

Proposed Replacement of Existing Buildings With Dormer Bungalow, At Rainbow Kennels, Woodhead Road, Wortley.

Applicant: Mr A Lewis.

This report has been prepared by Simon M Elliott - Dip. URP. of S.E.A. Planning Limited. The purpose of this report is to support the proposed development, as described above, at Rainbow Kennels, Woodhead Road, Wortley.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight the relevant planning considerations and benefits of the proposed development, in planning terms. This report is to support the revised application for Planning Permission submitted by Robert Bishop for the above-mentioned development and is to be considered along with that planning application.
- 1.2 This report takes account of the current use and status of Rainbow Kennels and the surrounding land. Account has also been taken of the current Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, where they relate to the allocation of the site and surrounding area within the Green Belt and an Area of Borough Landscape Value and to the replacement of existing buildings in such areas to create a single dwelling unit.
- 1.3 This report also takes account of other material planning considerations that are believed to be relevant to the proposed development or may have some influence on the LPA's decisions on this planning application. These include the size and external appearance of the existing buildings on this site and also the Government's current advice, as contained in PPG2, together with any other relevant advice notes relating to development in the Green Belt. Pre-application advice has also been sought from one of the Council's planning officers and the comments that have been made by the officer have been taken into consideration and a number of significant amendments have been made to the originally prepared plans in the light of those comments and it is considered that the latest plans accord with the requirements set out by the planning officer.

2. Site & Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site of the proposed development is at Rainbow Kennels, which is located off Woodhead Road, which is a country road linking Grenoside in Sheffield with Wortley in Barnsley. The existing buildings are set well away from Woodhead Road and at a lower level, but they are nevertheless clearly visible from that road. The site is also visible from Penistone Road, which is located some distance away to the north of this site. However, that road is set at a much lower level than the application site and the buildings are well away from that road and only appear as a small group of buildings from a short section of Penistone Road with the naked eye. The application site is surrounded by open countryside, interspersed by other farms and individual dwellings and there are also a number of mature trees in close proximity to the site, the majority of which form part of the nearby Greno Wood.
- 2.2 The site is comprised of an existing dwelling, together with a large number of associated buildings, which are mostly used in connection with the applicant's dog and cat boarding kennel business but also include stable buildings. A significant number of the existing buildings or parts of the buildings on this site are proposed to be removed as an integral part of this development. Over the past few years the applicant's business has been reducing more and more, which has become even worse over recent months since a number of new kennels have opened in close proximity to this site. A number of the buildings on this site have, therefore, become increasingly redundant because of the lack of demand for the kennel use and it is considered that the proposed development would represent an improvement to both the openness of the green belt and the visual amenity of the area. All of the buildings and their relevant uses are shown on the submitted plans.
- 2.3 The majority of the buildings on this site are constructed of brickwork or blockwork and were clad by the previous owner by horizontal timber boarding. The buildings are also largely covered with corrugated asbestos roofs, all of which would be removed if this development were to proceed. The buildings that are to be removed as part of the proposed works can be clearly seen on the submitted plans and the photographs that are attached to this report. The photographs also show how visible and unattractive the existing buildings are, particularly when viewed from Woodhead Road. The views of this site from the road would be significantly improved if those buildings were to be removed and replaced with a smaller building as we are proposing in this application.
- 2.4 There is a long established access drive, which serves the application site and the adjacent land, which enters the site in a north-easterly direction from the main road. The access that serves the site is already hard surfaced but will, if necessary, be upgraded as part of the proposed development, if required by the Council. However, it is not thought that this will be necessary as part of this particular development.

3. Outline of Proposals

- 3.1 The development, as proposed, involves the removal of a total of three significant buildings or parts of buildings from the application site, which are to be replaced with a much smaller dormer bungalow. The existing buildings are not in particularly good condition and appear as prominent and unattractive structures as viewed from the adjacent highway. There is sufficient space within the site for an appropriate level of car parking and a turning area on land that is already hard surfaced or occupied by buildings. The existing dwelling will remain unaltered and unaffected by this proposal and the boarding kennel business will continue but on a much reduced level, because of the reduction in trade, as referred to above.
- 3.2 The position of the proposed dormer bungalow is on the site of two of the buildings that are obviously to be demolished. The largest of the kennel buildings that will be removed is currently the most prominent building on this site, with a dual pitched roof, which is very light in colour, appearing as almost white from the nearby road and is much more prominent because of that fact. As a contrast the roofing materials of the proposed building will be dark in colour and at the present time it is proposed to use a flat profile artificial stone tile, such as Hardrow 'old stone' tiles will be similar to a number of the roofing materials on other dwellings in the locality. The particular design of this dwelling has been chosen because it is considered that the more simple form of the building, as viewed from Woodhead Road will be more appropriate to this hillside location and the dormer windows on the lower side of the roof will also make best use of the views across the valley.
- 3.3 A dormer bungalow has been chosen for this site to ensure that the height of the building is kept down as low as possible. It would be possible to convert one of the existing buildings on this site into a dwelling unit as they are clearly capable of being converted because of their structural integrity. However, it is considered that by removing all of the buildings that are proposed to be demolished this will create an improved visual feature in the countryside and reduce the impact of the overall development on this site on the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt. The applicant has also received advice from one of the Council's planning officers who has indicated that subject to a reduction in the size of the building, the proposal should be viewed favourably by the Council.

4. Planning Policy & Other Material Considerations

- 4.1 It is considered that the following UDP Policies are, in some way, relevant to the proposed development:

Policy GS7, which relates to development in the Green Belt.

Policy GS8, which relates to the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt.

Policy GS8A, which relates specifically to the re-use and adaptation of buildings in the Green Belt.

Policy GS9, which refers to protecting the visual amenity of the Green Belt.

Policy GS13, which refers to development within Areas of Borough Landscape Value.

Policy BE6, which refers to standards of design to be incorporated into new developments.

- 4.2 The following Central Government guidance notes/statements are also considered to be relevant to the proposed development:

PPS1 relating to Delivering Sustainable Development;

PPG2 relating to development within and adjacent to Green Belt areas;

PPS7 relating to Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

- 4.3 As an introduction to this statement in support of the proposed development it is considered that this proposal will have a beneficial, rather than a detrimental impact on the openness and the visual amenity of the Green Belt. The existing buildings on this site are not listed and are not within a Conservation Area. No trees will be lost as a result of the proposed development and it will not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of any local residents. It is also considered that this proposal will not have an adverse impact on the interests of highway safety. The existing access drive is considered to have sufficient width to serve this development; however, improvements can be accommodated within the site if required by the Council's highways officers.

- 4.4 The proposed development involves the removal of large and unsightly buildings on this site, which although built from Bricks and blocks have been clad at some time in the past with horizontal timber boarding, which does not reflect the traditional facing material for buildings in this area. Most of the buildings also have corrugated asbestos sheets on the roofs, which again are not aesthetically pleasing in this setting. The existing buildings as identified on the submitted plans, together with a significant amount of unsightly outside storage will be removed from the site. The new dormer bungalow will cover a much smaller area, have a much better appearance, including the proposed external facing materials and have much less of an impact on the Green Belt than the buildings that are being removed. The proposed development will also improve the outlook from the existing dwelling in the direction of Woodhead Road, which is a further benefit of this development.

- 4.5 In terms of the Policy considerations of this proposal it is considered that the development is consistent with the Council's Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, as referred to above. Whilst the existing buildings are considered to be structurally sound and are generally capable of being converted without the need for alterations it is considered that a much better form of development for all concerned is to replace them with a dormer bungalow, as proposed in this application. The development will not adversely affect the character or the visual amenity of the Green Belt or the Area of Borough Landscape Value but will be viewed as an enhancement of the area. The proposed building is considered to be architecturally consistent with the existing site and its surroundings and the curtilage of the development is limited to the existing boundaries, as outlined on the submitted plans. The proposed external facing materials are to be coursed natural stone for all external walls and an artificial stone tile for the roof. Samples of all external facing materials can be produced either before the planning application is determined for the consideration of planning officers or after permission has been granted if required by an appropriately worded condition.
- 4.6 It is also considered that with the reduction in the floor area of the kennels that will be achieved as an integral part of this development the openness of the green belt will be enhanced and the level of traffic to and from the site will also be significantly reduced. As a result of this the proposed development will represent an improvement to Woodhead Road in terms of the interests of highway safety.
- 4.7 The Council's own policies, as referred to above, together with the advice contained in PPG2 and PPS7 allow for the conversion of existing buildings to form dwellings within the Green Belt and also supports development that will enhance the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt, as this development most definitely will. PPG2 makes it clear that converting existing buildings, where no material alterations or extensions to the building are needed to make it habitable, does not represent an inappropriate form of development within the Green Belt. As there are three substantial buildings that are to be removed as part of this development an alternative form of development would be to convert them to more than one dwelling unit. However, the applicant does not want to add more than one dwelling unit on this site and hence the plans were drawn up for the development as now proposed.
- 4.8 The proposed development is for the creation of a single dwelling on a long established farmstead and more recently a business for boarding kennels, which is wholly within the confines of an existing group of buildings. This proposal will not be detrimental to the openness, the visual amenity or the character of the Green Belt or the countryside. The windows and doors and rainwater goods will all be consistent with this rural area and if necessary details will be agreed with the LPA before any works are commenced on the development.

- 4.9 The main consideration for the Council regarding this proposal is whether the development will accord with the provisions of the UDP. It is clear from a perusal of the relevant UDP Policies, together with the advice contained in PPG2 that this development will not be contrary to any of the 5 purposes of including land in Green Belts.
- 4.10 In terms of the relationship of the existing buildings that will be removed to the proposed development I can confirm that the new dwelling will cover a total area of approximately 110 square metres, compared to a total area of well over 400 square metres of buildings that are to be demolished. The relative heights of the existing and proposed buildings on the site can be seen on the submitted details. Once again, it can be seen from the submitted plans and site sections that there will be a significant reduction in the overall impact on the Green Belt when one compares the proposed development with the existing buildings that will be demolished. It should also be noted that *planning permission was granted in 1998 for the construction of an additional kennel building in two phases, measuring a total of 30 metres by 10 metres. However, only the first phase of that building was constructed, equating to 50% of the planning permission. If necessary, the applicant is willing to relinquish the right to complete the remainder of that building, which will further aid in the Council's aim to reduce the impact of development in this area on the openness and character of the Green Belt.*
- 4.11 In addition to the arguments set out above in support of the proposed development it is also proposed to carry out landscape planting to the west/south of the site. This will represent an improvement in the visual amenity of the site and also help to screen the proposed development and the existing buildings alike from views along Woodhead Road. If the LPA feels that sufficient landscape details have not been submitted at this time it is considered that *an appropriately worded condition can be imposed on a planning permission to require further details to be submitted for the Council's approval.*

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 In conclusion it is my opinion that the removal of the buildings on this site and their replacement with a single dwelling, as proposed, represents an acceptable form of development in this Green Belt location. The existing buildings are substantial buildings and their replacement with a smaller and more attractive building is considered to represent good planning practice in this particular instance. It is considered that the changes to the appearance of this site, including the removal of large and visually prominent buildings will have a materially beneficial impact on the openness and the visual amenity of this area of mainly open countryside, which amounts to a case of exceptional circumstances to justify the granting of planning permission. It is also considered that this proposal will not be contrary to any of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt as set out in PPG2.
- 5.2 It is clear that this proposal will not be materially detrimental to the character or the openness of the Green Belt. The access to the site already exists and serves a large number of vehicles into and out of the site on a daily basis and as such the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the interests of highway safety.
- 5.3 As viewed from outside the site the appearance of the buildings and the site as a whole will be significantly improved if this development is granted by the Council. The construction of a replacement building is not considered to represent an unacceptable form of development in this location, which will be further enhanced as a result of the landscaping works that will also be carried out as an integral part of this proposal. The overall effect of the new development will be that it represents a reduction in the impact of this site on the openness of the Green Belt and also a significant improvement in the visual amenity of the locality.
- 5.4 The Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development in the interests of improving the character and openness of the Green Belt and the visual amenity of this Area of Borough Landscape Value.