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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Project Abbots Hall, Woodhey Road, Ramsbottom

Client Mr Derek Abbott

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1 Introduction

This document is prepared on behalf Mr Derek Abbott, for the planning application at Abbotts Hall, Woodhey Road, Ramsbottom, Bury, BL0 9RD. The application seeks permission for an access track with adjacent public footpath, car parking and turning area, bin and cycle stores, associated landscape works and ecological enhancements associated with a barn conversion.

The applicant has already received Class Q Permitted Development permission for the proposed change of use of the agricultural barn to 3 no. dwellings houses (Use Class C3) on the site, Application Ref. 69509 dated 20 July 2023.

The Design and Access Statement includes information on the location and context of the site, a description of the site, the design principles and concepts that have informed the proposals, how access has been dealt with and the approach to sustainability. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted landscape drawings by EAT Landscape and Planning Statement by Roman Summer Associates Ltd.



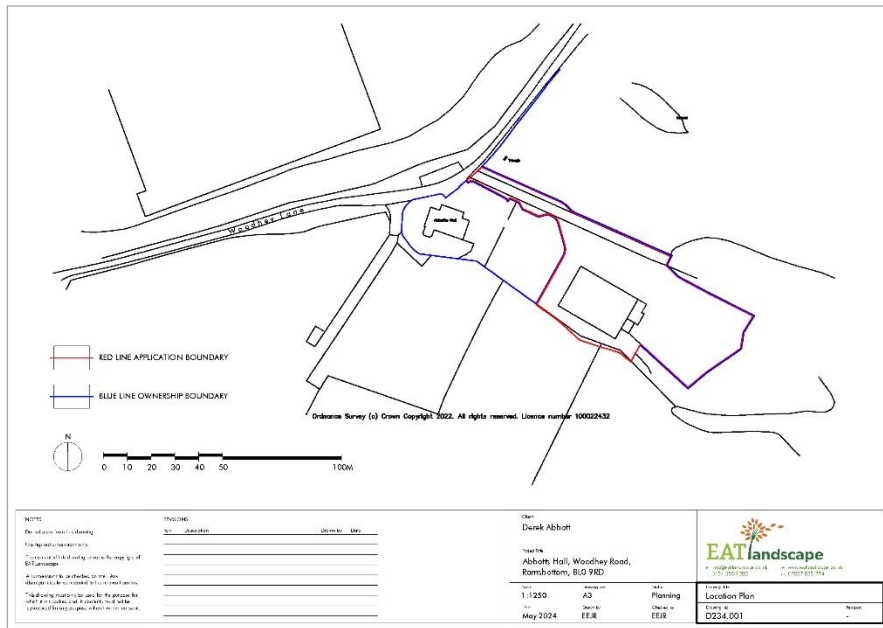
Elevations of Proposed Barn Conversion by Hawthorne Design Partnership

2 Site and Context

Location

The site is located on land at Abbots Hall, Woodhey Road, Ramsbottom in the local authority area of Bury. Drawing D234.001 Location Plan shows the red line planning boundary and blue line ownership boundary.

The site is accessed via an informal track from Woodhey Road and the agricultural barn is located at the eastern end of the site.



D234.001 Location Plan

Context



Aerial image showing wider context of site

As shown on the aerial photograph above, there are open fields to the north, south and west of the site. To the east of the site and further to the south is broadleaved woodland. Woodhey Secondary School is located to the north of Woodhey Road.

In the wider context, beyond the fields and woodland, there are residential buildings to the south and west, part of the settlement of Holcombe Brook. The centre of Ramsbottom is approximately 1.7km to the north east of the site.

Site Description and Use

The site is approximately 3,680m² (0.37 Ha) in area and forms part of the land associated with the residential property and farmhouse, Abbots Hall.

The site includes an informal access track from Woodhey Road and linear strip of the adjacent field. The track is between 3.0 and 4.5m wide, including verges, and laid with crushed stone.

At the end of the informal track is a barn and area of hardstanding. The barn is currently used for agriculture associated with the farm. A secondary track, within the site, connects Abbots Hall to the barn. The hardstanding and second track are both surfaced in crushed stone.

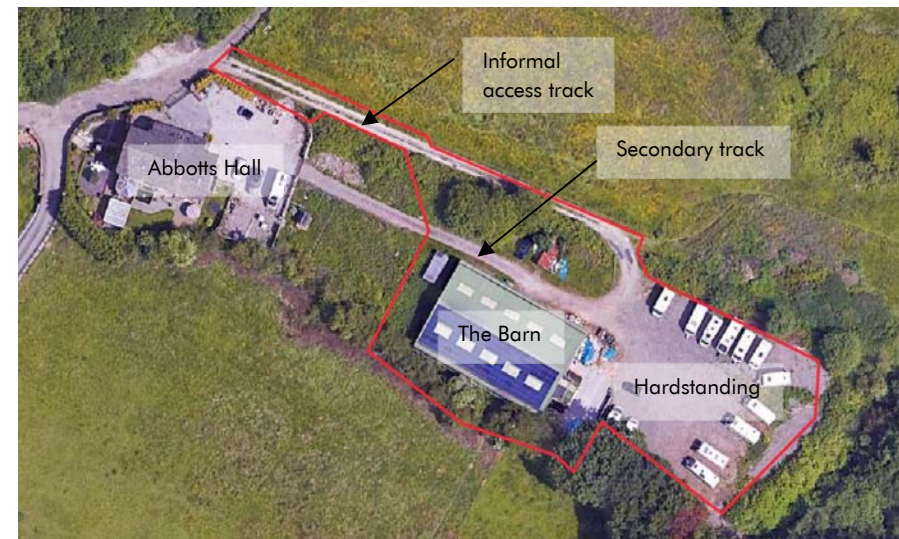
To the south east of the hardstanding is an naturally regenerating scrub. Part of the hardstanding and scrub area used to be a former tip.

A linear strip of soft landscape including several small to medium trees and shrubs lies between the two access tracks. There is also a belt of mature trees along the south west boundary of the site.

There is a gradual slope across the site from higher land by Woodhey Road in the north west down to the hardstanding in the south east.

A Public Right of Way follows the line of the main access track. At the end of the track the footpath continues in a south east direction through the adjacent field.

Abbots Hall and the barn are not listed or in a Conservation Area. The site lies within the Bury Council Green Belt.



Aerial image of the site showing key features and the approximate red line boundary

Site Photographs



1. End of main access track where it joins Woodhey Lane



2. Secondary entrance into the Abbots Hall property from the main access track



3. Looking along the main access track and route of Public Right of Way towards Woodhey Lane



4. South east end of the informal access track. Access into the hardstanding area on the right and continuation of the footpath through the field to the left



5. Pet Memorial under construction at the side of the main access track, next to the secondary entrance to Abbots Hall



6. Looking down the main access track and route of Public Right of Way to the south east



7. Entrance to hardstanding associated with the barn



8. Front elevation of the barn



9. Line of mature trees on south east boundary



10. Second access track running in front of barn



11. Grassland and shrubs on the linear strip of land between the two access tracks



12. Group of trees on the linear strip of land between the two access tracks

3 Design Principles

Use

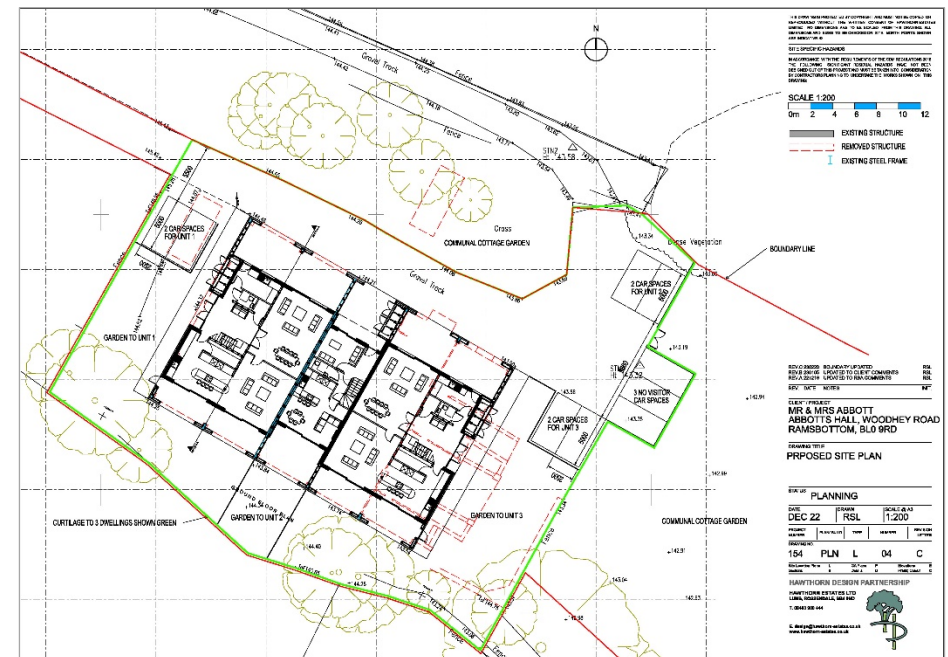
The development will be for residential use only. There is an existing planning permission to convert the barn into three dwellings. The landscape works included in this application will support this residential use.

The majority of the site will be for private use only, for residents of the barn and Abbotts Hall, visitors and deliveries. The Public Right of Way will be for public use.

Amount

The development will deliver one new access track, a re-aligned section of Public Right of Way, private footpath, 6 parking spaces to each of the three dwellings, 3 visitor car parking spaces, a vehicle turning area and two areas of nature based open spaces. Each dwelling will have a private garden space, including a patio to the front and a patio and grassed area to the rear.

Two distinctive open space areas will be created, the Wildlife Garden opposite the barn (461m² area) and the Nature Area at the south east end of the site (1,134m² area). The total area for nature and informal recreation will be 1,595m².



Proposed Site Plan by Hawthorn Design Partnership included in the Barn Conversion planning application

Layout

The layout of the external works included in this application will be broadly similar to those shown on the Proposed Site Plan for the barn conversion application, see Hawthorne Design Partnership drawing on the previous page.

There are several key design principles informing the design.

- **Minimise area of hard surfacing** – A substantial part of the large area of hardstanding will be removed and reclaimed to create a new Nature Area. In addition, the width of the existing track, which runs along the new Wildlife Garden, will be reduced, to create a pedestrian only public footpath.
- **Maintain and frame views to the landscape** – Views for residents of the barn, Abbotts Hall and people enjoying the Public Right of Way will be retained and enhanced by using appropriate boundary treatments, removal of existing visual detractors such as the large areas of hard surfacing and through new planting in keeping with the landscape character.

Residents of the barns will be surrounded on all sides by a green environment, and fully integrated into the existing landscape. Residents will be able to enjoy views of the fields and woodland in the wider countryside from their back gardens by keeping low post and rail fences. Slightly higher, solid fences will be provided between back gardens for privacy. From the front of the dwellings there will be views to the new Wildlife Garden opposite.

- **Create new open space areas for people and wildlife** - Opposite the barn a new Wildlife Garden will be created, building on the existing setting of groups of trees and shrubs. New native shrub planting will be added to link the open space to the adjacent Nature Area and provide privacy for residents from users of the Public Right of Way.

The second open space is the Nature Area, closely linked to the Wildlife Garden. Parts of the existing hardstanding will be removed and sown with an appropriate reclamation seed mix and new areas of native scrub planting and individual trees will be added. Informal mown paths will allow residents and their visitors to enjoy the space and have valuable contact with nature.

- **Discrete parking** - A new access track leads directly to the front of the barns. Parking is provided by the side of the dwellings for plots 1 and 3, visually separated by hedges from the back gardens. At the end of the road there is parking for plot 2, plus visitor spaces with a green surfacing treatment and a turning area. The location of parking minimises views of cars for residents and avoids disturbance to established trees.
- **Provide practical bike and bin storage for residents** – Bin storage will be sensitively incorporated into the footprint of the barn. This will be at the side elevations of the barn for plots 1 and 3 and at the front for plot 2.

Each dwelling will also have a dedicated bike shed for storing bikes. These will each accommodate a minimum of two adult bikes.

- **Maintain a safe, attractive route for the Public Right of Way** – The existing footpath will be re-aligned on a very similar route to existing. For the first 40m from Woodhey Lane, it will run on a new section of footpath parallel to the existing track. It will then revert to the original track until it reaches the field, as described in more detailed in Section 4 Access.

The client is planning to construction a special feature at the side of the footpath, near the entrance to Abbots Hall, to form a focal point. This will be a stone carved Pet Memorial to remember cherished animals owned by the Abbott Family and will appeal to other animal lovers using the footpath.

The developed landscape scheme is shown on drawing D234.001A General Arrangement on the following page.



Scale and Massing

The existing barn that is to be converted into three dwellings is approximately 27m long x 19m wide x just under 6m high. There are not other buildings or structures proposed as part of this application for the associated external works.

The barn will be fully integrated into the surroundings by a comprehensive landscape scheme

Character and Appearance

Hard Landscape

A simple, robust palette of materials is proposed for the hard landscape, to reflect the semi-rural location and complement the barn and existing surroundings. The access road will be crushed stone or gravel in keeping with the existing character.

The private parking spaces will be a permeable Tegula type block paving. Visitor spaces, which will be less frequently used, will be surfaced in a grass grid type system e.g. Groundtrax. This will have a low visual impact and when the seeded area is established will blend in with the green corridor of landscape between the Wildlife Garden and Nature Area. High quality paving slabs, such as natural stone, porcelain or concrete aggregate will be used for private patios and maintenance paths.



- 1 Permeable, Tegula type block paving to driveways
- 2 Large format stone, porcelain or concrete aggregate paving slabs to patios
- 3 Cellular paving grid filled with gravel to visitor parking spaces
- 4 Cellular paving sown with grass seed, to blend in with surrounding landscape

Boundary Treatments

Timber post and rail fencing will be used for the majority of boundaries, in keeping with the surrounding agricultural landscape. This will retain views for future residents of the barn to the wider countryside and also users of the Public Right of Way. A simple, timber knee rail will be used to segregate vehicle and pedestrian users on the Public Right of Way for safety.

Higher 1.5m horizontal slatted fences will be used between adjoining back gardens to retain views but also allow privacy for residents.



- 1 Agricultural style timber fencing to create visually permeable boundaries
- 2 Taller timber slatted fences between back gardens of barn dwellings

Soft Landscape

The barns will be fully surrounded by existing and new vegetation, in keeping with the wider context and to create a green environment and enhance biodiversity.

New planting will be used to provide a buffer around the barn dwellings and also link the linear strip of land between the two existing access tracks, to the new, reclaimed Nature Area and create wildlife corridors.

The landscape scheme will incorporate current landscape assets, including groups of trees and shrubs and new landscape features will draw on these. Planting will be predominantly native, with small amounts of more ornamental planting limited to front entrance areas by the barn.



Existing groups of trees and ornamental shrubs to the side of the access track



Mature trees along the south west boundary of the site



Mixed native hedgerow

New planting will include individual trees, native scrub planting, mixed hedgerows, species rich meadow grassland and mixed grassland to hedgerow habitats. The choice of species has been informed by the Preliminary Ecological Assessment. The proposals have been designed to provide a biodiversity net gain on the site.

A copy of the proposed soft landscape proposals Plan D234.003A Planting Plan is shown on the next page.

4 Access

Vehicle and Pedestrian Access

A formal access track will be constructed from Woodhey Lane to the barn, on the line of the existing informal track. The surfacing will be upgraded to crushed stone chippings or gravel laid on a cellular system. The access road will be used by residents of the three barn dwellings and Abbots Hall, visitors and delivery vehicles.

The access track will be a minimum of 4.1m wide, with a passing place just after the entrance to Abbots Hall. A separate pedestrian footpath will be provided alongside the track, leading to the barn.

Parking

There will be parking for all plots within the curtilage of the barn. There is convenient pedestrian access from vehicles to the main entrances of each dwelling.

The development will provide 2 parking spaces per dwelling, including one standard space and one which will be the dimensions of a disabled space and have an electric charging point. There will be 3 visitor spaces. This is a total of 9 parking spaces.

Service Access

A private bin store is provided adjacent to each dwelling. Bin lorries will drive down the access track to empty bins, use the turning area and drive back up the access track in a forwards direction.

The access track has also been designed to allow fire engine access to the barn in the case of an emergency.

Access to dwellings

There are no external steps or significant changes of level anticipated on the site.

There will be flush access to the entrance points of each dwelling.



Existing section of informal track to be upgraded to form a new vehicle access track running along the front of the barn to the new parking area

Public Right of Way

The existing route of the Public Right of Way will be maintained and follow a similar route to existing.

To avoid potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, a new section of 1.8m wide footpath will be created adjacent to the start of the new access road by Woodhey Lane, separated by a timber knee rail. At the point where the access road turns towards the barn, the footpath will return to the existing access track. Here the track will be reduced in width to 1.8m and the remaining strip of land will be returned to soft landscape. The footpath will continue into the field at the end of the access track as currently.



Re-aligned section of Public Right of Way to run down the side of the existing informal track. Post and rail fence to be moved over.

5 Sustainability

A number of sustainability measures have been incorporated into the proposals to ensure that the development has a minimum impact and contributes to the surrounding environment.

- The parking spaces will be a combination of Tegula type permeable blocks and a grass grid system, to promote Sustainable Urban Drainage on the site.
- The crushed stone footpaths and access track will be constructed from responsibly sourced or local material.
- One third of all parking spaces will have electric vehicle charging points, to promote more sustainable modes of transport.
- Each dwelling will have a bike store, to encourage families to enjoy the countryside and reduce dependency of car use.
- Existing green infrastructure will be retained and enhanced and disturbed as little as possible. New habitats will be created, building on existing plant communities on site and a net increase in biodiversity created.

