

Planning Support Statement Land at Wood Mill, Wood Road Lane, Summerseat

**Planning Application for demolition of
outbuilding, erection of single dwelling
within existing garden and sub-division of
existing house to three properties**

Job No: 25/L/073

Client: Brian & Lorraine Mitchell

Version: v.1

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Support Statement has been prepared by JWPC Chartered Town Planners on behalf of the applicants, Brian & Lorraine Mitchell, in support of a full planning application for the demolition of an existing outbuilding, erection of single dwelling within the existing garden and sub-division of the existing house to three properties at a Wood Mill, Wood Road Lane. The site includes a former mill building converted to a residential property, an existing associated summerhouse outbuilding and garden areas around the property. It lies to the east of the village of Summerseat, adjacent the river Irwell.
- 1.2. The site was subject to an approval for full planning consent in 2024 (Ref: 69266) for subdivision of the dwelling to four dwellings, an increase of three dwellings at the site. The new proposal includes the building of a new property alongside subdivision of the property to three dwellings, which in total represents the same increase of three dwellings at the site.
- 1.3. This Statement should be read alongside the submitted application documentation, including the following documents:
- Design & Access Statement – IDC Architecture
 - 21053-600 – Location Plan
 - 21053-601- Existing Site Plan (1:500)
 - 21053-602 – Existing Site Plan (1:200)
 - 21053-603 – Existing Site Plan Topo -Dwelling D Location
 - 21053-604 – Existing Floor Plans – Original House
 - 21053-605 – Existing Elevations – Original House
 - 21053-611 – Proposed Site Plan (1:500)
 - 21053-612 – Proposed Site Plan (1:200)
 - 21053-613A – Proposed Site Plan – Dwelling D Location
 - 21053-614 – Proposed Floor Plans – Original House
 - 21053-615 – Proposed Elevations – Original House
 - 21053-616B – Proposed Plans – Dwelling D
 - 21053-617B – Proposed Elevations – Dwelling D

- 1.4. This statement will summarise the proposals and set out the relevant planning policies and material planning considerations to justify how the application submission is acceptable in planning terms.
- 1.5. Bearing in mind the Local Planning Authority's duty under Paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), it is requested that the Agents are contacted in the first instance if any further information is required to enable a positive determination or there are queries that the submitted application does not address. The applicants request that any proposed conditions can also be reviewed prior to the release of a decision.

2. Site Characteristics

The Site

- 2.1 The application site boundary is the residential curtilage of the Wood Mill building, which is a residential property that is being subdivided for the applicant's family, with consent granted in 2024 for four separate properties within the building. The application site includes the main building, gardens and a summerhouse outbuilding on the western boundary, along with the private access drive through the site. Consent was also secured for the building of a swimming pool and gym building through a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC – Ref: 68719) on the garden area to the immediate south of the outbuilding. The red edge boundary of the site extends to the north where it meets Wood Road Lane. The site measures approximately 1.15 hectares.

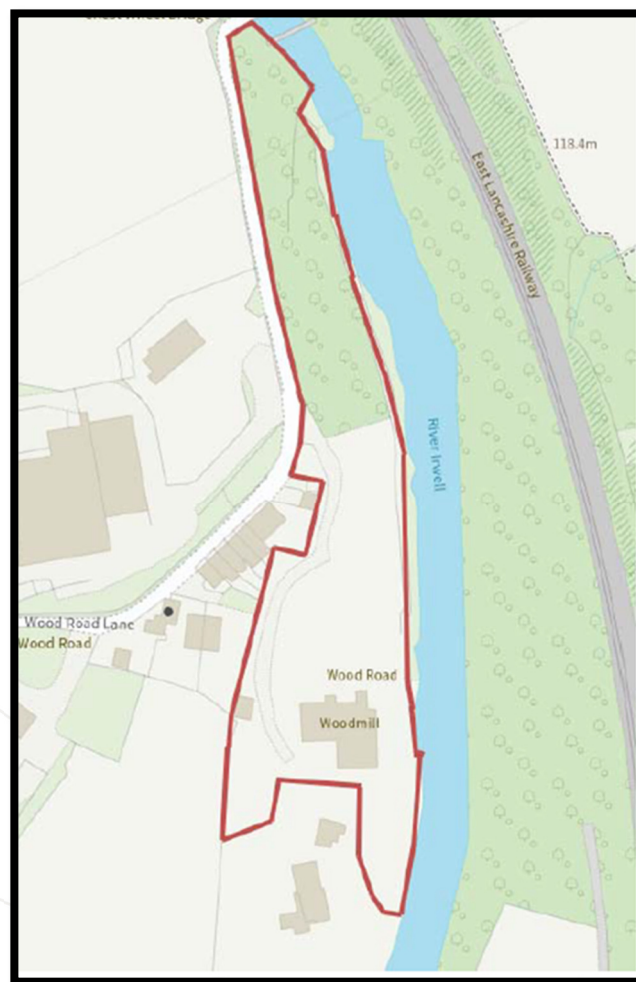


Figure 1 – Site Boundary

- 2.2 The private access drive from Wood Road Lane to the north leads to the house and garden areas and also connects around to the rear of the main Wood Mill building to a separate residential property not connected with the Wood Mill property. This property does not form part of the application site, but its garden buffers the southern boundary of the application site from the open countryside beyond it.
- 2.3 The site lies adjacent the River Irwell to its eastern boundary. The majority of the length of the western boundary of the site lies adjacent the rear gardens of existing residential properties on Wood Road Lane. On the western boundary of the application site is the existing summerhouse outbuilding.
- 2.4 The application site forms part of a large cluster of existing residential and farm buildings around Wood Road Lane, which can be seen in the aerial photograph below.



Figure 2 – Aerial Photograph (Wood Mill property highlighted)

Location and Access

- 2.5 The application site is accessed via Wood Road Lane, with a private drive leading to the main property and also providing access to the separate property to the south of the site, known as West Bank.
- 2.6 The site is located to the east of the village of Summerseat. Summerseat train station lies approximately 450 metres to the north along Wood Road Lane. The station is part of a heritage railway line connecting from Heywood to Rawtenstall. There is a bus stop close to the station 'Summerseat, opposite Wood Road Lane' which is part of the Bee Network, with the 477 bus providing a regular bus service to Bury and Ramsbottom and stops in between.

Heritage

- 2.7 The application site is not subject to any statutory heritage listings nor is it within a Conservation Area.

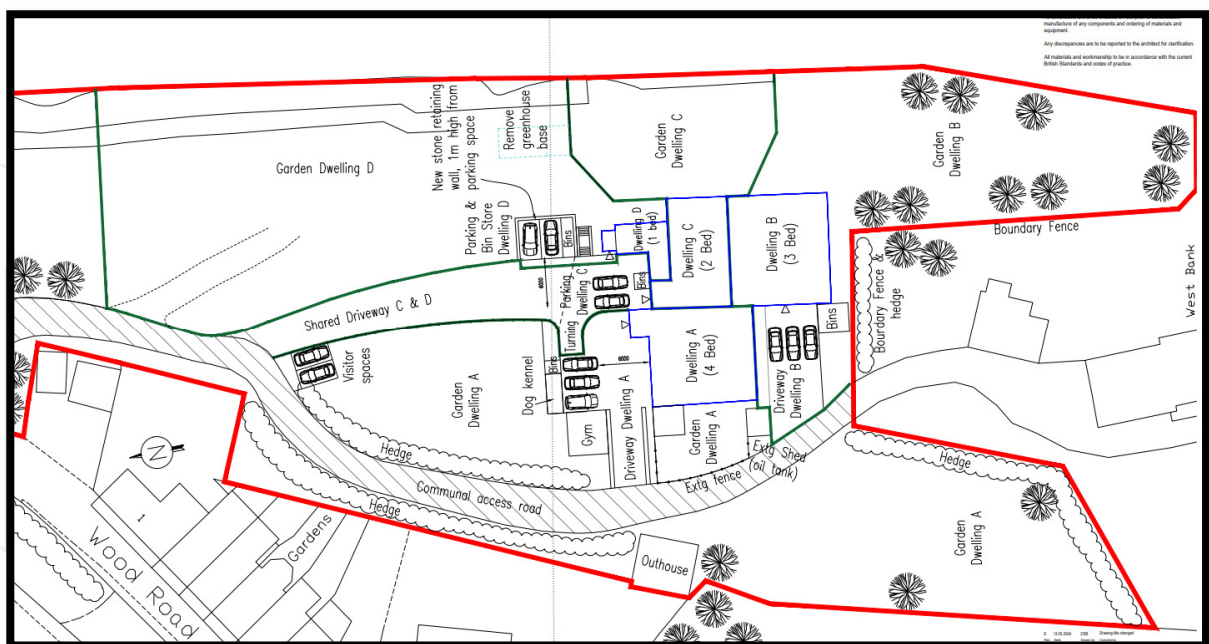
Planning History

- 2.8 The planning history of the site includes a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) (Ref:68719/LDCP) for the building of a swimming pool and gym within the garden area to the western side of the main property, which was approved in November 2022. The Delegated Report noted that after the officer had visited the site, they accepted that the area of land subject to the LDC was considered part of the residential curtilage and issued the LDC for a Class E building under permitted development rights.

2.9 The Class E Building approved by the LDC measured 7.5 metres by 13.35 metres, with the longer elevation fronting the access road, with its position on site shown on the approved plan below. The maximum ridge height of the building was proposed at 4 metres. Whilst the building has not yet been constructed, as its size is set out in an LDC it does represent a fallback position in planning terms.



2.10 The whole application site was subject to a planning consent approving subdivision of the Wood Mill building from a single dwelling into 4 separate dwellings (Ref: 69266). The plan below, taken from that application, shows the subdivision of the building and garden areas around the building, with the south western rear garden associated with Dwelling A of that approval.



2.11 The photographs below show the access drive to the front of the site, with the Wood Mill dwelling the right hand side and the summerhouse outbuilding of the application site to the left. Below that is the eastern boundary of the garden, with the separate dwelling showing over the hedge.



3. Application Proposal

- 3.1 This section summarises the submitted proposals for the redevelopment of this site, the bulk of which involves subdivision of the main property into three dwellings. It also includes the construction of a new dwelling in the south western rear garden of the dwelling, replacing an existing outbuilding/summerhouse. The overall increase in dwellings across the site is three, matching the 2024 approval for subdivision of the main building.

Access

- 3.2 The access will remain as proposed in the 2024 approval for sub-division. The new dwelling, detailed below, will be accessed from the same private drive, which it fronts to, and two new parking spaces will be provided adjacent the property.

Sub-Division

- 3.3 The main property will be sub-divided into three dwellings, which is a change from the four dwellings proposal approved in 2024. Details of the changes to the building are set out in the submitted plans and explained in the Design and Access Statement prepared by IDC. The main building will provide two four-bed dwellings and one three-bed dwelling.

New Building

- 3.4 The proposals include the addition of a new dwelling within the rear south western garden, located on the area where the LDC approved a separate outbuilding, adjacent the summerhouse outbuilding that will be demolished. The Design & Access Statement details the design iterations considered in preparing the proposals, which had initially sought to convert the outbuilding, explaining the reasons why this is not proposed to be demolished and replaced by a new three-bed dwelling.

Gardens and Boundaries

- 3.5 The proposal subdivision of the building is also matched by a subdivision of the area around the building into four separate garden areas associated with each dwelling, providing private amenity space to residents.

Parking and Manoeuvring

- 3.6 The site is very large and at present accommodates 12 vehicles. Whilst the proposal would create three additional dwellings, all the people who will inhabit those dwellings currently live in this single large house, and therefore there will not be any difference to the number of vehicles that currently park there. Notwithstanding this, the submitted plans provide individual driveway parking positions for each of the dwellings on the Site Plan, based upon the required number of parking spaces in the Bury parking standards (minimum of 2 spaces for a 3-bedroom house and 3 spaces for a 4-bedroom house).
- 3.7 In addition, two visitor parking spaces have been provided near the entrance gates. Each of the new dwellings will have EV charging points installed.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), newly updated in December 2024, is a material consideration in relation to this planning application.
- 4.2 The Development Plan for the district comprises the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan adopted by the Greater Manchester Combined Authorities. The Council is in the process of producing a new Bury Local Plan (BLP), a draft of which was consulted upon in March 2025. This, alongside the PfE replaces the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which was originally adopted in 1997.

Places for Everyone

- 4.3 The site is located within the Green Belt, the extent of which is detailed in the PfE, at Policy JP-G9. This policy states the five purposes of green belt set out in the NPPF and defines the green belt areas across Greater Manchester. It also states that the beneficial use of the Green Belt will be enhanced where this can be achieved without harm to its openness, permanence or ability to serve its five purposes.

Emerging Bury Local Plan

- 4.4 The Policies in the ELP do not carry full weight, as the Plan is not adopted, but are outlined below.
- 4.5 Policy LP-H2: Windfall Housing Development – of the BLP states that any planning application for housing development on a site that is not allocated for residential use will generally be allowed to come forward if the site meets a list of six criteria. These are set out below:
- a. within the urban area or on suitable previously developed land within the Green Belt;

- b. on land that is not protected for other purposes;
- c. adequately serviced by appropriate infrastructure;
- d. not in an area of flood risk from any source (or it can be demonstrated that any flood risk can be managed)
- e. suitable in land use terms, with regard to amenity, local environment and surrounding land uses; and
- f. not in conflict with the overall Spatial Strategy and other policies in the BLP or PfE.

4.6 Policy LP-GB1: Limited Infilling in Village Settlements defines the village settlements where the Council will support limited infilling, as it is defined in the NPPF, and places additional conditions on them. This policy includes the village of Summerseat. The conditions that go beyond the scope of the NPPF are that the proposal is:

- a. is in keeping with the scale, character and appearance of its surroundings and the local area;
- b. does not give rise to unacceptable impacts; and
- c. does not involve the loss of undeveloped land that makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.7 The most up-to-date iteration of the Framework (December 2024) sets out national planning policies and is confirmed as a material consideration in planning decisions. The Framework defines the purpose of the planning system as being to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives, namely: an economic, a social and an environmental objective.

4.8 The NPPF provides clear guidance relating to development in the green belt, which it notes is inappropriate unless the proposal meets one of the certain exceptions set out in paragraph 154 and 155. Of relevance to an application for residential development are exceptions at 155c, 155d, 155e and 155g. These are set out below.

155c provides exception for the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

155d provides exception for the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

155e provides exception to limited infilling in villages.

155g provides exception for limited infilling or partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential), which would not cause substantial harm the openness of the Green Belt.

- 4.9 Paragraph 155 also states that the development of homes in the green belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where it would utilise grey belt, meets an unmet need and is in a sustainable location.
- 4.10 Paragraph 153 notes that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness other than in case of development on previously developed land or grey belt land, where development is not inappropriate.
- 4.11 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that where there are no relevant Development Plan policies, or the policies are out of date (footnote 8 defines this as being where a Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites or where the Housing Delivery Test is below 75%), then permission should be granted, unless:
- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

- 4.12 Paragraph 39 of the Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and confirms that decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.13 Section 5 of the Framework seeks to ensure the delivery of a sufficient supply of homes and reiterates the Government's commitment to significantly boosting the supply of homes.
- 4.14 Section 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport at Paragraphs 114 and 115 makes clear that new development proposals should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 4.15 Section 11: Making Effective Use of Land at Paragraph 124 states that planning decisions should promote the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.16 Paragraph 125 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused. It also states that decisions should 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.
- 4.17 Paragraph 84 states that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless certain circumstances apply, this includes where the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building.

Housing Land Supply and Housing Delivery Test

- 4.18 The Five Year Supply Statement from 2024 demonstrates a supply of 5.8 years supply against the requirements of the PfE housing figures, with a supply of 2,824 houses expected to be built in the next five years.

4.19 The nationally published Housing Delivery Test results for the district show a delivery of just 64% of expected houses over the previous three years, meaning that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged as the development plan is to be considered out of date.

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1 This section discusses the proposals against the development plan policies and material planning considerations to assess the principle of development and justify reasons why the application should be approved.
- 5.2 The previous consents at the site are wholly relevant to the consideration of this proposal as they provide fall back positions and demonstrate how the site can already be developed. This includes an existing planning consent across the whole site that allows for subdivision of the existing dwelling in the main Wood Mill building to four dwellings and an LDC for a Class E outbuilding in the curtilage of the property. This provides an overall increase of three dwellings across the site and an additional built footprint of residential use within the south western rear garden area of the property. The new proposal subject to this application also provides for an overall increase of three dwellings across the site and an additional footprint of residential use within the rear garden area of the property.
- 5.3 The existing buildings on the site are classed as previously developed land. The definition of previously developed land within the NPPF also states that the curtilage of such building also falls within the definition. Whilst the definition excludes land in built-up area such as residential gardens, planning case law has confirmed that this only refers to residential gardens in built-up area and not gardens in the rural green belt. As such, the garden curtilage areas of the dwelling are also considered previously developed land.
- 5.4 The Lawful Development Certificate on the south western garden area confirmed that the area was the garden of the property and demonstrate that new build residential development for a Class E building was permitted development, creating additional built floorspace for the dwelling.
- 5.5 The previous planning consent for the main building has accepted that the property is suitable for conversion from a single dwelling to four dwellings in this rural location within the green belt, and can provide suitable parking and manoeuvring space within the property.

- 5.6 During preparation for the subdivision of the property, further considerations had been given by the applicant to the division of space across the four properties which resulted in amendments being considered including the drafting of proposals for extensions to the main building. However, after careful consideration of these proposals, and review of the planning arguments within the green belt in relation to subdivision, extensions and new build, a proposal was developed to subdivide the main building to one fewer dwelling and instead build a new dwelling separate to the house in the garden area close to the existing summerhouse outbuilding and instead of the Class E outbuilding.
- 5.7 Given the potential dimensions of the Class E building and significant height of the summerhouse outbuilding, the proposal has been developed to now seek a modest new build dwelling that has a lower ridge height than the existing summerhouse, and be smaller in volume terms than the Class E building and summerhouse combined. The summerhouse will be demolished, which will improve the western boundary to the residential dwellings off Wood Road Lane, with the resultant new property effectively replacing an existing built structure away from those properties and at a reduced height. The new dwelling presents as a 1.5 storey dwelling that is clearly subservient to the main Wood Mill building.
- 5.8 The proposed new build dwelling in the garden of this rural green belt location is justified by the above considerations, and in planning policy terms would be supported to some degree by paragraphs 84 and paragraph 125 of the NPPF. Further to this, paragraphs 155d and 155g are also supportive of the proposals which represent both the replacement of the summerhouse building and perhaps most importantly can be defined as both limited infilling and the redevelopment of previously developed land within the green belt.
- 5.9 In addition, if the local planning authority do not accept these arguments, we would present an argument that as the Development Plan is out of date, due to the Housing Delivery Test

result, the land would also meet the definition as grey belt within the NPPF and could be therefore be justified as not inappropriate development under paragraph 155.

- 5.10 Due to the overall volume reduction on what has consent at the site and as the height of the new dwelling is lower than the existing outbuilding it replaces, any impact on the green belt would be minimal, and could be argued to be less impactful than what has consent, which retains the existing summerhouse building. Overall, we consider that the proposal is wholly consistent with local policy and national policy in the green belt, and given the fallback position of the existing consents, the proposal also represents a less impactful proposal in the green belt.

6. Summary

- 6.1 The application seeks planning consent for the subdivision of an existing large dwelling into three dwellings, plus the replacement of an existing summerhouse with a new building dwelling.
- 6.2 The increase of three dwellings on this site, which does lie outside of a settlement, has already been accepted by a previous consent. This statement and the Design and Access Statement submitted with the application details how the appellant has evolved the design of the scheme from that original consent, with a view to being policy compliant and making good use of the existing buildings and space at the site.
- 6.3 The NPPF and the development plan allow for the development proposed and we present a case that approving the proposal would allow for the current subdivision of the building to be completed with the additional works to complete the remainder of the development, creating an additional three dwellings to help meet the overall need for housing across the district.
- 6.4 The Design and Access Statement provide additional details regarding the applicants family arrangement which explain the rationale for the proposals, and whilst these are not relied upon to justify the proposals in policy terms, they do provide a clearer understanding of the approach to the development of the whole site and a willingness to complete once consent is given.



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