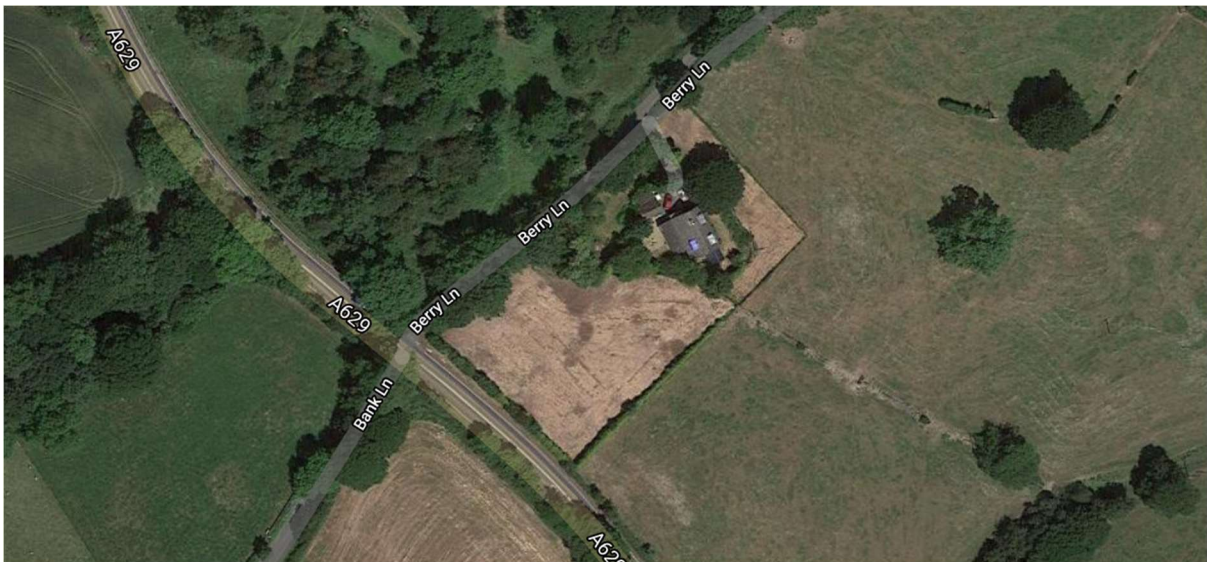


DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR EXTENSIONS AND RECONFIGURATION OF DWELLING

At

Ruggen House, Berry Lane, Howbrook, Wortley



Prepared by

SIMMONDS PLANNING Ltd.

March 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

Simmonds Planning Ltd have been instructed by Mr and Mrs Hanks to submit a full application for the extension and reconfiguration of a dwelling at Ruggen House, Berry Lane, Howbrook.

This application arises out of the applicant's previous discussions with the case officer; the applicants have significantly reduced the size of the dwelling in accordance with informal advice and also enlisted the help of an architect who is familiar with appropriate designs within a Green Belt setting.

This supporting statement will demonstrate the key features of the new design and address Local and National Planning Policy considerations.

Mr and Mrs Hanks would appreciate any engagement with the Council to discuss any pertinent points within the application.

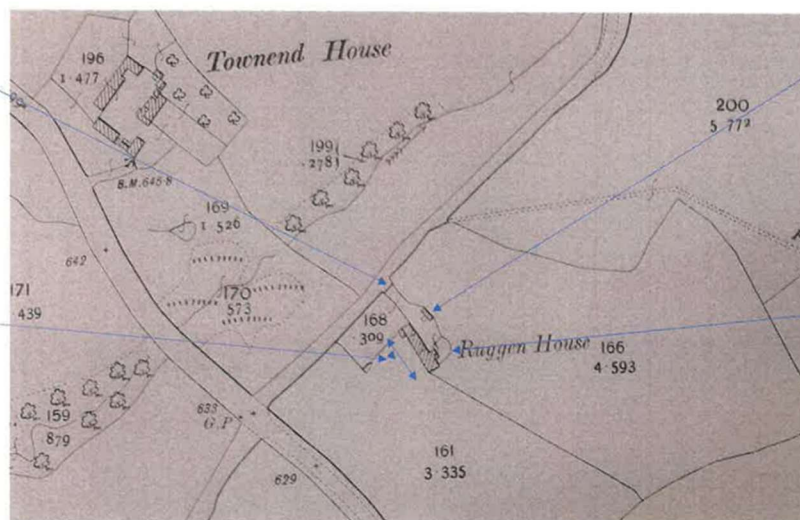
2. THE SITE, LOCATION AND BACKGROUND

The Site

- 2.1 The dwelling sits on a generous plot located along Berry Lane just as the lane meets the A629 and then follows on to Bank Lane. There are no immediate neighbours in the vicinity of the dwelling and the plot sits in an elevated position with established mature screening to the boundaries.
- 2.2 The applicant has undertaken some research into the site and its history and it would appear that there has been a dwelling on the site since before 1905. The extract below from the 1905 OS map has been annotated by my client with the pertinent boundary information.

Gates appear to measure 5.1m wide

House was 29m long in 1905 OS map



Outbuilding in drystone wall recess

Current boundary drystone wall is still in place connecting to the property in 1905

What is a worthy point to note from the above extract is that the dwelling annotated on the map as Townend House has seen considerable development over the years

and Townend House is now Townend Farm and consists of a number of farm and outbuildings. This shows an increase in development historically in this area.

- 2.3 The applicants purchased the dwelling as a renovation project for themselves and their young family. Over a lengthy period, it would appear that the dwelling has been very poorly maintained and any repairs have been remedial with no visual improvements being apparent. The applicants have found that the dwelling is very poorly insulated and has very high energy usage. Any previous refurbishment of the dwelling has been inadequate in terms of energy efficiency and the applicant has found it difficult to keep the dwelling warm and the heating costs are high. Visually the previous refurbishments have also been of poor quality with inexpensive Upvc windows, doors and cladding which altogether detract from the vista rather than complement the landscape.
- 2.4 The applicants very much acknowledge that this is highly visible dwelling in this location and the area's Green Belt status very much guides the Council on extensions and replacement dwellings.
- 2.5 With this in mind, the applicants have sought to produce a proposal which reflects Local Plan Policy considerations, and it is hoped that the Council can appreciate the efforts made with the design which seeks to be a notable improvement to the dwelling in existence.
- 2.6 The extensions and reconfiguration have been very much influenced by the design of other dwellings in the locality. The site sits close to the built form of the village of Howbrook but contains an eclectic mix of designs and materials which create an attractive vista of a rural village. The area is swathed under a Green Belt allocation which seeks to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and requires measured consideration of any development which may adversely affect this protection.
- 2.6 It is hoped that the Council when applying the local and national policy consideration can also give weight to the quality of design and the lack of harm in terms of amenity and the Green Belt to give a positive planning balance in support of this proposal.

The Dwelling

- 2.7 The dwelling, at the moment, reflects a simple design of no great merit which is of a modern style rather than any traditional vernacular which some stone cladding and some timber features and slate roof. Any original traditional materials appear to have been replaced with unattractive Upvc replacements including some cladding and the window frames. On balance the dwelling is a problematic design which does not accommodate the needs of the family.



The rear aspect of the dwelling sees a conservatory structure, which again is of no particular merit.



Rear Elevation

- 2.8 The existing dwelling has been set out poorly in terms of the interior and space is wasted and not used to its best potential and the applicants, with their young family need to make best use of the dwelling and expand in a sensitive and measured manner.
- 2.9 The Council is asked to note that in 2011 a planning permission was granted for this dwelling to erect a stable block and extend the garage on site (2011/0458). This

permission was not ever implemented, and the garage remains as it was with no additional stabling built. This is the only relevant planning history available on this site. Notwithstanding this, the existing extension to garage, shown on the block plan extract below, was demolished some years ago and has not been replaced.



- 2.10 Access to the dwelling is directly from Berry Lane by way of a spacious driveway. The extensions to the house do not decrease or detrimentally effect the parking arrangements and sufficient off-street parking is maintained for the family. There will be no adverse impacts on the highway, the access and egress remains unchanged with this proposal.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Council is asked to consider that although there is a 55% increase in volume to the dwelling, taking the volume from 540m³ to 840m³, the design has very much reused as much of the original footprint as possible and increases the massing on the first floor more that encroaching and expanding its footprint into the Green Belt. There are also energy efficiency improvements, with the introduction of renewable energy features such as PV panels on the roof and an EV vehicle charging point.
- 3.2 The submitted floor plans demonstrate the increase from existing to proposed but generally the Council is asked to consider the following summary:

- Ground Floor

The ground floor sees only a modest extension to its actual footprint as the design seeks to utilise the existing size with only a modest extension to the Conservatory, which has been modernised into a sunroom and a reasonable extension to the kitchen area to create an open plan kitchen/ diner. There is also a very modest extension to the utility room, which replaces the previously demolished projection to the garage as mentioned above at point 2.9.

- First Floor

The first floor sees the larger scale extension to what was already existing as this was the main area of concern as the space was severely restricted and unworkable for a family. The massing on this floor has been increased in order to fully utilise the modest increase in the footprint of the dwelling for the family bedrooms.

- Second Floor

An additional floor has been incorporated into the roof space in order to provide home working rooms and space for the family. This addition would not be immediately visible from the external views and the massing of a second floor has been concealed within the roof space.

3.3 The proposed layout is illustrated in the submitted drawings. The dwelling currently sits to the north eastern section of the plot with the large extent of garden falling to the rear of the dwelling. The extensions and reconfiguration result in only a modest increase in the footprint of the dwelling with the increase of massing being to the upper levels. This means that the garden layout remains largely unchanged and in terms of increasing the built form the effects are more in terms of the height and massing rather than encroaching further into the Green Belt with development. Generous garden space is retained, and the existing access and parking arrangements remain unaffected.

3.4 The orientation of the proposed dwelling remains the same and with no nearby neighbours there are no issues with privacy, amenity or overlooking. The parking and access arrangements remain unaltered resulting in no highway impacts.

3.5 The proposal does not require any removal of trees and the boundaries and screening remain unaffected within the site.

APPEARANCE

3.6 The extension of the dwelling and reconfiguration has been designed so as to respect the rural area by creating a traditional rural dwelling which mirrors many of the dwellings in the locality. The applicant has put together a document with examples of other similar dwellings nearby from which they have taken some inspiration, and this appears at Appendix 1 to this document. The external appearance features traditional roof materials and the use of stone which is often used in this area as cladding. The

windows would be a modern anthracite giving the renovation a fresh look which is far more visually appealing from the dwelling that currently occupies the site.



Current dwelling



3D Visual of the front of the dwelling



3D visual of the rear aspect of the proposed dwelling

4. PLANNING POLICY

4.1 National planning guidance and Local planning policy dictates the principle of development and the features of the dwelling houses proposed and associated works on the site.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019)

It sets out Central Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Paragraphs 7 and 8 define the commitment to sustainable development based on three dimensions:

"An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

"A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

"An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve

biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

This is followed by a commitment to a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 states that “for decision-taking this means:

- c) Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, or;
- d) 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:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 11 states that this means:

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

4.2 For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) 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:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of

particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

DESIGN

4.3 In terms of Design Chapter 12 of the NPPF refers to Design and advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Paragraph 127 sets out a number of design criteria to be considered in relation to the design of development stating:

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.4 The Council is asked to view the proposal as a betterment to what is already there. It has been designed and laid out to ensure the character and appearance of the dwelling retains its character and is in -keeping with the surroundings. Respectfully it is considered that the proposal results in a well-designed scheme with benefits to visual amenity of the site through high quality design. The extensions and amendments to the layout creates a much-needed family home for the applicants and their young family and also provides a dwelling of quality design in this prominent location. The amendments create and facilitates much needed family space, reducing energy usage and the impact of the users Carbon Footprint. The design drives towards home working and the resulting reduction in CO2 emissions along with the visual improvements on the landscape and the Green Belt.

Local Plan Policy Considerations

- 4.5 In terms of the Local Plan the Council is in the position of having a relatively new Development Plan which was adopted in January 2019. The most relevant policies are highlighted below:

Policy SD1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy GD1 – General Development – this sets out a number of general development control matters to be considered in relation to (inter alia) amenity, landscaping, access and trees.

Policy H4 – Residential Development on small non-allocated sites – proposals on such sites less than 0.4ha will be supported where proposals complies with other relevant policies.

Policy D1 – High Quality Design and Place Making – policy sets out that development is expected to be of a high quality and respect local character. The policy sets out a number of criteria which should be considered.

Policy GB1 – Protection of Green Belt – this policy seeks to ensure that Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national planning policy.

- 4.6 The most pertinent material planning consideration in this case is the Green Belt as the site sits wholly within the Green Belt. This is now addressed in detail as follows:

GREEN BELT

National and Local Planning policy states that the main aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. As such certain types of development are deemed inappropriate as it may harm the open character and function of the Green Belt. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF sets out the five purposes of the Green Belt, namely:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 145 of the Framework states that new buildings are inappropriate in the Green Belt unless they fall within the given list of exceptions. One exception is 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. The Framework does not specify what might be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

- 4.7 This site in the Green Belt has already been developed and historically has seen a dwelling in this location along with all other domestic paraphernalia since at least the 1900's. The proposal increases the scale and massing of the dwelling, without dramatically increasing its actual footprint. Local Plan Policy GB2 states the following:

Policy GB2 Replacement, extension and alteration of existing buildings in the Green Belt

Provided it will not have a harmful impact on the appearance, or character and will preserve the openness of the Green Belt, we will allow the following development in the Green Belt:

- *Replacement buildings where the new building is in the same use and is not materially larger than that which it replaces.*
- *Extension or alteration of a building where the total size of the proposed and previous extensions does not exceed the size of the original building.*
- *Dividing an existing house to form smaller units of accommodation.*

All such development will be expected to:

Be of a high standard of design and respect the character of the existing building and its surroundings, in its footprint, scale and massing, elevation design and materials; and

Have no adverse effect on the amenity of local residents, the visual amenity of the area, or highway safety.

- 4.8 Therefore the when applying the above policies, the main issues are:

- Whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') and development plan policy;
- The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT

- 4.9 The existing footprint of the dwelling is 131sqm. The extensions involved in the

proposal result in a footprint of 160sqm. The Council is asked to note that there is an existing garage building with a footprint of 34sqm which is closely associated with the dwelling and as a matter of fact and degree could be considered in the original footprint when applying the principles of the Tandridge DC v SSCLG & Syrett case reported in 2015. However, in any regard the increase in footprint is reasonable but with regards to the volume calculation may be a point for the Council to respectfully consider.

- 4.10 With regards to the volume of the original dwelling, this has been assessed as being 540sqm. The Council again is asked to recall that the 2011 permission granted for the dwelling was never implemented and has now lapsed. The volume of the proposal is that of 840sqm which is an increase of 55%.
- 4.11 The Council is asked to consider that although the volume is just over the 50%, the footprint results only a modest increase. On this basis the Council is respectfully asked to view the proposal as to **not** result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. On this basis it would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the Framework and development plan policy.

OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT

- 4.12 As highlighted above, Policy GB2 of the Local Plan also requires extensions and alterations to preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 4.13 The existing dwelling is well established and although occupying an elevated position, it is screened by boundary treatments, established green landscaping and is viewed from the public highway in conjunction with the large double garage. Respectfully, it is a domestically developed site and represent and example of many dwellings in this area which occupy their own large plot with a dwelling and other domestic paraphernalia. Based on this it is strongly argued that the limited increase in footprint and increase in volume of over just 50% does not create a harmful visual or spatial impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. The established natural boundary treatments which will remain unchanged by this proposal.

This is not a case where a development would result in an erosion of space where there are currently no buildings – the plot has seen residential development of some kind since the 1900's and the applicants firmly believe that they propose a betterment to the existing dwelling on a scale which does not erode or harm the spatial qualities of the Green Belt in this location.

By keeping within a modest increase to the actual footprint it is further considered that the scheme would actually safeguard against the encroachment of development into the countryside; the increase is in terms of volume rather than the built form sprawling ever closer to the boundary with the open countryside and the green belt.

On this basis it is respectfully state that paragraph 134 of the Framework is also complied with.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Design

The Council is asked to view the proposal as a betterment to what is already there. It has been designed and laid out to ensure the character and appearance of the dwelling retains its character and is in -keeping with the surroundings. Respectfully it is considered that the proposal results in a well-designed scheme with benefits to visual amenity of the site through high quality design. The extensions and amendments to the layout creates a much-needed family home for the applicants and their young family and also provides a dwelling of quality design in this prominent location.

5.2 Highways

There are no changes to the access arrangements and the modest increase in footprint does not affect the amount of off-street parking available on site.

5.3 Ecology

There are no ecology issues as the dwelling is used daily and the roof is sealed and maintained resulting in the unlikely event of any suitable habitat for protected species. The applicant would be pleased to incorporate additional ecology improvements and habitat such as bat or bird boxes within the external fabric to encourage wildlife integration.

5.4 Flood Risk

There are no Flood Risk issues associated with the site.

5.6 Green Belt

The Council is respectfully asked to consider the modest increase in footprint and the volume increase of just over 50%. On this basis the Council is respectfully asked to view the proposal positively as it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. On this basis it would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and does not impact on its openness, having regard to the Framework and development plan policy.

5.7 Concluding Outcomes of the Proposal:

1. Provides a sustainable attractive home.
2. Fabric first approach to energy sustainability.
3. Drive down expensive fuel costs for the development.
4. Provides a lifetime family home and future proof the design to suit their needs.
5. Regenerate the property so that it fits into the attractive landscape vista.
6. The design features quality materials which are appropriate to the surroundings and

creates a safe habitat for the family.

7. The design considers the environment to ensure a reduction in Co2 emissions and significantly improves the energy efficiency of the dwelling and performance.

Angela Simmonds

Planning Consultant and Solicitor non-practising

For and on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hanks

March 2021