

Planning Application: Report of Handling

Reference No. 23/0083/PP



Renfrewshire
Council

KEY INFORMATION

Ward: 10 – Houston, Crosslee and Linwood

Applicant: Mr Patrick McLaughlin

Registered:
21/02/2023

Report by Head of Economy & Development

PROSPECTIVE PROPOSAL: Erection of four dwellinghouses (in principle)

LOCATION: Sawmill, Goldenlea Farm, Houstonhead Road, Bridge of Weir, PA11 3SU

APPLICATION FOR: Planning Permission in Principle



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RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Alasdair Morrison
Head of Economy &
Development

IDENTIFIED KEY ISSUES

- The application site is identified by Policy 8 – Green Belts in National Planning Framework 4 (2023) and Policy ENV1 ‘Green Belt’ of the Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021).
- There have been no representations received.
- The proposal does not accord overall with the relevant provisions of National Planning Framework 4 and the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.

REPORT OF HANDLING FOR APPLICATION 23/0083/PP

SITE ADDRESS	Sawmill, Goldenlea Farm, Houstonhead Road, Bridge of Weir, PA11 3SU
PROPOSAL	Erection of four dwellinghouses (in principle)
RECOMMENDATION	Refuse

PROPOSALS	<p>This application seeks planning permission in principle for the erection of four dwellinghouses at Goldenlea Farm which is located on Houstonhead Road between Houston and Bridge of Weir.</p> <p>The farm currently comprises of one dwellinghouse and a mix of outbuildings one of which is occupied by a blacksmith. The perimeter of the farm is defined by a row of conifer trees. Agricultural land surrounds the farm on all sides.</p> <p>For the purposes of the application the farm will be split into two sections. The southern half which is occupied by the dwellinghouse will be retained in situ. The northern half, which extends to approx. 0.4 hectares, will be cleared of all existing buildings. The applicant has submitted an indicative layout for four dwellinghouses in this area.</p> <p>The applicant advises in their supporting statement that the proposed development would remediate and redevelop a brownfield site which would in turn improve the green belt's environment and wider landscape.</p>
SITE HISTORY	<p>Application No: 17/0214/PP</p> <p>Description: Partial demolition of adjoined outbuilding, erection of extension and alterations to roof of dwellinghouse.</p> <p>Decision: Granted.</p>
CONSULTATIONS	<p>Communities & Housing Services (Environmental Protection Team) – No objection subject to conditions relating to noise and contaminated land.</p> <p>Chief Executive's Service (Roads Development) – No objection subject to condition requiring the upgrade of the junction at Bridge of Weir Road, and the formation of intervisible passing places along the access road.</p> <p>Glasgow Airport Safeguarding – No objections.</p> <p>NATS – No objection.</p> <p>Director of Children Services – If the development progresses it is anticipated that the capacity of schools within the catchment could be breached. If it is breached developer contributions would be required to meet education provision.</p>

	<p>The Coal Authority – Objection pending submission of a Coal Mining Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Scottish Water – No objection.</p>
REPRESENTATIONS	None received.
DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES	<p>National Planning Framework 4</p> <p>NPF4: Policy 1 - Tackling the climate and nature crises NPF4: Policy 2 - Climate mitigation and adaptation NPF4: Policy 3 - Biodiversity NPF4: Policy 8 - Green belts NPF4: Policy 9 - Brownfield, vacant and derelict land, and empty buildings NPF4: Policy 13 - Sustainable transport NPF4: Policy 16 - Quality homes NPF4: Policy 17 - Rural homes</p> <p>Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021) LDP 2021: Policy ENV1 - Green Belt LDP 2021: Policy I1 - Connecting Places</p> <p>Renfrewshire New Development Supplementary Guidance (2022) Delivering the Environment Strategy Delivering the Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Material Considerations New Development in the Countryside 2022</p>
PLANNING ASSESSMENT	<p>In considering the development plan, National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) sets out the most up to date policy position.</p> <p>Policy 8 outlines that residential accommodation will only be supported in the green belt if it is required and designed for a key worker in a primary industry within the immediate vicinity of their place of employment where the presence of a worker is essential to the operation of the enterprise. In this instance the dwellinghouses being proposed are not in connection with providing accommodation for a key worker and no justification has been provided for locational need for the development of this site.</p> <p>The intent of Policy 8 is to encourage compact urban growth and the sustainable use of the land around urban areas. The allowance for residential accommodation within the green belt is therefore focused to key workers only. The erection of four dwellinghouse at this location would not align with the sustainable development strategy advocated by Policy 8. The proposal is not therefore considered to comply with Policy 8 of NPF4.</p>

	<p>The proposal also fails to comply with Policy 16 as it has not demonstrated that the houses are required to address any shortfall in the area, with the variety of housing needs in the Houston and Bridge of Weir area is already addressed by allocated housing land within the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.</p> <p>Furthermore, specifically in relation to Policy 16 (f), it is considered that this proposal for new homes on land not allocated for housing in the local development plan is not consistent with the spatial strategy, or any other relevant policies such as local living or 20 minute neighbourhoods, the site is not within an existing settlement boundary and that the proposal is not for affordable homes supported by the affordable housing plan/strategy. In terms of being consistent with the policy on rural homes, this assessment is detailed below.</p> <p>Policy 17 seeks to encourage, promote, and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable rural homes in the right location. However as noted above the site is within the green belt which seeks to restrict development around towns and cities.</p> <p>Although there is no definition of 'rural homes' in NPF4, it is considered that the site is not in a rural location distant to the urban envelope or other housing, given that the site is less than 400m from residential properties on Brierie Hill Road to the east and 700m from Loch Road to the west.</p> <p>As outlined above the site is not allocated for housing within the local development plan and therefore greater weight should therefore be attached to the provisions of Policy 8 – Green Belts with respect to sustainable development.</p> <p>The applicant has emphasised the redevelopment of the brownfield site as being a factor for justification. It is accepted that the site is brownfield and acknowledged that Policy 17 makes allowance for reuse of brownfield land in rural areas where a return to a natural state has not or will not happen without intervention. However, the policy intent of one of Policy 17's key outcomes is that homes are provided that support sustainable rural communities and are linked with service provision. Again there is no locational justification provided by the applicant associated with this proposal and the site is not considered to be distant to the urban envelope.</p> <p>In addition whilst it is noted that Policy 17 also allows that residential proposals may be acceptable in rural areas where the proposal makes use of redundant or unused buildings; makes use of or secures the future of historic environment assets; demonstrates a necessity to support the sustainable management of a rural business; offers retirement succession of a viable farm holding; relates to the subdivision of an existing dwelling of appropriate scale; or reinstates a former house or is a one-for-one replacement of an existing permanent house. None of these instances are noted in the submission of this application. It is therefore considered that the</p>
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	<p>proposed development is not fully compliant with Policy 17 – Rural homes.</p> <p>Policy 9 relates specifically to brownfield land. It seeks to encourage, promote, and facilitate the reuse of brownfield land to ensure development is directed to the right locations. The nature of the proposed development and its location do not align with the sustainable development strategy advocated by Policy 8. It would not therefore constitute the sustainable reuse of a brownfield site.</p> <p>While the site is accepted as constituting brownfield land, this does not provide justification for redevelopment with respect to the policies within the development plan. The provisions of the green belt policy still apply regardless of whether a site is brownfield or greenfield. The removal of an eyesore is a not material consideration which can be given weight in the decision making process. However, this consideration would only outweigh the policies of the development plan in exceptional circumstances where development on the site with the associated removal of an eyesore would considerably enhance the openness and visual amenity of the green belt.</p> <p>The visual impact of the farm in its current form is not considered to be of significant detriment to the character of the green belt, and residential development on the site will not considerably enhance the openness and visual amenity of the green belt. Little weight is therefore attached to this as a material consideration.</p> <p>Finally, it is considered that the residential accommodation would still be dependent on private transport to meet everyday travel demands. The development would not be in a location that supports sustainable travel and is contrary to Policy 13.</p> <p>Policy ENV1 of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan states that residential development within the green belt will be considered appropriate in principle where it offers a housing land shortfall remedy. As noted above, no such shortfall has been identified in the North Renfrewshire area and the proposal does not therefore accord with this principle. Again, there has also been no locational need demonstrated by the applicant to justify new housing in the green belt.</p> <p>Additional criteria for considering new housing in the green belt are also outlined in Policy ENV1 and the New Development Supplementary Guidance and are considered in turn below:</p> <p><u>Development is required to maintain and support an established activity</u></p> <p>There is no indication that development is required to maintain or support an established activity that is suitable in the green belt.</p> <p><u>There is a need for the residential use to be located outwith the settlement</u></p>
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	<p>It has not been demonstrated that there is a need for the development to be located outwith the settlement.</p> <p><u>Buildings which have special architectural, traditional or historic character may be converted for residential use</u></p> <p>The development does not involve the conversion of an existing building.</p> <p><u>The proposal demonstrates outstanding quality of design, is of an appropriate scale within its setting, and makes a positive contribution to the site and surrounding area</u></p> <p>The proposal is in principle only. While the applicant has provided indicative design concepts, no detailed elevations have been provided.</p> <p><u>The proposal integrates with, complements, and enhances the established character of the area</u></p> <p>The indicative layout shows that the site could accommodate four dwellinghouses. Retention of the trees along the site boundary would maintain the self-contained nature of the site.</p> <p>However, the site in its existing condition is not considered to be of significant detriment to the landscape character of the green belt. It is not considered that the development is needed in order to enhance the surrounding area, or that the proposal would have any other special qualities that would outweigh the lack of a locational justification, as outlined above.</p> <p><u>Replacement dwellings should reflect the specific character of the location, fit well with the surrounding landscape and achieve a high design standard</u></p> <p>The proposed development does not constitute a replacement dwellinghouse.</p> <p>On balance, it is not considered that there is any locational justification for the development, nor are there any other outstanding reasons in terms of the quality of the development that would sufficiently outweigh these considerations.</p> <p>In addition to the above, the development must also be assessed against the green belt development criteria outlined in the New Development Supplementary Guidance.</p> <p>In terms of these criteria, the proposals would result in no loss of prime quality agricultural land and it is not considered that the site constitutes valuable agricultural land. There are no natural heritage designations within the site, or any ecological or habitat resources of significant value.</p>
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	<p>With respect to traffic and access, Roads Development have offered no objections subject to conditions relating to upgrading the junction at Bridge of Weir Road, and the provision of intervisible passing places along the access road. These matters could be covered by condition.</p> <p>In terms of any other infrastructure connections there is no reason to suggest that the site could not be serviced given the nearby infrastructure in the area. Scottish Water has confirmed no objection to the development and have advised that sufficient capacity exists in their infrastructure to support the proposals.</p> <p>In summary, the proposed development is found to be contrary to the relevant policies within the development plan as no locational need for the development to be sited within the green belt has been demonstrated. There are no other factors in terms of the potential contribution of the development to the surrounding area that would be sufficient to outweigh this consideration.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that planning permission be refused.</p>
RECOMMENDATION	Refuse

Reason for Decision

1. The proposed development is considered contrary to Policy 8 of the National Planning Framework 4 (2023), Policy ENV1 of the Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2021) and the New Development Supplementary Guidance (2022) on Housing in the Green Belt, as it has not been demonstrated that there is a specific locational need for four dwellinghouses at the application site and there are no other material considerations sufficient to outweigh the lack of any demonstrable locational need.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Background Papers

For further information or to inspect any letters of objection and other background papers, please contact James Weir on 07483370666.