

Conversion of redundant stable/ workshop building to retirement dwelling at 143 Manchester Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith for Mr. J. McNamara

The application site is a redundant stable/workshop building situated on a plot of land approximately 0.75 hectares in area lying on the southern side of Manchester Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith, immediately to the west of no. 143. The site lies beyond the formal garden area of the property and outside of the domestic curtilage. It is located on an area of grassland around the periphery of which are numerous mature trees, which are all protected by virtue of a Tree Preservation Order (High Peak – Tree Preservation Order no. 21). The building overlooks a paddock, and Chapel-en-le-Frith Golf Course.

The building has an existing vehicular access and entrance roadway at the western end of the frontage, being separate from the main vehicular access to the adjacent dwellinghouse which lies further to the east. The existing access is located within a long straight section of the highway, , there is adequate safe visibility in both directions, particularly as there is a 30 mph speed limit in force along this section of Manchester Road. The reuse of this building does not give rise to any concerns regarding highway safety.

The existing building occupies a small footprint of approximately 45sq.m. It sits discreetly within the overall site and has little impact on the view available from Manchester Road South and presents as a blank abstract wall and corrugate iron roof.

The Land located on the southern side of Manchester Road, is currently designated as Countryside within the adopted High Peak Local Plan 2005, whilst the residential properties forming a ribbon development along the north side of the road are included within the Built-Up Area Boundary, as shown on the High Peak Local Plan Proposals map. Notwithstanding the Countryside designation, there are a number of large detached residential properties fronting the highway along its' southern side. Additionally, there is a large residential Care Home, known as Whitestones, situated just to the east of the application site. Notwithstanding the designation of the site as Countryside, the application site has for over 30 years been used in association with the domestic use of no. 143, and is isolated from any agricultural land by the golf course which bounds the site immediately to the south. As such it does not form part of an agricultural holding. Its designation as Countryside therefore appears to be an anomaly.

Furthermore in a recent report on the Chapel-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2028 dated January 2015 by Independent Examiner Janet L Cheesley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPIt confirmed this uncertainty when she noted.

“The site is either domestic garden or countryside. As such it is either domestic or rural in character. I have no robust justifiable evidence to clearly indicate that the site is demonstrably special and holds a particular local significance. For these reasons, I do not consider this area meets the criteria for designation as Local Green Space.”⁽¹⁾

Ms. Cheesley went on to recommend this area be removed from the plan from Local green Space designation and subsequently the referendum version of the Chapel-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2028 contains no references to this area as local green space.

The submitted scheme indicates the refurbishment, extension and conversion of the existing building to a dwelling. The frontage presented to Manchester Road whilst increasing in length slightly, remains discreet and will retain the essential characteristics of the existing stable /workshop. The wall will remain free of any fenestration and will be enhanced with some landscaping to the Manchester Road side. It is proposed the corrugated tin roof be replaced with a sedum roof as an innovative measure to enhance integration with the landscape and existing sylvan character of the street scene, and generally make a positive contribution to both the biodiversity and visual amenity of the area.

The proposal complies with Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

“Local planning authorities should avoid new **isolated** homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as: where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting” (2)

The policy frameworks also allows for new homes in such situations that demonstrate “ exceptional quality or innovative nature” in design. This proposal will result in a highly insulated building making use of an existing structure, passive solar gain, renewable technology, sustainable materials and as noted above have a green roof.

The proposal re-uses a redundant building and will enhance the immediate setting.

The proposal will also provide for a compact and sustainable retirement home allowing the applicants to downsize from their existing home in which they have lived for 27 years and to remain within this established neighbourhood. It should also be noted that the applicants can continue to enjoy a location well served by local bus routes that stop within 100m of the vehicular entrance.

There is sufficient space within the existing building for a bedroom and living area designed to lifetime home standards. An extension to the building is required to provide kitchen space and a further bedroom to accommodate visiting family / future carers should such become necessary.

The extended part of the building will be in materials to match the existing where it presents to the road. It is proposed the side which faces the golf course side of the site will be faced with weathered Horse chestnut cladding to merge with the many mature horse chestnut trees on the site.

Vehicular access is via an existing stoned laneway into the adjacent paddock and parking space for 2 cars will be provided in between the adjacent trees. Landscaping to the south of the site will be minimal as it is intended to maintain the same relationship that currently exists between the building and the paddock.

Notes

- (1) *Chapel-en-le Frith Neighbourhood Development Plan: Examiner's Report. January 2015*
Janet L Cheesley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI. CHEC Planning Ltd.

(2) *National Planning Policy Framework. March 2012, Department for Communities and Local Government. ISBN: 978-1-4098-3413-7*