

Application Reference Number:	2026/0643
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Application Type:	Permission in Principle
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Proposal Description:	Residential development up to one dwelling (Permission in Principle).
Location:	Land adjacent Finkle Street Lane, Wortley, Sheffield

Applicant:	Mr Stephen Bramall
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Third-party representations:	2	Parish:	Wortley
		Ward:	Penistone East Ward

Summary:

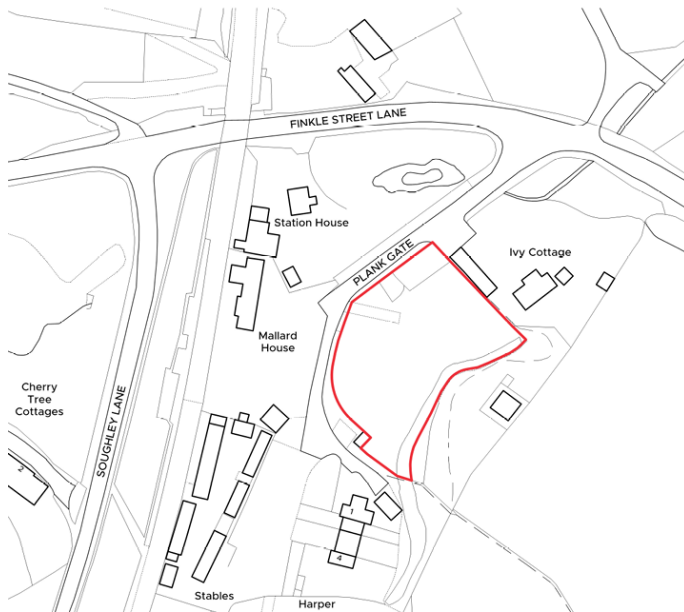
This application seeks Permission in Principle for the erection of one dwelling at an undeveloped site. The site is currently washed over by Green Belt as defined in the adopted Barnsley Local Plan and is located in a rural cul-de-sac off Finkle Street Lane, near Wortley.

The Applicant suggests that the site could be considered as Grey Belt and that the proposed development accords with the criteria set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2026) Policy GB7 which relates to the various exemptions to development in the Green Belt being not inappropriate. However, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) disagree with the Applicant's conclusions regarding the location of the site being sustainable. The site has poor pedestrian access and infrequent bus services, meaning the occupiers would be reliant upon private car. The site also has a score of 29 on the Government's Connectivity Tool. The LPA therefore consider the site to be in an unsustainable location.

As such, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and therefore discordant with NPPF Policy GB7: Development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt.

Recommendation: **Permission in Principle REFUSED.**

Location Plan



Introduction

The permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for (minor) housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical details of the development.

The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages:

- the first stage (permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle;
- the second (technical details consent) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.

Permission in principle, as the initial stage, is limited to the consideration of location, land use and the amount of development which, in the event of an approval, would leave the remaining matters to be considered at the technical details application.

Site Location & Description

The site is an irregular shape and extends to circa 0.2ha (incorrectly described as 0.1ha in the submitted application form). The site lies to the south of Plank Gate, off Finkle Street Lane. However, on the application form and supporting documents, the site has been addressed as 'land adjacent to Finkle Street Lane' which is consistent with the address of the previous refused planning application (ref: 2017/0845). The site lies within a small hamlet, in a cul-de-sac arrangement to the west of Finkle Street Lane. A detached property (Ivy Cottage) is located to the immediate east of the application site, with two further detached dwellings (Mallard House and Station House) located to the north of Plank Gate. A terrace of 4x dwellings is located to the south-west of the site, with a stables/living business adjacent. All the neighbouring properties are accessed via Plank Street which has an unadopted road.

The site is currently undeveloped, consisting of scrubland and a small allotment/vegetable patch area with raised beds and planters at the north-eastern corner. A small portacabin building and shed are located on the site, with waste/building materials scattered across the ground. There is a metal gate at the western corner of the site, with a post and wire fence roughly defining the edge of the site. The site is uneven, with land levels significantly raising towards the southern boundary.

A tree belt/woodland borders the site to the south which then joins with Forge Woods to the south-west of the site, whilst a line of established trees defines the boundary between the site and the Ivy Cottage (to the east). PROW path number: 24 runs along the eastern boundary and then southwards, through the woodland, though is currently inaccessible in certain sections due to overgrown trees and lack of clear route. Further smaller trees/scrub are located along the northern and western boundaries. Open fields lie further to the south-east and east.

On the application form, the site is described as being used as a depot for a landscaping business, however this is not consistent with the planning history or the mapping data, in which the site has no formal address.

The neighbouring properties are large in scale and situate within generous but well defined plots. The properties are set back from Plank Gate, with mature landscaping and trees screening the dwellings from direct view. Plank Street is not an adopted highway and is not constructed to modern standards (though does serve more than 5 dwellings). The road has a loose, gravel surface and is undulated, with large potholes which quickly hold surface water. The street has no pedestrian footway, with part of the road currently being used for informal on-street parking. A formalised footway is located along one side of Finkle Street Lane.

Wortley is the closest settlement, the edge of which is located circa 710m in an eastern direction. Though via road/footpath, Wortley is roughly 1.2km away via Finkle Street Lane and A629. Wortley provides basic amenities, including a small village shop with Post Office, a pub and a church. However, the closest schools or supermarkets are located in Deepcar and Stocksbridge which is circa 3km in a southern direction.

The site lies within a low-risk development area as per the Mining Remediation Authority maps. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) on the Environment Agency maps, though land to the north and east lies within Flood Zone 2.



Planning History

2017/0845 - Residential development (Outline with all matters reserved), REFUSED, 11/8/2017

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The site lies within the Green Belt on the approved Barnsley Unitary Development Plan, wherein it is the Policy of the Local Planning Authority not to permit new development except in very special circumstances, for purposes other than those set out in paragraphs 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2. UDP Policy GS8 reflects national policy guidance and precludes development for purposes other than agriculture, forestry and essential facilities for sport and recreation, which preserve the openness of the Green Belt. In the opinion of the LPA the proposed outline residential application [2017/0845] constitutes inappropriate development contrary to policy and prejudicial to the character and openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, there are considered to be no very special circumstances to justify the granting of planning permission in this instance.
2. The planning application site boundary does not include all land necessary to carry out the proposed development; specifically the land required to provide access from a public highway.
3. The applicant has not submitted sufficient details to enable an adequate assessment to be made of the effect of the proposal on trees and the ecology of the area.

B/82/0921/WO – Erection of dwelling and garage, REFUSE, 18/8/1982

B/81/0180/WO - Use of stables for riding school and provision of exercise area and paddock, GRANTED, 7/5/1981

B/78/3603/WO - Erection of tool shed and stable for ponies, HISTORIC, 25/1/1979

B/78/3548/WO - Erection of double garage, HISTORIC, 14/11/1978

Proposed Development

This application seeks permission in principle for the erection of one dwelling at the application site with associated works. The application has been supported by an indicative site plan which provides a suggested layout of the proposed development. No further supporting information is required for this type of application.



Policy Context

Allocation/Designations

The site is washed over by Green Belt as defined in the adopted Local Plan.

The site is in a low-risk development area as designated by the Mining Remediation Authority. The site is in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) as per the Environment Agency maps.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework 2026 sets out the overarching planning framework for England. It has replaced the previous version published in December 2024 and introduced a revised structure in the main body of the document comprising national decision-making policies organised by policy code rather than paragraph number. Paragraph 1 confirms that the NPPF is a material consideration of critical importance for making decisions on development proposals in England.

Paragraph 15 confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and NPPF Policy S3 sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with paragraph 17 setting out the three overarching objectives of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Relevant policies have been taken into account throughout the assessment of this application according to the issues raised by the proposal.

The most relevant sections of the NPPF are:

- Section 6 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Section 15 - Promoting Sustainable Travel
- Section 12 - Making Effective Use of Land
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land

Section 14- Achieving Well-designed Places

Section 17 – Pollution, Public Protection and Security

Section 19 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The National Design Guidance (2019) is a material consideration and sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places based on planning policy expectations. A written ministerial statement states that local planning authorities should take it into account when taking decisions.

Barnsley Local Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019).

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means, no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

The following Local Plan policies are relevant in this case:

- Policy GD1: General Development
- Policy LG2: The Location for Growth
- Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt
- Policy GB3: Changes of use in the Green Belt
- Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making
- Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety
- Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection
- Policy H1: The Number of New Houses to be Built
- Policy H4: Residential Development on Small Non-allocated Sites
- Policy BIO1: Biodiversity & Geodiversity

Supplementary Planning Guidance

In line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Barnsley has adopted twenty eight Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following the adoption of the Local Plan in January 2019. The most pertinent SPD's in this case are:

- Parking, November 2019
- Sustainable Travel, July 2022
- Design of Housing Development, July 2023
- Residential Amenity and the Siting of Buildings, May 2019
- Biodiversity & Geodiversity, March 2024
- Trees and Hedgerows, May 2019
- South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, 2011

The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision making and are afforded full weight.

Consultations

Biodiversity Officer – No objection, though further information would be required at Technical Details Consent stage.

Local Ward Cllrs – No response.

Drainage – No objection.

Highways DC – Concerns raised regarding the condition of Plank Gate and the number of dwellings which would be accessed via an unadopted road/private drive.

Yorkshire Water – No objection.

Pollution Control – No objection at this stage.

Public Rights of Way – No objection, though improvements to the adjacent to the PROW would be welcomed.

Forestry Officer – No response.

Planning Policy – Concludes that the application site is not in a sustainable location and that the proposed development would not meet the requirements of NPPF Policy GB7, meaning the proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt which should be refused in the absence of any very special circumstances.

Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Development Management Procedure Order (DMPO) 2015 and the Permission in Principle legislation, as follows:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining properties- consultation expiry date: 8/9/2026
- Site Notice (Public Interest) displayed adjacent to the site- consultation expiry date: 7/9/2026

2 representations have been received in response to the above publicity, raising the following concerns:

- Unsustainable location;
- Green Belt designation/purposes;
- Harm upon openness;
- Impact upon biodiversity;
- Impact upon trees;
- Submitted before new NPPF was published;
- Impact upon character of the area;
- Previous reason for refusal not overcome;

Assessment

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale:

- Substantial

- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

The National Planning Policy Guidance explains that permission in principle is an alternative way of obtaining planning consent for housing led development as part of a two stage procedure.

Permission in principle, as the initial stage, is limited to the consideration of location, land use and the amount of development which, in the event of an approval, would leave the remaining matters to be considered in a technical details application. The PPG further advises that conditions cannot be attached to the grant of permission in principle and expressly states that planning obligations cannot be secured at the permission in principle stage. Therefore, with regard to any consultation responses received which recommend additional work or conditions, these would be required at the technical consent stage if permission in principle was to be granted.

Location

The site is washed over by Green Belt as defined by the adopted Local Plan.

NPPF Policy GB6: Control of Development in the Green Belt, Paragraph 1 states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the categories in policy GB7. Paragraph 2 follows on to state that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Such circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposed development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In making this assessment, substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt which would be caused, including harm to its openness.

NPPF Policy GB7: Development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, Paragraph 1(g) states that development whereby all of the following apply is not inappropriate:

- i) The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
- ii) There is an evidenced unmet need for the type of development proposed;
- iii) The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3 of this Framework; and
- iv) In the case of major development involving the provision of housing, the development proposed complies with policy GB8.

The definition of 'Grey Belt' is set out in Annex B: Glossary of the NPPF, as follows: *For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in policy GB2.*

NPPF Policy GB2: Assessing existing Green Belt land sets out the purposes of (a), (b) and (d) as follows:

- a) Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- d) Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;

Local Plan Policy GB1: Protection of the Green Belt repeats the guidance set out in NPPF Paragraph GB6, stating that that Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national planning policy.

The Planning Policy Officer has undertaken an assessment against the Green Belt policies set out above. The assessment concluded that the site does not contribute strongly to purposes a, b or d of NPPF Policy GB2 for the following reasons:

- a) *Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas* – The site is not near to any large, built settlements or towns, meaning that it does not contribute to Green Belt purpose (a).
- b) *Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another* - The site does not form part of a gap between towns and therefore does not contribute to Green Belt purpose (b).
- d) *Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns* – The site is not near to a historic town or the historic core of a town and therefore does not contribute to Green Belt purpose (d).

On this basis, the site meets the definition of Grey Belt and can therefore be assessed against NPPF Policy GB7, Paragraph 1(g) as follows:

- i. As set out above, the site does not strongly contribute towards purposes a, b or d of the Green Belt and is therefore considered to be Grey Belt. Paragraph 1(g)(i) requires the site to be assessed against all purposes of the Green Belt as set out in Policy GB2, Paragraph 1 of the NPPF. Purpose (c) states that the Green Belt shall assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. It is considered that the application site does not contribute to the open rural setting, and is physically separated from the open fields to the south by the established tree belt. However, it is clear that the site does form part of the hamlet off Finkle Street Lane. On this basis, the site's current contribution to Green Belt purpose (c) is considered to be moderate. Purpose (e) states that the Green Belt shall assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. When taking into account the extent of the Green Belt across the development plan area, and the current housing need, any harm in relation to purpose (e) is considered to be limited. Accordingly it is concluded that the proposed development complies with NPPF Policy GB7, Paragraph g(i).
- ii. Paragraph 1(g)(ii) states that there must be an evidenced unmet need for the type of development proposed. It is acknowledged that the latest (2025) housing delivery test result for Barnsley was 75%, meaning that delivery targets have not been met and, as such, a 20% buffer should be applied to the five year housing land requirement. It is also acknowledged that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a deliverable five year housing land supply. The most recent published supply figure published October 2025 shows a position of 2.9 years (having taken into account the 20%buffer) - Barnsley Five Year Deliverable Housing Land Supply Report April 2024 - March 2029. On this basis, the development proposal accords with NPPF Policy GB7, Paragraph g(ii), though the development's contribution towards housing supply would be limited, due to the proposal relating to only one dwelling.
- iii. Paragraph 1(g)(iii) requires the development proposal to be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to NPPF Policy TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations. NPPF Policy TR3 requires developments to be located in locations which limit the need to travel, particularly by private car and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. Paragraph 2 refers to using the Government's Connectivity Tool when assessing the connectivity of development sites. The application site is located in a hamlet which is not a defined settlement in the Barnsley Local Plan. The nearest services and facilities (such as pub, small shop and church) are located at Wortley, which is over 1.2km away via road/footway, though the footways along Finkley Street Lane have no street lighting, and the A629 has only occasional street lighting. More facilities (including schools and supermarkets) being located at Deepcar and Stocksbridge which are circa 3km away to the south and not walkable. The closest bus stop to the application site is 160m away on Finkle Street Lane, close to the junction

with Soughley Lane, though this is poorly served by public transport. The submitted documents do not refer to the frequency or direction of bus services. However the Case Officer has reviewed the available bus timetables for the closest bus stop, which indicates that bus services towards Millhouse Green (via Wortley) runs 3 times a day between 10am – 2pm. The bus times are infrequent and would not provide suitable service times for school or typical working hours. There are no direct bus services towards Barnsley Town Centre, Stocksbridge or Deepcar. Access to the closest facilities at Deepcar/Stocksbridge would require users to change buses. Taking this into account, the application site provides inconvenient pedestrian and public transport access, which is reflected by the Connectivity Tool score of 29. It is clear that occupiers of the development would be reliant upon private car in order to access day to day services and facilities. The development is therefore not situated in a sustainable location and is discordant with NPPF Policy GB7, Paragraph g(iii).

- iv. Paragraph 1(g)(iv) states that major development involving the provision of housing, shall comply with NPPF Policy GB8: The Golden Rules. As this proposal relates to a maximum of one dwelling it does not constitute as a major development, thus Paragraph 1(g)(iv) does not apply.

Overall, whilst the site is considered to be Grey Belt, the development does not satisfy the requirements of NPPF Policy GB7. The site is not located in a sustainable location, with pedestrian and public transport access to nearby facilities being inconvenient. Residents would be reliant upon private car, due to the infrequent bus services and lack of suitable pedestrian routes. The development is discordant with NPPF Policy GB7, Paragraph g(iii) and is therefore considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Land Use

Local Plan Policy H4: Residential Development on Small Non-allocated Sites states that proposals for residential development on sites below 0.4 hectares will be allowed where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the Plan. Paragraph 9.11 follows on to state that 'small scale residential development within towns and villages in line with other plan policies, including those protecting people's living conditions, road safety and design' could be acceptable.

The application site is circa 0.2ha in size and therefore Policy H4 applies.

As mentioned above, the application site currently has no formal use consisting of scrubland, meaning it has no established residential use. It is recognised that the land to the immediate north and east is used for residential purposes, and based on the definition set out in the NPPF, the site could be considered as Grey Belt.

However, for the reasons set out in the section above, the development is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, meaning the proposal is discordant with Local Plan Policy GB1. As such, residential uses is not an appropriate use at this site.

Amount of Development

Local Plan Policy D1 states that development is expected to be of high-quality design and should respect and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features. Development should contribute to place making and make the best use of materials, as well as display architectural quality and express proposed uses through its composition, scale, form, proportions and arrangements of materials, colours and details.

Local Plan Policy GD1 states that proposals for development will be approved if there are no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future

residents. Proposals should be compatible with neighbouring land and should not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land.

Local Plan Policy POLL1 states that development will be expected to demonstrate that there would be no unacceptable affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people.

The proposed development includes the erection of one dwelling in addition to the associated landscaping and access works. The application submission includes an indicative site plan which demonstrates that a detached dwelling can be erected at the site and broadly achieve the required separation distances; space standards and suitable outdoor amenity space in accordance with the adopted SPDs.

Further information would be required at Technical Details Consent stage, particularly in regard to highways to ensure that the amount of development could be appropriately accessed. Significant concerns regarding the number of dwellings accessed off Plank Gate has been raised by the Highways DC Officer. The South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide Section 4.B.1.1.9 states that unadopted shared private drives may give access for up to a maximum of 5 dwellings. It is recognised that more than 5 dwellings are currently accessed off Plank Gate which is unadopted (thus considered as a private drive). Any future Technical Details Consent application would need to propose/secure significant improvements to Plank Gate due to the intensified use. At least the first 10m of Plank Gate would need to be surfaced to mitigate the increase in vehicle movements and ensure the adequate provision for surface water disposal.

In summary, based on the details provided at this stage, the amount of development proposed is considered to be acceptable. However, this does not outweigh the issues concluded in the sections above.

Conclusion

The scope of a Permission in Principle is restricted to location, land use and amount of development. Other matters would be considered further at the technical details consent stage.

Neighbour representations have been received which include concerns relating to the Green Belt designation of the application site, with issues referring to the location being unsustainable. These concerns are consistent with the assessment made by the Planning Policy Officer and the Case Officer who both consider that the application site is not sustainable and is therefore discordant with the requirements of NPPF Policy GB7(g)(iii). Future residents of the site would be reliant upon private car, due to the infrequent bus services and absence of local facilities within a safe, walkable distance.

Although the amount of development hereby proposed is acceptable, this does not outweigh the concerns relating to location of the site and the fact that residential uses are inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Significant concerns relating to the highways access has also been raised by the Highways DC Officer, who confirmed that part of Plank Gate would require substantial improvement works in order to be considered as a suitable access for the proposed development.

Whilst it is recognised that there is an unmet need for housing development within the borough, the development constitutes as inappropriate development in the Green Belt and is therefore discordant with both Local Plan and NPPF policies. Additionally, the development of one single dwelling would not substantially contribute towards housing supply and this benefit is therefore afforded limited weight. Overall, the development is in an unsustainable location and would introduce in inappropriate use within a rural, Green Belt location, whereby no very special circumstances exist. The Permission in Principle is therefore refused.

RECOMMENDATION: Refused

Justification

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ARTICLE 35 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE ORDER 2015

In dealing with the application referred to above, despite the Local Planning Authority wanting to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application, in this instance this has not been possible due to the reasons mentioned above.

Due regard has been given to Article 8 and Protocol 1 of Article 1 of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998 when considering objections, the determination of the application and the resulting recommendation. it is considered that the recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or any objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

Reason for Refusal:

1. The application site lies within the Green Belt as defined in the adopted Barnsley Local Plan. The proposed development constitutes as inappropriate development, due to being discordant with National Planning Policy Framework Policy GB7 and no very special circumstances exist. The proposed development also fails to accord with Local Plan Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt.