



Planning Statement

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ONE DWELLING (OUTLINE WITH LAYOUT & VEHICULAR ACCESS)

LAND TO THE REAR OF CHAPEL ROAD, PILLEY, BARNSELEY, S75 3AR

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an outline planning application for the erection of 1 no. detached dwelling. The application seeks outline consent with layout and vehicular access under consideration at this stage. All other matters are reserved.

The site lies within the Green Belt as defined by the adopted Barnsley Local Plan. The application is, therefore, accompanied by a robust assessment of Green Belt policy, having regard to The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), The Draft NPPF December 2025, including Annex E (Grey Belt), National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and The Barnsley Local Plan.

The statement demonstrates that the proposal constitutes Grey Belt development and limited infilling within a village and, therefore, should not be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It further demonstrates that the proposal would not undermine the purposes of Green Belt designation, and represents a sustainable, deliverable form of development.

Technical supporting information (highways, arboriculture, ecology and access design) confirms the site is developable, sustainable and capable of mitigation.

The proposal should therefore be granted planning permission.

2.0 THE SITE

The application site is located on the southern side of Pilley Hills, to the rear of existing residential properties at that front Chapel Road, within the village of Pilley.

Pilley is a small village settlement characterised primarily by residential development, interspersed with community facilities, small-scale employment uses and agricultural land at its edges. The site lies at the north-western edge of the built-up form but is clearly read as part of the settlement rather than open countryside.

The site comprises an overgrown and unmanaged parcel of land, directly abutting with the residential curtilage of the existing dwellings on Chapel Road.

The site is bounded as follows: - North: Pilley Hills highway and dense woodland beyond; East: Existing residential dwellings fronting Chapel Road; - South: Residential property and agricultural/farm buildings beyond; - West: Open land with strong containment provided by woodland and vegetation. Approx 150m to the west is a further group of residential dwellings.

The site is visually and physically contained by existing development, boundary treatments and mature landscaping, resulting in a limited perception of openness.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

The application seeks outline planning permission for 1 no. detached dwelling. The application is in outline form with layout & vehicular access under consideration at this time.

The proposal comprises a single dwelling with a detached garage, set within a modest residential plot, reflecting the scale and grain of surrounding development.

- The site comprises 'grey belt' land, and there is a recognised shortage in the supply of housing in Barnsley. As such the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt.
- Furthermore, the site is considered an 'infill' site to accord with definitions within the NPPF and there its development is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This was confirmed by the LPA in a recent pre-application submission.
- The proposed site plan demonstrates that one house can comfortably be accommodated within the site in a manner that respects and reflects the existing grain and pattern of development.
- The siting of the dwelling in this roadside location would not harm the character of the rural landscape.
- The site is well-contained by the existing neighbouring building group, the topography and physical features such as Pilley Hills, and the surrounding mature woodland, and there would be no harm to the function of the wider Green Belt area.
- The proposed house would provide a high standard of housing amenity for future occupiers, with no adverse impacts on neighbouring residents.

- Vehicular access is proposed from Pilley Hills, utilising a new dropped kerb arrangement. The access has been subject to technical design and is supported by a Highway Statement confirming safe and suitable operation, including pedestrian improvements through the provision of a new footway along the site frontage.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The planning history comprises of:

B/98/0538/WO – Outline application for erection of a detached dwelling – Refused (1998).

This refusal predates the adoption of the Barnsley Local Plan, multiple iterations of the NPPF, and critically the introduction of Grey Belt policy and the Government’s strengthened emphasis on housing delivery. These policy changes represent a significant shift in material circumstances since the refusal and this previous decision, therefore, carry very limited weight.

Of more relevance is the recent pre-application advice provided by the LPA. This concluded that:

“The principle of new residential development in this location could be considered acceptable under the provisions of NPPF Paragraph 154(e): Limited infilling in villages.”

Technical matters raised in the pre-app in respect of highways, trees, ecology and amenity have also been fully addressed in the application.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan comprises the Barnsley Local Plan (January 2019).

Relevant Local Plan policies include:

- SD1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development;
- GB1 – Protection of the Green Belt;
- LG2 – The Location of Growth;
- H1 – Number of New Homes;
- H4 – Residential Development on Small Non-Allocated Sites;
- GD1 – General Development;
- D1 – High Quality Design and Place making.
- T3 / T4 – Transport and Highway Safety;
- BIO1 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

National Planning Policy Framework – December 2024

The NPPF is reflective of the guidance contained within the NPPG. The following sections of the revised NPPF are considered of direct relevance to the current proposal:

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 - Decision-making
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The overarching message of the NPPF is that LPAs should adopt a positive and pro-active approach to planning proposals, particularly those that result in sustainable development. LPAs should not place unnecessary burdens on developers and should look to support appropriate schemes such as this.

Draft NPPF – December 2025

The Draft NPPF represents a material consideration. The draft reiterates that infill in villages and grey belt development will both remain types of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt.

6.0 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development / Green Belt

The NPPF is a crucial part of the Government's overarching agenda of delivering 1.5m new homes during this parliament. This is a central pillar of the 2024 election pledge and is a response to the well-publicised UK housing crisis. The NPPF places great importance on housing delivery across the UK and is accompanied by recent press releases ("back the builder's, not the blocker's") and written ministerial statements. All place heavy emphasis on the need to reform the planning system so that developments, most notably housing developments, can be delivered as quickly as possible.

The proposed level of housing that is expected to be delivered is extremely ambitious. To put it into context, the UK has not got close to delivering the amount of housing now proposed for over 45 years.

Applications for housing developments need to be viewed in this context and supported wherever possible.

The adopted NPPF confirms that:

- The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate development, which is by definition harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- However, the Framework also identifies specific forms of development which are not inappropriate and therefore do not require very special circumstances.

One such category is limited infilling in villages.

Although the adopted NPPF does not define “infill” exhaustively, long-established interpretation through appeal decisions and Planning Practice Guidance confirms that infill development generally involves:

- The development of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or cluster;
- Development that is closely related to existing buildings;
- Proposals that round off the built form rather than extending it into open countryside;
- Development that is limited in scale and respects the character and form of the village.

The assessment is fact- and context-specific, focusing on the relationship between the site and surrounding development rather than settlement boundaries alone.

The site is located within the village of Pilley, which is a clearly identifiable settlement with an established residential character, community facilities and supporting infrastructure. It is not an isolated or sporadic form of development in the open countryside.

The adopted NPPF does not require villages to be inset from the Green Belt or to have defined settlement boundaries for infill to apply. What matters is whether the proposal relates to an existing village in a meaningful way.

The site exhibits the following infill characteristics:

- It lies immediately adjacent to existing residential development, including properties at Chapel Road.
- It is physically and visually enclosed by existing buildings, the highway (Pilley Hills), boundary treatments and vegetation.
- It does not project development into open countryside nor create ribbon or linear sprawl.
- It represents a logical rounding-off of the built form at the village edge.
- The scale of development is limited to a single dwelling, which is inherently modest.

Taken together, these factors are consistent with the established interpretation of limited infilling in a village under the adopted NPPF. This is consistent with the LPA's view at pre-application stage that the proposal would comprise infilling in a village.

On this basis, it is clear that the proposal is an appropriate and policy compliant form of development in the Green Belt.

Grey Belt

Whilst the development is acceptable in the Green Belt on the infill basis set out above, it is further noted that one of the most significant changes in the revised NPPF in respect of

Green Belt policy is the introduction of 'grey belt' land and its potential for redevelopment under paragraph 155 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 155 sets out that the development of homes should not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. 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;
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

The NPPF defines 'grey belt' land 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 paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development."

Barnsley cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing supply and have also reported an under-delivery of new housing in recent years. As such, there is currently an unmet need for new housing development and criterion a) is currently engaged.

As such, consideration should be given to whether the site strongly contributes to Green Belt purposes a), b) or d) as set out in Paragraph 143 of the NPPF.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides detail as to how to assess sites in the Grey Belt. This also aligns with the draft NPPF (Dec 25), Annex E.

The assessment focuses on the contribution the site makes to the following Green Belt purposes only:

- Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

This reflects the NPPG's clear direction that villages are not large built-up areas, and that purposes (a), (b) and (d) are the relevant tests when identifying Grey Belt land.

The assessment area comprises the application site and its immediate context, which is appropriate for decision-taking and consistent with NPPG guidance on proportionate assessment.

Purpose A – To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-Up Areas

The NPPG confirms that:

- This purpose relates specifically to large built-up areas, and
- Villages should not be considered large built-up areas.

The relevant question is, therefore, whether development of the site would contribute to the unrestricted sprawl of a large urban area, not whether it would marginally extend a village edge.

The site is located within and immediately adjacent to the village of Pilley, which is not a large built-up area for the purposes of Green Belt policy. The site is not adjacent or near to a large built-up area such as Barnsley, Hoyland or Wombwell. The site is partially and visually enclosed by existing residential development to the east and south, the Pilley Hills highway to the north and woodland and mature vegetation which restrict outward views and development perception.

Development of a single dwelling would not result in an incongruous pattern of development, nor would it form a “finger” of development extending into open countryside. The proposal would represent a rounding-off of existing built form rather than sprawl.

Accordingly, the site makes a weak to no contribution to the purpose of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose B – To Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging into One Another

The NPPG is explicit that this purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages. The assessment must therefore consider whether the site:

- forms part of a gap between towns; and
- plays a role in maintaining visual or physical separation.

The site does not form part of a gap between towns. There is no risk of coalescence arising from development at this location. Substantial areas of open countryside remain between nearby towns, entirely unaffected by the proposal. The site plays no role in maintaining visual or physical separation between urban areas.

The site, therefore, makes no contribution to Green Belt Purpose B.

Purpose D – To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns

The NPPG clarifies that:

- This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages; and

- Where there are no historic towns affected, detailed assessment may not be necessary.

The site does not lie within the setting of a historic town. Pilley is a village and does not fall within the definition of a historic town for Green Belt purposes. The site has no visual, physical or experiential relationship with any historic townscape. Development would not affect the setting or character of any historic town.

It, therefore, makes no contribution to Green Belt Purpose D.

Overall, therefore, the site makes no strong contribution to purposes a), b) or d). As such, the site can properly be identified as Grey Belt land.

The site is well contained by the existing neighbouring buildings redevelopment of the site would not fundamentally undermine the purpose of the remaining Green Belt taken across the plan area.

The size of the site is below the threshold at which the 'Golden Rules' apply.

For the reasons set out above, the proposal comprises the acceptable use of an 'infill site' and 'grey belt' land and is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt as defined by paragraph 155 of the NPPF. Because the proposal is an acceptable form of Green Belt

development, it follows that there is no conflict with local plan policy GB1 or the adopted spatial strategy.

Design, Amenity and Landscape Considerations

The development would very much respect and reflect the existing situation whereby the roadside development of the urban area is framed by the rural landscape surrounding Pilley.

The appearance of the proposed house is saved as a reserved matter. Layout and access are part of this outline submission.

The layout allows ample separation distance, as well as private amenity and circulation space. The development would provide a very good standard of housing amenity for future occupiers without any adverse impact on residents of existing houses, subject to appropriate detailing at reserved matters stage.

Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken. The assessment was carried out in accordance with CIEEM guidance and included a desk study and site walkover. The site comprises unmanaged scrub, tall ruderal vegetation and scattered trees, with areas of woodland in the wider vicinity. No statutory or non-statutory ecological designations are present within the site, and the habitats recorded are of low to moderate ecological value, typical of village-edge land.

The PEA confirms that the site provides potential habitat for common breeding birds, bats for foraging and commuting, and species such as hedgehog and badger. No evidence of protected species or bat roosts was identified that would preclude development. The report concludes that potential ecological effects can be appropriately managed through standard mitigation measures, including sensitive timing of vegetation clearance, precautionary working methods, and retention and enhancement of boundary vegetation where possible. No further detailed surveys are required at this stage to support the outline application.

The appraisal also identifies clear opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through landscaping and habitat creation, meaning the development can deliver biodiversity improvements in accordance with national policy and Local Plan Policy BIO1. Overall, the Ecology Statement confirms that the site is ecologically suitable for development, with no overriding constraints, and that ecological matters can be satisfactorily addressed through planning conditions where necessary.

Arboriculture

An Arboriculture Report & Impact Assessment has been prepared to assess the effects of the proposed development of 1 no. dwelling on trees within and adjacent to the site. The assessment identifies several trees and groups, primarily located along the site boundaries, with the majority comprising low to moderate quality specimens typical of unmanaged village-edge land. No trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders were identified within the site, and the site does not lie within a Conservation Area.

The report confirms that the proposed development can be accommodated with limited tree removal, primarily affecting lower-value specimens, and without unacceptable harm to retained trees. Appropriate root protection areas, construction exclusion zones and tree protection measures can be secured through an Arboriculture Method Statement, which can

be addressed by condition at the detailed design stage. Boundary vegetation and higher-value trees can be successfully retained and integrated into the layout.

The assessment concludes that there are no arboriculture constraints that would preclude development. Opportunities exist for replacement tree planting and landscaping enhancements, which would improve the site's contribution to local character and biodiversity. Subject to standard conditions, the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy BIO1 and the Council's Trees and Hedgerows SPD, and arboriculture matters raise no objection to the grant of planning permission.

Transport and Highways

A Highway Statement has been prepared by Paragon Highway Consultants to assess the transport and highway implications of the proposed development of 1 no. dwelling. The site is accessed from Pilley Hills, which forms part of the local highway network serving the village of Pilley. Traffic flows in the vicinity are low, and the assessment confirms that there are no existing highway safety issues, with no recorded personal injury accidents within the relevant search area over the most recent five-year period. The proposed access arrangements are therefore acceptable in principle and align with Local Plan Policy T4, which requires development to provide safe and suitable access for all users.

The proposal includes a new vehicular access designed in accordance with adopted standards, together with sufficient off-street parking provision exceeding the Council's minimum requirements. In addition, a new 2.0-metre-wide footway is proposed along the site frontage, linking into the existing pedestrian network and improving connectivity and safety. These measures accord with Local Plan Policy T3 (New Development and Sustainable Travel), which seeks to promote development in accessible locations and encourage walking and cycling where practicable.

The Highway Statement concludes that the proposed development would generate only negligible additional traffic, which would not result in any material impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network. The site is therefore considered to be in a sustainable and accessible location, consistent with Policy T3, and the access arrangements satisfy the requirements of Policy T4. Overall, the proposal raises no transport or highway objections and is fully compliant with the relevant transport policies of the adopted Barnsley Local Plan.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed scheme represents a sustainable form of development that would not have any unacceptable impact for the reasons set out above.

The proposal would deliver a much-needed good quality new home, in a manner that is fully compliant with Green Belt policy. The proposal would have no adverse impact in respect of landscape, visual, amenity, highways and environmental considerations.

The proposal has been assessed against the development plan and all material considerations.

Planning permission should be granted.

The Applicant is willing to discuss any issues that may arise during the consideration of the proposal with the LPA.