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Application reference number	2024/0276
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Application Type	Full
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Proposal Description:	Demolition of agricultural buildings and erection of 2no. dwellings and associated driveways, garage and amenity space.
Location:	Royd Moor House Farm, Royd Moor Road, Thurlstone, Sheffield, S36 7RD

Applicant	Emma Hanks
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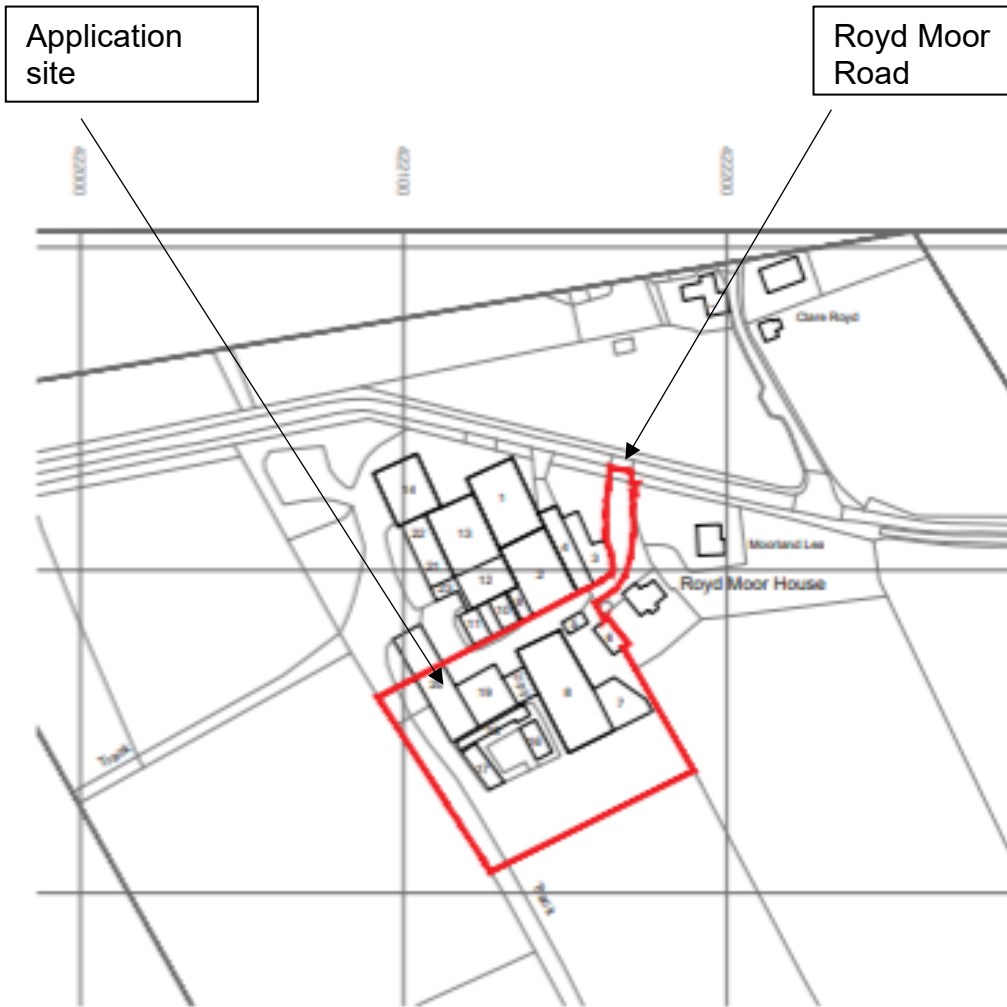
Number of Third Party Reps	3 letters of support 2 objections	Parish:	Penistone
		Ward:	Penistone West

SUMMARY

The proposal seeks full planning permission for the demolition of agricultural buildings and erection of 2no. dwellings and associated driveways, garage and amenity spaces.

The report demonstrates that any harm generated by the proposal is outweighed by other material planning considerations. The development would not cause an unacceptable level of harm to neighbouring properties, the highway network, trees, biodiversity or the openness of the Green Belt subject to suitably worded conditions.

Recommendation: **GRANT Planning Permission**



Existing site plan and red-line boundary



Aerial view of site

Introduction

This application relates to the demolition of the existing agricultural buildings on the site and the erection of 2no. dwellings and associated driveways, garages and amenity spaces. The whole site (including the land to the north which is the subject of a separate application for the erection of 5 dwellings – application 2024/0292) has existing extant permissions for the change of use of the agricultural buildings to 5no. dwellinghouses including building operations reasonable necessary for conversion (Prior Approval – Class Q) under application reference 2023/0288 and a further full planning permission for the conversion of the stone barn and agricultural barns into 3no. dwellings with associated driveways and gardens under application 2024/0068.

The applicant is the same for both this application and the application on the adjoining site for 5 dwellings (application 2024/0292). The applicant has chosen to submit the scheme as two applications but if approval is granted for both schemes it will result in 7 dwellings on the combined sites. As the applicant has been working on both applications, although this application is only for two dwellings, the plots in the application are designated as plots 4 and 5. They will therefore be referred to this throughout the remainder of the report.

The site is allocated as Green Belt within the Local Plan proposals maps. The plans have been amended during the course of the processing of the application to include design alterations at the request of the Conservation and Urban Design Officer and the repositioning of the plots to allow sufficient clearance from the protected trees set to the eastern boundary.

The proposed dwellings have front and rear garden areas with garaging, with a bin collection point adjacent to the highway. The proposed properties have been arranged around a private courtyard, accessed via Royd Moor Road and include:-

Plot 4 – 5 bed detached dwelling with detached triple garage

Plot 5 – 4 bed detached dwelling with integral triple garage, including disabled persons facilities with a pool and therapy rooms

The materials proposed include the following:-

Walling:- blend of coursed stone that includes new and reclaimed in the same mix, as used in the adjacent bungalow. This includes sawn stone jambs, mullions cills and heads, kneelers quoins and gutter corbels

Roof:- Greys Artstone roofing slates in Aged York

Boundary Treatments:- To the front areas of the development that access off the road low height drystone walls and to be provided. rear gardens boundary treatments to be post and wire fencing with native edging along all borders.

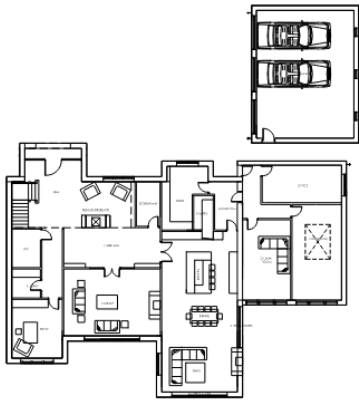
The following plans and documents have been submitted in support of the planning application:-

- Statement of Very Special Circumstances
- Design and Access Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Proposed Materials Details Document
- Ecological Impact Assessment

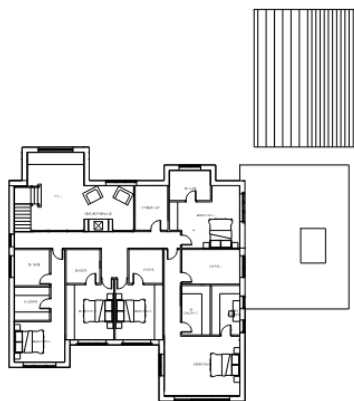
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Walk Over
- Biodiversity Metric



Proposed site plan (including planning application to the north for 5 additional units 2024/0292 subject to separate report)



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

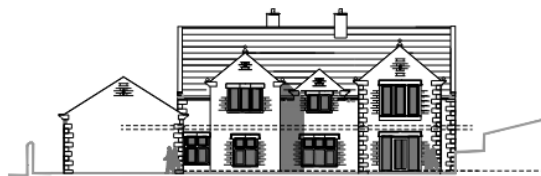
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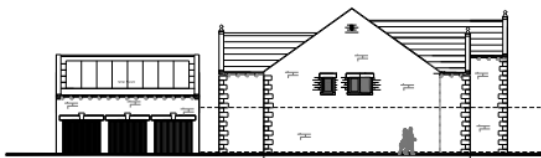
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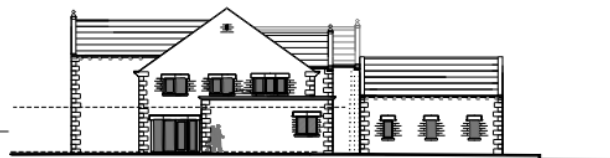
NOTE 1
PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION



NOTE 1
PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION



NOTE 1
PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION



NOTE 1
PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION



Plot 4 Plans and Elevations

Relevant Site History

Application Reference	Application description	Status
2023/0288	Change of use of agricultural buildings to 5no. dwellinghouses including building operations reasonable necessary for conversion (Prior Approval)	Prior Approval – Granted
2024/0068	Conversion of stone barn and agricultural barn into 3no. dwellings with associated driveways and gardens	Approved with conditions
2024/0292	Demolition of agricultural buildings and erection of 5no. dwellings and associated driveways, garages and amenity space	Under consideration

Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the current development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment, and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies which are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means, no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

Local Plan

The site is identified as Green Belt within the Local Plan and as such the following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

GD1: General development

SD1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

D1: High quality design and place making

GB1: Green Belt

GB2: Replacement, extension and alterations of existing buildings in the Green Belt.

GB3: Changes of use in the Green Belt

T3: New development and sustainable travel

T4: New development and highway improvement

Poll1: Pollution Control and Protection

BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents relevant to this application:

Trees and hedgerows
Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Parking
Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Design of Housing Development

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. NPPF sections of relevance to this application includes:

2. Achieving sustainable development
4. Decision-making
5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
9. Promoting sustainable transport
13. Protecting Green Belt land
12. Achieving well-designed places
14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Penistone Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019

BE1: Design of the built environment

Relevant Consultations:

Penistone Town Council – No comments received

Biodiversity - No objections subject to conditions

Highways DC – No objections subject to conditions - the revised layout for the proposed 2no. dwellings is acceptable in terms of vehicular access, parking and turning.

Drainage – No objections subject to conditions

Yorkshire Water – No observation comments are required from Yorkshire Water as foul drainage is to an existing private package treatment plant and surface water drainage is to SuDS / Soakaway system

Pollution control – No objection subject to conditions

Contaminated Land Officer – No objection subject to condition

Forestry Officer – No objection subject to condition

Environment Agency – No comments received

Ward Councillors – No comments received

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to 2 surrounding properties, a site notice was placed nearby.

The following representations were received which included 3 letters of support and 2 objections

The letters of objection raised the following material planning issues:

- Contamination and potential asbestos
- Light pollution
- Impact on wildlife habitats
- The current buildings are very high and form a solid mass of concrete and cladding which completely blocks any view in that direction from Royd Moor Hall Farm. The proposal for 8 stone-built houses would be less imposing and more attractive to look at and the space between the buildings would make the area feel much more open.
- Object to previous conversion approvals on site

The letters of support raised the following points:

- The proposal would be a vast improvement of the site
- It would be nice to see occupied homes
- The existing buildings are both derelict and redundant and a 'Blot on the Landscape'.
- The proposed development of stone built houses would enhance the view and provide much needed homes for families in a rural environment without impacting on any other properties.
- There has been no interest in bringing the farm back into use

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The acceptability of residential development and impact on the openness of the Green Belt and visual amenity
- The impact on neighbouring residential properties
- The impact on the highway network and highways standards
- The impact on the existing trees
- The impact on the ecology of the site
- Flooding and Drainage issues

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant

- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of development

The buildings are set within the Green Belt as allocated within the Local Plan Proposals Map.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- 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), including buildings, 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 (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
 - i. mineral extraction;
 - ii. engineering operations;
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

The site does not fall within any of the exceptions set within paragraph 154 above. The site, which forms part of the overall larger Royd Moor House Farm site has extant Class Q and full planning permission for conversions into 8 dwellings in total, however these applications have not been implemented. In line with the NPPF and the definition of previously developed

land (PDL), the land is not considered to be Previously Developed Land as is agricultural land. Whilst the site has planning permission for the conversion of buildings into residential use via a planning approval and Class Q conversion, these uses have not been implemented, although they remain extant and could be implemented, therefore the demolition of these agricultural buildings and development of new build dwellings is considered to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. In line with the NPPF, Inappropriate development should be refused unless it is shown that there are very special circumstances (VSC) that justify setting aside local and national policy.

With regard to the loss of the agricultural use, it is clear that the agricultural use at the site has been scaled back over the years and many of the buildings are redundant. The site contains large and unattractive agricultural buildings which have a somewhat tired and dilapidated appearance. The previous permissions for conversion to residential use could be implemented so this confirms the loss of the agricultural use has been accepted. In addition, the demolition of these buildings and replacement with high quality new build dwellings will undoubtedly result in a significant improvement to the visual amenity of the site.

Whilst the dwellings are large in scale, the current overall proposals (both applications) result in a 53% reduction in the footprint and a significant reduction in overall bulking and massing compared with the existing built form of the site. As previously stated, the overall site has extant Class Q and full planning permission for conversions into 8 dwellings in total, therefore should this application, and the associated application for 5 units be permitted, this would be a reduction in unit numbers by 1 unit and therefore be less residential activity at the site. It would therefore also have a reduced impact on openness from the scale and bulk of built form compared to the previous schemes

In terms of the other VSCs, the applicants have stated that one of the units would be built specifically for a disabled person. Given the rural nature of the site and that personal circumstances are not normally taken into consideration, this would have little weight in terms of the planning balance.

In terms of the design, the dwellings would be constructed of high quality materials and detailing, with more energy efficient materials which would provide significant benefits. As stated previously, the site also has approval for Class Q conversions and full planning permission to convert some of the buildings into residential uses, but it is considered that the design and massing of the new build dwellings is far superior than the class Q conversions, given the type of materials and overall massing of the existing buildings to be converted.

The extent of the proposed curtilage, which includes parking areas, follows the extent of the site and does not extend any further into undeveloped Green Belt. This seems a logical boundary and is considered reasonable to serve the dwellings without resulting in any significant detriment to the openness and character of the Green Belt.

Since the application has been submitted the NPPF has been changed and updated and now makes reference to 'grey belt' land. 'Grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143 of the NPPF. Purposes a), b) and d) are

a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas:

b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another:

The site is not set in a built up area. The site is set in an isolated location so would not conflict with the above aims.

d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns:

With regards to a) and b) the site is not set in a built up area. The site is set in an isolated location so would not conflict with the above aims. With regards to d) Whilst the general area plays a fundamental role in preserving the setting and character of the conservation area of Thurlstone and the historic assets within it, Thurlstone is a village, so cannot be considered a historic town. Therefore, although not a specific point put forward by the applicant, the site could also be considered as 'grey belt'.

In terms of balancing the weight given to the various factors, the fact that the site has had extant permissions for conversion of buildings to 8 dwellings and the combination of this scheme and the application for 5 dwellings under reference 2024/0292, would result in a reduction in number of units, massing and improved design weigh in favour of the proposal. The change in direction through the updated NPPF of the ability to look at 'grey belt' land and to encourage the development of housing lessens the weight against the development. Given the merits of the scheme outlined above, taking consideration of the impacts on the Green Belt, the balance of weight on the principle of the development is considered to be in favour of the scheme for this particular case.

In addition to the above principle of the development, any development should uphold an excellent and appropriate standard of design whilst not having a detrimental impact on other material considerations which are assessed in detail below:-

Visual amenity

The Conservation Officer has considered the proposal and feels that the development will improve on the existing buildings at the site and will reduce the intrusion into the landscape setting made by these large unattractive farm buildings. There will also be a degree of opening up of views from Royd Moor Road looking to the west and this would improve the setting of the listed buildings at Royd Moor Hall. The architectural details are broadly traditional and the amended fenestration reduces the impact of large areas of glazing to the south. The dwellings would also be located on the footprint of the existing buildings.

Whilst the proposed two dwellings are large, when compared to the existing buildings, this will result in a net reduction which will have a benefit to the openness of the Green Belt. The architectural style is generally sympathetic to the traditional setting (and the setting of the listed buildings) and will on balance be an improvement which carries significant weight. The materials proposed are of a high quality and therefore the proposal would be acceptable in terms of visual amenity in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1.

Residential Amenity

The proposed dwellings have been designed to meet the requirements of the internal space standards as set out in the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide and as such a good standard of internal amenity will be achieved. In terms of external amenity, the proposed site

plan demonstrates there will be sufficient private amenity space to serve the proposed dwellings.

There are two dwellings adjacent to the site, including Royd Moor Farm House and Royd Moor Bungalow. The proposed dwellings would be in accordance with the separation distances as stipulated in the Design of Housing development SPD and should not cause any significant impact upon their amenity, given that the site has been used for agricultural purposes which is a 24/7 activity and involves heavy machinery.

Impact on Trees

The Tree Officer has been consulted and has no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. The amended scheme ensures that the valuable TPO trees on the site are retained and this is now reflected in the overall layout. The site plan demonstrates that the works in the main take place outside the rooting areas of the trees and as such the construction of the dwellings should not have a detrimental impact.

The Tree Officer states that:- 'The trees in question have recently been TPO'd in light of their prominent visible location at the top of the hill. These trees are clearly visible from High Bank Lane, Royd Moor Lane, to the residents of Royd Moor Farm and those people parking to visit and walking to visit Royd Moor Reservoir as well as other roads and vantage points in the area. They were protected to ensure that the group remained long term and were not eroded through future pressures due to shading and other natural phenomena associated with trees via pruning or even removal as a result of the proposed new development. There are defects with some trees which will require their removal in the future, however none have been noted as category U on the tree information provided and the scheme has been designed in such a way as to ensure they can be retained. The TPO is intended to maintain the arboricultural feature these trees provide in perpetuity and removal and replacement of individual specimens as and when required is part of this process and as such it was not felt that these issues should prevent the protection of the group as a whole. It is also intended to ensure the trees are not diminished in themselves or as a group through natural loss or inappropriate works. The TPO will ensure a high standard of pruning is required and that trees are replaced when they do eventually require removal.'

Given the nature of the works required and the proximity to the trees, an arboricultural method statement will be required to deal with the protection of the trees. Subject to the above condition, the proposal is acceptable in terms of impact on Trees and as such the proposal is in compliance with Policy BIO1 of the Local Plan and the SPD Trees and Hedgerows.

Impact on Geodiversity and Biodiversity

Ecology reports have been submitted in support of the application. The Ecology Officer has reviewed all of the updated ecological information submitted by the applicant and is content that sufficient information has been provided and the majority of impacts from the proposal are localised and small scale. The Ecology Officer has requested a number of conditions to be applied to any grant of permission including the following mitigation works:-

- Integrated bat roosting boxes and integrated swift boxes to be installed in suitable locations within each new dwelling; and

- Hedgehog highways to be installed in all boundary fencing, including fences between dwellings. The hedgehog highways will be signposted to prevent residents blocking the gaps.

Subject to the above, the proposal is considered acceptable when measured against policy BIO1 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety

The site, which forms part of the overall larger Royd Moor House Farm site has extant Class Q and full planning permission for conversions into 8 dwellings in total. The site therefore can be developed for 8 dwellings. It is now proposed to completely remove the numerous existing agricultural buildings and new dwellings within the site but the number of dwellings would not increase from that approved by the previous permissions.. The site has two existing vehicular access points along the Royd Moor Road frontage.

With regard to the proposed site layout, each dwelling is shown to have adequate parking and turning provision within the site, emergency vehicle turning facilities are provided and a refuse collection point is included adjacent to the main site access, positioned so as not to impede visibility. In view of the above, the proposals are considered acceptable from a highways perspective in accordance with Policy T4 of the Local Plan.

Drainage

Yorkshire Water have stated that no observation comments are required from Yorkshire Water as foul drainage is to an existing private package treatment plant and surface water drainage is to SuDS / Soakaway system. The site is not in an area at high risk of flooding and the Environment Agency have been consulted and have not commented on the application.

The Drainage Officer has been consulted and whilst there are no drainage details shown on the plans, the details can be conditioned to be submitted prior to the commencement of the development.

Contamination/Pollution Control

Concerns have been raised by neighbouring residents with regard to light pollution and contamination. Pollution Control team have not raised any concerns with regard to noise or light pollution and given the permitted agricultural use on the site, it is felt that the residential use would be more in keeping and would provide less disturbance to the adjacent residential properties.

In terms of Contaminated Land, the applicant has not submitted a contaminated land report with the application, therefore a Phase 1 report is required to identify contamination risks and should be submitted prior to the commencement of the development.

Planning Obligations

No planning obligations are required for this proposal.

PLANNING BALANCE & CONCLUSION

In terms of balancing the weight given to the various factors, the fact that the site has had extant permissions for conversion of buildings to 8 dwellings and the combination of this

scheme and the application for 5 dwellings under reference 2024/0292, would result in a reduction in number of units, massing and improved design weigh in favour of the proposal. The change in direction through the updated NPPF of the ability to look at 'grey belt' land and to encourage the development of housing lessens the weight against the development. Given the merits of the scheme outlined above, taking consideration of the impacts on the Green Belt, the balance of weight on the principle of the development is considered to be in favour of the scheme for this particular case

With regard to the loss of the agricultural use, it is clear that the agricultural use at the site has been scaled back over the years and many of the buildings are redundant. The site contains large and unattractive agricultural buildings which have a somewhat tired and dilapidated appearance. The previous permissions for conversion to residential use could be implemented so this confirms the loss of the agricultural use has been accepted. In addition, the demolition of these buildings and replacement with high quality new build dwellings will undoubtedly result in a significant improvement to the visual amenity of the site.

The amended scheme ensures that the valuable TPO trees on the site are retained and this is now reflected in the overall layout and the design is of a high quality and would result in a significant improvement to visual amenity. All other material planning considerations have been fully explored by the appropriate consultees who have raised no objections to the proposal subject to conditions and this weighs moderately in favour of the application.

Having balanced all material planning considerations the proposal is considered acceptable on balance and overall would result in a scheme that would improve the visual amenity of the site and would not have a significant impact upon the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with the NPPF and the Local Plan.

RECCOMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

The above objections, consideration and resulting recommendation have had regard to Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998. The recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.