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17th July 2025

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**Planning Application 25/00527/PIP**

**Permission in Principle for the conversion of the existing building for to up to two Residential Dwellings (C3)**

**Alders Court, Green Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5GY,**

**Applicant: Mrs R Portman  
Ward: Astwood Bank And Feckenham Ward**

**(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Claire Gilbert, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881655 Email: [claire.gilbert@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:claire.gilbert@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

**Site Description**

The existing building that the application relates to forms part of a farmstead which is located to the Southwest of Redditch in an area designated as Green Belt. The building is a linear barn structure which is agricultural in nature. The other barns that form the farmstead have already been converted into dwellinghouses.

Due to its age the building is not considered to be of historic interest, however it does fall within the setting of a historic and largely intact farmstead, which is of historic interest and also forms part of the curtilage of the grade II listed farmhouse known as Wellbrook House.

The building is currently used for a mixture of uses including as an ancillary building for the occupiers of the adjacent dwelling houses and as a stable for the keeping of horses. The land that surrounds it and makes up the remaining site area, appears to be land which is maintained by the existing residential dwellings at Alders Court and mainly comprises areas of grass and shrubs along the existing access drive that serves some of the existing dwellings within the farmstead.

**Proposal Description**

This is a Permission in Principle (PIP) application, which is an alternative route of obtaining planning permission for development, additional information is contained in the assessment section of the report.

The proposed development is for the conversion of the existing building on the site for up to 2 dwellings.

**Relevant Policies**

**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

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Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy  
Policy 4: Housing Provision  
Policy 8: Green Belt  
Policy 16: Natural Environment  
Policy 17: Flood Risk Management  
Policy 19: Sustainable travel and Accessibility  
Policy 36: Historic Environment  
Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

## **Others**

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)  
National Planning Practice Guidance  
National Design Guide  
Redditch High Quality Design SPD

## **Relevant Planning History**

No relevant history

## **Consultations**

### **Conservation Officer**

Comments received summarised as follows:

The application refers to a building that forms part of the farmstead historically known as Greenlane Farm located to the southwest of Redditch around Callow Hill. From map evidence, it is a linear building and was constructed sometime between 1938-71. The planning statement notes that it has a concrete portal frame, so the building is most likely a barn associated with the wider farm site. It is probably agricultural in character and therefore in keeping with the sort of building found on a farm, though its age suggests it is not of historic interest. However, it falls within the setting of a historic and largely intact farmstead, which is of historic interest and forms the curtilage of the grade II listed farmhouse, Wellbrook House. It is also sited next to a historic moat, which is of archaeological interest.

In principle, the conversion of the building to residential purposes would be acceptable to Conservation. This would be subject to the submission of further information for consideration at the technical details consent stage.

### **Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service**

Comments received summarised as follows:

There is no archaeological objection to the principle of re-development of the existing building and land for up to two dwellings, however, Archaeology should be consulted on the Technical Details, as there may be a requirement for conditions to offset harm.

### **North Worcestershire Water Management**

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Comments received summarised as follows:

The proposed development site is situated in the catchment of Alders Brook. The site falls within flood zone 1, meaning it is not considered that there is any significant fluvial flood risk to the site. But there is a section of unmapped watercourse to the East of the development which could pose some risk. The EA's flood mapping does however indicate that there is a risk to the site and surrounding area to surface water flooding. This is mostly on the south half of the site away from the current building but does show a significant risk.

As there are no details provided in relation to any proposed drainage arrangements, NWWM have provided a statement of their requirements for the technical details.

**Worcestershire Highways – Redditch**

Comments received summarised as follows:

No highway objections "in principle" to the proposed residential development of Permission in Principle for the conversion of the existing building for to up to two Residential Dwellings (C3) – subject to details provided within any full application are in accordance with WCC Streetscape Design Guide.

The site is located in a semi-rural and unsustainable location due to amenities and facilities not being located within acceptable walking distance, however this is accepted since pedestrian safety is not compromised. The site has an existing vehicular access and is located off a private drive which is located opposite a classified road (Green Lane). Green Lane has no footways or street lighting. No bus stops are located within acceptable walking distance.

Due to the latest December 2024 government published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highways now look at pedestrian and highway safety, and it has been concluded sustainability of the site is no longer a highway reason for refusal. Sustainability of the site is something that is now considered by the planning department.

**WRS - Contaminated Land**

Comments received summarised as follows:

I have looked over the information provided by the applicant; the previous commercial use of the existing building is unclear, and as its being converted to a dwelling we require further information on the land use history, I would suggest a desk study in the first instance.

**Feckenham Parish Council**

Comments received summarised as follows:

Whilst we accept that this application site falls within the definition of "grey belt," the question of whether the application complies with paragraph 155 of the NPPF is far less clear.

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The principle of conversion of the existing buildings may be acceptable, but the change of use to two large residential dwellings would significantly increase the use and therefore create a detrimental effect to the openness of the surrounding area.

Again, whilst in principle, the highways authority, have not objected, the site is in an unsustainable location with no adequate footpaths or street lighting.

The application therefore fails to comply with -:

Paragraph 155a, as it would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining green belt.

Paragraph 155b, whilst the Borough do not have a five-year land supply, there is no demonstrable (clearly apparent or capable of being logically proved reason), to substantiate it.

Paragraph 155c, the site is in an unsustainable location.

On the basis of the above the Parish Council object to this application

**Arboricultural Officer**

Comments received summarised as follows:

No objection to the proposal set out in this application.

**Public Consultation Response**

1st Site Notice posted 09/05/2025 expired 26/05/2025

2<sup>nd</sup> Site notice posted 16/05/2025 expired 09/06/2025

1<sup>st</sup> Neighbour letters sent 09/05/2025 expired 26/05/2025

2<sup>nd</sup> neighbour letters sent 14/05/2025 expired 31/05/2025

1<sup>st</sup> Press Notice posted 12/05/2025 expired 02/06/2025

2<sup>nd</sup> Press Notice posted 9/05/2025 expired 09/06/2025

No representations received to date.

**Assessment of Proposal**

The proposal is for permission in principle, as provided for in the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017(as amended). The Planning Practice Guidance advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle, and the second stage ('technical details consent') is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. The granting of technical details consent has the effect of granting planning permission for the development.

**When assessing applications for permission in principle, the scope for assessment is strictly limited to the following issues:**

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- **Location**
- **land use; and**
- **amount of development**

All other matters are considered as part of the subsequent technical details consent application if permission in principle is granted. Consideration of this application has to be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is one such material consideration.

## **Location**

### **Green Belt**

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF sets out that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. '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.

Paragraph 154 goes on to set out that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the set list of exceptions applies, one of which is:

- h) other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
- i. mineral extraction.
  - ii. engineering operations.
  - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location.
  - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction.
  - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
  - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

It is considered that the conversion of the existing building into dwellings would fall within paragraph 154. h) iv. which is the re use of buildings provided that the buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction.

Whilst it appears that the building that is the subject of this application would be capable of conversion, no structural survey to confirm this has been submitted at this stage. Information about the structural integrity of the building and how the conversion would take place would be required to be submitted at the technical details consent stage.

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Due to the sites existing use and siting, it is not considered that the proposal to convert the building to provide up to two dwellings would conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. It is also considered that due to the nature of the development that is proposed, the openness of the Green Belt would be preserved.

Overall is it considered that the proposal would be appropriate development in the Green Belt.

## **Sustainability**

The site is situated to the southwest of the identified residential area of Redditch. The access to the site is via an existing vehicular access off Green Lane which currently serves other residential properties at Alders Court. There are no pavements or street lighting along this section of Green Lane.

On the eastern side of Green Lane, there is a footpath that connects into the existing residential area of Callow Hill (Underwood Close). There are 2 access points into this footpath from Green Lane. One of which is situated approximately 20 metres to the north of the sites access and the other is situated just over 40 metres to the south of the sites access. This is a tarmacked footpath which does have some street lighting.

Given the proximity of the site to the main residential area of Redditch and that there is an existing footpath near to the site that would provide a link into this residential area of Redditch, it is not considered that the site is in a wholly unsustainable location.

## **Land Use**

The application site is near to other residential properties.

## **Historic Environment**

The Councils Conservation Officer has set out that in principle, the conversion of the building to residential purposes would be acceptable. In the event of a formal application, they have set out that further information and detail would be required and the potential impact of the proposal on the nearby heritage assets would need to be taken into consideration.

County Archaeology have set out that they have no archaeological objection to the principle of re-development of the existing building and land for up to two dwellings, however, they have set out that they should be consulted on the Technical Details as there should be conditions to offset harm.

## **Contaminated Land**

Worcestershire Regulatory Services have not raised an objection to the principle of the development but have set out that given the unknown history of the site and building, further information would be required to be provided. This would be required at the technical details stage.

## **Drainage**

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North Worcestershire Water Management have not raised an objection to the principle of the development but have set out that there is a risk of surface water flooding on the site. Due to this they have recommended that detailed drainage information should be provided at the technical details stage.

Notwithstanding, the land use is considered appropriate at this stage.

## **Amount of Development**

The amount of development proposed is considered to be acceptable given the size of the building and the area of land shown within the red line on the application plan.

## **Other matters**

### **Highway safety**

Worcestershire County Highways have raised no highway objections "in principle" to the proposed residential development - subject to details provided with any full application are in accordance with WCC Streetscape Design Guide.

### **Trees**

The Councils Tree Officers have no objection to the proposal.

### **Biodiversity and Ecology**

The grant of PIP is not within the scope of biodiversity net gain (BNG) and this is a matter that instead will need to be considered at Technical Details stage.

The site does not fall within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or a Special Wildlife Site; however, the proposal does affect an existing rural building and the site is surrounded by trees and hedgerows and open countryside. Whilst it is not a reason to refuse PIP, further information in relation to protected species will be necessary at the technical details consent stage.

### **Planning Conditions**

The Governments Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) expressly sets out that it is not possible for conditions to be attached to a grant of permission in principle. Conditions could only be attached at any later technical details consent stage.

## **Conclusion**

The Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) and therefore regard should be had to paragraph 11(d) and footnote 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which together state that for applications providing housing, where the Council cannot demonstrate a 5YHLS, the policies which are most important for determining the application are considered out-of-date and planning permission should be granted unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

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ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

This application seeks to establish whether the principle of development is acceptable, having regard to only three matters: location, land use and amount of development.

In view of limb (i) the proposal has been found to comprise appropriate development within the Green Belt. There is therefore no strong reason for refusing the application on this basis.

In view of limb (ii), the location of the site is considered sustainable, making effective use of the land and providing up to 2 new dwellings towards housing supply.

On that basis, there are no known adverse impacts of granting permission in principle that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. It is therefore considered that this Permission in principle application should be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, permission in principle be GRANTED.**

## **Informative:**

1. This decision notice only relates to the grant of planning permission in principle. It does not give any approval or consent which may be needed under any legislation, enactment, byelaws, order or regulation other than the Housing and Planning Act 2016. You may need other approvals, consents or licenses for the development eg. Technical Details Consent or building regulations approval.

Permission in Principle is not a planning permission; it is a precursor to it. A planning permission only exists when the Permission in Principle and Technical Detailed Consent have been granted.

## **Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to Planning Committee because a statutory Consultee (Feckenham Parish Council) have raised objection to the proposal. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.