

Planning Statement

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR UP TO NINE DWELLINGS
(PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE)**

LAND OFF BARNSLEY ROAD, DARTON, BARNSLEY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement supports a planning application for Permission in Principle to establish the acceptability in policy terms of developing a parcel of land off Barnsley Rd, Darton for residential purposes. It is proposed to erect up to nine detached dwellinghouses.

The permission in principle (PiP) consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development (stage 1) from the technical detail of the development (stage 2). This application is for the 'permission in principle' (stage 1) only.

Under Article 5D of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended) an application for PiP requires only:

- a) a completed application form
- b) a plan which identifies the land to which the application relates, drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction North.
- c) the correct application fee.

The scope of matters which can be considered with Permission in Principle is limited to:

- **the location of the site**
- **the type of land use proposed**
- **the amount of development.**

The Location of the Site and Type of Land Use

The site comprises 'grey belt' land within the Green Belt and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) does not have a five-year supply of housing land. As such there is a demonstrable

unmet need for the proposed development. The discussion below demonstrates that the development would not undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt, and the site is in a suitable location for housing development. As such the proposal is a type of development that is not inappropriate within the Green Belt and accords with both the National Planning Policy Framework(NPPF) and Local Plan Policy.

The Amount of Development

This statement should be read alongside the supporting plans, which give a broad indication of the location and footprint of the dwelling proposed.

This statement will discuss the planning merits of the scheme as they relate to the 3 'in principle' matters above. All necessary technical reports will be provided at the technical details stage. It is anticipated that the LPA will adopt a progressive approach to this sustainable scheme.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Darton lies near to the River Dearne, directly to the east of Kexbrough, and 5 miles (8 km) north of Barnsley. It is served by the A637 road and the M1 motorway lies to the west (junction 38 being a mile to the north).

The application site is a 0.49 hectare parcel of land located to the east of the A637 Barnsley Rd, close to the junction with the access road to Darton Business Park (known as Dearne Mills). To the north is Darton Park recreation ground, and to the south is Darton Livery Stables. To the east is a parcel of agricultural land, bordered by the River Dearne to the east. Beyond that is the Darton (or Dearne Mills) Industrial Estate. On the opposite side of Barnsley Rd to the west is an extensive area of residential development.

The location plan is shown in Figure 1 below:

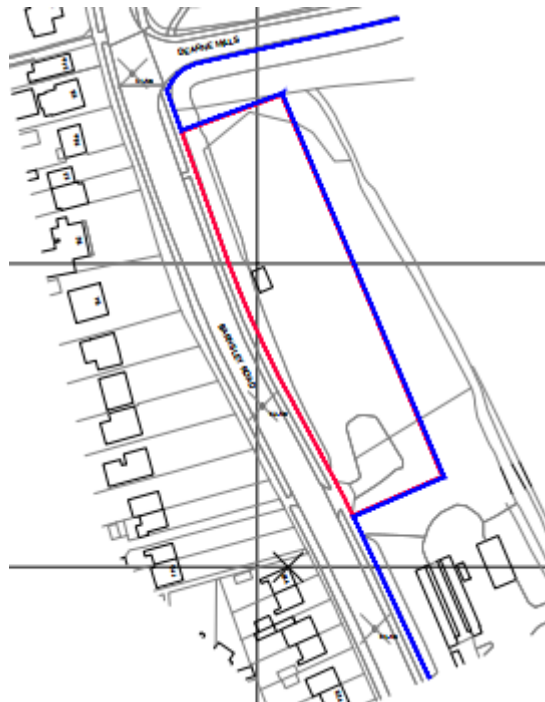


Fig 1: Location Plan

The site is washed over by the Green Belt. It is not within a Conservation Area and there are no listed buildings in the vicinity.

The site is currently occupied by a stable building. The site has direct vehicular access off Barnsley Rd, at the south end of the land parcel.

The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1. A small part of the site in the north east corner is within Flood Zone 2.

A small part of the site is within the Coal Mining High Risk Area.

Historically the area has been used for the inert tipping of bricks, rubble and waste concrete by the Council and was substantially re-engineered and regraded following planning permission in 2010.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

Permission in Principle is sought for residential development, consisting of up to nine detached dwellings. The indicative proposed site plan shows that the dwellings can be sited as follows:

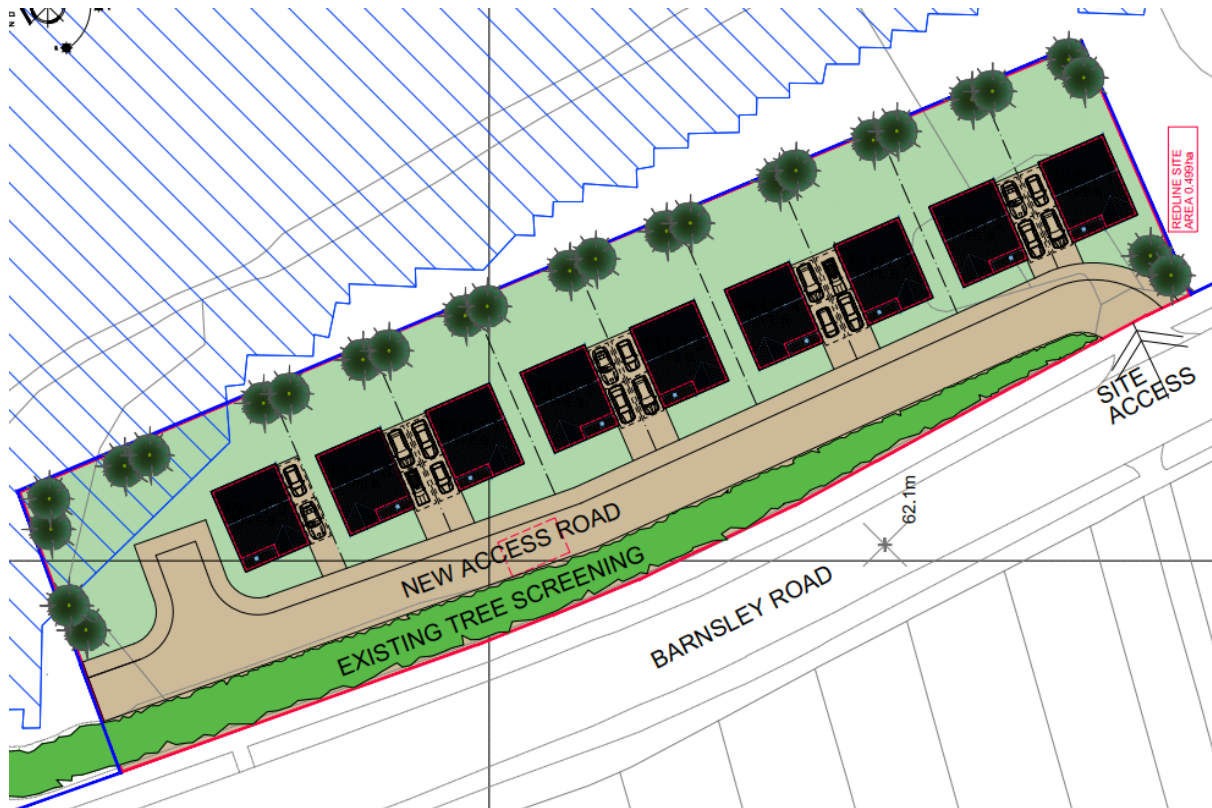


Figure 2: Proposed (indicative) site plan

The dwellings will be detached, and arranged in a linear fashion, with their principal elevations facing south towards Barnsley Rd. The dwellings will be served by a new access road extending westwards from the existing access point, across the frontage of the site to a turning head.

The site plan shows that nine dwellings can comfortably be accommodated within the site. Each dwelling can be provided with an individual driveway and off-street parking, together with private rear gardens extending northwards towards the site boundary. The existing

trees along the Barnsley Rd frontage are retained to soften the appearance of the development. Additional native tree planting can be provided around the site perimeter.

The indicative elevations show that the dwellings will be two storey with pitched roofs, to match those in the immediate vicinity.

This layout and overall massing will be very similar to the three dwellings that have been recently been approved on the site of the former livery stables directly to the south of the site and also the detached dwellings on the opposite site of Barnsley Rd. Consequently, the development will harmonise well with its surroundings.

As shown on the aerial photograph below, it is a well contained site. The proposed dwellings would not result in a prominent development in the wider landscape and there would be no harm to the function of the wider Green Belt.



Figure 3: Aerial Photograph of site

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The following history relates directly to the application site:

2010/0791 – permission granted for regrading of land to alter land levels to provide grazing land including erection of a stable block, fencing and the formation of a hardstanding, parking area and menage.

The following history relates to the adjacent site (livery stables) to the south:

2021/1571 – Outline planning permission granted for up to 3 dwellings.

2023/0081 – Reserved matters application approved for three dwellings with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale under consideration (in connection with outlined application 2021/1571).

5.0 ALLOCATION AND POLICIES

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 Development Plan comprises The Barnsley Local Plan, which was adopted in January 2019.

Material considerations exist in the form of national policy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as updated in December 2024 and the suite of documents comprising National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

Allocations

The site lies within the Green Belt as identified by the Barnsley Local Plan 2019. The following legislation, policy and guidance is considered relevant to the determination of this application:-

National

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 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.

Barnsley Local Plan

The following policies are considered of relevance:

LP1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

LP2 – Place shaping

LP3 – Location of new development

LP7 – Efficient and effective use of land and buildings

H4 - Residential Development on Small Non Allocated Sites

H6 - Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land

6.0 ASSESSMENT

The revised 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 of these 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.

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 of 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 particular 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 Metropolitan Borough Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The most recent published Five Year Deliverable Housing Land Supply Report (1 April 2024-31 March 2029) concludes that it has only approximately 2.9 years' supply. As such, there is currently an unmet need for new housing development and therefore criterion b) is met. The remaining criteria, a, c, and d are assessed below

Criterion a) Whether 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.

In order to test whether the proposals would meet criteria a) of Paragraph 155, consideration needs to be given as to whether the site strongly contributes to Green Belt purposes a), b) or d) as set out in Paragraph 143 of the NPPF.

Green Belt purposes a), b) and d) are as follows:

- a) – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

The Local Plan identifies Darton as forming part of Urban Barnsley. And so by default, land within the defined boundary of Urban Barnsley cannot be considered to contribute strongly to checking its unrestricted sprawl. Nonetheless the site is contained closely on three sides, by Barnsley Rd and residential development to the west, the recreation ground and further retail and housing development to the north

and by the stable/approved housing to the south. To the east is a field parcel but beyond that is the very substantial industrial estate of Dearne Mills. As a result of this physical containment the site cannot be considered to contribute strongly to unrestricted sprawl.

This has effectively been confirmed in the LPA's 2014 Green Belt Review. Within that review the application site is part of a wider land parcel (ref MPW7) that scored 2 in respect of checking urban sprawl. A score below 4 or 5 means that the area does contribute strongly in this regard, which is a requisite test for grey belt sites as set out in the NPPF. The Review confirms that MPW7 does not protect a strategic gap between Barnsley Urban Area and other large urban areas within Barnsley. The score of 2 for MPW7 shows that the area scores 'relatively weakly'. Consequently, it cannot pass the test of contributing strongly to purpose a).

- b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another

The site essentially forms part of a gap between the main residential area of Darton to the west and the substantial Dearne Mills Industrial Estate to the east. To the north is Darton recreation ground with further retail and residential areas of Darton beyond. To the south is a livery stables, where new housing development has recently been approved. As a result, the application site is significantly contained within the general settlement area of Darton and so does not serve a purpose in preventing neighbouring towns from merging.

The 2014 Green Belt review states that development within the general area of MPW7 would result in the coalescence of Darton and Barugh Green to the south – hence scoring 3 (moderate). This is because MPW7 as a whole includes land to the south of Darton which does indeed lie between the two settlements. However, the Review goes on to acknowledge that Darton and Barugh Green form part of the Barnsley Urban Area and so do not fall within the definition of 'towns'.

In any case this site differs significantly from the predominant character of MPW7 as a whole. It does not contribute to the gap between Darton and Barugh Green because it lies to the east of the residential part of Darton, not to the south. As a result, this specific site would score much lower than 3, notwithstanding that a score of 3 still does not meet the threshold of a 'strong contribution'.

Consequently, the site does not contribute to preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another.

d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

The site is located between a largely 20th century housing development, livery stables, a recreation ground and a modern industrial estate. The site clearly does not form the setting of a historic town and so does not strongly contribute to purpose d).

In conclusion, it is clear that the site comprises 'grey belt' land as defined by the NPPF. However, to conclude whether the proposal would be inappropriate development, or not, the provisions of paragraph 155 of the Framework need to be applied.

The PPG gives advice about how to assess whether the development would fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan. It advises that consideration should be given to whether, or the extent to which, the development of Green Belt land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way. This is a high bar. The building of nine houses on the small area of land that is the application site cannot reasonably be said to fundamentally undermine Green Belt purposes

Criterion c) Whether the development would be in a sustainable location

Darton forms part of the Urban Barnsley Area where the Local Plan directs most new development because it is considered one of the Borough's most accessible and sustainable locations.

Barnsley Road is a main bus and vehicular route into and out of Barnsley and there are bus stops within a few metres of the access. The Darton train station is 800m to the north. There are various employment developments in the immediate area and good access to services. As such the proposed is in a sustainable location.

Criterion d) Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157

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 'grey belt' land and is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt as defined by paragraph 155 of the NPPF.

Following the significant changes to Green Belt policy as a result of the December 2024 revisions to the NPPF, the development is now acceptable in principle in the Green Belt.

Landscape Considerations

As the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt as defined by paragraph 155 of the NPPF, no consideration of the impacts on Green Belt openness is applicable. However, it is fully acknowledged that the impact on landscape character remains a material consideration and is relevant in terms of the 'location of the site' criterion that is considered when making a 'Permission in Principle' decision.

The proposed dwellings would sit comfortably alongside the existing built form in the area. There are mature trees and hedgerows (to be retained) on the western boundary of the site such that any views from Barnsley Road would be heavily filtered, even when the trees are

not in leaf. From the access road to the industrial estate to the north and the recreation ground, there are more open view of the site, but from here the development will be seen against the backdrop of the livery stables and eventually the approved housing. There is some existing tree planting along the northern boundary and this can be strengthened by new planting to help the development to blend well with its surroundings. There are no wider views from the east due to the presence of the industrial estate and tree cover to the west of it.

The development would respect and reflect the development pattern in the adjacent residential areas. It is noted in particular that when outline planning permission was granted in 2021 for housing development within the Green Belt adjacent to the site to the south, the officer report concluded *'the introduction of residential development here would not be out of character with the area'*. There is no reason why the same conclusion should not be reached with regard to the current application site and consequently, there would be no harmful impact on the wider landscape character, in full compliance with the NPPF.

Flood Risk

As a small part of the north east corner of the site is within flood risk zone 2, a Flood Risk Assessment would be submitted at the Technical Details Stage. However, the indicative site plan shows that there would be no built development within this area (hatched blue on figure 2) and the ground would remain permeable. Consequently, the proposals would not increase flood risk on or off the site.

Ecology and BNG

The development will be subject to the statutory requirement to achieve 10% Biodiversity Net Gain and so at the Technical Details Stage, a completed Statutory Biodiversity (small sites) Metric and an Preliminary Ecological Appraisal will be submitted.

Other Considerations

A coal mining risk assessment and a Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Assessment (if necessary) can be carried out at the Technical Details stage to ensure compliance with adopted policies in respect of contaminated and unstable land.

Subject to appropriate design details at the technical matters stage, the proposed dwellings would have no adverse impact on the residential amenity of any other neighbouring property. The indicative plans show that a separation distance of at least 55m between the front elevations of the proposed houses and those on the opposite side of Barnsley Rd. A distance of around 30m between the side elevation of the southernmost dwelling and the rear elevation on Plot 1 of the housing approved under application ref 2023/0081 to the south can be achieved, which is an acceptable gap. The generous gardens proposed would be well above the 60sqm standard expected in the New Housing Development SPD.

Being on a straight section of Barnsley Rd with a good set back from the highway edge, there is no reason to believe that the existing access is not safe and suitable for the additional traffic generated from the development.

7.0 CONCLUSION

With regard to the three considerations in a Permission in Principle decision, the conclusions are as follows:

Location

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

Type of Development

The proposal would deliver nine much needed, good quality new homes, in a manner that is fully compliant with Green Belt policy. The proposal would have no adverse impact in respect of landscape or on the amenity of the locality.

Amount of Development

The dwellings would fit comfortably in the site whilst remaining consistent with the character of the area.

The proposals are fully compliant with adopted policies within the Barnsley Local Plan and the guidance within the NPPF.

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

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JR Planning