



JPE CONSULTANCY LIMITED
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN & PLANNING

9 Woodend Drive, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 2SF

Tel: 07875 627 988

E-mail: jim@jpeconsultancy.co.uk

Ref; 23/1304//302 Planning Statement

Planning Statement

Erection of infill dwelling to previously developed stables use to the north of Titus Cottage, 57 Bradley Fold Road, Ainsworth, Bolton, BL2 5QR



Section 1.0 - Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared on behalf of Mr Halliwell in support of a planning application for the erection of a single dwelling to land that is situated between two residential properties and is a previously developed stables use.
- 1.2 The following information is submitted in support of the application:
 - 23/1304/100 - Location plan.
 - 23/1304/101 - Existing site plan.
 - 23/1304/102 - Site plan of previously developed stables use.
 - 23/1304/201 - Proposed site plan.
 - 23/1304/202 - Proposed floor plans.
 - 23/1304/203 - Proposed elevations.
 - 23/1304/204 - Proposed street scenes.
 - 23/1304/205 - Proposed design section.
 - 23/1304/301 - Design and Access Statement.
 - 23/1304/302 - Planning Statement (photos at app1)
 - 23/1304/303 - Schedule of materials.
 - 23/1304/304 – Lighting Statement
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Summary Report.
 - 1096-01 Landscape Proposal.
 - FTC - Titus Cottage - BS5837 report – 291124.
 - LKC 241306 A1 PRA Titus Cottage R0 Sep 24.
 - PGC1020-RP-C-001 - Drainage Strategy Report.
 - TRI-4483-01-A1 and TRI-4483-02-A1- Topographical survey.

Section 2.0 – Site context

- 2.1 The subject site had until recently used for stabling of horses for a period of at least 35 years. There were a number of buildings to the land (shown to plan 23/1304/102). Several of the structures were taken down in 2017 but the stables were still in use until May 2022. The foundations/concrete floor slabs remain in place for the majority of the structures.
- 2.2 The site is owned by Mr Halliwell and directly to the south is Titus Cottage, an extended dwelling that he has occupied with his family since 2002. There was also a rear paddock area that extends alongside the rear garden of Titus Cottage.
- 2.3 The subject land was purchased by the Halliwell's in 2013 and initially they continued to utilise the stables before the land and buildings were subsequently used for recreation purposes as an extension of their home (Titus Cottage). Since 2017 the paddock area has been used by the Halliwell family as an extended amenity area to their garden (used for football, play, camping and BBQ's, and exercising their dogs).
- 2.4 Titus Cottage is a sizeable home that has been extended on a number of occasions. This includes a large swimming pool extension (pool now filled in) that extends beyond the rear of the original property by 12 metres and is the dominant feature at the rear. The established gardens of Titus Cottage extend for a further 30metres to the east and are enclosed within 1.8 metre high concrete post and timber fence panels giving a suburban appearance at the rear of this property.
- 2.5 Directly to the north is Titus Barn which is an agricultural building that was granted planning consent for conversion to a dwelling, and further consent for the addition of a rear dormer roof/window (consent ref: 68002). These works have now been completed and Titus Barn is in residential use. The subject land sits between Titus Cottage and Titus Barn (a 20 metre gap). All the three properties front onto Bradley Fold Road that is an adopted road connecting to the centre of Ainsworth Village that is 400metres to the north.



Figure 1 Aerial photo of Titus Cottage, stables use & Titus Barn (from right to left).

2.6 In figure 2 below the built up extents and previously developed nature of the stables use can be seen. There are at least 4 stables/storage buildings, several smaller sheds and storage containers, a caravan, horse trailer and horsebox, along with further areas of hardstanding and yard area for parking/turning.



Figure 2 - View of previously developed stables in relation to Titus Cottage & Barn

2.7 The properties are part of the wider extents of Ainsworth Village and there is ribbon development along Bradley Fold Road to the grouping of buildings at Titus Cottage that also includes substantial buildings at Plane Trees Farm to the south, and 57 Bradley Fold Road and Kiln Clough Farm to the north. There is a public footpath that extends continuously along Bradley Fold Road from the centre of Ainsworth Village to the subject property and this is provided with street lighting.

2.8 Ainsworth Village centre and wider extents is the families' closest centre for local goods and services. They have frequently and continuously used the facilities there over the last 21 years, have had a close association with the village, and continue to do so.

2.9 The Halliwell's children are now at university and their current home has become too big, but it is the family's intention to stay within the village of Ainsworth. They now seek planning permission to develop a smaller home to previously developed land that is directly adjacent to Titus Cottage and would enable them to stay within the village.



Figure 3 Extents of Ainsworth Village (Source: Imagery © 2023 Airbus, Info terra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies, The Geo Information Group, Map data 2023 ©)

2.8 For the past 21 years the family have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the Ainsworth Community and village life and have been an integral part of the function of the village, as follows:

- Both children christened at Christ Church Ainsworth Parish, Church Street. (long term subscribers to Ainsworth Church Magazine)
- Both children attended Christ Church Ainsworth Nursery School.
- Both children attended cubs and scouts, brownies and girl guides in Ainsworth.
- Both children attended Christ Church Ainsworth County C of E Primary School. (Head Teacher Mr D. Gerrard).
- Both children attended after school clubs at Ainsworth Church Hall.
- Regular visitors to Ainsworth Village Dentist.
- Regular visitors to Ainsworth Village Post Office.
- Regular visitors to SMS Village store.
- Have regularly used the Duke William Inn PH, the Old White Horse PH, & Casalingo restaurant.
- Regular dog walking around Ainsworth recreational areas, lodges etc.
- The whole family were regular visitors to Ainsworth Library before it closed.
- Attended the Village Fair every year and contributed to that.
- Used the bus services from Church Street, Ainsworth.



Figure 4: Site features and characteristics

Note 01:
Subject infill site edged red.

Note 02:
Titus Cottage directly to south.

Note 03:
Titus Barn directly to north (converted into a dwelling with consent for dormer roof extensions).

Note 04:
Previously developed site contained by Bradley Fold Road, Titus Cottage and Titus Barn.

Note 05:
Existing access to site (to be retained).

Note 06:
Buildings to former stables use.

Notes 07 & 14:
Tree and hedge screen at site frontage.

Note 08:
Swimming pool extension extending out to full depth of subject plot.

Note 09:
Existing 2.0 metre high timber waney lap fencing giving a suburban appearance to rear aspect.

Note 10:
Formal garden area to Titus Cottage. Residential use extending 80 metres north from Bradley Fold Road.

Note 11:
Adopted footpath and street lighting extending to Ainsworth Village Centre.

Note 12:
Mature tree screening to north.

Note 13:
Former paddock utilised by the Halliwell family for further amenity.

Section 3.0 – Proposed development

- 3.1 The proposal is to construct a single infill dwelling within the curtilage of the previously developed stables use. Parking and turning is provided to the front of the dwelling and an amenity area to the rear with new hedgerow planting at the boundaries.
- 3.2 The dwelling is sited directly between Titus Cottage and Titus Barn and will be within the established lines of development fronting Bradley Fold Road. The dwelling will be viewed against the backdrop of the adjacent dwellings and will integrate with the existing built form, would relate closely to these and would not appear out of place.



Image: 01 – View through site access with dwellings to either side

- 3.3 The dwelling would have a modest footprint in relation to the overall plot (the proposed building footprint is 17% of the available land area).
- 3.4 It is proposed that the dwellings would have two storeys of accommodation but the overall height of the dwelling is reduced by adopting a lower wall plate level at first floor level and a large part of the bedroom accommodation will be housed within the roof space. This is an efficient use of the building volume and will result in a significant reduction to the height of the eaves and ridge.
- 3.5 The new dwelling is designed to reflect the form and scale of the adjacent buildings (both two storeys of accommodation).
- 3.6 Titus Cottage and a dwelling at Plane Trees Farm (to the south) have a relatively modern/suburban appearance and are not of significant architectural merit.
- 3.7 The adjacent agricultural building is currently being converted into a single dwelling and the approved plans show black cladding panels to the external walls and the roof. The existing rectangular barn form is maintained and with those materials the building will reference the simple form and appearance of the previous agricultural use.

- 3.8 Similarly with the proposed dwelling a simple rectangular barn form is proposed and this would be in keeping with the adjacent development.
- 3.9 Stone facings are proposed to all external walls and slate roof coverings. This would reference the adjacent Titus Cottage, and the approved treatment to a converted barn at Plane Trees Farm to the south (consent ref: 64794).
- 3.10 Titus Cottage and a dwelling at Plane Trees Farm (to the south) have a relatively modern/suburban appearance but this is screened to a large extent by mature trees and hedgerows along the site frontage. Similarly the proposed dwelling would be screened from Bradley Fold Road by the existing trees and hedges and the proposal will not significantly affect the street scene in terms of character and appearance.



Image 02 Existing hedge and tree screening along Bradley Fold Road

- 3.11 From the rear the substantial buildings and swimming pool extension to Titus Cottage are the dominant features, along with the 1.8 metre high concrete post and timber fence panels. Again this gives a suburban character at the rear.



Image 03: Rear extension & suburban style fencing

- 3.12 The proposed dwelling would be of a similar scale to the adjacent buildings at Titus Cottage and Titus Barn and would not appear out of character with its surroundings.
- 3.13 The development will be contained within the established boundaries of the previously developed stables use with no encroachment of buildings or residential use beyond this.
- 3.14 There are existing mature trees and hedges to the front of Titus Cottage and Titus Barn that provide a natural screen to the site frontage. This proposal does not require any removal of the existing landscaping and so the screening to Bradley Fold Road will remain.



Image 04: Tree and hedge screening along Bradley Fold Road

- 3.15 The dwelling is proposed to have a landscaped garden/amenity area at the rear. New hedgerows are proposed to the rear boundaries to be planted with native species.
- 3.16 The landscaping will perform an important function in;
- further strengthening the boundary screening.
 - Providing an opportunity to improve biodiversity.
 - Providing a clear distinction between the extent of formal residential garden areas, and the undeveloped green space located beyond the established and clearly defined curtilage of the former stables use.
- 3.17 Secure cycle storage and an Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCH) are provided to the dwelling to promote sustainable forms of transport.
- 3.18 There is an existing access from Bradley Fold Road that has been utilised over a 35 year period to service the stables use. This would have included use by larger horseboxes and agricultural machinery.
- 3.19 The access is retained and is suitable for reuse to serve a single dwelling. From the existing access there is good visibility in both directions along Bradley

Fold Road. A safe access is provided and traffic generation from a single dwelling will be minimal and would not have any perceivable impact on the highway network.

- 3.20 Similar to Titus Cottage there is a turning and parking area to the frontage that will allow parking for a minimum of 2 cars. Level access and approach can be provided to the dwelling to enable access to people of all ability.
- 3.21 The site is in a sustainable location, within a grouping of existing houses and close to the centre of the Ainsworth Village. Existing infrastructure is available to facilitate development and local shops and services are available in the village centre.

Section 4.0 – Planning policy

The Development Plan for Bury comprises the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (1997), and the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan document (Pfe). The Pfe is a joint development plan document for nine of the Greater Manchester districts (including Bury) and is a long term plan for jobs, new houses and sustainable growth. Following the adoption of the Pfe in March 2024 Bury MBC are now preparing a new Local Plan.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchases Act (2004) identifies that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development must therefore be assessed against national planning policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) together with the local policies set out in the Pfe and Bury UDP (1997).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2024)

- 4.1 The NPPF is an important material consideration in determining planning applications emphasising a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and requiring that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay (paragraph 11).
- 4.2 Paragraph 61 confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and identifies the importance of a sufficient amount and variety of land coming forward where it is needed.
- 4.3 Chapter 11 confirms that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. This includes the need to support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.
- 4.4 Chapter 12 of the NPPF focusses on 'Achieving Well Designed Places'.

- 4.5 Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.
- 4.6 Chapter 13 sets out policies for 'Protecting Green Belt land' (Paragraphs 142 – 160) and confirms that Green Belt serves the following five purposes:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from further encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 4.7 Paragraph 153 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 4.8 Paragraph 154 states that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, exceptions to this include;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
 - g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land; whether redundant or in continuing use, which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 4.9 Paragraph 155 confirms that the development of homes in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where:
- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the process (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.
- 4.10 Paragraph 187 requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Bury MBC Unitary Development Plan (1997)

- 4.11 The subject site is a previously developed site washed over with a Green Belt designation in the Pfd Development Plan, and Bury UDP (1997) and is also located within the West Pennine Moors and in a Special Landscape Area.
- 4.12 UDP Policy OL1 (Green Belt) seeks to maintain the Green Belt, ensuring that it fulfils the following strategic purposes;
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from further encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;

- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 4.13 Saved policy OL1/2 states that *“The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate development unless it is for one or more of the following purposes:*
One of the purposes listed is;
- *“limited infilling in existing villages as set out under Policy OL1/3”.*
- 4.14 “Policy OL1/3 – Infilling in Existing Villages in the Green Belt’ states that;
“In all named villages which lie within the Green Belt, limited infill development may be permitted, provided that it is in scale with the village and would not adversely affect its character and surroundings”.
- 4.15 Policy OL7/2 West Pennine Moors states that throughout the area of the West Pennine Moors the Council will control development so as to reduce any possible detrimental effects on the important character of the area.
- 4.16 UDP policy EN1/1 states that the Council will seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment. Policy EN1/1 states that development will not be permitted where proposals would have a detrimental effect on visual amenity both within, or viewed from, areas of environmental interest such as the Green Belt, Special Landscape Areas.
- 4.17 UDP policy EN8 Woodland and Trees states that the Council will support the retention of trees, woods, copses and hedgerows and encourage natural regeneration and new and replacement tree planting throughout the Borough.
- 4.18 Policy EN9 Landscape states that the Council will seek to protect, conserve and improve the landscape quality of the Borough, and will encourage the enhancement of landscapes, where appropriate.
- 4.19 UDP policy EN9/1 – Special Landscape Areas states that any development will be strictly controlled and required to be sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of visual impact. High standards of design, siting and landscaping will be expected. Unduly obtrusive development will not be permitted in such areas.

Development Control Policy Guidance Note 8 ‘ New Buildings and Associated Development in the Green Belt’

- 4.20 Whilst this policy guidance note does not have development plan status it is a material consideration.

Section 5.0 - Planning Assessment

- 5.1 In this section the development proposals are assessed against the relevant policies of local and national planning policy.

Principle of development

Green Belt

- 5.2 The application site is a previously developed site within a wider Green Belt designation.
- 5.3 The proposed development would not result in harm to any of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, and there is no conflict with para. 143 of the NPPF or policy OL1 of the development plan. Clearly no unrestricted sprawl would occur, the development is within the well-defined boundaries of the previously developed site and there would be no encroachment into the countryside. This development would not result in the merging of towns, or have any impact of the setting and special character of historic towns. The development assists in the recycling of derelict land and will be of benefit through the provision of a family home, and an improvement in biodiversity through the management of the mature trees and provision of landscape planting at the site perimeter.
- 5.4 Both the Development plan (UDP 1997) and the NPPF state that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development unless one of the stated exemptions can be demonstrated.
- 5.5 The application site provides a unique set of circumstances where development can be considered to be one of the stated exemptions to para 154 of the NPPF and therefore would not be inappropriate development.

Infill in existing villages

- 5.6 Para 154 of the NPPF sets out exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt which includes exception “e) limited infilling in villages”.
- 5.7 The application site is part of an existing grouping of dwellings and ribbon development along Bradley Fold Road, and is on the outskirts of Ainsworth Village and is part of the wider village setting/extends.
- 5.8 In considering whether development constitutes infill it is necessary to consider the character of a site and it is a case of looking at each proposal on its merits.
- 5.9 The subject site clearly reads as part of the existing settlement and is bracketed by Titus Cottage to the south, and Titus Barn to the north. The proposed dwelling is located within clearly defined lines of development.
- 5.10 Saved policy OL1/2 states that *“The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate development unless it is for one or more of the following purposes:”*
- 5.11 One of the purposes listed is;
“limited infilling in existing villages as set out under Policy OL1/3”.

- 5.12 'Policy OL1/3 – Infilling in Existing Villages in the Green Belt' states that;
"In all named villages which lie within the Green Belt, limited infill development may be permitted, provided that it is in scale with the village and would not adversely affect its character and surroundings".
- 5.13 Ainsworth is one of the named villages where the policy recognises the need to accept limited infilling. A settlement boundary for Ainsworth or other named villages is not identified to the UDP. It is a matter of judgment whether a particular site falls within a village. This was clarified in a Court of Appeal case *Julian Wood v Secretary of State for CLG and Gravesham Borough Council* (2015). The Court of Appeal found that sites outside development boundaries could still be considered as constituting infill sites.
- 5.14 The Judge held:
 "Before this court it was common ground that whether or not a proposed development constituted limited infilling in a village for the purpose of paragraph 89 was a question of planning judgement for the Inspector and the Inspector's answer to that question would depend upon his assessment of the position on the ground".
- 5.15 This judgement confirmed that a common sense 'on the ground' view should be taken as to the physical extent of the village.
- 5.16 We note that in determining a number of previous applications the LPA have allowed development as infill where the subject property was some distance from the main centre of a village (examples of infill development in Bury Authority are provided in table 1.1). This indicates that the LPA will consider the possibility of infill in a village where a site is some distance from the main concentration of the built up village centre and that each case will be judged on its merits and that an 'on the ground view' will be taken.

Table 1.1 – Examples of infill development in Bury MBC

Planning app ref:	Comments
<u>Example 1;</u> App ref: 56899 Approved 10/11/14 249-251 Bury & Bolton Road, Radcliffe, M26 4FP	Planning consent granted as limited infilling and/or redevelopment of previously developed land for a pair of semi-detached dwellings to a site that had previously been used as a petrol filling station. This was an open and highly prominent site with a Green Belt designation. No buildings of any significant scale had existed to the site (the main petrol filling station being to the south side of Bury and Bolton Road), and any above ground development had been cleared for a significant period of years. This site did not benefit from significant screening at the boundaries and there were unrestricted views into the site from the Green Belt to the north.

Table 1.1 (continued) – Examples of infill development in Bury MBC

Planning app ref:	Comments
<u>Example 2:</u> App ref: 52233 Approved 01/04/10 454 Whalley Road, Shuttleworth, Bury, BL0 0ES	Planning consent was granted as infill development for ‘Demolition of two garages, erection of new dwelling in garden of 454 Whalley Road and replacement garage for no. 454 Whalley Road’ This site is a significant distance away from the centre of Shuttleworth village. The area where the dwelling was approved was open garden with no existing buildings and there was a frontage gap of approximately 27 metres between 454 and 456 Whalley Road. The site does not benefit from significant natural screening at the boundaries and is prominent from the open Green Belt to the east and west.
<u>Example 3:</u> App ref: 53307 Approved 19/01/11 452 Whalley Road, Shuttleworth, Bury, BL0 0ES	Planning consent was granted as infill development for a ‘detached dwelling incorporating existing garage’. Again this site is a significant distance north of the named village of Shuttleworth and comprised an open garden to the existing property with a frontage gap of approximately 32metres. The site does not benefit from significant natural screening at the boundaries and is prominent from the open Green Belt to the east and west.
<u>Example 4:</u> App ref: 68661 Approved 10/11/22 Former Ainsworth Nursing Home, Knowsley Road, Ainsworth, BL2 5PT	Planning consent was granted as an infill plot – exception e) of paragraph 145 of the NPPF for a new dwelling (now para 154). Officer’s report confirms that: “The site is located to the north of Ainsworth Village and is self-contained and remote from the rest of the village...” “This application relates to a plot of land to the southwest of the former Ainsworth Nursing Home site. The site contains a small brick building, which was in use as a gatehouse. The remainder of the site is open and there are trees on the perimeter”. “New dwelling – The proposed development would be located between two existing buildings – the gatehouse and the wash house. As such, the proposed development would be an infill plot. Therefore, the principle of the proposed development would be acceptable and would comply with exception e) of paragraph 145 of the NPPF and Policies OL1/2 and OL1/3 of the Bury UDP”.

Example 3 – New detached dwelling

- 5.17 It is noted that in planning application 53307 (example 3 of table 1.1) the LPA commented that “The application site forms part of a ribbon of residential development along Whalley Road, within the Green Belt...”
- 5.18 The site is approximately 700metres north of the main built up extents of Shuttleworth Village and there are several large open gaps with no built development.

LPA assessment (example 3);

- 5.19 It appears that the LPA applied policy OL1/3 infilling in existing villages in the Green Belt and that this infilling would be permitted provided it is in scale and not out of character with its surroundings. Where ribbon development is concerned, small gaps may be capable of successful development without prejudicing Green Belt objectives and in these cases, each proposal should be assessed on its individual merits.

Response: (example 3);

- 5.20 In this case it would appear that the LPA were satisfied that this example site could benefit from policy OL1/3 infilling in existing villages in the Green Belt despite the example site being some distance (700 metres) from the main cluster of development to the centre of Shuttleworth.
- 5.21 Further it would also appear that the LPA were satisfied that the example development would comprise ribbon development despite development not being continuous from the main concentration of development at the centre of Shuttleworth to the example site, and there being several wide open gaps.
- 5.22 This suggests that ribbon development need not necessarily be continuous from a village centre and that some gaps in development would be allowed, and/or ribbon development will be considered in settlements that are relatively close but outside the main built up extents of a village.

Example 4 – New detached dwelling

- 5.23 It is noted that in planning application 68661 (example 4 of table 1.1) the LPA commented that the site was remote from Ainsworth village (the site is approximately 800metres from the village centre and beyond existing ribbon development that extends north along Knowsley Road there are open fields, and open Green Belt).

LPA assessment (example 4);

- 5.24 The LPA assessed that the new dwelling would be located between two buildings and therefore would be infill and would comply with exception e) of policy 145 of the NPPF. It is noted that the two buildings were 42metres apart and both buildings were relatively small structures.

Response: (example 4);

- 5.25 In this case the LPA confirmed that they were satisfied that this example site could benefit from policy OL1/3 infilling in existing villages in the Green Belt despite the example site being some distance (800 metres) from the main centre of Ainsworth Village, and the LPA's assessment that the example site was isolated from the main centre of the village.
- 5.26 This suggests that the wider settlement can be considered to be a part of a village settlement even where the site is some way distant from the village

centre (800meters) and is separated from the village by open fields and ribbon development is not continuous.

- 5.27 An appeal decision at Bag End, Hogpits Bottom (4/00829/17/FUL) which allowed a single detached dwelling is of relevance, with the following paragraph of the Inspector's decision being of particular interest:

7. "...Whilst I recognise that both built-up areas do not physically abut each other, I see no reason why a village may not be comprised of more than one built-up area separated by an undeveloped gap, just as the built-up areas of towns and cities are often sub-divided by parks, the open countryside and other natural features such as steep hills and rivers".

- 5.28 The application site is outside the main grouping of buildings to the village centre but is part of ribbon development that extends out of the village centre along Bradley Fold Road. There is no clear distinction in the local plan between the washed over village settlement of Ainsworth and the Green Belt of Ainsworth. It is important to note that Ainsworth Village does not solely comprise the main concentration of buildings to the centre but also other development that comprises ribbon development along the roads that extend out from the centre. The wider village settlement has expanded and evolved over time to encompass further areas of development and UDP policy OL1/3 makes provision for this.
- 5.29 There are areas of transition between the ribbon development extending out from the centre of Ainsworth Village and the areas of open countryside that lie beyond the settlement.
- 5.30 The subject site is close to the densely built up development to the main core of Ainsworth Village and lies within its more loosely developed fringes. The subject site and adjacent development is functionally and visually related to the main concentration of development to the core of the village.
- 5.31 It is considered that the residents of Titus Cottage and adjacent dwellings may contribute similar levels of support to the village facilities and economy including the church, shops and public house as residents in the village centre and there is nothing to suggest that future residents of the proposed dwelling would not make a similar contribution to the village.

Whether the application site constitutes an 'infill' plot

- 5.32 Having established that the site is 'physically and functionally part of the village it is necessary to confirm whether the site constitutes "limited infilling".
- 5.33 The term 'limited infilling' is not defined in National Policy. The interpretation of the term was considered at the Court of Appeal in the case of *Tate v Northumberland County Council* [2018].
- 5.34 The Judge held:

"The question of whether a particular proposed development is to be regarded as "limited infilling" in a village for the purposes of the policy in paragraph 149 of the NPPF will always be essentially a question of fact and planning judgement for the planning decision-maker. There is no definition of "infilling"

or “limited infilling” in the NPPF, nor any guidance there, to assist that exercise of planning judgement. It is left to the decision-maker to form a view, in the light of the specific facts. Can this proposed development be regarded as “limited infilling”, or not, having regard to the nature and size of the development itself, the location of the application site and its relationship to other, existing development adjoining it, and adjacent to it?”

- 5.35 Policy OL1/3 states that *“A particular difficulty exists in relation to “ribbon” development which strings out along a number of roads, from villages within the Green Belt. Where such ribbon developments present a significant and generally unbroken frontage, small gaps may be capable of successful development without prejudicing Green Belt objectives. **This will usually be a case of looking at each proposal on its merits: the planning authority will wish to take into account the character of the site; and, generally, development which would involve the felling of the trees, or the spoiling of a fine view, would be prevented**”*.
- 5.36 Considering the subject proposal on its merits the proposed dwelling would be sited within a small gap between existing dwellings that form part of the wider village settlement. The scheme would fall within the exception category for limited infilling in villages identified by paragraph 154 part (e) of the Framework. The scheme would not therefore constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would as a consequence comply with Policy OL1/3 of the UDP.
- 5.37 In appeal decision APP/N0410/W/21/373174 for a single detached dwelling (Mrs Messsum v Buckinghamshire Council [2022]) the Inspector commented that;
 “16. In my experience, in order to qualify as infilling a proposal must fill a space or gap between two other buildings or structures whether within a continuous built-up frontage or within built development”.
- 5.38 The inspector found that the proposal would be infilling, and as the scheme proposes a single dwelling it would therefore be very limited.
- 5.39 Case law (Lee Valley Regional Park Authority v Epping Forest District Council 2016) has determined that where development is found to be ‘not inappropriate’ when applying paragraphs 149 (now 154) of the Framework, it should not be regarded as harmful either to the openness of the Green Belt or to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. In these circumstances there is no need to consider the effect of the development on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 5.40 We reserve our position that the subject site can be considered as an infill plot and therefore can be considered as appropriate development under para.154(e) of the NPPF.

Example of infill development in Rochdale Authority

- 5.41 In refusing planning permission for the construction of a detached dwelling to land at the rear of 190 Heywood Old Road, Middleton, Rochdale MBC had assessed that the development of a detached dwelling did not represent infilling (ref; 21/00790/FUL). The Council refused development stating that it would constitute inappropriate development were it in the Green Belt. The reason for refusal also referred to “...and would additionally lead to a significant loss of openness of the site”.

- 5.42 In the officers report there was an assessment of impact on openness and consideration that 'Openness' is split into two distinct parts: Visual and Spatial. In assessing the visual component the Council assessed that the dwelling would protrude above the landscape, restricting views through the site and resulting in harm to openness. In assessing the spatial component the Council assessed that the proposed building would increase the massing on site, thus prejudicing its openness. The LPA concluded that the harm on openness would prejudice the provisions of para. 137 of the NPPF.
- 5.43 This application was allowed at appeal with the Inspector determining that the appeal proposal can be considered to be limited infilling within an established pocket of housing.
- 5.44 The appeal inspector commented that the applicant and LPA had made reference to the proposal not filling a gap in an otherwise built-up frontage and it was acknowledged that there is no definition of what constitutes limited infilling in local policy or in the Framework. The Inspector commented on being able to see a variety of garages and buildings along the lane in the vicinity of the site and a house under construction. The Inspector was satisfied that there was sufficient development in close proximity for the proposal to be considered as infill.

Limited infilling or partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land

- 5.45 Para 154 of the NPPF sets out exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt which includes exception "g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land; whether redundant or in continuing use, which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 5.46 The site was utilised for stables there being a number of buildings to the site for both stabling and storage. These buildings were in use as recently as 2017 and the concrete slabs and foundations for a number of these buildings are still in place.
- 5.47 The application site is previously developed land as defined in appendix 2 of the NPPF.
- 5.48 The subject site forms part of an established previously developed curtilage between residential uses. Any views into the site would be very limited due to the screening providing at the Bradley Road frontage by existing mature trees and hedgerows. Where it is considered that there could be even a restricted view into the site the new dwelling would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing cluster of buildings.
- 5.49 The proposed dwelling would not be readily discernible from the existing grouping of buildings and there certainly would be no significant change in character or substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. In deeming some forms of building in the Green Belt not inappropriate, the NPPF allows for a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt in some circumstances. Based on the merits of this case it is evident that significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt would not be caused by virtue of the modest scale of the

proposal and with development being contained between Titus Cottage and Titus Barn to either side.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 5.50 The landscape and visual impact of the development has been assessed to consider the anticipated effects resulting from the development on the character and features of the landscape and on people's views and visual amenity.
- 5.51 It is noted that views from the public roads and footpaths in the vicinity are enclosed or substantially screened by vegetation and this prevents views of the site, or into the site.
- 5.52 The subject area is relatively small scale and low-lying and therefore discreet within the landscape.
- 5.53 The application site is well enclosed by existing trees.
- 5.54 The subject site forms part of a pleasant landscape but one which is heavily influenced by its close proximity to existing development. Views are restricted by vegetation and include the existing built form to either side (Titus Cottage and Titus Barn). The landscape has an urban element and is not open greenspace.



Image 05: Existing dwellings to either side of site

- 5.55 The site makes little or no contribution to the scenic quality of the wider area as it is well enclosed by existing built development, and existing vegetation. The existing dwellings to either side are partially visible and urbanise the views. It is considered that the site comprises land that is read within the context of the existing settlement and does not perform a valuable landscape function.

- 5.56 It is assessed that the scale of development is appropriate to the scale of the landscape and it is considered that the susceptibility to change of the character of the wider landscape is low.
- 5.57 Susceptibility to change of the landscape character within the immediate locality is assessed as low.
- 5.58 The existing trees provide enclosure and visual screening where the site interfaces with the undeveloped Green Belt. A native hedgerow is proposed around the site periphery to provide further screening.
- 5.59 The site is small, low-lying, well contained, and discreet in the landscape. It is closely associated with the existing settlement, the buildings of which are partially visible from the settlement edge but are well screened in longer distance views. In any case, these longer distance views include the existing dwellings and any filtered views of buildings are seen in this context.



Image 06: View north along Bradley Fold Road to subject site

- 5.60 The scale of the development is small and is appropriate to the scale of the landscape. The design and materials proposed for the dwelling aligns with the existing buildings (Titus Cottage and Titus Barn) and is in keeping with the local vernacular.
- 5.61 There is opportunity to manage the existing trees to the periphery of the site, and introduce new trees and hedgerows to reinforce the existing landscape character. This would enhance the appearance of the landscape as well as providing ecological interest, habitat connectivity and biodiversity gain.
- 5.62 The proposed dwelling is well associated with the adjacent buildings. Local materials and styles are incorporated, and the building will assimilate well into its setting in terms of siting, scale and design.
- 5.63 There is a perception that the site is already developed, due to the rubble composition of the site and close proximity to the existing buildings and access

road. The proposals would be in keeping with the existing character of the locality with little or no perceptible change in longer distance views.

- 5.64 The size and scale of effect on the landscape character within the immediate locality upon completion as a result of the proposals would be negligible.
- 5.65 In assessing impact on the Green Belt it is assessed that there are very few locations close to the edge of the settlement from which the subject site is visible. This is largely due to the level of enclosure and screening provided by existing buildings and vegetation.
- 5.66 In views from PRowS which lie within the immediate vicinity of the site, the existing buildings and mature trees filter views of the former stables site. The dwellings are partially visible resulting in an urban edge character. As such, when walking on the PRowS within the vicinity of the site, the experience is one of being on the edge of a settlement rather than a wholly rural context.
- 5.67 The site is perceived as part of the existing settlement due to its close association with the existing buildings. There is a clear distinction between the developed extents of the settlement (which includes the application site), and the surrounding countryside. The site therefore makes no contribution to a sense of openness when viewed from the PRowS close to the settlement edge.
- 5.68 The scale of the proposed development is small, and the buildings would assimilate well into their setting in terms of siting, scale and design. The proposals would be in keeping with their surroundings, with negligible change to the character or appearance of the area. In views from the settlement, there would be no effect on the perceived openness of the Green Belt as a result of the proposals.
- 5.69 In assessing the effects of any perceived encroachment into the Green Belt the site is closely associated with the existing built form to the settlement. Its character is distinct from the countryside which surrounds it. The proposals would be confined within the extents of the former stables site and would be well screened by the dense tree cover. The development would not encroach into the surrounding countryside and the function and purpose of the Green Belt would remain.
- 5.70 In terms of planning the site would not meet the criteria of 'Valued Landscape' in terms of NPPF. There would be no disturbance to the character of the wider landscape.
- 5.71 It is noted that in granting approval for demolition of an existing bungalow and erection of 4 dwellings (63388/Full) Bury MBC allowed a significant increase in building footprint (259%). We appreciate that this consent was granted as infill in a village but consider it relevant that in assessing the impact on the character of the village the LPA were prepared to support a significant increase in building footprint and volume.
- 5.72 In this decision (63388/Full) officer's commented that in the context of infilling in villages (paragraph 154(e) of the NPPF), **the primary factor is the impact the development would have on the character of the village within the wider Green Belt rather than the loss of openness per se.** It was noted by officers that the trees are a particularly important mitigating factor in the assessment, both reducing views across the existing site and partly screening the new build

from Bolton Road. It was assessed by officers that **“The development would be viewed through the retained tree line which would significantly reduce its visual impact and reinforce the semi-rural and village setting”**.



Image 07: View towards site and existing development lines

- 5.73 The proposed infill development would respect existing development lines with the dwelling located close to the existing access and between the existing buildings.
- 5.74 Development is contained within the area of the previously developed stable use. There is a clear distinction between the previously developed site and the greenspace beyond.
- 5.75 The proposed dwellings would be viewed within the context of the existing settlement and would sit comfortably within this. There would not be a significant change in the character of the setting.

Example of infill development to a previously developed site (Rochdale MBC)
190 Heywood Old Road, Middleton, M24 4GR (application Ref 21/00790/FUL)

- 5.76 In consideration of this appeal for construction of a detached house the Inspector makes reference that para 149 g) of the Framework (now revised para 154g) requires the development not to have a greater impact on openness of the Green Belt than the existing development. The Inspector acknowledges that the proposal for a dwelling would involve the erection of a building where there is currently none, however, spatially, it sits within a clear building envelope. The Inspector considered that visually the new building would have no greater effect on openness and would spatially be interpreted as falling within a well-defined residential envelope.
- 5.77 In respect of openness paragraph 154g of the NPPF has been updated to confirm that limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land may be an exception to inappropriate development

in the Green Belt where it would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. This is a significant shift in emphasis from the previous version (para. 149g of NPPF 2021) which referred to development not having a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

Example of infill development to a previously developed site with a Green Belt designation in Bury authority

- 5.78 Planning consent was granted by Bury MBC for the erection of two dwellings at 249-251 Bury and Bolton Road (consent ref;56899). This site has a Green belt designation in the Development Plan and we understand that approval was granted as limited infilling and/or redevelopment of previously developed land (exception g) of paragraph 149 of the NPPF).
- 5.79 This was an open and highly prominent site that had previously been used as a petrol filling station. No buildings of any significant scale had existed to the site (the main petrol filling station being to the south side of Bury and Bolton Road), and any above ground development had been cleared for a significant period of years. This site did not benefit from significant screening at the boundaries and there were unrestricted views into the site from the Green Belt to the north.
- 5.80 This decision (56899) suggests that Bury Authority considered that this proposal would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development, and that a significant increase in development scale and volume could be supported to a previously developed site in the Green Belt. In this case Bury Authority did not limit consideration of openness in purely spatial and volumetric terms but also considered the visual concept of openness.
- 5.81 The proposed infill development would be contained within the existing development lines of Titus Cottage and Titus Barn with no expansion beyond this.
- 5.82 The area surrounding Ainsworth Village centre is characterised by open fields with scattered dwellings fronting highways such as Bradley Fold. The proposed dwelling would be part of this pattern and would be in keeping.
- 5.83 The views to and beyond the site are limited due to the existing natural screening to the boundaries, the existing mature trees can be retained and further supplemented with additional planting and there is no basis for a fine view to be spoiled.
- 5.84 No trees are to be felled as part of the development. The dwelling is sited away from the trees to the location of the former stables buildings. The exact position of the trees, the Root Protection Areas and canopies are confirmed in the submitted tree survey.

Section 6.0 –Benefits of development and Very Special Circumstances

- 6.1 It is considered that the proposed development qualifies as appropriate development under exceptions e) and g) of paragraph 154 of the NPPF and in those circumstances it is not necessary to consider Very Special Circumstances.
- 6.2 Should the LPA consider that they will not apply these exceptions to support the proposed development we consider **Very Special Circumstances exist** that would outweigh any potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, or any other perceived harm resulting from the proposal.
- 6.3 The Very Special Circumstances
- The site is derelict land comprising a previously developed stables use. Redevelopment to a residential use that is compatible with the existing settlement would be beneficial through an **improvement in the appearance of a derelict site, and would add vitality and strengthen the existing community**.
 - The PRA that has been undertaken has identified an unknown depth and constituent of made ground across the site and a risk of contamination from the previous use. Redevelopment provides the **opportunity to remediate the land and derelict land that is part of a previously developed site would be put to an efficient use**. This would provide long term certainty over development of a site located between existing dwellings and would avoid the possibility of having an area of derelict and potentially contaminated land retained adjacent to the existing residential use.
 - An **improvement in biodiversity** can be achieved through the management of the existing trees and the proposals for new landscape planting.
 - The addition of a low rise dwelling built with traditional materials sits comfortably within the adjacent dwellings and the established curtilage of the previously developed stables use. There is natural screening of the site by mature trees, hedgerows and vegetation both at the site boundaries and within the immediate area, and the dwellings would not be readily discernible in the wider landscape and the potential impacts on the landscape would be negligible. The proposals would not affect the openness of the Green Belt and an **improvement in the landscape and visual appearance of the previously developed land can be achieved through the development proposals**.
 - **Ecological benefits** can be achieved through the landscaping proposals, and the ecological enhancements that are proposed.
 - **A family home would be provided** in an area where there is strong demand for this, and very little opportunity to build new homes. The provision of a family home would **contribute to supply where there is high demand**. This helps to relieve the pressure for development of other less suitable Green Belt sites in the Ainsworth area to provide the new housing that is needed.
 - **A dwelling would be provided as a self-build plot**. The Council are required to make provision for self-build homes and this dwelling would contribute to this need.

- 6.4 In granting consent for a large single dwelling in a Green Belt designation in Ramsbottom (66308/Full) the case for VSC's was accepted by Bury Planning Authority. Officers considered that the addition of this single dwelling, on the edge of an existing settlement with **natural screening provided would not be overly incongruous or prominent within the identified visual envelope and would not materially alter the view of the Green Belt location**. It was accepted that the potential change to public and private views would be negligible.
- 6.5 In accepting a lack of visual harm and landscape enhancements officers commented that the dwelling would be located behind a group of existing trees, a good proportion of the building would be screened. **It was considered that that the addition of a single dwelling, which is partially screened by tree planting would not be readily discernible and the potential impacts on the landscape would be negligible.**

Housing need

- 6.6 There is great demand for 3 bedroom family homes in the Ainsworth area and there is very limited previously developed land available to provide new homes. This proposal provides the **opportunity to supply a new family home within the established curtilage of a previously developed site** without resulting in the pressure to seek development or encroachment of other areas of undeveloped Green Belt.
- 6.7 The dwelling is proposed as a self-build plot. The Self-build and Custom housebuilding Act 2015 requires that each Authority will keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward self-build and custom housebuilding projects, and places a duty on public authorities to have regard to those registers in carrying out planning and other functions. Authorities are required to have regard to the provision of self-build plots when making decisions regarding planning, provision of housing and the regeneration of land. The construction of a new dwelling to this previously developed site presents an opportunity for the provision of a serviced self-build plot that the Halliwell family would like to implement.
- 6.8 **The subject site is available for immediate development and could be delivered within a 5 year period.** The NPPF emphasises the need for Local Planning Authorities to boost the supply of housing to meet local needs and the proposed development would assist in contributing to the supply of housing land in Ainsworth.

Section 7.0 – Other considerations

Design

- 7.1 UDP policy H2/1 requires all new residential development will make a positive contribution to the form and quality of the surrounding area.
- 7.2 The proposed dwellings are designed to reference the existing buildings in terms of form and scale, and the use of materials.
- 7.3 Design features from the existing buildings that have been drawn upon include:
- Rectangular building footprint with two storeys of development referencing building form of Titus Cottage and Titus Barn.
 - Linear development arranged along existing access road similar to adjacent dwellings.
 - Pitched roofs with slate coverings (referencing Titus Cottage).
 - Stone facings to external walls (referencing Titus Cottage).
- 7.4 The height of the adjacent buildings has been considered and the proposed dwellings are designed to be of a comparable, or lesser height (5.88 metres from finished floor level to ridge), as follows;
- Proposed dwelling: Ridge level = 105.88m.
 - Titus Cottage: Ridge level = 107.18m (1.3metres higher than proposal).
 - Titus Barn: Ridge level = 105.42m (0.46 metres lower than proposal).



Image 08: Two storey development to either side

- 7.5 The siting, scale and orientation of the dwelling has been carefully considered in order to ensure that the dwelling sits comfortably with the development plot, and to achieve satisfactory separation distances and amenity with the neighbouring buildings.

- 7.6 Boundary treatments have been kept at a low level (1.5 metre high post and rail fencing), and are appropriate and in keeping with the location.
- 7.7 In accordance with Bury MBC's parking standards a minimum of two parking spaces are provided. The drives and parking areas are constructed with permeable resin bound gravel and providing sustainable drainage.

Lighting

- 7.8 Paragraph 198 (bullet point c) of the NPPF states that development should: 'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'.
- 7.9 During the construction phase any lighting to be used should be directional and screened where possible, and this specification is to be included in the Construction Management Plan (CMP).
- 7.10 The development lighting scheme will include the use of appropriate products and screening, to ensure no excessive artificial lighting shines over the boundary trees, new hedgerow and any landscape planting, as lighting overspill may deter use by wildlife such as foraging bats.

Ecology

- 7.11 An Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken by Pennine Ecological and includes the following findings:
- No designated statutory sites within the site or within 2km of the site.
 - There are no known statutory designations within the site.
 - Ainsworth Lodge SBI is located 450metres south east of the site but there are no impacts anticipated.
 - The existing habitats on site are of low to medium distinctiveness.
 - The majority of habitats are of limited botanical interest.
 - No priority, protected or notable habitats are present on or immediately adjacent to the site.
 - Himalayan balsam, an invasive species is recorded at the sites eastern boundary.
 - On-site habitats impacted by the proposals do not exceed site ecological value.
 - No evidence of badger activity was found within the site or the wider area.
 - The habitats associated with the site and surrounding area are of some value to bats, most notably the line of trees to the east, and the hedgerows to the west. All suitable foraging and connectivity habitat will be retained under the proposals, and indeed opportunities will be generated by the creation of new native hedgerow.
 - The site is unlikely to support a bird assemblage above site ecological value.
 - Bird nesting boxes are proposed to improve the biodiversity value of the site.

Landscaping proposals

- 7.12 A landscaping design is submitted that illustrates the hard and soft landscaping details.
- 7.13 The development proposals provide an opportunity for biodiversity and landscaping improvements.
- 7.14 New native hedge planting is proposed around the site perimeter (sides and rear), with ornamental hedge and shrub planting to the frontage.
- 7.15 The landscaping proposals will provide a visual improvement to the landscape and will increase biodiversity and support ecological enhancement.

Contaminated Land

- 7.16 A phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment of the subject site has been undertaken and this provides sufficient information on the potential contaminative status of the site to allow issue of conditional planning approval.
- 7.17 The PRA has identified an unknown depth and constituent of made ground across the site. It is concluded that there is viable contamination and geotechnical risk and therefore further assessment is recommended with the undertaking of a phase 2 intrusive site investigation.
- 7.18 The intrusive work is recommended to confirm the ground conditions across the site with testing of contaminants of concern based on the preliminary conceptual model and field observations.
- 7.19 The information is to be used to carry out a contamination and geotechnical assessment and provide a remediation strategy for the site.

Access

- 7.20 There is an existing access from Bradley Fold Road that has been utilised over a 35 year period to service the stables use. This would have included use by larger horseboxes and agricultural machinery.
- 7.21 The access is retained and is suitable for reuse to serve a single dwelling. From the existing access there is good visibility in both directions along Bradley Fold Road. A safe access is provided and traffic generation from a single dwelling will be minimal and would not have any perceivable impact on the highway network.
- 7.22 Similar to Titus Cottage there is a turning and parking area to the frontage that will allow parking for a minimum of 2 cars. Level access and approach can be provided to the dwelling to enable access to people of all ability.

Trees

- 7.23 In support of the application the following documents have been prepared:
- Tree survey compliant with BS5837.
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
 - Tree Protection Plan.
- 7.24 The tree survey identified 7 individual trees, 2 tree groups and 1 hedge. The proposed layout will result in the loss of no trees, all trees will be retained.
- 7.25 It is advised that significant arboricultural work is undertaken to tree 5 due to its current condition. This is a mature ash tree that is suffering from ash dieback disease, and has significant dieback and fragile deadwood throughout its crown.
- 7.26 The proposed building is set back away from the retained trees meaning that shading is unlikely to be a significant issue.
- 7.27 Due to the lack of proximity to retained trees of a height that could drop leaves and debris onto the roof of the proposed building there is no significant issue relating to debris and leaves obstructing guttering.
- 7.28 Forest and Tree Consulting have assessed that the proposal is workable and arboriculturally acceptable.

Flood risk and drainage strategy

- 7.29 A Drainage Strategy Report is submitted with this application.
- 7.30 The report confirms that the subject site is within Flood Zone 1 with a low risk of flooding and the proposed site area is less than 1.0 hectare. In line with criteria set within the NPPF a Flood Risk Assessment is not required.
- 7.31 The report assesses Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) as an option for reducing surface water flood risk, and devises outline strategies for surface and foul water drainage.
- 7.32 The surface water drainage strategy is to collect the runoff from the roof of the new residential property and outfall into a geocellular infiltration tank located in the rear garden that will enable the water to infiltrate to the underlying sands. The rainwater pipes will outfall via a waterbutt. Permeable paving will be constructed to the parking area.
- 7.33 The outline foul drainage strategy will be to direct all new foul drainage to a new sewage treatment plant, sized for the proposed population usage, which will then outfall to the underlying sands via a new land drainage network.

Section 8.0 – Conclusion

- 8.1 The former stables use is unique in terms of its original use, characteristics and setting, and is a previously developed site that housed substantial built development within a clearly defined curtilage.
- 8.2 We have explained why the proposed development is compliant with local and national planning policy, and why granting of consent would be consistent with other planning consents granted by Bury MBC.
- 8.3 We have identified that the development would be an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt as defined in paragraph 154, through exceptions;
 - e) limited infilling in villages,
 - g) limited infilling of previously developed land where development would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.4 The landscape and visual impact has been assessed to consider the effects resulting from the development on the character and features of the landscape, and on people's views and amenity.
- 8.5 The subject land is a previously developed site (brownfield) within the Green Belt and is closely associated with the existing housing development to either side. The proposals would demonstrably not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, and would not encroach into the countryside which surround the existing settlement.
- 8.6 The proposed dwellings are sited close to the existing access and grouping of houses. The dwellings would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing settlement with Titus Cottage being more substantial in terms of height, massing and footprint. Any view of the dwellings will be with the backdrop of the existing housing settlement and as a result the proposal will not materially change or substantially harm the openness or visual appearance of a brownfield site within a Green Belt designation.
- 8.7 This modest and well screened development of a single dwelling would not have any adverse impact on the five purposes of Green Belt set out in paragraph 143 of the NPPF.
- 8.8 It is concluded that the development can be considered as infilling in a village, and would also be limited infilling of previously developed land. The openness of the Green Belt would be preserved, and the development would not conflict with any of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 8.9 The proposed development offers a number of Economic, Social and Environmental benefits, including;
 - Economic benefits
 - Benefits during and after construction by providing employment and support for local services and the generation of additional revenue in the local economy.
 - Increased income for the Council through new homes bonus and Council Tax revenues.

Social benefits

- Contribution of a family home to the Authorities housing supply in an area where there is great demand for this type of housing.
- Social benefits to an existing residential location by allowing future occupants to form part of the local community.
- Natural surveillance and occupation of derelict land that is previously developed to help address crime and anti-social behaviour issues.

Environmental benefits

- The recycling and regeneration of previously developed land within an established residential setting.
- Remediation of a previously developed site providing a long term environmental benefit.
- Improvements to the biodiversity and ecology of the site through the provision of ecological enhancements and landscape planting.

8.10 Should the LPA not agree that the proposals are limited in filling in a village, or limited infilling to a previously developed site then we consider that **Very Special Circumstances** exist that would outweigh any potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, or any other perceived harm resulting from the proposal.

VSC 1

- **Recycling of derelict land and remediation of the former stables use.**

VSC 2

- The existing trees to the periphery of the site are unmanaged with one tree suffering ash dieback (T5). The proposals in the submitted tree survey, ecological report and landscape design would allow for the **long term management of the trees and an improvement in biodiversity.**

VSC 3

- An assessment of the landscape and visual impact identifies that the proposals would not affect the openness of the Green Belt, and that an **improvement in the landscape and visual appearance of the previously developed site can be achieved through the development proposals.**

VSC 4

- **Ecological benefits** can be achieved through the landscaping proposals and the ecological enhancements that are proposed.

VSC 5

- **Vacant and derelict land that is part of a previously developed site would be put to an efficient use.** This would provide long term certainty over the development of a previously developed site that is directly adjacent to existing residential use, and would avoid the possibility of having an area of vacant and unmaintained land detracting from the amenity of the adjoining homes.

VSC 6

- A family home would be provided in an area where there is strong demand for this, and very little opportunity to build new homes.

VSC 7

- **A self-build plot would be provided** that would assist the authority in meeting their obligation to make provision for self-build plots.

8.11 The application is in compliance with the NPPF and the development plan and in the planning balance the demonstrated benefits clearly outweigh any perceived harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.

Issued: 6th January 2025

APPENDIX 1 - PHOTOGRAPHS

Plate 1 – View into subject site from existing access off Bradley Fold Road



Plate 2 – View towards subject site from east with existing dwellings to either side



Plate 3 – Existing gate and walling at site access



Plate 4 – Adjacent gate and walling to Titus Cottage



Plate 5 - View to north of adjacent Titus Barn and ribbon development to village centre



Plate 6 – View to east over subject land with tree screening beyond



Plate 7 - View north from site entrance along Bradley Fold Road with ribbon development, and public footpath and street lighting extending to village centre



Plate 8 – View south from site entrance along Bradley Fold Road with ribbon development extending to south



Plate 9 – Concrete post & timber fence at rear of Titus Cottage & subject land



Plate 10 – Rear extension to Titus Cottage (adjacent to subject plot).