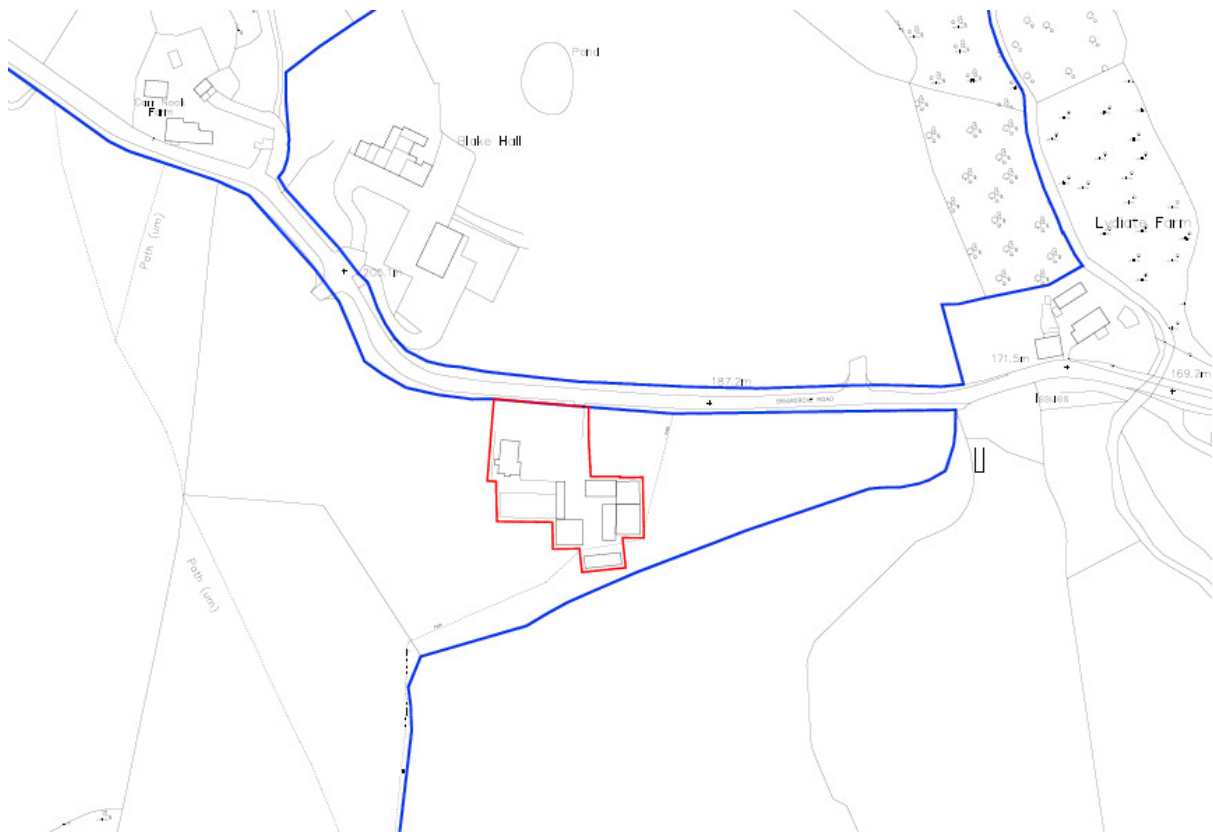


HOLLY FARM, BRIARGROVE ROAD, BIRCH VALE, SK22 1AY

**DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF
REPLACEMENT DWELLING**

APPLICATION REF HPK/2023/0469

PLANNING STATEMENT



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This document follows the extensive pre-application discussions held with the Council since 2021 regarding the redevelopment of the site at Holly Farm for a single new dwelling, which culminated in a meeting at the Council offices in May 2023 at which the scheme was confirmed as being acceptable and a full planning application was invited. A subsequent written letter of pre-application advice dated 6 June 2023 confirmed this to be the case, setting out the parameters and planning policy considerations.
- 1.02 Although not a statutory requirement for the application, this Planning Statement is provided to endorse the view that very special circumstances exist which justify the development in the Green Belt.

2 THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.01 The character of Briargrove Road has changed significantly over the years to the level that there is now only one other farmhouse remaining in its original use (other than Holly Farm) with all previous such properties now utilised as standard open market dwellings.
- 2.02 Nearby dwellings include the applicant's current home across the road from Holly Farm at Blake Hall in which a considerable amount of time and investment has been expended to enhance the property via the quality of the works and the considerable attention to detail and outstanding level of craftsmanship.
- 2.03 The site at Holly Farm contains the existing dwelling which has consent for an front extension (for which a formal commencement of development was made via the digging of the foundations within the three-year period) along with a Class AA upwards extension, as well as a former Sty and a Tall Barn at the site which have the benefit of prior approvals for conversions to one dwelling each.
- 2.04 The land also has two further non-agricultural buildings (a large, detached garage/workshop and a stable block) as well as other redundant farm buildings.
- 2.05 The extent of the existing and approved residential area of the site is shown in the plans provided by C4 as part of the overall package.
- 2.06 For ease of reference, an extract from the submitted site plan to show the various areas of the existing site layout is illustrated on the following page of this statement.



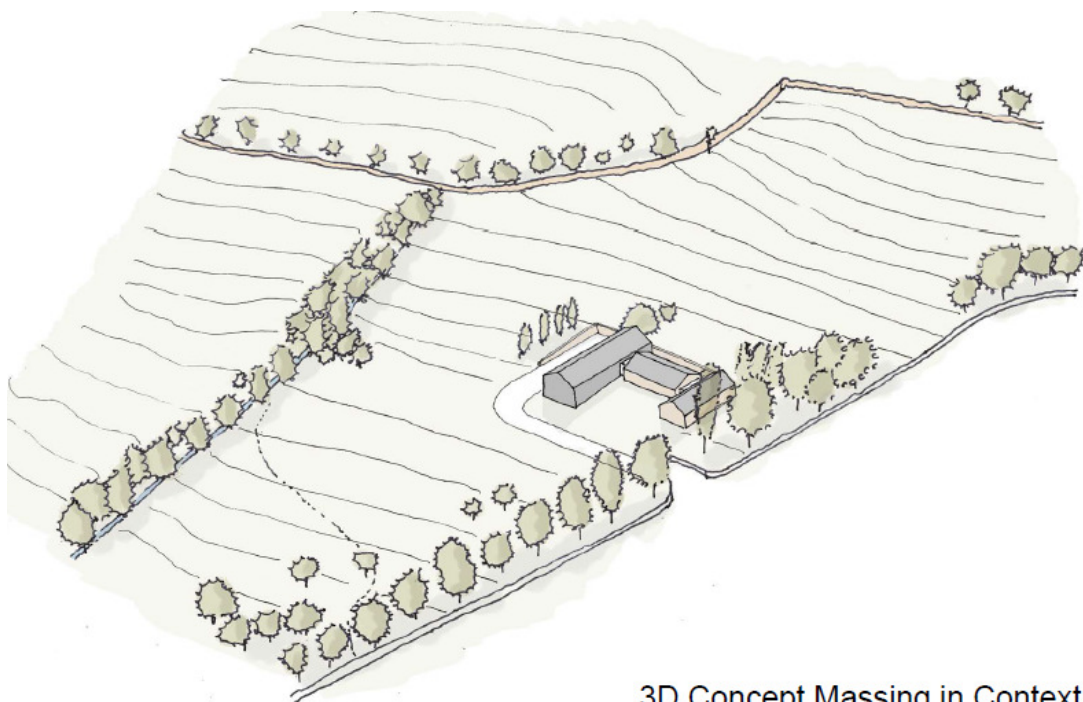
3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.01 The rationale for the scheme is to replace the current agglomeration of buildings spread across the site which are consented for three dwellings as confirmed earlier, with a more appropriate single dwelling of an exceptionally high quality of design which will serve to open up views across the site by focussing the built footprint in a single location, thereby benefiting the landscape character of the area and opening up the Green Belt. An extract from the proposed site layout plan is provided below to endorse this point, when compared to the earlier existing site plan.



- 3.02 The quality of the overall design is exceptional, and the scheme will also benefit the existing public footpath which crosses the site via its future maintenance and enhancement along with significant quality landscaping of the site and biodiversity enhancements.

- 3.03 The scheme emerged following a series of discussions and documents, with the final pre-application document confirming that the proposal incorporates three building masses that mimic agricultural outbuilding silhouettes with dual pitched roofs and long/narrow footprint proportions. These three masses are linked together by two transitions pods of structural glass which allows the three masses to exist independently from each other in order to increase the visual permeability of the site. Each mass is able to express its own architectural language, materiality and proportions to keep the overall replacement dwelling scheme sleek and simple in its design within the landscape.
- 3.04 An illustration from the pre-application document to show how the Green Belt will be opened up when the site is be transformed into a much more beneficial landscape feature as compared to the current mass of structures is provided below.



3D Concept Massing in Context

- 3.05 Extracts from the submitted visuals of the scheme when viewed from the road to the north and across the proposed open meadow area to the east are shown below.



- 3.06 As discussed with the Council, the dwellinghouse takes on the form of a 'C' shaped layout, with the southern aspect taking advantage of the change in topography providing a split-level elevation, with the other two aspects reading as single-storey elevations from the footpath and public highway, with a courtyard/garden area in the centre, to the east of which would be the internal vehicular access.

- 3.07 Each of the three aspects would be connected by a small-scale subsidiary link of a contemporary nature finished in glass, with the middle section having a sub-terranean basement facilitating the extension of the garage located at the lower ground floor of the split-level southern aspect.
- 3.08 Some of the key benefits of the application can be summarised as follows:
- Increased openness across the greenbelt and views through the site via demolition of existing sheds and outbuildings.
 - Response to the site's rural architectural vernacular to create a new family dwelling using interlocking barn-like masses with dual pitched roofs.
 - Reflection of the character of the farmyard vernacular by positioning the interlocking masses in a 'C'-shape formation to form a courtyard.
 - Increased visual permeability across the site through careful use of glass to sympathetically link the building masses together.
 - Orientation of the dwelling to efficiently respond to passive solar gain and maximise the view of surrounding landscape.
- 3.09 In line with advice offered by the Council, the siting, layout and design of the replacement dwellinghouse set out in the application can be supported. The central and northern aspects read as single-storey above ground floor level and are constructed from high quality materials including stone, with the split-level southern aspect providing more potential for the introduction of a more contemporary modern choice of material.

4 PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.01 As a site within the Green Belt, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of December 2023 confirms that all new built development is inappropriate unless it falls within an exception category or there are very special circumstances which prevail. In this respect, Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 4.02 NPPF Paragraph 154 (g) allows for the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.
- 4.03 It is established by planning law that there is no set definition of what does and does not represent very special circumstances, and that the determination as to whether such circumstances exist is a matter of planning judgement by the decision maker. It is recognised that the weight to give to the various elements identified which either individually or cumulatively are considered to constitute very special circumstance must be weighed against the Green Belt harm of inappropriateness.
- 4.04 The High Peak Local Plan (LP) Policy EQ3 refers to proposals which lie outside of the defined built-up area boundaries and seeks to ensure that new development is strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape's intrinsic character and distinctiveness. The policy sets out a list of criteria whereby new residential development will be supported in principle, which includes the following:

“A replacement dwelling provided it does not have a significantly greater impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling nor result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area.”

- 4.05 LP Policy H1 sets out the locations for where new housing development will be supported, which includes promoting the re-use of land by encouraging housing development, including (amongst other things) redevelopment, on all sites suitable for that purpose.
- 4.06 The Council have accepted that the existing building does not have any special architectural merit of traditional characteristics and is not therefore intrinsic to the overall character of the rural area, and as such the proposal is therefore be supported by LP Policies EQ3 and H1.

5 ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

- 5.01 It is considered that the existing/approved residential buildings footprint is significantly greater than the footprint of the proposed replacement dwelling, which allows for increased openness when the additional circumstances of removing the current agglomeration of structures is replaced with a single high-quality building to the benefit of the landscape and the openness of the Green Belt. The visuals provided as part of the package and extracted in this statement are considered to fully endorse this position.
- 5.02 The application presented to the Council provides significant landscape enhancement benefits that would arise from the site clearance, along with the improvement in the overall character and appearance of the site and the indirect biodiversity enhancements that would occur as a result of the proposed development. Accordingly, it is considered that the development of a larger dwelling and the demolition of all existing structures on site can be supported given the very special circumstances that prevail.
- 5.03 Although technically amounting to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the principle of development is supported given the very special circumstances that are presented with the application, including the public benefits relating to the overall character and appearance of the site and enhancement to the rural landscape character when experienced from public footpaths and vantage points, and net gains to biodiversity.
- 5.04 Given that it was agreed by the Council during the pre-application process that very special circumstances prevail in the form of the landscape benefits that will result from the scheme including the opening up of the Green Belt, it is trusted that the Council will continue with this view and progress towards the approval of the planning application.