
Case Number	18/02208/FUL (Formerly PP-07002574)
Application Type	Full Planning Application
Proposal	Change of use of commercial building to form 2no. dwellings including provision of a horse riding arena and private stabling
Location	6 Stone Lane Sheffield S13 7BR
Date Received	07/06/2018
Team	City Centre and East
Applicant/Agent	Stainton Planning
Recommendation	Grant Conditionally

Time limit for Commencement of Development

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Approved/Refused Plan(s)

2. The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents:

ML/SL/LP/01 - Location Plan
ML/SL/PFP/01A - Proposed Floor Plans
ML/SL/PE/A1/01C - Proposed Elevations
ML/SL/RSE/A1/02 - Retained Structure Elevations
743 SEL 03 - Tree Protection Plan
743 SLE 04 Rev C - Landscape Masterplan
Skyline Architectural Fabrications Chisel Eaves Profile

Reason: In order to define the permission.

Pre Commencement Condition(s) – ('true conditions precedent' – see notes for definition)

3. Any intrusive investigation recommended in the Phase I Preliminary Risk Assessment Report shall be carried out and be the subject of a Phase II Intrusive Site Investigation Report which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being commenced. The Report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR 11 (Environment Agency 2004).

Reason: In order to ensure that any contamination of the land is properly dealt with and the site is safe for the development to proceed, it is essential that this condition is complied with before the development is commenced.

4. Any remediation works recommended in the Phase II Intrusive Site Investigation Report shall be the subject of a Remediation Strategy Report which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being commenced. The Report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR11 (Environment Agency 2004) and Local Planning Authority policies relating to validation of capping measures and validation of gas protection measures.

Reason: In order to ensure that any contamination of the land is properly dealt with and the site is safe for the development to proceed, it is essential that this condition is complied with before the development is commenced.

5. No development shall be begun until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: In the interests of minimising the impact of the development and mitigating its impact on the open space, the Green Belt and Area of Natural History Interest surrounding the site.

6. No development shall commence until full details of measures to protect the existing trees to be retained, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved measures have thereafter been implemented. These measures shall include a construction methodology statement and plan showing accurate root protection areas and the location and details of protective fencing and signs. Protection of trees shall be in accordance with BS 5837, 2012 (or its replacement) and the protected areas shall not be disturbed, compacted or used for any type of storage or fire, nor shall the retained trees, shrubs or hedge be damaged in any way. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing when the protection measures are in place and the protection shall not be removed until the completion of the development.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the identified trees on site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to trees is irreversible.

7. No development shall commence until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, including short, medium and long term aims and objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all distinct areas, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan shall thereafter be implemented as approved.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the biodiversity of the site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to existing habitats is irreversible.

8. No development shall commence until full details of the proposed surface water drainage design, including calculations and appropriate model results, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include the arrangements and details for surface water infrastructure management for the life time of the development. The scheme shall detail phasing of the development and phasing of drainage provision, where appropriate. The scheme should be achieved by sustainable drainage methods whereby the management of water quantity and quality are provided. Should the design not include sustainable methods evidence must be provided to show why these methods are not feasible for this site. The surface water drainage scheme and its management shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. No part of a phase shall be brought into use until the drainage works approved for that part have been completed.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development and given that drainage works are one of the first elements of site infrastructure that must be installed it is essential that this condition is complied with before the development commences in order to ensure that the proposed drainage system will be fit for purpose.

Other Pre-Commencement, Pre-Occupancy and other Stage of Development Condition(s)

9. No demolition and/or construction works shall be carried out unless equipment is provided for the effective cleaning of the wheels and bodies of vehicles leaving the site so as to prevent the depositing of mud and waste on the highway. Full details of the proposed cleaning equipment shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before it is installed.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian and cycle safety and the amenities of the locality.

10. Details of all proposed external materials and finishes, including samples when requested by the Local Planning Authority, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before that part of the

development is commenced. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

11. The existing landscaped areas within the site shall be retained as shown on Tree Protection Plan 743 SEL 03. Any damage during construction / demolition works shall be made good by reinstating to the condition/appearance prior to the commencement of the works.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

12. Upon completion of any measures identified in the approved Remediation Strategy or any approved revised Remediation Strategy a Validation Report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be brought into use until the Validation Report has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Validation Report shall be prepared in accordance with Contaminated Land Report CLR11 (Environment Agency 2004) and Sheffield City Council policies relating to validation of capping measures and validation of gas protection measures.

Reason: In order to ensure that any contamination of the land is properly dealt with.

13. Before the dwellings are occupied details of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter external lighting shall only be installed and operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of minimising the impact of the development on the green belt and the wildlife using the surrounding woodland.

14. A detailed soft landscaping scheme showing plant species, sizes, densities, maintenance and aftercare proposals for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any above ground works commence, or within an alternative timeframe to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and mitigating the ecological impact.

15. The approved landscape works shall be implemented prior to the development being brought into use or within an alternative timescale to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the landscaped areas shall be retained and they shall be cultivated and maintained for a period of 5 years from the date of implementation and any plant failures within that 5 year period shall be replaced.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality it is essential for these works to have been carried out before the use commences.

16. Prior to any of the following works commencing typical 1:20 scale details shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

- 1 Window frames and doors
- 2 Roof lights
- 3 Balustrade

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality

17. Prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings details of a barrier on the Stone Lane boundary of the footpath that runs between the building and the paddock to prevent vehicular access but allow for pedestrian access shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved barrier shall be erected before any of the dwellings are occupied and retained.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety.

18. Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling the redundant structures, redundant areas of hard surfacing, material storage, and fly tipping shall be removed from the site and existing boundary fencing shall be removed and replaced with the approved boundary fencing.

Reason: In order to reclaim a damaged and derelict site in the interests of the amenities of the locality

Other Compliance Conditions

19. All development and associated remediation shall proceed in accordance with the recommendations of the approved Remediation Strategy. In the event that remediation is unable to proceed in accordance with the approved Remediation Strategy, or unexpected contamination is encountered at any stage of the development process, works should cease and the Local Planning Authority and Environmental Protection Service (tel: 0114 273 4651) should be contacted immediately. Revisions to the Remediation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved revised Remediation Strategy.

Reason: In order to ensure that any contamination of the land is properly dealt with.

20. The areas of retained structure as shown on drawing ML/SL/RSE/A1/02 shall not be demolished and shall be incorporated into the building.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring the building is reused and is not in appropriate development in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Green Belt policy.

21. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment.

Reason: In the interests of minimising and mitigating the ecological impact of the proposal

22. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 1 (Classes A to E inclusive), Part 2 (Class A), or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order, no extensions, porches, garages, ancillary curtilage buildings, swimming pools, enclosures, fences, walls or alterations which materially affect the external appearance of the (variable) shall be constructed without prior planning permission being obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the openness and visual amenities of the Green Belt.

23. The means of vehicular access for demolition/reclamation/construction shall be via the existing vehicular access to the plot containing the building unless alternative access arrangements are approved by the Local Planning Authority. Ingress and egress for such vehicles shall be obtained only at the approved access point.

Reason: In the interest pedestrian and traffic safety and the amenities of the locality.

24. A site compound including an area for delivery/service vehicles to load and unload, for the parking of associated site vehicles and for the storage of materials shall be provided within the plot containing the building and shall be used for these purposes and retained for the period of demolition/reclamation/construction unless an alternative site compound is approved by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian and cycle safety and the amenities of the locality.

Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

1. The applicant is advised to contact Mick Hanson in the Council's public rights of way section to discuss the surfacing on the footpath between the building and the paddock on 0114 2736117

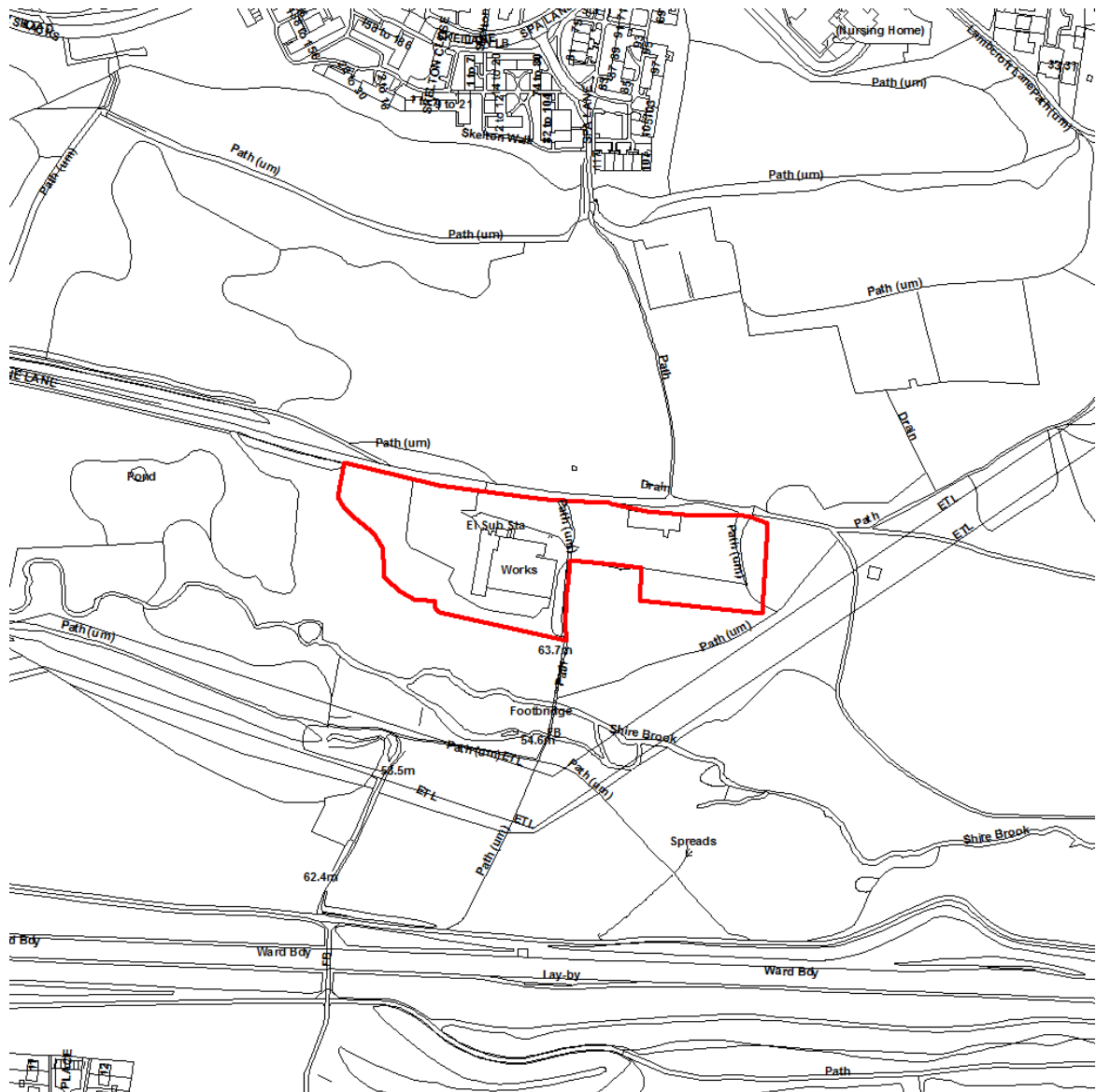
2. The Local Planning Authority has dealt with the planning application in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems where necessary in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. You are advised that this development is liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charge. A liability notice will be sent to you shortly informing you of the CIL charge payable and the next steps in the process, or a draft Liability Notice will be sent if the liable parties have not been assumed using Form 1: Assumption of Liability.
4. The applicant is advised to undertake a photographic survey of the condition of the access track prior to the works commencing and to reach agreement with the Council's Parks and Woodlands section about any reinstatement works that may be required following the completion of construction.
5. By law, this development requires the allocation of official, registered address(es) by the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Officer. Please refer to the Street Naming and Numbering Guidelines on the Council website here:

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/sheffield/home/roads-pavements/address-management.html>

The guidance document on the website includes details of how to apply, and what information we require. For further help and advice please ring 0114 2736127 or email snn@sheffield.gov.uk

Please be aware that failure to apply for addresses at the commencement of the works will result in the refusal of statutory undertakers to lay/connect services, delays in finding the premises in the event of an emergency and legal difficulties when selling or letting the properties.

Site Location



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LOCATION AND PROPOSAL

The application site occupies an area of approximately 4 acres and lies within the Shirebrook Valley in an area of Green Belt and Open space which sits between Hackenthorpe to the south and Woodhouse to the north. It is situated in a wooded area accessed from Stone Lane via a road that serves the Shirebrook Valley visitor centre car park at the eastern end and then turns into a gated track primarily used by the public for recreation purposes.

The site is located approximately 1.1 km from the western end of Stone Lane where it meets Coisley Hill. It comprises of a large derelict workshop type building within a fenced compound that incorporates areas of hard standing, a concrete frame of a former industrial building and areas of scattered scrub and trees. To the west, south and east of the fenced compound are areas of broadleaf woodland, scattered scrub, some areas of hard standing and unimproved neutral grassland. These areas are not distinguished from the surrounding Shirebrook Valley open spaces areas. There is a footpath that dissects the eastern end of the site in a north south direction. The applicant has advised that the building was last used as a recycling depot.

The site owners are keen to live on the site with their families. The application is proposing to convert the existing building into 2 large three and four bedroom houses with shared garage, four stables, gym, relaxation area and study. The eastern part of the site will be cleared of scrub and trees and the concrete foundations removed to create a fenced paddock and menage to the east side of the existing footpath. The application states that the main structure is to be retained and refurbished with the building being faced in red cedar cladding with a blue brick plinth. The roof pitch on the north side will be altered by raising the eaves by just over 1m and the roof will be faced in standing seam cladding. Dormer windows will be constructed on the south elevation to serve the bedrooms and roof lights will be introduced to provide additional lighting. Large glazed openings will be introduced into the north east and west elevations.

Much of the existing broadleaf woodland adjacent to the west, southern and eastern boundaries will be retained. The north/south footpath link between the existing building and menage will be maintained. New landscaping comprising of screen planting with native species, wildflower meadow, a pond, tree planting and lawn areas along with slab paved pedestrian and block paved access road and turning areas will be created within the fenced building compound site. Screen planting with native species will be provided around the paddock/menage site.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

One objection, one neutral representation and five representations in favour of the scheme have been received. The comments are summarised below.

Objections

- Additional traffic will take from the rural aspect of the nature reserve and lead to fly tipping and illegal access by motor vehicles.

- The site should be changed to open space and swapped with similar land at the Beighton Road entrance to Linley Bank

Neutral Comments

- Potential conflicts between horses and walkers, particularly those with dogs at the point where the horses cross the path to get to the paddock. Signs could be placed to warn walkers.
- If the gate restricting access along Stone Lane is removed the Lane could be vulnerable to fly tipping. Therefore the gates should be retained or an alternative installed.
- The new owners will need to introduce security measures to protect their property and livestock.

Comments in support

- The Chair of the Trans Pennine Trail supports the application as it creates greater opportunity to use the trail and Linley Meadows and so should reduce anti-social behaviour. Measures should however be taken to prevent fly tipping.
- The equestrian facilities will raise economic activity in the region, raise the profile of this area and could encourage more legitimate users to use this section of the trail.
- The proposal will be a positive addition to the surrounding area and ensure a derelict Brown Field site is regenerated and the development will complement the heritage by retaining the footprint of the current building.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Policy

The application site lies within the Green Belt and may also encroach into an Area of Natural History Interest. The building itself lies outside the Local Nature Reserve and Local Nature Site but the site does extend into both of these areas. Local Nature Reserves are of local importance. The Shirebrook Valley is part of the Green Corridor as defined in the Unitary Development Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework says that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Once Green Belts have been established, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

The re-use of buildings (provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction) is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt provided that the development preserves its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The purposes of including land within the Green Belt are:

- To check unrestricted urban sprawl
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- To assist the setting and special character of historic towns
- To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging recycling of derelict land

Policy GE1 says development in the Green Belt will only be permitted in very special circumstances where it would lead to the criteria for including land in the Green Belt being breached.

Although the primary purpose of the development is residential accommodation it will improve the opportunities for outdoor recreation in the Green Belt by facilitating horse riding and it will also improve the visual amenity of the derelict industrial building and its immediate surroundings by improving damaged and derelict land. However the paddock and Menage area will result in the clearance of a substantial area of regenerating woodland. The impact on the landscape, visual amenity and biodiversity is considered further below.

The re-use of a building of permanent and substantial construction is not necessarily inappropriate development in the Green Belt. In this instance although the former workshop/warehouse building which is to be retained is in a derelict condition it is a permanent construction in that it is not intended to be temporary. Although it is in a poor condition it is of a substantial construction being constructed of brickwork with concrete lintels and having a metal sheeted roof. The applicant has indicated that they will be retaining most of the walls at ground floor level and one gable elevation. However the whole of the roof structure will be replaced, one of the gable elevations above ground floor level and only a small section of the wall on the north elevation will be retained. The National Planning Policy Framework no longer requires the Local Planning Authority to assess whether the building is capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction. In addition to being of permanent and substantial construction the development must preserve the openness of the Green Belt and not conflict with purposes of including land within it.

In assessing its impact on the openness it is necessary to consider the impact of the building and its surroundings. The footprint of the building will not be increased, although the pitch of the north facing roof slope will be increase so that it will be approximately 1.3m higher at the eaves although it will be no higher at the ridge level. It is considered that the building as altered will not have a significantly greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing building. The proposed areas of hard standing around the building are considered to be fairly similar to those around the existing building. There would be expected to be vehicle parking, lighting and fencing associated with an industrial building and that associated with the residential use is not expected to be significantly different. To

create the menage and paddock a large area of self-seeded trees will need to be cleared. This will have a different visual impact, however the paddock and menage will still have a largely open character. As the development sits in a heavily wooded valley the site is screened by trees from many viewpoints and consequently it is not prominent in wide and open vistas. This means it is less sensitive to minor changes in character and appearance. Therefore it is concluded that the proposal will preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

The main purpose of the Green Belt in this location is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment. Given the building and the associated hard standings already exist, their retention in substantially the same format will not result in a significant change to the level of encroachment on the countryside. Whilst trees will be removed to create the menage and paddock these uses are still countryside uses, albeit of a different character to woodland. Therefore this part of the development will not have a significant impact on the encroachment on the countryside and will not be contrary to Policy GE1.

Therefore it is concluded that the development is acceptable in principle in terms of Green Belt policy.

Impact on Landscape and Nature Conservation Value

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This is to be achieved by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity value, minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity, remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict and contaminated land. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Policy GE2 seeks to maintain landscapes of high landscape value and improve poor landscapes in priority areas.

Policy GE4 says the scale and character of development in the Green Belt should be in keeping with the area and wherever possible conserve and enhance the landscape and natural environment.

Policy GE10 says that Green Corridors will be:

- Protected from development that would detract from their mainly green and open character or which would cause serious ecological damage.
- Enhanced by encouraging development which increases their value for wildlife and recreation.

Policy GE12 says that development which would damage Local Nature Reserves will not be permitted.

Policy GE13 says that development affecting Local Nature Sites should wherever possible be sited and designed so as to protect and enhance the most important features of natural history interest. Where development would decrease the nature

conservation value of a Local Nature Site, that decrease must be kept to a minimum and compensated for by creation or enhancement of wildlife habitats elsewhere within the site or local area.

Policy GE15 says the trees and woodland will be encouraged and protected by requiring developers to retain mature trees, copses and hedgerows, wherever possible, and replace any trees which are lost.

An ecological assessment has been submitted in support of the application. This identifies the fenced area around the building to be largely occupied by building and hard standing with scattered areas of scrub and broadleaf trees. To the south, west and east edges of the site and also within the areas to be used as paddock and menage there are areas of Broadleaf woodland. The paddock/menage area also includes areas of hard standing, unimproved neutral grassland and scattered scrub.

A tree survey has been carried out which shows the majority of the trees on the site are of low quality and of adequate condition that could be retained. The others are unsuitable for retention as they are dead or dying or suffering from significant disease.

The site layout/landscape plan indicates that the majority of the broadleaf woodland to the west, south and east of the site will be retained. The broadleaf woodland, scrub and unimproved grassland will be removed within the paddock/menage areas. Native screen planting is proposed to the edges of the fenced building area and within the paddock and menage plot. Lawn areas, ornamental shrub planting, meadow areas, a pond and individual trees are proposed within the fenced building plot. Management and enhancement of the retained landscaping areas will take place following advice from an ecologist.

The ecological assessment did not identify any protected species within the site although it is used by foraging bats and provides good habitat for nesting and foraging birds. Site clearance will take place outside the bird breeding season or with a qualified ecologist in attendance. Bat boxes and bird boxes are to be provided on the building and in trees as compensation and the lighting will be carefully designed to minimise impacts on the bat activity. The applicant states that the retained woodland will act as a buffer to the surrounding woodland and the surrounding areas will be protected by temporary fencing during construction.

In the absence of mitigation, the ecological assessment concludes that the development would have minor significant residual effects in relation to general habitat loss and habitat loss in relation to reptiles. Compensation proposed includes seeding areas of wildflower meadow, the creation of a pond with reptile hibernaculum, native screen planting, new tree planting to the gardens and a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to provide management for the new and existing habitats for 5 years. With the mitigation proposed the ecological assessment concludes that the scheme will address the residual negative ecological impacts and as new habitats and native planting will be introduced it will likely result in a positive impact in future years.

The City Ecologist is satisfied that the development will enhance the biodiversity on the site provided the habitats are managed appropriately in the long term. It will enhance the recreation value of the site by restoring a derelict and despoiled site. It will have a significant impact on an open mosaic habitat on previously developed land which is a priority habitat. However it will compensate for this impact by replacing it with 4 high quality managed habitats (woodland, hedgerow, wildflower and pond). It is therefore concluded it is consistent with the NPPF and Unitary Development Plan ecology policies listed above.

The part of the site occupied by the fenced building is an eyesore. It comprises of a derelict building covered in graffiti, hard standing areas, piles of rubble, the frame of a derelict building and is surrounded by industrial palisade fencing. The works to the building will improve its appearance considerably and the new fencing and planting will help to screen and integrate the building better into the woodland context. The site of the paddock/menage does not contain any buildings and the remains of building foundations are not obvious as they are being colonised by scrub and trees. The building foundations will be removed along with the trees and scrub. They will be replaced with a fenced paddock area and menage and although it will not be artificially lit it is likely to contain the paraphernalia associated with horse riding such as jumps. It will be screened around its edges by the existing woodland and new screen planting. However it will have a more formal and managed appearance than the naturally regenerating woodland and in this respect is likely to appear more urban than the naturally regenerating woodland on the site. Taking into account the benefits of the removal of the hard standing and the negative impacts of the replacement of the trees with a formal fenced compound containing horse jumps etc it is concluded that landscaping impacts of this part of the scheme will be moderately harmful. However taken as a whole the landscaping impacts of the proposal associated the regeneration of the derelict building will be overwhelmingly positive. Therefore it is concluded that the proposal will improve the landscape in a priority area, retain the most important area of woodland and compensate for the loss of trees and therefore is consistent with Policies GE2 and GE15.

Access Issues

The accessibility of the site on foot is far from ideal as it is a long walk along an unlit and un-overlooked track. As a result it is not easily accessible by public transport. However it is only a small residential scheme.

Stone Lane is a public bridleway on private land. The part of Stone Lane that runs along the edge of the application site is part of the Trans Pennine Trail which can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

Stone Lane provides adequate vehicular access for a couple of houses along with occasional use by a horse box. There is sufficient parking and turning space within the site to serve the use.

Stone Lane has been the subject of fly tipping in the past and there are gates along the track preventing vehicular access by non-key holders. There is a concern that allowing the proposal will result in the gates being left open and the area being

vulnerable to fly tipping. Whilst this is a risk, as opening and shutting gates will be an inconvenience to residents, it is also not in their interests to leave the site vulnerable to fly tipping. Should fly tipping occur as a result of the gates being left open the Council may be able to recover clean-up costs from the occupier which is likely to be a significant disincentive to leaving the gate open.

The applicant has advised that they are considering a remotely operated electric gate with an intercom that would communicate with the applicant's phone or dwelling. Post and parcels could be directed to a Post Office Box or to the applicant's business address. The applicant has been discussing this with Parks and Woodlands who manage the wider open space area. Should the applicant seek to make access easier by installing an electric gate this a private matter they will need to agree with colleagues in Parks and Woodlands.

Concern has also been expressed about potential conflicts between horse traffic crossing the footpath between the stables and the paddock/menage area. Whilst there is a small risk this applies generally through the Shirebrook Valley where horses and pedestrians share the same routes. It is not considered to be such a significant concern that the access across the path between the two sites should be precluded. Given that the layout shows 4 stables and involves 2 families, the number of movements across the path should be fairly infrequent.

Sustainability

Whilst the site is not sustainably located it is an existing developed site. The re-use and restoration of brownfield land and the re-use of at least part of the existing building is sustainable.

Flooding/Drainage

The application site lies in flood zone 1 therefore is not at high risk of flooding.

The application seeks to remove areas of hard standing and increase the permeable area of the site. The drainage report says that it is proposed to use soakaways and that this will be investigated further and the possibility of using grey water harvesting as part of the sustainable design of the building. The site is served by a foul sewer and the foul drainage will be connected to this system. A condition is proposed requiring drainage details to be submitted for approval.

Design Issues

Core Strategy policy CS74 says that high quality development will be expected, which would respect, take advantage or and enhance the distinctive features of the city, its districts and neighbourhoods, including:

- The green network, important habitats, woodlands and open spaces

Development should also help to transform the character of physical environments that have become run down and are lacking in distinctiveness.

Unitary Development Plan Policy GE4 says that the scale and character of any development in the Green Belt, or would be conspicuous from it, should be in keeping with the area and, wherever possible conserve and enhance the landscape and natural environment.

The building which is the subject of this application is a utilitarian industrial building. It has brickwork elevations with a corrugated metal roof. The brick elevations have been subject to graffiti and the window frames are missing and have been infilled with blockwork. The roof contains a number of holes. The concrete frame of a former industrial building with no walls and roof sits on the north side of the building and there is building rubble which has been tipped on the site. There are areas of concrete hard standing within the curtilage of the building.

Whilst the site is well screened from the wider area by the surrounding woodland it has a derelict appearance and detracts from the visual amenity of the open space within which it sits.

The applicant's design objective has been to create a contemporary residential development that is sympathetic to the semi-rural location and adjacent nature reserve.

The proposals keep the basic industrial form of the building. The blue brick plinth and grey metal roof are sympathetic to the industrial character of the building. Timber will weather naturally and is often utilised on agricultural buildings. It will help to soften the industrial character and integrate the building better within the woodland context. The design of the new window/door openings has been rationalised and regularised since the original submission which has resulted in a simpler and more coordinated fenestration.

Whilst the design of the building is not an outstanding example of contemporary design it is considered to be satisfactory. Along with the landscaping works the alterations will significantly improve the appearance of the site and transform the immediate locality by removing what is currently a blot on the landscape.

Ground Conditions

A phase 1 risk assessment has been submitted which the Environmental Protection Service consider is satisfactory. This recommends that further site investigations are undertaken and conditions are proposed to secure this.

The applicant has advised that existing hard standing areas are to be removed and any contamination will be remediated as required.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The application site lies in zone 3 where the charge is £30 per square metre.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is consistent with Green Belt policy in that it will improve damaged and derelict land and remove a significant eyesore in the Green Belt. As it re-uses an existing building it is not inappropriate development. The footprint of the building and the amount of hard surfacing will not increase. The alterations to the roof form will not impact significantly on the scale and massing of the building and the paddock will maintain the open character of that part of the site. Therefore it is concluded that the development will preserve the openness of the Green Belt. It will not undermine the main purpose of this section of Green Belt which is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment.

The negative impacts on the natural environment of the removal of existing landscaping will be mitigated by the planting and ecological management plan. The proposal will enhance the biodiversity value of the site and overall conserve and enhance the natural environment. Whilst the landscaping impacts of removing the regenerating woodland on the paddock site and replacing it with a more formal landscape will cause some harm, this will be outweighed by the positive landscape benefits of the proposal as a whole.

The vandalism and anti-social behaviour problems which affect the site are likely to be significantly reduced. The introduction of a use which will provide some surveillance and policing of the surroundings is likely to benefit the security of the area. The scheme will deliver some economic development but the main benefit will be the restoration of a derelict site in the Green Belt and the improvements in the visual amenity. These benefits significantly outweigh the concerns about the isolation of the site and the loss of trees. Therefore it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the listed conditions, which have been agreed with the applicant in line with current government regulations.

