



ALISTAIR FLATMAN PLANNING
...a Positive Approach



Planning Statement

Proposed Barn conversion to form single dwelling

Lower Deerplay Farm, Triangle, HX6 3DT

Prepared by Alistair Flatman Planning for Mr & Mrs Harris

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant / landowner in support of the proposed conversion of existing stone barn to create a family dwelling.
- 1.2 The NPPF confirms at paragraphs 149 (c) and 150 (d) that alterations to existing buildings and re-use of buildings in the green belt are appropriate forms of development.
- 1.3 The application is submitted at a time where the LPA are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply (5 YHLS). The latest Housing Delivery Test figures (Nov 2021) confirm that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is triggered in Calderdale. Furthermore, recent appeal decisions have confirmed that the absence of a 5YHLS can be considered a very special circumstance if there is any conflict with green belt policy.

Background

- 1.4 The conversion has been informed by the Structural Report (confirming the barn can be converted together with repairs to the roof) and the need to create a new field access to higher land to the west together with resiting of spring to the rear (north) of the building. Given the location of the site, and recent high winds, the roof is in need of repair but this will form part of the conversion.
- 1.5 As can be seen on site, the field to the north west has historically been accessed via track to the front (south facing elevation) of the stone barn. However, this track is no longer fit for purpose as it is not wide enough to accommodate modern farming machinery.
- 1.6 As such a new means of access is proposed to the field so this can be brought back into use by the applicant. The creation of the new access renders the existing redundant and it will be removed as part of the proposed conversion. The removal of this access will reveal elements of the barn currently below ground and will require the south west corner / west gable to be rebuilt as part of the conversion. This element of rebuild constitutes circa 20% of the external walling and so is not considered to be a major reconstruction (mindful of guidance set out in RUDP Policy NE4). The submitted structural report acknowledges this limited element of new build and internal works required to ensure the conversion can be delivered without major rebuild / reconstruction.
- 1.7 The excavation of the redundant access track, together with the creation of new, creates an opportunity for subterranean parking / garage and a sunken garden area. Neither of these would be visible from the road or wider views across open fields and as such ensure parking and amenity space can be delivered without impact on openness or visual amenity of the green belt. This clever design solution is a positive outcome from the characteristics of the site and conversion of the stone barn.

- 1.8 In addition, it is noted that internal floor levels of the building do not reflect external levels as ground has been built up over time. The proposed conversion seeks to 'regularise' these level differences between inside and outside of the building.
- 1.9 Furthermore, to the north elevation (rear) there is a piped spring that once served the barns (water for animals) and also still serves the adjacent farm. As part of the conversion this spring will be repaired and relocated slightly north of the building so as to secure / maintain water supply to the adjacent farmhouse and buildings.
- 1.10 These elements have informed the design of the conversion and layout of the site.
- 1.11 Further details on the proposal are set out below and in the submitted Design & Access Statement.
- 1.12 This Planning Statement addresses the relevant national and local planning policy with respect of conversion of existing buildings in the Green Belt. Overall, the scheme has been sensitively designed and results in a high quality, sensitive conversion of the existing stone barn benefits the visual amenity and openness of the green belt in this location.

Planning History

- 1.13 The site is not subject to any planning history. However it is noted that planning permission was granted for the conversion of the barn at Upper Deer Play to the north west of the site (LPA ref 18/01113/FUL)

The Site

- 1.14 The site is located to the south of Triangle off Oak Lane (between junction of Oak Hill / Sandy Dyke Lane to the north and Oak Lane / Mill Bank Road / Dean Lane to the south).
- 1.15 The stone barn sits within a small group of buildings including large farmhouse with attached stone barn and more modern agricultural buildings.
- 1.16 Access is taken from Oak Lane with a large concrete hardstanding in front of the barn. Access to the east of the stone barn serves fields to the north whilst there is a narrow / unusable cobbled track in front of the barn providing historical access to fields at a higher level to the west.
- 1.17 The barn is stone built with stone slate roof. Internal floor levels differ from external levels as ground has been built up over time. Within the building there is evidence on the rear wall of former openings which now sit below ground level externally as soil has accumulated over time.
- 1.18 To the north of the building is an existing spring serving the barn and also adjacent farmhouse. There is also a large covered water tank in the north east corner.
- 1.19 There are a number of existing openings within the building (some open and some blocked up) together with rooflights.
- 1.20 Due to topography the building is split level as it follows contours of the site, hence the variations between internal and external levels.

- 1.21 The site is not subject to any landscape, heritage or ecological designations and sits within Flood Zone 1.

The Proposal

- 1.22 The proposal involves conversion of the stone barn to create a dwelling. The proposed conversion seeks to use variation in internal and external levels to create a 2 storey dwelling albeit elements will sit within the roofspace.
- 1.23 Existing openings are retained where possible with new openings kept to a minimum. There are a number of existing rooflights which will be removed (when barn is re-roofed) but proposal includes a larger central rooflight to bring light into the central open atrium of the building. This open element will reflect traditional character of a barn with open internal spaces.
- 1.24 The larger openings are retained as glass with internal layout carefully considered to utilise the existing openings.
- 1.25 As set out above, the proposal includes provision of a new access to serve the paddock to the west – this is to enable access for modern vehicles as the existing track in front of the barn is too narrow. As part of the works to create the new access there is an opportunity to create a subterranean garage into the banking so that cars / domestic paraphernalia can be hidden away.
- 1.26 The existing access track to the south will be removed as part of the conversion. The north west corner / west gable will then be partially exposed requiring limited rebuild. As such it is proposed to remove this element (circa 20% of total walling so not major) and dig down into the site so that floor levels run through with those at the eastern end of the building. This will create a 1.5 storey elevation on the front (south) whilst the rear elevation (due to higher land levels) will remain as a single storey element. The 'lower ground floor' element in the north west corner will therefore be below ground and would be tanked as part of the conversion. The internal layout of the kitchen has been carefully considered to reflect this element with a single new opening proposed to the south and a glazed western gable onto small amenity space. Given surrounding land levels neither the glazed gable or amenity space will be noticeable from outwith the site. Again, this ensures there is no Green Belt harm arising in terms of openness or visual amenity.
- 1.27 The proposed site layout has been carefully considered to provide adequate parking and turning (with opportunity to hide garage / parking in the hillside) whilst garden areas have been kept to a minimum. There would be amenity space to the western gable at the lower level as set out above with a narrow strip along the northern elevation which will be accessible for future occupants. Again, levels of the field to the north (rising from the building) ensures that the amenity spaces are not prominent and the barn conversion is seen in wider views as a single storey building.
- 1.28 Extracts of the proposed site layout, floor plans and elevations are copied below.

Proposed Elevations and Section



- 1.29 Full details of the proposal are set out in the supporting plans and DAS. The submitted Structural Report confirms the building can be converted and that the replacement of the roof and limited rebuild to the west gable / south west corner together with internal tanking and subterranean garage can all be achieved without necessitating any major rebuild of the stone barn.

The Planning Application

- 1.30 This planning application includes the following:
- Completed application form
 - Planning Statement – Alistair Flatman Planning
 - Design & Access Statement – Stoddart Architecture
 - Structural Report – Dudleys Consulting Engineer
 - Submitted Plans prepared by Stoddart Architecture:

- 1.31 The submitted additional technical information is considered sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to determine the clear merits of the proposed development.

2.0 Relevant Planning Policy.

National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019) – Summary & Assessment

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (revised July 2021) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken in to account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 2.2 Set out below is a summary and assessment of the relevant sections of the NPPF. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The guidance advises that the policies in paragraphs 1-217 taken as a whole constitute the government's view on what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 2.3 Paragraphs 7, 8 and 11 of the NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 2.4 Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives of sustainable development, namely economic, social and environmental objectives. Paragraph 10 confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework.
- 2.5 Paragraph 11 sets up the presumption in favour of sustainable development stating:

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-date⁸, 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 proposed⁷; 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.**

- 2.6 The proposal is consistent with Development Plan policies supporting the conversion of existing buildings (RCUDP Policy NE4) in the green belt. As such 11(c) is relevant and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. It is however noted that the LPA are unable to demonstrate a deliverable 5YHLS and as such the presumption in favour of sustainable development is a material consideration. This should be weighed against relevant Green Belt policies.

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 2.7 Chapter 5 of the NPPF relates to the delivery of a sufficient supply of homes with Paragraph 69 confirming the role of smaller sites in meeting housing requirements of an area.
- 2.8 Paragraphs 74-77 confirm the importance of maintaining a minimum 5 year supply of deliverable supply of housing sites. Where this 5 year supply is not maintained Local Plan policies can be considered out of date (as per Para 11 'd' of the NPPF). The LPA are unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS.
- 2.9 Paragraphs 78 – 80 deal with rural housing with paragraph 80 advising that new homes in the countryside are acceptable forms of development where it would result in the re-use of disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting.
- 2.10 The proposed conversion will re-use existing stone barn to create a single family dwelling on site. The proposal is well designed with use of stone and slate which reflect the character and form of the site and its surrounds.
- 2.11 As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle with regards boosting the supply of housing (paras 60 and 69) and para 80 as it will re-use existing buildings and significantly enhance its immediate setting.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 2.12 Chapter 9 of the NPPF refers to highways matters with para 111 advising that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 2.13 The proposed development of 1 dwelling will not give rise to any highway safety or capacity issues. Onsite parking and turning is provided as well as improvements to field access.

Design

- 2.14 Chapter 12 of the NPPF refers to Design and advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 2.15 Paragraph 130 sets out a number of design criteria to be considered in terms of 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 users⁴⁹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*
- 2.16 The proposed development is considered to represent a high quality scheme, sensitively converting the stone barn. Parking areas are retained on the existing hardstanding with garage / store set into the hillside and grassed over to minimise impact.
- 2.17 From the information submitted it is considered the proposal can deliver a well-designed scheme with benefits to visual amenity of the site and its surrounds. The Design & Access Statement that accompanies the development proposals clearly sets out how the development meets all of the objectives set out above and represents high quality design.

Protecting Green Belt Land

- 2.18 The application site is located within the defined Green Belt. The essential character of the green belt is its openness. The Green Belt serves the following five purposes (para 138);
- 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.
- 2.19 Given the compact nature of the site and existence of numerous buildings, the role of the green belt in this location is limited in terms of the five purposes listed above.
- 2.20 As such it is considered the role of the green belt in this location is limited to that of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The site however contains a number of buildings (as set out in Section 1 of this Planning Statement) together with extensive areas of hardstanding.
- 2.21 Paragraph 145 of the NPPF advises that LPA's should plan positively to enhance their beneficial uses such as looking for opportunities to (inter alia) retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity or to improve damaged land. The proposal can contribute to these opportunities for enhancement given the appearance of the site at present and delivery of well-considered and sensitive conversion of the barn together with new field access.
- 2.22 The NPPF sets out that inappropriate development is harmful to the green belt and should not be allowed unless very special circumstances exist (para 147). Para 149 also sets out the types of development considered appropriate in the green belt, this includes the following set out at para 149:

(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;

- 2.23 Furthermore, paragraph 150 goes on to set out further types of development that can be considered appropriate. This includes at engineering operations and conversions:

(b) engineering operations

(d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

- 2.24 The wider site comprises a number of agricultural buildings and farmhouse including the stone barn building subject to this proposal. The barn is of a permanent and substantial construction, all with walls and roofing resulting in clearly defined built form. Further details on the structural condition of the barn and the works proposed for conversion / repair are set out in the submitted Structural Report.

- 2.25 The proposal comprises conversion of the existing stone barn and limited alterations together with creation of a new field access to provide access for agricultural vehicles to enable the land to be managed. The alterations and sub-terranean garage building are not considered to be disproportionate additions but will contribute to the sensitive conversion of the barn. The proposal is consistent with all the aforementioned forms of appropriate development.

- 2.26 As such the proposal is considered to be appropriate in terms of principle (consistent with NPPF para 149 [c] and 150 [b] & [d]) such that it would not harm the function, visual amenity or openness of the Green Belt in this location.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 2.27 Paragraph 159 of Chapter 14 confirms that development should be directed to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk from flooding.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 2.28 Paragraph 174 of Chapter 15 advises that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: -

- *a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- *b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- *c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- *d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*

- *e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
 - *f)remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*
- 2.29 Paragraph 180 relates to ecology and biodiversity considerations when determining planning applications. There are no known protected species or ecology designations on site, the site is therefore of low wildlife value.
- 2.30 Paragraph 183 refers to ground conditions advising that when making decisions, consideration must be given to whether a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.
- 2.31 There are no known contamination or stability issues that would prevent redevelopment of this site.

Assessment against NPPF

- 2.32 Assessing the proposal against the main objectives of the NPPF, it is clear the scheme accords with the overarching approach to planning in that:-
- The proposal will maintain the supply of housing in the district through redevelopment of a small windfall site (para 69 & 80);
 - The proposal represents appropriate development within the green belt with elements of conversion and limited alteration / extension such that the resulting development will not harm the function, visual amenity or openness of the Green Belt in this location (paras 145, 149 & 150);
 - The site is not of any environmental, ecological, heritage or landscape value;
 - The site can be safely accessed and will not give rise to any highway safety or capacity issues;
 - The proposed development will not give rise to any ecological or landscape (tree) harm;
 - The site will not give rise to any flood risk or drainage issues;
 - As illustrated by the proposed layout, elevations and Design Statement, the development proposal will provide a development that is sympathetic to and reflective of the character of the surrounding area.

The Development Plan

- 2.33 With respect to the proposal, the Development Plan currently comprises saved policies of the Replacement Calderdale UDP (RCUDP) (as Amended Aug 2009).
- 2.34 It is noted that Policies NE1 and NE2 relating to Green Belt have not been saved. Furthermore, it is considered that some of the CRUDP policies are out of date having been superseded by guidance set out in the NPPF. This refers specifically to Policy NE3 which refers to extension and alteration of other buildings in the green belt. The policy is restrictive in terms of alterations /

- extensions unless the building is a dwelling. This policy is inconsistent with the NPPF which allows extensions / alterations to any building in the green belt.
- 2.35 It is noted also that the LPA re preparing a replacement Local Plan but this is still subject to EIP and so can be afforded limited weight.
- 2.36 Furthermore, the LPA are unable to demonstrate a 5YHLS and as such the tilted balance is engaged in terms of presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, the NPPF also advises that this needs to be considered against policies that protect areas or assets which includes Green Belt policy. Notwithstanding, there have been a number of recent appeal decisions where Inspectors have allowed inappropriate development in the green belt where the lack of housing supply has been considered a very special circumstance.
- 2.37 The site is located within the Green Belt but not subject to any other landscape, ecology or heritage designations.
- 2.38 In light of the above, the following RCUDP policies are noted:
- GNE1 – Containment of the Urban Area
 - H9 - Non-Allocated Sites (limited weight due to tilted balance)
 - BE1 - General Design Criteria
 - BE2 - Privacy, Daylighting and Amenity Space
 - BE5 - The Design and Layout of Highways and Accesses
 - EP8 - Incompatible Uses
 - EP20 - Protection from Flood Risk (EP14 & EP22 are also noted in drainage terms)
 - NE16 - Protection of Protected Species
 - T18 - Maximum Parking Allowances
 - NE4 – Conversion or Change of use of buildings in the Green Belt
- 2.39 Policy NE4 is considered to be the most relevant and is copied below for completeness:

Policy NE 4 Conversion or Change of Use of Buildings in the Green Belt

Proposals for the conversion or change of use of buildings in the Green Belt will be permitted provided they meet the following criteria:-

- i. the form, bulk and general design of the existing buildings are in keeping with their surroundings or can be improved in their appearance to remove any adverse impact on the landscape;*
- ii. the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;*
- iii. the conversion does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of Green Belt, and the purposes of including land in it or on the character of the countryside in general;*
- iv. the conversion does not cause traffic, amenity or servicing problems and does not give rise to pollution which outweighs the advantages of the conversion and which cannot be overcome by attaching conditions to the permission;*
- v. adequate water supplies and means of drainage exist; and*

vi. *they would not harm other interests of acknowledged importance such as the setting of Listed Buildings, the character or appearance of Conservation Areas or valuable wildlife species and habitats*

2.40 These policies are assessed in Section 3.

3.0 Planning Assessment

Principle – supply of housing and Green Belt

Housing Supply

- 3.1 The NPPF promotes sustainable development and seeks to boost the supply of housing with Para 69 of the NPPF acknowledges the role such previously developed, windfall sites make to delivering and maintaining housing supply.
- 3.2 The proposed re-use of an existing building is consistent with this guidance.
- 3.3 The LPA do not have a 5YHLS and there is currently a presumption in favour of sustainable development within Calderdale. The proposed conversion will contribute to the supply of housing in the District.

Green Belt

- 3.4 The site sits in the Green Belt.
- 3.5 The NPPF (para 145) encourages LPA's to look for opportunities to improve the character and appearance of the green belt (inter alia) retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity or to improve damaged land. The proposal can contribute to these opportunities for enhancement given the appearance of the site at present and delivery of well-considered and sensitive conversion of buildings.
- 3.6 Before looking at the barn itself, consideration is given to the proposed replacement access track to serve the paddocks to the west. The existing track adjacent to the front of the barn is too narrow to facilitate access to the paddock and so a new track is proposed within land in the applicant's control to the south of the barn. The track utilises existing topography to gain access to the field. The engineering operations associated with this work are considered to be appropriate forms of development in accordance with para 150 (b) of the NPPF.
- 3.7 With regards the barn conversion itself, NPPF Para 149 and 150 sets out the appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt. This includes limited extension / alteration of buildings and conversion of existing buildings. These forms of development are considered appropriate in principle in the green belt.
- 3.8 The proposal is supported by a Structural Report which confirms the building is capable of conversion. Works are required to repair the roof and the proposal also includes a limited element of new building in the south west corner / west gable as a result of removing the now redundant access track to the adjacent paddock. The removal of the track together with internal works to regularise floor levels will require an element of new build – this will be predominantly stone to reflect the agricultural appearance of the barn on the southern elevation. The replacement western gable will be glazed to deliver light to the building and access an area of amenity space.
- 3.9 The alterations to the south of the barn, together with the aforementioned new access track, provide an opportunity for garaging / storage to be 'hidden' within the existing banking. The proposal includes a sub-terranean garage unit with grassed roof which will then form part of the domestic curtilage. The proposed garaging solution provides an opportunity to hide elements of

domestic paraphernalia that could be 'harmful' to the character and appearance of the green belt. Whilst the proposed garage is acknowledged to be an element of new build, the scale, design and siting of the building can be considered as a proportionate addition and will not harm visual amenity of the green belt in this location.

- 3.10 These alterations are considered to be proportionate in relation to the building as a whole and will not harm the open character or visual amenity of the green belt in this location.
- 3.11 Saved RCUDP Policy NE4 reflects this national guidance in respect of conversion of existing buildings. As stated in Section 2, Policy NE3 is considered to be out of date as it seeks to resist alterations to other buildings in the green belt (i.e any building that is not a dwelling). This element of green belt policy have been revised since the UDP was adopted with NPPF allowing proportionate additions to any building in the green belt (not just dwellings).
- 3.12 Policy NE4 sets out a number of criteria against which proposals for barn conversions should be assessed. The proposed conversion, with limited alterations to the building, minimal areas of domestic curtilage and sensitive use of site topography ensures the scheme is consistent with this green belt policy. In assessing the relative criteria set out in Policy NE4 it is considered that:
- i. the form, bulk and general design of the stone barn is in keeping with its surroundings and the conversion will enhance its relationship with adjacent farmhouse / barn and result in improvements to the appearance of the barn and the wider landscape. The proposed design solutions in terms of utilising site topography ensures parking and garden areas can be screened from any public views and sensitive conversion ensures the proposal will not give rise to any adverse impact on the landscape;*
 - ii. the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction (please refer to submitted Structural Report);*
 - iii. the conversion (by virtue of sensitive design and use of topography) does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of Green Belt, and the purposes of including land in it or on the character of the countryside in general;*
 - iv. the conversion does not cause traffic, amenity or servicing problems and does not give rise to any pollution issues*
 - v. it is served by adequate water supplies and means of drainage (both mains); and*
 - vi. the proposal does not harm other interests of acknowledged importance such as the setting of Listed Buildings, the character or appearance of Conservation Areas or valuable wildlife species and habitats.*
- 3.13 The proposal is therefore considered to benefit openness and visual amenity in this regard with the alterations associated with the conversion representing proportionate additions to existing buildings. The proposal is therefore compliant with RCUDP Policy NE4.
- 3.14 In light of the above it is considered the proposal is consistent with guidance set out in the NPPF and saved RCUDP Policy NE4.

Design / Visual Amenity

- 3.15 The Proposed Development seeks to create a family dwelling through sensitive conversion of the stone barn. Curtilage areas are kept to a minimum and parking located to the south of the building within the existing hardstanding area already used by vehicles associated with adjacent buildings.
- 3.16 Existing openings are retained as part of the conversion and a replacement roof is proposed. Some of the openings on the rear (north) elevation are visible within the building but not externally as ground levels have been built up over time to the rear.
- 3.17 The topography of the site means internal floor levels need addressing to reflect external levels and removal of redundant field access will result in limited rebuilding of the south west corner / west gable of the barn. These are not considered to be major works. The works required can be carried out as part of the conversion as evidenced in the submitted Structural Report.
- 3.18 The new field access uses existing levels and provides an opportunity for the garage to be constructed into the bank and subsequently grassed over. Amenity space adjacent to the western gable will not be visible from outwith the site and small seating areas to the northern elevation will also not be prominent from any public views.
- 3.19 New openings are proposed on the south elevation to provide a glazed opening to the central core – there is evidence within the building that this area used to be open between the ‘wings’ to east and west. The lower GF opening to the south is proposed to serve the kitchen / living area in lieu of the existing higher level door way.
- 3.20 To the rear, a new opening is proposed on the north west corner to serve master bedroom whilst those on the north east corner are existing and can be seen internally. Also mindful that at the north east corner there is currently a tank under railway sleepers – when within the building there is evidence of an opening into this area.
- 3.21 Final new opening is the west gable – this gable is part of the limited rebuild proposed and will provide light / outlook for the GF kitchen / living space and FF master bedroom. This is an architectural feature that reflects the high quality design approach being taken with the conversion. This gable is not visible from any public views, including when accessing the site from the driveway and so will not be prominent or detract from the simple agricultural character of the stone barn.
- 3.22 Use of rooflights has been considered to bring light into the building. There are a number of existing rooflights, some are re-used and others repositioned to better serve the proposed internal spaces.
- 3.23 The proposed garage will be constructed in the existing banking with grass to the roof (as part of the domestic curtilage). This design approach ensures the garage (and associated parking of cars and domestic storage) is not prominent and will therefore have minimal impact on the openness of the green belt.
- 3.24 The design of the proposed buildings is set out on submitted plans and DAS. Materials will be stone and slate on the extension to match host building.

- 3.25 Calderdale RUDP Policies GBE1 and BE1 refer to design with BE5 relating to design and highways, all of which seek to ensure development proposals are in-keeping with their surroundings.
- 3.26 The proposed conversion scheme is considered to be of a high quality design maintaining the character and appearance of the stone barn by utilising existing openings. Alterations are kept to a minimum with the main area being the south west corner / west gable which are as a result of works to regularise internal floor levels and remove the redundant farm track. The proposed garage will be set into the hillside and covered and will not be overly dominant or prominent. With regards BE5, the proposal provides on site parking and turning whilst the site is within walking distance of bus stops and local services in Triangle on the A58.
- 3.27 In light of the above, it is considered the Proposed Development complies with the design guidance set out in the NPPF and Calderdale UDP Policies GBE1, BE1 and BE5.
- 3.28 In these terms, it is considered that the proposal is well designed, resulting in a sensitive conversion development that will contribute to improving the appearance of the site and wider landscape. The Proposed Development will therefore deliver a high quality of design and make a positive contribution to its surroundings consistent with NPPF and saved RCUDP policies.

Amenity Considerations

- 3.29 There is a farmhouse to the south east of the site with attached barn. There are no livestock on site. Due to layout of the site and internal arrangement of the proposed barn conversion there are no issues of over looking or loss of privacy. Future residents will also benefit from private amenity space to the west of the building which is screened from public views and the farmhouse. Access is provided to the north of the barn as well but again this is not overlooked and will not be prominent in the wider landscape.
- 3.30 RCUDP Policies BE2 and EP8 refer to privacy / amenity and incompatible uses respectively. Overall, the proposed design / layout together with location of uses relative to adjacent farmhouse ensures existing and proposed residents will enjoy acceptable levels of residential amenity. The proposal is therefore consistent with the aforementioned RCUDP policies.

Highways

- 3.31 The site is accessed off Oak Lane. The access serves the barn and adjacent farmhouse / barn together with a number of portal framed buildings.
- 3.32 The impact of the development (that is, a single dwelling) on the surrounding area will be negligible and it is therefore concluded that the development proposals could be accommodated without resulting in a significant detrimental impact upon the network. This is in line with the severe impact test within revised NPPF.
- 3.33 In terms of the NPPF (para 111) it is considered the proposal will not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network.
- 3.34 RCUDP Policies GT5, T18 and BE5 are relevant in terms of highways. In terms of car parking (Policy T18) 4 spaces are provided (2 within the garage and 2

externally in the existing hardstanding area). The site is also within walking distance of bus services on A58 with links to Ripponden, Sowerby Bridge, Elland and Halifax.

- 3.35 In summary it can be seen the Proposed Development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network. Overall, it can clearly be seen the Proposed Development is in accordance with the NPPF and Calderdale RUDP Policies GT5, T18 and BE5.

Ecology

- 3.36 There are no known protected species on site. RCUDP Policy NE16 regarding protected species is noted. However, as with similar barn conversion schemes in the area (including the nearby Upper Deer Play scheme) a condition could be added for survey work to be undertaken in advance of development commencing.

Ground Conditions and Drainage

- 3.37 The site has a history of agricultural use. It is not considered the proposal will give rise to any new issues in terms of pollution / contamination or ground stability.
- 3.38 Flooding and Drainage Policy EP14 of the RCUDP aims to secure appropriate levels of drainage for new development. Policy EP20 of the RCUDP states development will not be permitted if it would increase the risk of flooding due to surface water run off, and EP22 of the RCUDP says development proposals shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems.
- 3.39 The barn is located in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore in the lowest risk area in terms of flooding.
- 3.40 The barn is served by mains water and drainage whilst the existing spring to the north of the barn will be re-sited away from the northern elevation to ensure supply is maintained to the adjacent buildings.
- 3.41 In terms of drainage, a standard drainage condition relating to the submission of details of the foul, surface water and sustainable drainage is requested for written approval. Subject to condition, the proposal would be acceptable in terms of RCUDP policies EP14, EP20 and EP22.

Summary

- 3.42 The proposed development will deliver a family dwelling through conversion of the existing stone barn. A limited amount of alteration / new building is proposed as part of the conversion. The scheme delivers on-site parking and private amenity space whilst ensuring there are no issues of overlooking. The proposed conversion and extension are sensitively designed to preserve the character and appearance of the building and will bring the building back into active use with associated benefits to the site and its surrounds. The site can be safely accessed from Oak Lane using existing routes and is within walking distance of local services and public transport in Triangle / A58. The proposed use will not give rise to any highway safety or capacity issues.
- 3.43 As such , the Proposed Development complies with the relevant national and local planning policies and as such there are no grounds to refuse this planning application.

4.0 Summary

- 4.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant / landowner in support of the proposed conversion of existing stone barn to create a family dwelling.
- 4.2 The NPPF confirms at paragraphs 149 (c) and 150 (d) that alterations to existing buildings and re-use of buildings in the green belt are appropriate forms of development.

Background

- 4.3 The conversion has been informed by the Structural Report (confirming the barn can be converted together with repairs to the roof) and the need to create a new field access to higher land to the west together with resiting of spring to the rear (north) of the building. Given the location of the site, and recent high winds, the roof is in need of repair but this will form part of the conversion.
- 4.4 As can be seen on site, the field to the north west has historically been accessed via track to the front (south facing elevation) of the stone barn. However, this track is no longer fit for purpose as it is not wide enough to accommodate modern farming machinery. As such a new means of access is proposed to the field so this can be brought back into use by the applicant. The creation of the new access renders the existing redundant and it will be removed as part of the proposed conversion. The removal of this access will reveal elements of the barn currently below ground and will require the south west corner / west gable to be rebuilt as part of the conversion. This element of rebuild constitutes circa 20% of the external walling and so is not considered to be a major reconstruction (mindful of guidance set out in RUDP Policy NE4). The submitted structural report acknowledges this limited element of new build and internal works required to ensure the conversion can be delivered without major rebuild / reconstruction.
- 4.5 The excavation of the redundant access track, together with the creation of new, creates an opportunity for subterranean parking / garage and a sunken garden area.
- 4.6 In addition, it is noted that internal floor levels of the building do not reflect external levels as ground has been built up over time. The proposed conversion seeks to 'regularise' these level differences between inside and outside of the building.
- 4.7 Furthermore, to the north elevation (rear) there is a piped spring that once served the barns (water for animals) and also still serves the adjacent farm. As part of the conversion this spring will be repaired and relocated slightly north of the building so as to secure / maintain water supply to the adjacent farmhouse and buildings.
- 4.8 These elements have informed the design of the conversion and layout of the site.

Planning History

- 4.9 The site is not subject to any planning history.

The Site

- 4.10 The site is located to the south of Triangle off Oak Lane (between junction of Oak Hill / Sandy Dyke Lane to the north and Oak Lane / Mill Bank Road / Dean Lane to the south).
- 4.11 The stone barn sits within a small group of buildings including large farmhouse with attached stone barn and more modern agricultural buildings.
- 4.12 The barn is stone built with stone slate roof. Internal floor levels differ from external levels as ground has been built up over time. Within the building there is evidence on the rear wall of former openings which now sit below ground level externally as soil has accumulated over time. There are a number of existing openings within the building (some open and some blocked up) together with rooflights.
- 4.13 Due to topography the building is split level as it follows contours of the site, hence the variations between internal and external levels.
- 4.14 The site is not subject to any landscape, heritage or ecological designations and sits within Flood Zone 1.

The Proposal

- 4.15 The proposal involves conversion of the stone barn to create a dwelling. The proposed conversion seeks to use variation in internal and external levels to create a 2 storey dwelling albeit elements will sit within the roofspace.
- 4.16 Existing openings are retained where possible with new openings kept to a minimum. There are a number of existing rooflights which will be removed (when barn is re-roofed) whilst the larger openings are retained as glass with internal layout carefully considered to utilise the existing openings.
- 4.17 The proposal includes provision of a new access to serve the paddock to the west – this is to enable access for modern vehicles as the existing track in front of the barn is too narrow. As part of the works to create the new access there is an opportunity to create a subterranean garage into the banking so that cars / domestic paraphernalia can be hidden away.
- 4.18 The existing access track to the south will be removed as part of the conversion. The north west corner / west gable will then be partially exposed requiring limited rebuild. As such it is proposed to remove this element (circa 20% of total walling so not major) and dig down into the site so that floor levels run through with those at the eastern end of the building. This will create a 1.5 storey elevation on the front (south) whilst the rear elevation (due to higher land levels) will remain as a single storey element.
- 4.19 The proposed site layout has been carefully considered to provide adequate parking and turning (with opportunity to hide garage / parking in the hillside) whilst garden areas have been kept to a minimum.
- 4.20 Full details of the proposal are set out in the supporting plans and DAS. The submitted Structural Report confirms the building can be converted and that the replacement of the roof and limited rebuild to the west gable / south west corner together with internal tanking and subterranean garage can all be achieved without necessitating any major rebuild of the stone barn.

Summary

Principle – supply of housing and Green Belt

- 4.21 The NPPF promotes sustainable development and seeks to boost the supply of housing with Para 69 of the NPPF acknowledges the role such previously developed, windfall sites make to delivering and maintaining housing supply.
- 4.22 The proposed re-use of an existing building is consistent with this guidance.
- 4.23 The site sits in the Green Belt. The NPPF, (para 145) encourages LPA's to look for opportunities to improve the character and appearance of the green belt (inter alia) retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity or to improve damaged land. The proposal can contribute to these opportunities for enhancement given the appearance of the site at present and delivery of well-considered and sensitive conversion of buildings.
- 4.24 NPPF Para 149 and 150 sets out the appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt. This includes limited extension / alteration of buildings and conversion of existing buildings. Similarly, saved RCUDP Policy NE4 refers to conversion of buildings in the Green Belt.
- 4.25 With regards the conversion, the building is permanent and substantial whilst the design uses existing openings, with new openings kept to a minimum. Similarly, the domestic curtilage is appropriately sized located to the west and parking space is also provided adjacent to the buildings to ensure it is not unduly prominent in the wider landscape.
- 4.26 In terms of the alterations (new access track, subterranean garage and limited rebuild of south west corner / west gable resulting from removal of redundant access track and taking account of topography / internal floor levels relative to external) these are not major elements of new build or reconstruction. They are considered to be proportionate additions and will not significantly harm openness or visual amenity of the green belt in this location.
- 4.27 The proposal is therefore considered to benefit openness and visual amenity in this regard with the alterations associated with the conversion representing proportionate additions to existing buildings.
- 4.28 In light of the above it is considered the proposal is consistent with guidance set out in the NPPF and saved RCUDP Policy NE4.

Design / Visual Amenity

- 4.29 The proposal comprises a sensitive conversion of the stone barn with limited rebuild and repair of the roof. The proposal will bring the building into an active residential use and will sit comfortably on the site reflecting the character of its surrounds.
- 4.30 In these terms, it is considered that the proposal is well designed, resulting in a sensitive conversion development that will contribute to improving the appearance of the site and wider landscape. The layout of the proposal ensures there are no issues of overlooking / loss of privacy whilst applicant will enjoy an area of private amenity space to the west.

- 4.31 The Proposed Development will therefore deliver a high quality of design and make a positive contribution to its surroundings consistent with NPPF and saved RCUDP Policies BE1, BE2 and BE5.

Highways

- 4.32 The site can be safely accessed with space provided on site to park and turn vehicles. Local facilities in Triangle and on A58 (bus services) are accessible on foot. In light of the above, it is considered that the Proposed Development would not have an unacceptable effect on traffic flow and safety and as such will not detract from the character or appearance of the area. As such it is considered NPPF guidance and the requirements of RCUDP policies BE5 and T18.

Ecology / Ground Conditions / Drainage

- 4.33 There are no known ecology issue that would prevent conversion. The site sits within FZ1 and is served by mains water and drains. It can be appropriately drained to ensure there are no drainage issues off site. The site has a history of agricultural use. It is not considered the proposal will give rise to any new issues in terms of pollution / contamination or ground stability.

Conclusion

- 4.34 The proposed development will create a family dwelling through conversion of an existing building with limited alterations. The scheme delivers on-site parking and private amenity space whilst ensuring there are no issues of overlooking. The proposed conversion and extension are sensitively designed to preserve the character and appearance of the building and will bring the building back into active use with associated benefits to the site and its surrounds. The site can be safely accessed from Oak Lane using existing routes and is within walking distance of local services and public transport. The proposed use will not give rise to any highway safety or capacity issues.
- 4.35 Assessing the proposal against the main objectives of the NPPF, it is clear the scheme accords with the overarching approach to planning in that:-
- The proposal will maintain the supply of housing in the district through redevelopment of a small windfall site (para 69 & 80);
 - The proposal represents appropriate development within the green belt with elements of conversion and limited alteration / extension such that the resulting development will not harm the function, visual amenity or openness of the Green Belt in this location (paras 145, 149 & 150);
 - The site is not of any environmental, ecological, heritage or landscape value;
 - The site can be safely accessed and will not give rise to any highway safety or capacity issues;
 - The proposed development will not give rise to any ecological or landscape (tree) harm;
 - The site will not give rise to any flood risk or drainage issues;
 - As illustrated by the proposed layout, elevations and Design Statement, the development proposal will provide a development that is sympathetic to and reflective of the character of the surrounding area.

- 4.36 In light of the above, and as demonstrated on the submitted plans and submitted reports, the proposal is consistent with planning policy set out in the NPPF and saved policies of the Replacement Calderdale UDP and does not give rise to any significant planning issues.
- 4.37 In view of the above, it is considered the scheme satisfies national and local policy and represents a suitable and sustainable development proposal for the site that addresses all the relevant and material considerations. In this context, the proposal satisfies Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and it is considered that planning permission should be granted.