



Planning Statement

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ONE DWELLING (PERMISSION
IN PRINCIPLE)**

LAND ADJACENT FINKLE STREET LANE, WORTLEY, SHEFFIELD

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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 at Plank Gate, adjacent to Finkle Street, for residential purposes. It is proposed to erect one detached dwelling.

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 plan, which gives a broad indication of the location and footprint of the proposed detached dwelling.

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

The application site is a parcel of land that lies to the south of Finkle Street Lane and is accessed from Plank Gate. The site lies within a cluster of buildings that are situated around Plank Gate, with neighbouring development immediately adjacent to the north, south and west. The site was historically occupied by the Green More Saw Mill, and used more recently as a depot for a landscaping business.



Fig 1: Site Plan

The site benefits from excellent accessibility to the Upper Don Trail and the local amenities within Wortley Villages, as well as having good levels of connectivity to the larger settlements of Stocksbridge and Penistone, as well as Barnsley and Sheffield.

The site lies within the Green Belt.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

Permission in Principle is sought for residential development, consisting of one detached dwelling.

An indicative site plan has been produced which shows that a detached dwelling can be comfortably accommodated within the site in a manner that reflects the grain and pattern of development in the locality. Furthermore, the indicative layout clearly shows that a detached dwelling can be achieved in a manner that provides generous circulation and amenity space, and good separation distances. This would ensure a high standard of housing amenity for future occupiers.

The site is nestled with the neighbouring development to the west, north and south, with further strong containment provided to the east by a mature tree belt. As such, it is a well contained site.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The planning history for the site comprises of:

2017/0845 Residential development (Outline with all matters reserved).

This application was refused on 11 August 2017 for the following reasons:

- 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.*

In respect of previous reason for refusal 1, there has been a significant material change in the relevant planning policy position since 2017. The December 2024 changes to the NPPF introduced concept of grey belt development as an additional form of development that is not

inappropriate in the Green Belt. As such, the principle of the development at this site needs to be re-considered.

Reasons for refusal 2 and 3 relate to matters that are for further consideration at the technical details stage.

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 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.

Allocations

The site lies within the Green Belt.

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. This is a significant material change since the refusal of the 2017 application.

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 Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. 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 application site is a small parcel of land that is contained on three sides by existing development. It is further contained on the remaining side by a mature tree belt that would be unaffected by the development. The site would provide additional dwellings within an area that is already characterised by residential development. The indicative layout shows the dwelling would sit comfortably between the existing development, creating essentially an infill development.

The NPPG emphasises that purpose a) relates to the sprawl of large built-up areas and that villages should not be considered large built-up areas. This site is not part of, or adjacent to a large built-up area. As such, when applying the up-to-date guidance provided in the NPPG, it can only be concluded that the contribution to purpose a) is weak.

b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another

In respect of purpose b) the NPPG states that for a strong contribution to be made, the development would be likely to result in the loss of visual separation between towns. The site is not part of a visual gap between towns and, as such, there would be no loss of any such visual separation. Consequently, the site cannot be preventing neighbouring towns from merging. The contribution to purpose b) is weak.

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

The site does not form the setting of a historic town, and does not strongly contribute to purpose d).

As such, it is clear that the site makes no strong contribution to Green Belt purposes a), b) or d).

Footnote 7

The definition of grey belt provided in the NPPF states:

“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.”

It is worth noting that the imminent NPPF revision removes the reference to footnote 7 from the grey belt definition. Nevertheless, there is no conflict in this instance in any case.

The areas and assets set out in footnote 7 are as follows:

- Habitats sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Green Space
- National Landscape
- National Park (or within the Broads Authority)
- Heritage Coast
- Irreplaceable habitats
- Designated heritage assets / heritage assets of archaeological interest
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change

None of these are applicable to the application site and it can categorically be said that there is no conflict whatsoever with footnote 7.

Function of the remaining Green Belt

In addition to Green Belt purposes a), b) and d), which have already been addressed, purposes c) and e) set out the following:

c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Given the location of the site in the cluster of existing dwelling, any sense of encroachment would be minimal and would have no discernible impact on the purpose of the wider Green Belt area. The site was historically occupied by the Green Moor Saw Mill and has subsequently been used as a commercial depot. As such, much of the site comprises

previously developed land as defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF. This strongly supports its identification as Grey Belt.

Taken in the context of the LPA's lack of housing land supply, and the development proposal being for one additional dwelling immediately adjacent to existing dwellings, there would be no material impact on the role that the wider Green Belt area serves in respect of purpose e).

The development of the site would not fundamentally undermine the purpose of the remaining Green Belt area.

Criterion c) Sustainability of the site

Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that:

The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

The site is within short distance of all the village amenities within Wortley, with traffic free public footpath access providing a pleasant pedestrian alternative route to the short journey by road. The site also benefits from excellent access to the Upper Don Trail, which provides good pedestrian and cycling links to neighbouring settlements, including the wide range of services and amenities within Stocksbridge.

The site is accessed from Plank Gate, which serves the existing site and neighbouring users without issue and would provide safe and suitable means of access (subject to further consideration at the technical details stage).

Taking into account the specific acknowledgement in the NPPF that sustainable transport solutions will vary between rural and urban areas, the site is actually very well served in this regard for a rural location. The proposal is fully in accordance with paragraph 110.

It is also noted that the 2017 application raised no issues relating to the sustainability of the site for residential development.

The site is in a sustainable location for the scale and type of development proposed.

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.

In conclusion on Green Belt considerations, 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 dwelling would sit comfortably alongside the existing residential development that surrounds the site. The development would always be seen in the context of the development to the west, north and south of the site. The site is then very well screened by the mature trees that lie to the east, ensuring no adverse landscape impacts.

The development would respect and reflect the established development pattern in the locality. Consequently, there would be no harmful impact on the wider landscape character and so the proposal is fully compliant with the NPPF in this respect.

Other Considerations

Subject to appropriate design details at the technical matters stage, the proposed dwelling would have no adverse impact on the amenity of occupiers of the existing neighbouring dwellings.

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 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.

Amount of Development

One detached dwelling would fit comfortably in the site in line with the existing development.

The proposals are fully compliant with adopted policies within the Barnsley Local Plan, so far as they are up to date in light of the LPA's housing land supply position, 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.