

APPLICATION REPORT - HH/343092/19

Planning Committee, 21 May, 2020

Registration Date: 21/03/2019
Ward: Saddleworth North

Application Reference: HH/343092/19
Type of Application: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Extension of a two storey side and rear extension and a single storey side extension.

Location: Running Hill Cottage, Running Hill Lane, Dobcross, OL3 5JS
Case Officer: Hannah Lucitt

Applicant Mr Clay
Agent : Wildesign Ltd

This application was deferred at the Planning Committee meeting on 1 July 2019 to allow for the submission of further information on the permitted development 'fall-back' alternative; the design of the windows; and the claimed issues of water ingress to the existing property. Since that time further queries have been raised in relation to the extent of the authorised site curtilage, which has resulted in the deletion of the previously proposed garage from this application.

The report below has been amended to have regard to these factors.

THE SITE

Running Hill Cottage is a former Grade II listed building (now de-listed) dating from the mid-late 18th century which occupies an elevated position and forms part of a small nucleus of farms and cottages forming the wider hamlet of Running Hill Head. The footprint of this predominantly two storey stone dwelling includes a single storey cat slide roof section to the rear of the northernmost part of the house, which it is understood was added in the mid 1960s following the demolition of an earlier large wing in the early part of the 20th century. There is also a small single storey side addition which was probably added in the 19th century.

THE PROPOSAL

This application has been amended since submission and presently comprises a two storey side extension, which then projects beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling by 5m. This is attached to a further two storey extension which projects across approximately half of the rear elevation of the original dwelling, along with a small single storey boot room/ lobby extension to the side.

The proposed development would be externally clad in stone and slate to match the existing dwelling.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE:

PREX/342132/18 - Single storey rear extension - Length: 8.0m maximum height: 4.0m Height to eaves: 2.5m' Prior Approval Required and Granted 05 Sep 2018. This permission expired on 30th May 2019.

CL/342211/18 - Certificate of lawfulness for a proposed detached garage and a single storey garden building forming gymnasium/games room. Granted 09th October 2018.

In the scenario below, a generous approach has been taken which includes the whole of the main two-storey structure and the present single storey side addition in the 'original' building calculations. In doing so, whilst not strictly adhering to the NPPF definition, it recognises the existing scale of the building in the context that the third bay is likely to have replaced an earlier similar structure.

The original building therefore would amount to approximately 505 cu m. The non-original cat-slide roof section has already added a volume of approximately 74 cu m to that total. It should be noted that if the whole of the third bay was included as an extension, the 'original' volume would already have been exceeded by approximately 66%.

A previous application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for alternative development at this site (CL/342121/18), proposed the erection of a single storey side and two storey rear extension, with a reduction of the width of the existing side / rear cat slide roof, and the demolition of the existing single storey side extension. The single storey side extension in that case would project 3.5m to the side of the original dwelling, be 6.5m in length, measure 3m to the eaves and 4m to the roof ridge. The proposed two storey rear extension would project 3m from the rear of the original dwelling, be 8.4m in length, measure 4.5m to the eaves height and 6.4m to the roof ridge.

As originally submitted in the present application, the proposed two storey side and rear extension would project 6m from the rear of the existing dwelling (now reduced to a depth of 5m), and 3.6m from the side of the existing dwelling at the greatest width. It would measure 6.8m to the roof ridge.

The proposed single storey side extension would project 4m from the side of the existing building towards Running Hill Lane, and would measure 4m in width, 2.3m to the eaves height and 3.7m to the roof ridge.

In volumetric terms, the present proposal amounts to approximately 315 cu m (10.5m x 5m x 6m) additional volume. This compares to the fall-back which would permit a two storey extension to the rear of the original house of approximately 237 cu m (13.2m x 3m x 6m).

In addition, it is proposed to erect a two storey side extension projecting beyond the rear elevation. This amounts to approximately 226 cu m (10.5m x 3.6m x 6m), and compares to an existing volume of 34 cu m. Allowing for the proximity to the site boundary any fall-back would be limited to a single storey extension of approximately 92 cu m (6.6m x 4m x 3.5m), a maximum increase of approximately 134 cu m.

Finally it is proposed to erect a single storey extension to the opposite side elevation of approximately 48 cu m (4m x 4m x 3m). Again proximity to the authorised site boundary limits the scale of any fall-back to approximately 92 cu m.

Consequently, in these scenarios, the presently proposed extensions would add a volume of 556 cu m to the original dwelling compared to 421 cu m for the fall-back.

To add further complication, permitted development rights (subject to the prior approval regime) would allow a single storey rear extension behind both the original dwelling and the fall-back side extensions of 8m in depth, approximately 528 cu m of additional volume. However, this would be as an alternative to the aforementioned proposals and fall-back, i.e. it would need to have regard to all the other restrictions on permitted development rights. As there are so many potential variations which could incorporate this permitted development right, it is not possible to precisely calculate any of those myriad alternatives.

Whilst it is accepted that permitted development rights could add a significant amount of extensions, even allowing for the relaxed approach to the 'original' dwelling, the proposal clearly represents disproportionate quantitative additions.

Furthermore, whilst recent court decisions have held that the likelihood of a fall-back development being implemented is not decisive, the rights described above could, for

instance, create a ground floor building measuring 19.4m by 14.5m. Achieving useable and practical living accommodation in that space which would be difficult to secure if rooms were to receive satisfactory levels of light and ventilation.

Visual comparison

Whilst the quantitative comparison is complex, a visual comparison provides a more accessible approach to this assessment.

Comparative visuals showing both the previously approved lawful scheme and the present proposal will have been made available for members in the accompanying Presentation.

Again allowing for a relaxed approach to comparing original and proposed developments, the existing building has a simple, predominantly rectangular form, typical of vernacular buildings in the area. The proposed extensions will significantly add to the physical and visual presence of the building. This is most evident on the side elevations whereby that simple form will be replaced by a bulky addition, almost doubling the depth of the building, and due to the new tall roofscape, being far from subservient to the host building. The presence of non-traditional and prominent fenestration adds to its visual dominance.

This impression is equally reflected on the rear elevation whereby the simple form will be replaced by a pair of highly intrusive, large structures.

In this context, the extensions appear inarguably highly disproportionate, and therefore represent inappropriate development which is harmful to the Green Belt.

Members will note that the fall-back suggested in the Certificate of Lawfulness application would also disproportionately impact on the original building. However, the comparison again shows that the harm resulting from such intrusion would be notably far less than currently proposed.

Very special circumstances

Having regard to the demonstrated harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, it is necessary for the applicant to demonstrate whether there are any very special circumstances which would outweigh such harm. Failing this, NPPF paragraph 143 is clear that the development should be refused.

The applicant has suggested that problems with water ingress would represent such a circumstance. Photographs have been submitted showing the existing problems associated with water ingress. Whilst these are noted, it remains unclear how the proposed extensions, in particular their extent, are directly related to the resolution of this problem, and therefore this issue carries very little weight in the determination process.

Design

DPD Policy 20 recognise the importance of achieving high quality design, whilst NPPF paragraph 130 stresses that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. The publication of the National Design Guide makes clear the importance government lays on achieving good design.

In response to comments raised at the last Planning Committee, the applicant has sought to amend the proposed window openings and reduce their scale to be more in keeping with that of the existing building. Whilst some reduction has taken place, the new windows remain out of scale with the established features, with a dominance of wide, full-height windows at both ground and first floor level.

The proposed extensions, through the scale and design, jar with the appearance and character of the existing building, and therefore, represent incongruous additions which are over-dominant and visually oppressive. The design therefore fails to have regard to the

objectives of both local and national planning policies.

Highway safety and amenity

The Highway Engineer has assessed the proposed development, and raises no objection is regards to the impact on highway safety and amenity. Similarly, there are no neighbouring properties in close proximity which would be adversely impacted by the proposed extension.

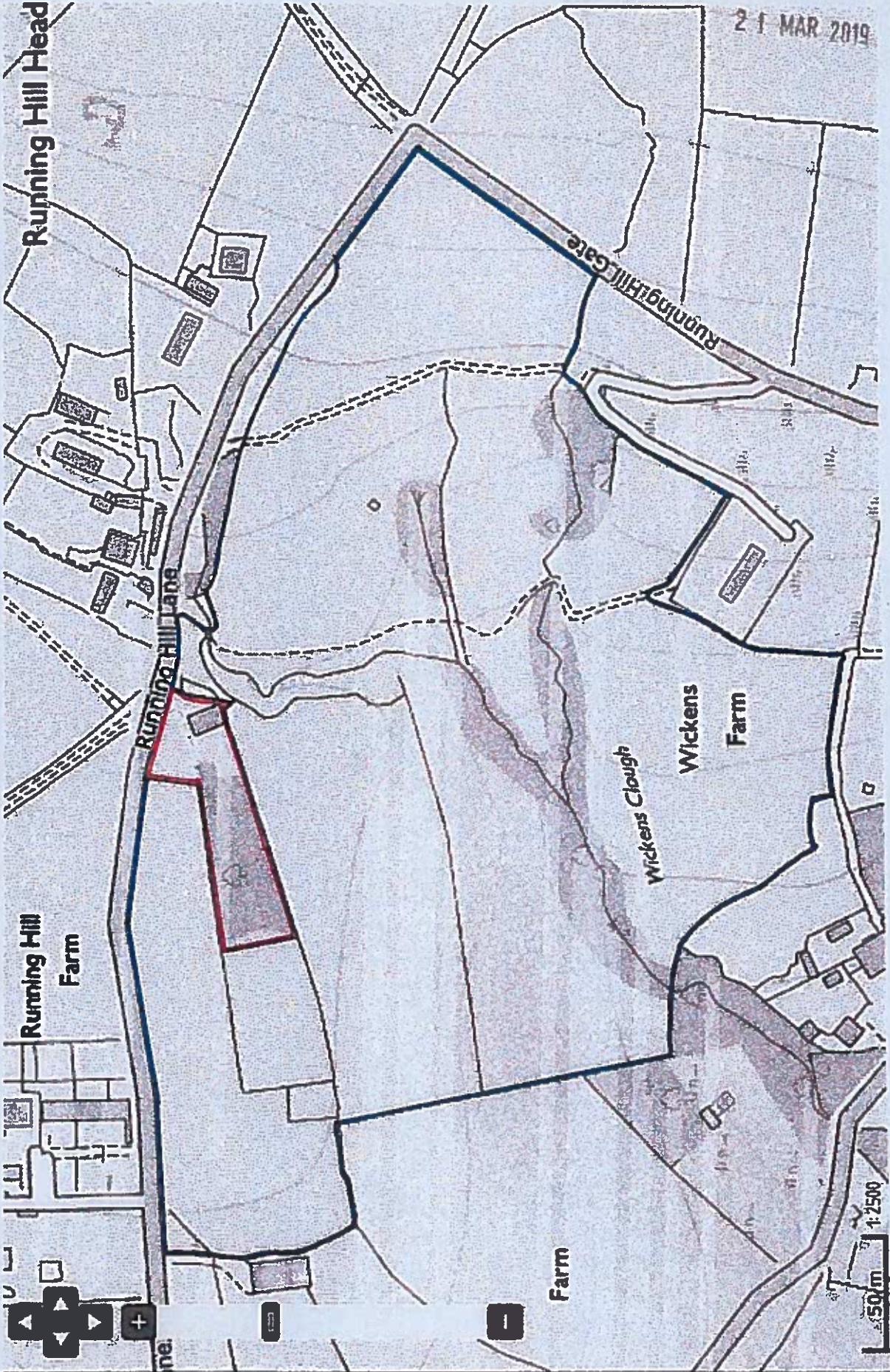
RECOMMENDATION

Refuse for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development represents disproportionate additions to the original dwelling and therefore comprises 'inappropriate development' which by definition is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. No 'very special circumstances' have been demonstrated to outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt. Therefore the proposals are contrary to Policies 1 and 22 of the Joint Development Plan Document forming part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham, and the guidance in paragraphs 143, 144 and 145 within the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposed development involves the erection of substantial dominant extensions to the existing property which fail to have due regard to the scale and character of the building and its setting. The proposal is therefore contrary to the objectives of Policies 9 and 20 of the of the Joint Development Plan Document forming part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham, and Part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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21 MAR 2019



Running Hill Head

Running Hill Farm

Farm

Wickens Clough

Wickens Farm



