

PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED EXTENSIONS

Birchen Bower Farm, Harwood Road, Tottington

The Proposal

This application is a resubmission following the split decision on application 67866 on 3rd March 2022. Planning permission was granted for a single storey extension but refused for a double garage with a room above and a link corridor. The proposed garage is now only single storey.

Birchen Bower Farm is a detached house surrounded by associated agricultural land in the family's ownership. Construction is in stone with a slate roof. Access is by a private road from Harwood Road to the north.

After years of disuse planning permission (number 01/38360) was granted for the resumption of residential use in September 2002. A planning condition removed permitted development rights for extensions.

In July 2017 planning permission (number 61563) was granted for conversion of the attached barn to residential use, a two storey extension and a detached garage/workshop. The change of use has taken place and the extension erected but the garage/workshop has not been built.

A conservatory has been erected at the rear of the house. The planning permission is for the removal of the conservatory and replacement with a larger single storey extension.

If the current application is approved a garage with a greater footprint will be built in a similar position to the approved garage. It would be linked to the house with a corridor.

Planning Policy

Bury Unitary Development Plan is still Bury's development plan although it was adopted as long ago as 1997.

UDP policy H2/3 states that applications for house extensions will be considered with regard to factors that include "the size, shape, design and external appearance of the proposal" and the character of the property in question and the surrounding area".

UDP policy OL1/2 states that new buildings in the Green Belt are "inappropriate development" with exceptions that include "limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings, provided that this would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling". Inappropriate development needs to be justified by the applicant demonstrating "very special circumstances".

The National Planning Policy Framework has been revised.

- It confirms that "the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open".
- Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and must be justified by proving "very special circumstances".
- Exceptions to inappropriate development include "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". It is a rule of thumb that extensions should not add more than one third to an existing dwelling without special circumstances being demonstrated.

Justification for Approval

The previous application was refused for two reasons. Reason 1 concerned the size and design of the extension which was considered to be a prominent and intrusive feature neither appropriate to nor sympathetic with the existing dwelling. The second reason referred to inappropriate development which would harm the openness of the Green Belt.

In my opinion the removal of the upper floor of the garage overcomes the two reasons for refusal. The extension is still “inappropriate development” but a convincing case can be made for “very special circumstances”. The size and scale of the building is very much reduced

The original building had a floor area of 278 square metres and a volume of 1210 cubic metres, including the single storey out building that has been demolished. The extension added a net floor area of 35 square metres and a volume of 63 cubic metres. Although a Design and Access Statement was submitted, planning permission was granted without a statement addressing Green Belt issues.

The existing conservatory has a floor area of 9 square metres and a volume of 24 cubic metres. The replacement single storey extension will have a floor area of 21 square metres and a volume of 60 cubic metres.

The proposed garage and link corridor will have a floor area of 68 square metres and a volume of 222 cubic metres. An existing timber building and storage container with a floor area of 30 square metres and a volume of 100 cubic metres will be removed.

The combined floor area of the original house and the elements that have been or will be removed is 327 square metres. The volume is 1302 cubic metres.

The combined extensions, i.e the earlier two storey extension, the approved single storey extension and proposed garage/link equate to 50% of the existing floor area and 40% of the volume of the original house and the removed structures.

The garage is now proportionate to the farmhouse and its rural setting. Many farms have a range of buildings as well as the house. The extension is in scale with the house and will have matching design and materials. The reduction in height makes it far less visually obtrusive. It will be built instead of a smaller but smaller garage which already has planning permission and in a similar location

The house is surrounded by land in the applicant's ownership and there are no immediate neighbours. The adjacent public footpath will not be affected.

The garage in its modified form will not harm the openness of the Green Belt and it is urged that planning permission be granted.