

Planning Application for the conversion of Calf Lee Barn to a dwelling, adjacent to Calf Lee Bungalow, Warland Gate End, A6033 Rochdale Road, Walsden, Todmorden, OL14 6XB



Forward

The property has a convoluted history and the background of this needs to be clearly laid-out in order for a reasoned judgement to be made, as to what we now consider is a pragmatic and acceptable scheme in order to make use of an existing building, which currently is vacant, in part, and partly used for the housing of livestock, leading to an unsatisfactory relationship with neighbouring dwellings with regards to their amenity due to noise and odour emissions.

An application to convert this building into a dwelling was submitted to Calderdale MBC in 2021 (Application Number: 21/00776/FUL). Discussions with the case officer, Gillian Boulton, had led to positive comments for the progression of the application, due to its close proximity (7m) to a recent application to turn adjacent outbuildings into a dwelling, with regards to the impact on the amenity of the new occupiers of said dwelling, with the concern that at the time it was used as a commercial car garage - the use has now ceased, but the applicant's building is still used as a barn, housing a

number of livestock within it. This means of course, that the impact on the neighbours is still a concern for the planners.

The problem with the 2021 application is that the Council's Highways Department have raised concerns about the access leading up to the site from Rochdale Road, due to its length (about a kilometre long), and the potentially, considered lack of passing places along the track. This point has been contested and photographic evidence of around 14 passing places submitted to the Highways Officer, to address any concern. As of yet, discussions with the Highways Officer have not led to clear agreement that this evidence negates the issues raised. This scheme identifies the existing passing places (18 now identified) and provides extra passing spaces where there is a current shortfall in provision.

However, there is a further concern raised by the Highways Officer, in that the junction on Rochdale Road, would lead to highway safety concerns, if the access road leads to the intensification of its use.

In response to this, we have stated that the site building is now used to house a number of animals (two donkeys and a pony), and they require regular care and attention. This involves daily access to let them out into the field from their stables (part of the main building), and putting them back in again, at the end of the day. This results in 4 vehicular movements per day, sometimes more as the applicant and his wife sometimes come from different places of work, which is on a par with the vehicular movements of a new dwelling. It is worthy of note on this point that the Applicant's movement up and down the track currently goes against the prevailing movements of others, whereas if they resided there, it would not (see later assessment on this point).

We are clearly therefore of the view that the creation of the new dwelling would not lead to any intensification of use of the access track, above that already existing.

However, due to the intransigent position that we find ourselves in, as the Highways Officer refuses to accept this, we decided to withdraw the last application with a view to re-submitting, emphasising a stronger argument, with details as follows.

- Submit formally annotated identified passing spaces along the track, and where there are gaps of more than around 30 metres or so, provide additional passing spaces.
- Clearly define, through argument that the use of a new dwelling would not therefore lead to any further intensification of use of the access track.

Furthermore, work has been done on site, at considerable expense to the applicant, to install a Kingspan Klargestor BioDisc package treatment plant that not only benefits the site building, but also the two adjacent neighbours. This has removed an out-of-date septic tank that fell short of EA standards. The Plant has its own building regulations application and was passed off on 14th June 2023 by CMBC. Building Control Certificate issued by Inspector Fraser Ambrose can be forwarded.

At a cost to the applicant, of £22,000, a new overhead electricity supply was brought to the building in May 2022. This involved Northern Power Grid upgrading the 1957 Transformer and Pole to a state-of-the-art storm proof transformer and pole. This will protect approx. 9 local properties from future power outages in bad weather.

The site has a 250m² pond originally built by Yorkshire Water. It is the intention of the applicant to use this as a balancing pond for the buildings surface water outflow, helping to slow the flow to acceptable levels.

The applicant has now planted 1000 new trees on the land, as identified on the submitted Location Plan. These being a mix of local indigenous species found in this upland Pennine area. They will

serve to aid bio-diversity, stabilise land and restrict surface water run-off, into the Calder valley, which of course is historically prone to flooding.

The proposed scheme indicates solar panels on the roof, and subject to future permission, the applicant is keen to consider a wind turbine, as a clean source of sustainable energy. It is of geographical note that the property is on the opposite side of the valley to Crook Hill Wind Farm.

Drinking water can be attained from a borehole well within the land ownership.

This building would be as clean, and self-sufficient as is reasonably possible to attain. There would be no impact on infrastructure for sewage, water, or power. A truly net zero example of what the government is trying to achieve. Super insulated and built to the new building regulations.

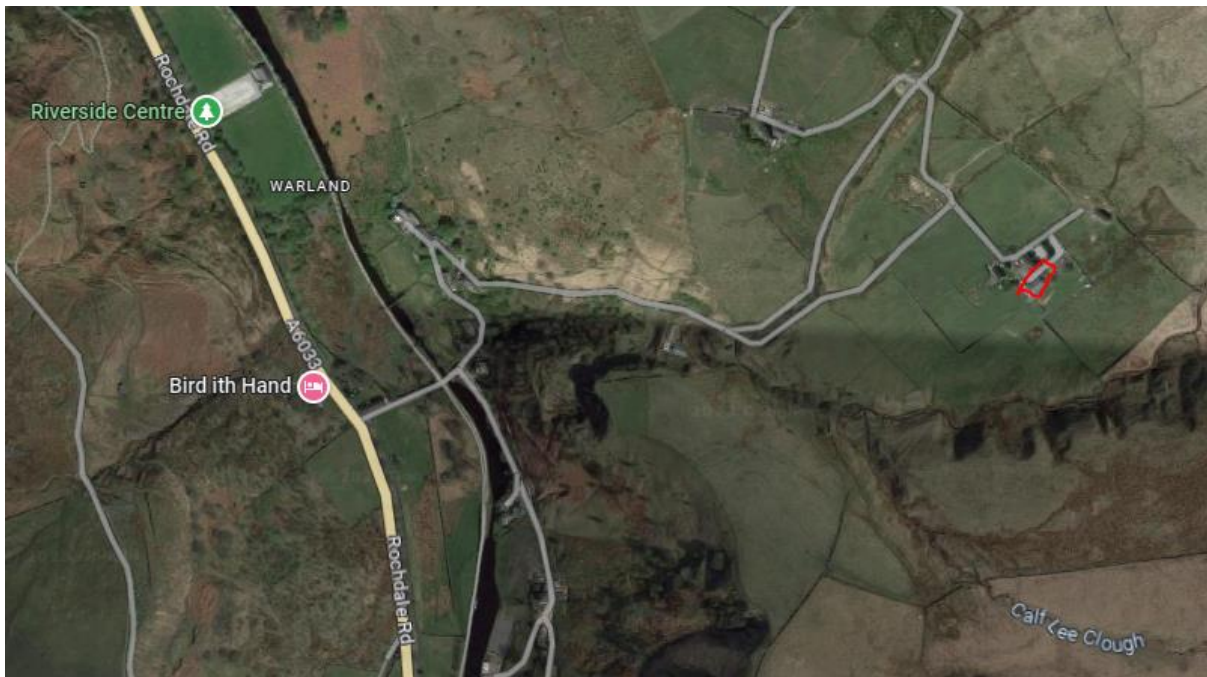
With regards to the planning merits of the site, the planning officer is in broad agreement that the site can, and could be viewed as acceptable, as a balancing argument against the highways concerns, taking into the fact that as it is sited within 7 metres of an existing dwelling, there are existing noise and odour concerns that will impact on the amenity of adjacent occupiers.

It is clear that there is an impasse between the desires of the planners to offer support for the application, subject to amendments to the proposal, which we have addressed here in this revised scheme, and the concerns of the Highways Officer with regards to passing places and the existing junction on Rochdale Road. The passing places have been addressed through this application, and we have put forward mitigation as to why the access onto Rochdale Road is not as significant as previously outlined by the Highways Officer.

In summary, we would suggest that the benefits of the proposal outweigh any existing concerns raised by the junction situation with Rochdale Road.

We are of the opinion that as there is nothing that we can do to improve the existing access on Rochdale Road, and that this still may cause a minor concern with Highways – although it needs to be taken into account that permission for one further dwelling would not materially change the circumstances of a road junction deemed potentially inadequate in design. We therefore have to find ways to mitigate any potential or perceived harm, accordingly. In this proposal we have outlined the factors that weigh in the proposal's favour, such as identifying the passing places along the track, the environmental and amenity expenses already addressed by the applicant, and the issue that vehicular movements are very much dependant on the hours of the day, and forms a direction of traffic to generally reflect this. **Moreover, there appears to be a difference of opinion between the planners and Highways in how they view the proposal and therefore this matter can only really be resolved by requesting that the application is presented to a forthcoming planning committee meeting.**

Location of site



Proposal site outlined in red. Google.

The site is located approximately 2.5km to the south east of Walsden, within the sparsely settled hamlet of Warland. Access is from Warland Gate End, a single track road, about a kilometre long, linking the site with Rochdale Road, to the west.

There are a number of dwellings accessed from Warland Gate End, with the proposal site at the end of a spur, with two other properties in close proximity to it.



Proposal site outlined in red. Google.

Existing Building

The building is a substantial structure, having a concrete slab floor, walls of insulated blockwork and timber cladding, and a roof of profiled metal sheeting. It sits within a small group known as Calf Lee. The building has been in situ since 2013, and until recently has been used as a car showroom. It is now occupied by two ponies and a donkey.

The building is a substantial, permanent structure, capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding.

Policies and Guidance

National Planning Policy Guidance.

Calderdale Local Plan

NPPF

Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
Chapter 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Chapter 11 – Making Effective Use of Land
Chapter 12 – Achieving well designed places

CMBC Policies of relevance:

SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable development
SD2 Housing Requirement
CC2 Flood Risk Management
CC3 Water Resource Management
CC5 Supporting Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
BT1 High Quality Inclusive Design
BT2 Privacy, Daylighting and Amenity Space
BT3 Landscaping
BT4 The Design and Layout of Highways and Accesses
GB2 Development in the Area Around Todmorden
GN3 Natural Environment
GN4 Landscape
GN5 Trees
EN3 Environmental Protection

Supplementary Planning Documents

Biodiversity Net Gain SPD

History

Current Site – Calf Lee Barn

21/00776/FUL – Conversion of detached building to a dwelling – this application was Withdrawn on 30 May 2023, after being submitted on 29 May 2021. This delay was due to a highways concern being raised about access to the site and the lack of details of available passing places.

Calf Lee Bungalow

18/01281/CON was approved for Conversion of domestic garage, attached garden buildings and ancillary out-buildings to dwelling on the 28th February 2019.

20/01568/REM -Removal of condition 5 (Ancillary Use) of planning permission 18/01281/CON adjacent building confirmed non-agricultural and non-equine use. Calf Lee House.

The adjacent building was considered to be sustainably located based on the following extract from the Officer's report on the assessment of the 2018 application.

'The site lies in an elevated rural location on land to the north-east of the host dwelling Calf Lee House approximately 3km from the village of Walsden and as such was considered to be quite isolated. However, the proposal would re-use existing buildings and looked to contain the development within an existing boundary. No further increase in volume was proposed and the footprint and height remained the same.'

A similar assessment can be attached to the current conversion application.

Policies and Guidance

Guidance in the NPPF

Sustainability

*The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27 March 2012 and amended in February 2019, and then again in 2021. At the heart of the NPPF is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision -taking.*

11. For decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted (for example, those policies relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives, and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park (or the Broads Authority); designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion).

Determining applications

47. *Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.*

Identifying land for homes

68. *Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of: a) specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period; and*

b) *specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.*

69. *Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:*

a) *identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;*

b) *use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;*

c) *support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and*

d) *work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.*

75. *A five year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the appropriate buffer, can be demonstrated where it has been established in a recently adopted plan, or in a subsequent annual position statement which:*

a) *has been produced through engagement with developers and others who have an impact on delivery, and been considered by the Secretary of State; and*

b) *incorporates the recommendation of the Secretary of State, where the position on specific sites could not be agreed during the engagement process.*

Efficient Use of Land

124. *Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:*

a) *the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*

b) *local market conditions and viability;*

c) *the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*

d) *the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*

e) *the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.*

125 c) *local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).*

Siting

130. *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 users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

Trees

131. *Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.*

Design

134. *Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:*

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or*
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*

The proposed scheme is considered to accord with all relevant parts of the guidance paragraphs, as identified above, in the NPPF.

Housing Issues with regards to Calderdale MBC

The requirement to maintain a rolling 5-year supply of deliverable land for housing is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance

(PPG). The current position is that Calderdale has 2 years housing supply. Paragraph 11, footnote 7 of the NPPF establishes that, for applications involving the provision of housing, the policies which are most important for determining the application should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The weight attributed to not having a five year supply should reflect paragraph 11 of the NPPF taking forward the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” and decisions based on whether a proposal is consistent with the policies set out in the NPPF when taken as a whole. The references in policies H2 and H9 (of the previous Calderdale UDP) to green field sites are not up-to-date because they are inconsistent with the NPPF (the NPPF encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed; however it does not prohibit the development of green field sites), and the Council does not currently have a five year supply of housing.

The conversion of this windfall site provides a small contribution to housing provision in Calderdale.

Principle of Development

Policy SD1 of the new Calderdale Local Plan reflects guidance in paragraph 11 of the NPPF with regards to giving a presumption in favour of sustainable development for new development, as outlined below;

Policy SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

I. As a means of securing sustainable development the Council will:

a. Work pro-actively with applicants in order to find solutions so that applications can be approved wherever possible;

b. When considering development proposals, take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework

II. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

III. Where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are the most important for determining the application are out of date, the Council will grant permission unless:

a. The application of policies in the National Planning Policy Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

b. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.

We would wish to show in this planning support statement that the benefits of this scheme demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts of the development proposed, and that the proposal can therefore be supported.

Development in the Area Around Todmorden

Policy GB2 states that development proposals which are considered appropriate will generally be supported providing that they do not have a negative impact upon the openness or character of the countryside. Types of appropriate development are ;

- The reuse and adaptation of existing buildings, and

- Limited infilling, or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land ... which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the countryside than the existing development.

The proposal is to convert an existing commercial/agricultural building into a new dwelling, utilising the existing footprint, scale and height accordingly.

The proposal therefore accords with Policy GB2 of the Calderdale Local Plan.

The principle of Development is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Layout and Design

Policy BT1 refers to 'High Quality Inclusive Design', where good design should demonstrate a holistic approach to design quality.

The footprint of the existing barn will be utilised in its entirety, and the scale and massing maintained with the proposed conversion. The curtilage to the new dwelling will be limited to grassed areas to the north-east and south-east of the dwelling, as identified on the proposed site plan.

The layout of the dwelling is for a three bedroomed unit, over a single ground floor.

The materials proposed are for local natural stone for the corners of the building with vertical cladding of western red cedar. Windows and doors will be triple glazed black aluminium. Roof materials are Tapco lightweight recycled plastic slates – specifically designed for low angled pitched roofs.

Residential Amenity

Policy BT2 of the Local Plan, states that 'development proposals should not result in a significant adverse impact on the privacy, daylighting and private amenity spaces for existing and prospective residents and other occupants'.

There are two adjacent existing dwellings, close to the proposal. Calf Lee House is some 20m to the north-west, but Calf Lee Barn is only about 7m away from the proposal.

The Officer's report in 2018 for Calf Lee Bungalow, identified the use of the current building, the subject of the present application, and referred to it in the following text;

'The host dwelling also has a building located to the south-east of the site which at the time was believed to be an agricultural along with a stable building located to the south-east of the proposed dwelling at a distance of between approximately 6-8m. The proposed dwelling would have bedroom patio doors and windows facing the barn and stables. In terms of amenity this would not meet the guidance between this type of building and a dwelling that was not in the same ownership. Furthermore, Annex A suggests a distance of 9m between a secondary window and blank elevation/non-habitable room. Given this if the proposed dwelling was to be sold on to a different owner to that of Calf Lee House, there could be amenity issues in terms of odours and visual amenity.

However, following the approval it has come to light that the building has only been used for the storage of cars and not been used in relation to agriculture and has been in place the necessary time to be lawful. The attached stables are no longer in use.

The agent has also clarified that the distance between the two buildings is 7.8m -8.1m a shortfall of 1m. They have also pointed out that there is some flexibility with distances under Annex A.

A different agent has submitted a planning application to convert the storage building and attached stables which has not yet been validated but does show there to be no habitable room windows which would face the bedroom windows in the current conversion.

Although there is nothing to state that the barn couldn't be used as a barn in the future, on balance and the fact that an application has been submitted on the adjacent building and stables, it is considered that sufficient information has been submitted to overcome the need for the tied condition. Furthermore, any future occupier of the dwelling would be aware of the close proximity of the storage building and stables.

The proposal to remove the tied condition would therefore on balance satisfy RCUDP policies BE2 and EP8'.

The design of the proposal has since been amended, so that there are now no habitable windows facing Calf Lee Bungalow. The only openings are for a door and its adjacent window and for a WC – all of which are shown as obscure glazed.

Calf Lee Bungalow has several bedroom windows facing the proposal and therefore a tied condition was added to the 2018 permission, although this was later rescinded, through the 2020 permission – which was granted on the basis of the occupiers being aware that the barn could be used for livestock purposes in the future. This clearly, would if used as such, potentially create an odour nuisance to the occupiers of Calf Lee Bungalow, a matter that would be addressed through support for the current proposal to convert this barn into a dwelling.

Access and Parking

Access

The site is accessed by a single lane track, Warland Gate End, about 1 kilometre in length from the junction with Rochdale Road.

Concerns have been raised by the Highways Officer on the last application, which was subsequently withdrawn. The concerns raised, were based on the extent of single track road and the perceived lack of passing places, or pedestrian footway along this track. Furthermore, concerns were also raised by the junction onto Rochdale Road, which as this is also single track, it is considered by highways as inappropriate to accommodate any further extra vehicular use, above existing.

Passing Places

We have submitted a numbered plan drawing showing 18 passing places along the length of the access track from Rochdale Road to the site. Towards the middle of the track length (between places 15 & 16), we have added two extra new passing places, to fill-in gaps along the track where existing passing places cannot be currently attained. With support for the application, these places (P1 & P2) can be conditioned to be put in place prior to occupation, if considered necessary. These identified places are supported by a set of identified photographs, numbered accordingly. Although none of the existing passing places identified are formalised passing places, they are currently used by existing vehicles and are adequate for purpose in their capacity to accommodate a standard vehicle.

Although the track is a designated footpath, it is not used by large numbers of walkers, and there is ample space for pedestrians to step off the track to accommodate any passing vehicles, as and when required. There are no parking places along this track, after the canal area, and therefore any existing vehicular use is that of existing occupiers along the track, visitors to their respective residences and any associated business use to those places accordingly. There is therefore no use by any other third party vehicles.

There are 14 existing occupied properties using this access road, after passing place No. 2, up to the proposal site. However 3 of these are opposite passing place No.2, with a further 4 accessed before getting to passing place No.8. This leaves only 7 properties after passing place No.8, whose users are served by 10 existing passing places plus an option to provide the two extra spaces proposed (if required). This clearly suggests that the extra dwelling, now proposed, will not lead to a significant increase in traffic concerns along the track.

The numbered passing spaces, as shown, generally take into account bends in the track, where any close contact meeting could occur, which would allow one of the facing vehicles to reverse only a small distance to allow the other vehicle to pass safely. As the vast majority of vehicle occupiers will either be residents or already know the track, through previous visits (friends or commercial delivery drivers) then appropriate action to pass others, accordingly, would be taken.

Furthermore, the movement of traffic along the track would tend to correspond to normal human behaviour, taking into account social patterns of movement. For example, there would tend to be a general outward flow of traffic down-hill in a westwards direction, during the first part of the day (7am to 1pm) and the reverse movement from early/mid-afternoon onwards, as people leave and return from social/work activities. This would of course, mean that vehicles actually meeting each other will and would, be minimal.

Junction at Rochdale Road



Rochdale Road junction with Warland Gate End. Google.

Comments from the Highways Officer, in the previous withdrawn application, also made reference to a concern with the junction on Rochdale Road.

The Highways officer has accepted that the sight lines at this junction are adequate and therefore complies with guidance in the Manual for Streets Document, used as a guide by CMBC. However, their concern is with the 100m or so of straight road along Warland Gate End, up to the canal bridge. The concern being that vehicles meeting each other along this stretch of track will result in one of them having to potentially reverse some distance to accommodate the other vehicle.

I would suggest that in many cases of vehicular meetings along this stretch, one of the vehicles would only need to reverse a short distance to accommodate the other. One to a passing bay on the western edge of the canal, the other on the belmouth junction, close to Rochdale Road.

There is nothing more the Applicant can do to physically address this potential highway concern, and therefore this situation has to be weighed against the benefits of bringing the building into a habitable use, with the benefits of its considerable merits as outlined within this statement.

We have identified a large number of passing places, along the length of the track, and suggested a further two spaces, if required, and we would contend that the access for users along the track is therefore reasonable. With regards to the extra use of the access itself, we would wish to state that, as the Applicant's have control over the occupation of the building, and now house three ponies within it, they both currently access the site from their home in Kirklees on a daily basis. Therefore the proposal would not amount to any further intensification of use of the access above what is currently existing. Furthermore it is possible that the use of the site for its previous commercial activity could re-occur at any future point, leading to a further increase in vehicular activity, above and beyond that of the single dwelling, currently proposed.

We would wish to conclude that there is no actual intensification of the use of the access track and therefore the highway concern regarding the junction with Rochdale Road is not a reasonable objection to make, when weighed against the other positive factors that support this scheme.

Parking

Two parking spaces are proposed on site, with adequate turning opportunity and designated EV charging points accordingly.

Landscaping

The land proposed for amenity space and parking is land currently either hard-surfaced or occupied by unsightly structures, so there is no question of a deterioration in the quality of the landscape as a result of the proposal. On the contrary, the proposal allows a future user to improve the visual amenity of the land as part of a domestic curtilage.

Foul Drainage

It is proposed to use an already approved Bio-Disc system that is capable of dealing with the additional load. An FDA1 form has been submitted in this respect.

Surface Water Drainage

Water from the roof, of Calf Lee Barn, currently drains to ground in the vicinity of the building. This proposal intends that water to drain to a soakaway in an existing pool in the field to the west instead. No SUDS Form is necessary as no additional impermeable areas are proposed.

Bats

A Self Assessment Form is submitted with this application. However, the building is at 280m in altitude, not adjacent to any watercourse or group of trees, and it is only 10 years old. It is open to the roof internally and has been used for the storage and showing of cars since its completion, so the habitat is not conducive to bat roosting. I have included photographs with the application, showing the internal layout of the building.

Bins

A bin storage area for 6 bins is shown on the proposed site plan.

A Transit-sized vehicle collects rubbish and recycling material from Calf Lee House on a weekly basis. It is anticipated that this situation will continue for the existing and proposed new dwelling.

Biodiversity

With regards to increasing biodiversity on the site we include with the red line location plan, details showing (black hatching) of new tree planting. The trees are indigenous upland species.

This large number of indigenous trees, over 1,000 in total, significantly aids the increase in biodiversity for this upland site. Furthermore they help to provide stability to the side of the adjacent beck, and also restricts water run-off into the Calder Valley.

The biodiversity net gain is well in excess of the 10% sought for new development.

As the new tree planting is more than adequate to address any concerns regarding bio-diversity net gains, and the proposal is for a conversion of an existing building, with no further buildings proposed, it is considered that a further Bio-diversity assessment is not required with this proposal.

Energy

We have shown on the submitted plans that one roof slope of the building will provide a large degree of solar panels, and we also wish to state that the property will not benefit from the burning of oils, or any other fossil fuels, therefore further limiting any fuel delivery to the site. The Applicant intends to progress at some point with an air/ground source heat pump, to further meet energy needs.

The proposal will therefore be a carbon-neutral development.

Summary

This application has been submitted after discussions with the Planning Officer and the Highways Officer, as a result of the concerns raised with the previous application – which was withdrawn due to an impasse between the case officer and Highways on how to determine the application, taking into account Highways reluctance to agree that the proposal would not lead to an intensification of use on the road network.

We have sought in this application to address the highway concerns raised.

Firstly, by assessing the existing amount of actual, and realistic, passing places along the track in its entirety, totalling 18 places, which are currently open to users of the track, as numbered accordingly on the submitted drawing. Furthermore, we have identified two further new passing places that can be achieved on land under the Applicant's control, and if considered necessary, we will be happy to accept a condition for the two extra places to be provided prior to occupation of the dwelling.

The concern with the junction at Rochdale Road is clearly an on-going current concern with Highways. However, it has been this way for many decades, and, as far as we are aware, there have been no major traffic accidents at this junction to suggest that it is 'dangerous' for current users, just not ideal.

We are aware that over recent years, there has only been one or two new dwellings built along Warland Gate End, with a total now of 14 dwellings, and realistically one extra dwelling added to this is arguably not materially significant. We would wish to qualify this point by the mitigation arguments that we have put forward in this planning support statement. These being that, we have identified 18 (+2) passing places, suggested, that users of the track know the road and the passing places, and that traffic movement will tend to follow daily set directional patterns, minimising meetings.

The building itself is structurally sound and capable of conversion, and the layout proposed, serves to respect the close setting to Calf Lee Bungalow, with only obscure glazed non-habitable room windows facing the adjacent dwelling.

We have also outlined the many merits of this scheme that serve to outweigh any perceived, or actual concerns, with the junction situation at Rochdale Road.

In summary, these being,

- The identification of a large number of passing places, with distances shown between them, with two extra passing places in the large gap, as shown.
- A bio-disc disposal system currently built on site – which also benefits the neighbouring dwelling.
- Surface water run-off to a balancing pond on site.
- Upgraded electricity connections for the proposal and the two neighbouring dwellings – now in situ and paid for by the Applicant.
- Environmental gains with solar panels for the roof of the new dwelling.
- A large number of new trees already planted, to the south and west of the site, to enhance biodiversity, structural support for the land and also an aid to reduce water run-off into the Calder Valley.

The proposal is considered acceptable with regards to a balance on sustainability based on the LPA's assessment of the conversion of the adjacent building (Calf Lee Bungalow).

The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion, with only minimal alterations and provides good, and positive design, and therefore accords with guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant Local Plan policies.

The proposal accords with all relevant Local Plan policies and we would welcome the support from the LPA on this proposal.