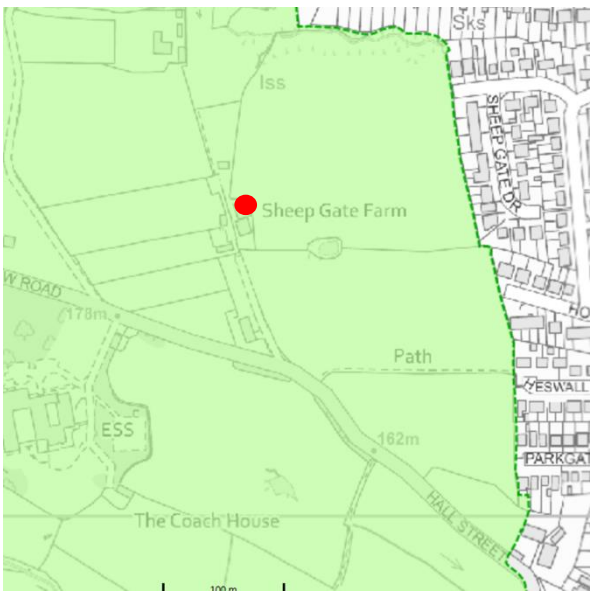


Image 15 - Extract from BUDP Proposals Map showing the location of the application site and extent of Green Belt in the area

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.28 Of relevance is Bury Council Supplementary Planning Document 8 - New Buildings and Associated Development in the Green Belt 2007 approved in 2007 ("SPD/SPD8").
- 6.29 In summary and inter alia, this confirms that existing dwellings should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. What can be considered to be proportionate the SPD8 considers additions of up to a third (33%). However, the SPD also confirms that that is not to say something larger, or smaller than 33%, would not be supported as each case is considered on its merits and by reference to the site's profile and related contexts.

Emerging Local Plan Documents

- 6.30 As already confirmed the council is currently in the process of preparing the BLP which will guide future development in the Borough. The form and content of this will need to follow the policy principles and direction of NPPF. In addition, it will also need to comply with what is known as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ("GMSF") which is being prepared jointly by Bury and the other Greater Manchester Combined Authorities ("GMCAs"). The reason for this is because GMSF will deal with strategic planning matters across the whole of Greater Manchester including identifying future levels of housing and employment growth. And in so doing currently plans to deallocate large areas of Green Belt to facilitate them being re-allocated for development. For legal and other reasons GMSF is severely delayed; indeed, unless legislation is changed its scope might need to be revised to remove planned changes to Green Belt leaving it to address general development needs only. Alternatively it might need to be transposed into a joint development plan to allow it to jump legislative hurdles.
- 6.31 While GMSF currently plans to take some land out of Green Belt, including some large swathes in Bury, the area of Green Belt within which the application site is located is not one of the areas being considered for reallocation.

7. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Approach

- 7.1 This section of the statement sets out the planning case in support of the planning application. Specifically, it considers whether the planning application accords with the provisions of the development plan, this by reference to the policies identified in section 6 of the statement. In so doing it also considers whether the planning application can be regarded as acceptable by reference to material considerations, which encompasses national planning policy and usual planning and land use considerations.

Impact on Purposes of Including Land in Green Belt and on the Openness of the Green Belt

- 7.2 As set out in section 5, NPPF confirms that the fundamental purpose of Green Belt and related policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The fact the planning application site is already developed and by a substantial residential property is a key counting consideration. As is the fact the planning application proposals only involve the addition of a relatively minor amount of volume to the property, with no corresponding increase in height or footprint. Considered collectively, this suggests that the planning application can be regarded as having no negative effects on the purposes of including land in Green Belt.
- 7.3 Our position on this is also bolstered by the fact that NPPF confirms at paragraph 149 subparagraph c) that extensions and alterations to existing buildings in Green Belt, subject to them not being disproportionate when compared to the existing property, can be regarded as appropriate development. We would say this is the case here by reference to the scope and profile of the proposed changes to the existing building.
- 7.4 It should also be noted that paragraph 149 sub-paragraph c) talks about 'original building.' Which has been defined in paragraph 3.4.

- 7.5 It is our case, as already set out, that as the development proposals covered under the planning application involve the extension of the building which sits in a small development adjacent to another substantial residential property, which dwarfs the proposal property even after any works are carried out. The nature of the proposals, including close attention to detail and how and where the new volume will be created, mean the extension and related alterations can be regarded as being proportionate in scale as they will not impact on the openness of Green Belt in this locale.
- 7.6 To assist in what might be considered disproportionate, SPD8 considers additions of up to a third of existing volume (33%) to be acceptable. Indeed, the SPD also confirms that this is not to say that an extension larger than 33% would not be regarded as acceptable, and supported, as each case is considered on its merits and by reference to the site's profile and related contexts, and by reference to whether the development in question would have a greater and unacceptable impact on the openness of Green Belt.
- 7.7 In the context of this development proposal the extension proposed falls within the 33% threshold if the garage and its subsequent volumetric reduction is taken into account, i.e., the increase is less than a third of the original volume (of the existing property which as we have confirmed in 3.4. With regard to this point it is firmly our view that the correct benchmarking figure is the volume profile of the property as it existed after works completed as part of the subdivision circa 1983. On this basis, the proposed development is fully supportable by reference to SPD8. Indeed, even if this were not to be the case, the SPD makes it clear it considers each case on its merits and that increases much greater than 33% can be regarded as supportable.
- 7.8 Overall, it is our firm view that the proposed development would not impact on the purposes of including land in Green Belt nor the openness of Green Belt in this locale, and that it also satisfies NPPF and SPD policy on the same.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Surrounding Area

- 7.9 The house is not currently aesthetically pleasing nor is it in any particular style. Any works to upgrade this property will only improve the amenity of the area.



Image 16: Long distance view of rear elevation of existing property



Image 17: Long distance view of proposed new improved rear elevation of property

- 7.10 Overall, it is our view that the proposed development will significantly improve the general quality and character of the area including its visual qualities and will enhance rather than detract from the appearance of the area.

Impact on Residential Amenity

- 7.11 Habitable rooms within the proposed development and reconfigured dwelling will be orientated and served by adequately sized windows to allow for natural lighting and for an outlook onto open land.
- 7.12 The separation distances between the rear elevations of the proposed reconfigured property in the context of their relationship with adjoining properties is within 7m of the boundary. However, as shown in image 2 and detailed in paragraph 2.8 the nearest residential property is 100m away, and there is no public access or right of way between. Furthermore, the 7m guideline referenced in paragraph 3.12 of SPD-6 relates specifically to privacy, which is not applicable to a property situated 100m away, nor is it meant to apply to agricultural land not in residential use. As such larger windows making the most of the available light and scenery are considered appropriate by the applicants.
- 7.13 Overall, the proposed development would not result in a detrimental impact on residential amenity including with regard to neighbouring properties.

Impact on the Highways

- 7.14 The proposed dwelling will be accessed via the existing private drive that serves the current property on the site.
- 7.15 The existing access is regarded as acceptable to serve the reconfigured property and there is sufficient off-road parking to accommodate up to 4 cars.
- 7.16 In addition, but a relevant point, the proposed development will not generate any additional traffic.

Impact on Flood Risk

- 7.17 There is no issue with regard to flood risk (Flood Zone 1 by reference to EA Flood Risk Map of England).

Impact on biodiversity and ecology

- 7.18 The development will not long term impact biodiversity or ecology

Sustainability issues

- 7.19 The site will utilise solar panels and ground source pumps to provide proportion of sustainable energy use. New windows and insulation will prevent excessive heat loss currently experienced.

Drainage and Services

- 7.20 Foul and surface water drainage and services exist and can be used as they currently exist to meet the needs of the proposed development.

Development Plan and Other Planning Policy Considerations

- 7.21 Considered collectively, it is our view that the planning application proposals can be regarded as satisfying relevant policy, i.e., according with development plan, NPPF and SPD policy of relevance, including policy on Green Belt, urban design, street scape and character, design, sustainability, transportation and residential amenity.

8. KEY POINTS

- 8.1 The external changes to the property largely affect the first-floor elements of the existing building but do not affect the overall height and footprint of the property which will not be any greater than the existing.
- 8.2 It can be seen in section 5.21 and 5.22 that overall volume of the applicant site will not increase.
- 8.3 The bulk of the proposed alterations fall in the centre of an existing cluster of buildings and outbuildings, do not increase the bounding box of the existing development and are and will remain several metres lower than the existing highest part of the cluster being the adjacent Sheepgate Farm.
- 8.4 As demonstrated in image 10, it is contended that the addition to the front/rear elevation is minimal and both sympathetic and reasonable with regard to the openness of the greenbelt.
- 8.5 It can clearly be seen in image 13 that the modest additional massing from this elevation is almost entirely within the backdrop of the property next door. As such it is contended that the addition to this elevation causes minimal impact on the openness of the greenbelt.

9. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The proposed development will not harm or increase the impact of the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 9.2 The proposed development will improve the character and appearance of the area, streetscape and Green Belt in this part of the Borough.
- 9.3 The proposed development will not detrimentally impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, nor will it have an adverse impact on the local highway network.
- 9.4 The proposed dwelling (in extended and remodelled form) will be of a high and unique architectural quality and can be regarded as being sustainable.
- 9.5 Importantly and based on the points and general conclusions set out above, the proposed development can be regarded as being in accordance with the development plan and the NppF.
- 9.6 Overall, it is our view that the planning application and the proposals it promotes attract nothing less than full policy support which suggests the planning application can and should be granted planning permission.