

PROPOSED SINGLE DWELLING
LAND TO NORTH OF 2 HOLLINS CLOSE,
UNSWORTH, BURY BL9 8AY

LANDSCAPE STATEMENT

Prepared by: **LEEMING ASSOCIATES LTD**

For: **CORNELL GROUP**

Job Number: 2501

Revision:

Date: 10.01.25

Status: ISSUE



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Jenny Gilmour I have a BA (Hons) in Landscape Design and a Diploma with Distinction in Landscape Architecture. I am a Chartered member of the Landscape Institute. Leeming Associates, established in 1996 in Darlington, Co Durham, is a landscape architecture consultancy that is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute.
- 1.2 In January 2025 Cornell Group commissioned Leeming Associates to prepare a Landscape Statement to support an outline planning application for a single dwelling on land to the north of 2 Hollins Close Unsworth, Bury BL9 8AX. This statement should be read in conjunction with information submitted under the Outline Planning Application reference 71178 (validated 18 September 2024).
- 1.3 The proposed site is a parcel of un-developed wasteland at the junction of Hollins Land and Hollins Close on the edge of Unsworth (total area 0.05 hectares) and is very narrow pocket of Green Belt land.

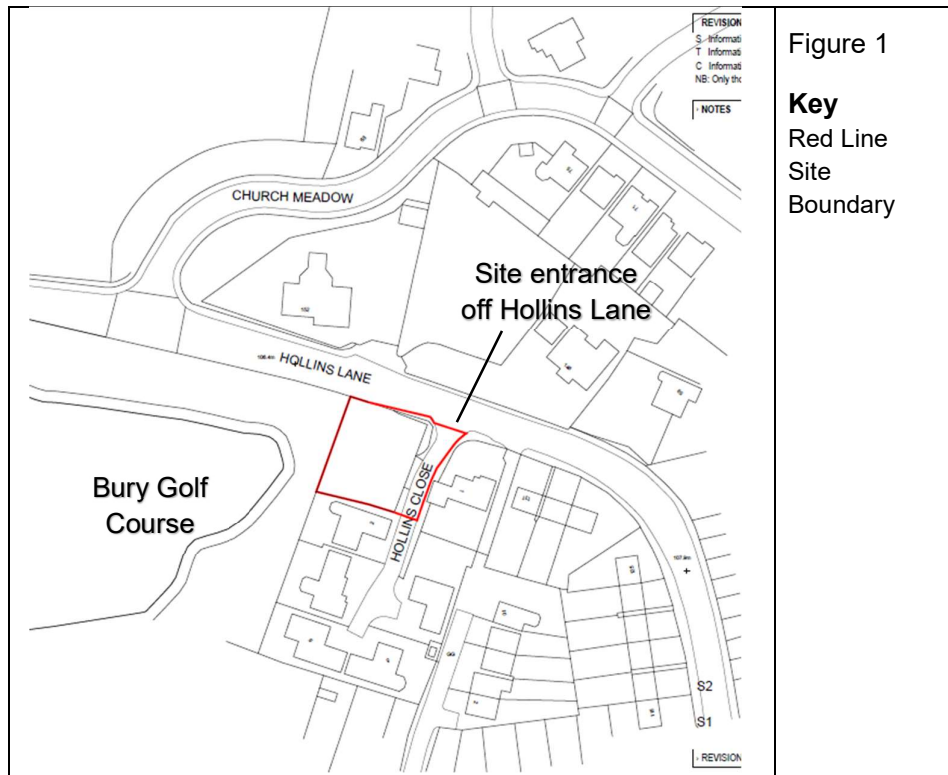


Figure 1

Key
Red Line
Site
Boundary

- 1.4 There are four items of discussion in this landscape statement which focus on principles set out in the following documents:
- Greater Manchester Landscape Character Study and Sensitivity Assessment LUC (2018) (LCSA)
 - Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document 2022 to 2039 (adopted March 2024)

- Bury Unitary Development Plan 2007 saved policies
- NPPF (December 2024) (Further updated guidance is expected January 2025).
- Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment LUC (2018)

1.5 Landscape issues that may conflict with potential development are:

1.	Would the proposed development have a negative impact on the local character of the area?
2.	Does the proposed development support local planning policy for development in this location without having a negative impact on landscape character?
3.	Does the proposed development compromise Green Belt Purposes (a), (b) and (c) of NPPF 2024 paragraph 143 in landscape terms in this area?
4.	Does the proposed development fall within the category of Grey Belt as defined in the NPPF (December 2024)?

2.0 Landscape Character

2.1 Greater Manchester Landscape Character Study and Sensitivity Assessment LUC (2018) (LCSA) identifies special qualities and key attributes in the landscape against which to rate the potential impact of 2-3 storey residential development to give a rating of low, medium or high sensitivity.

2.2 For landscape character assessment purposes the site and the wider local area only demonstrates a few of the key characteristics noted under Landscape Character Type '*Incised Urban Fringe Valleys*' in the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Study and Sensitivity Assessment. (Figures 2 and 3)

2.3 Landscape Character of the site
(Refer photographs and plans)

2.3.1 The site is a corner plot of un-managed grassland with a mature tree and native hedge adjacent to Hollins Lane. A low brick wall, unsightly scaffolding fences with mesh and an ornamental laurel hedge mark the east boundary.

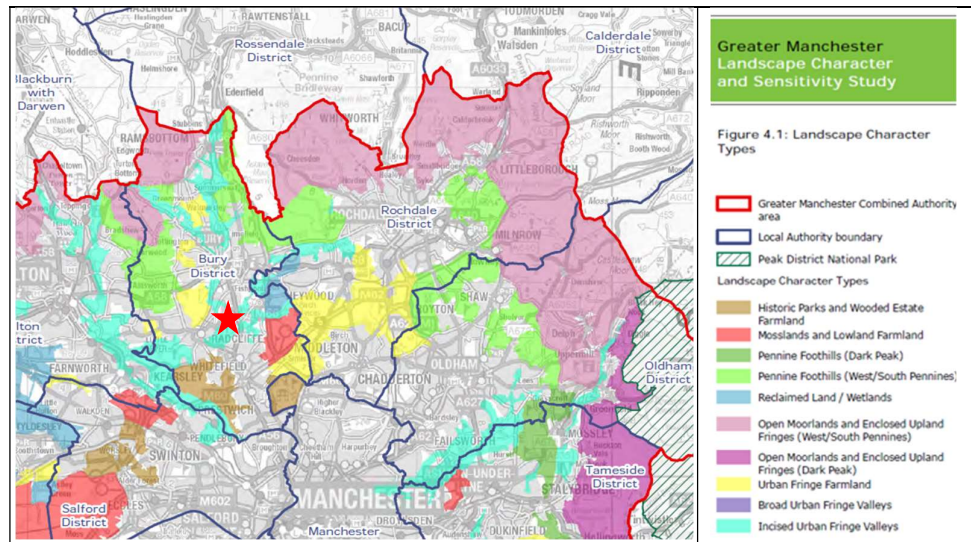


Figure 2 Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study Extract Figure 4.1 Landscape Character Types (LCT) (Site location denoted by star)

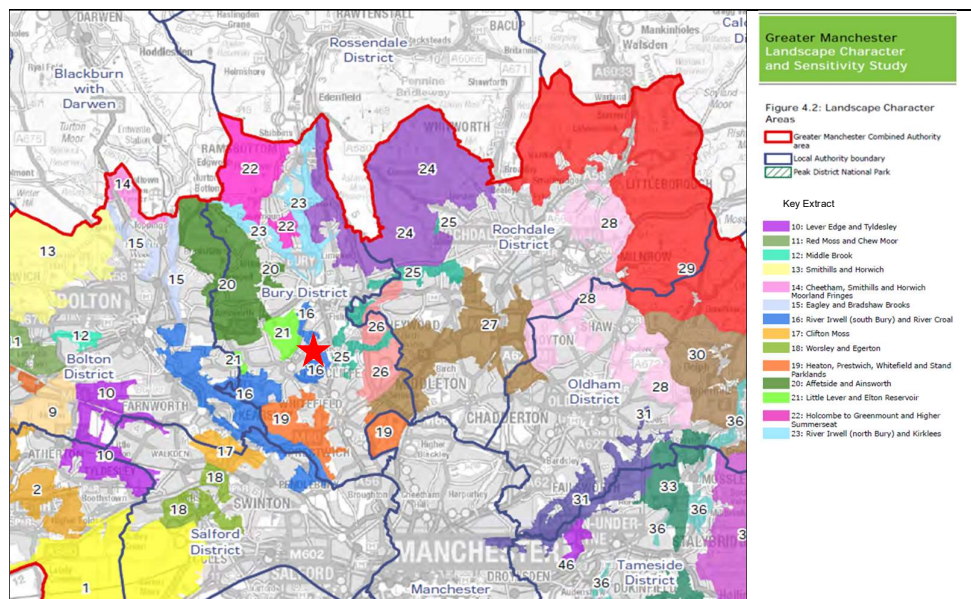


Figure 3 Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Study Extract Figure 4.2 Landscape Character Areas (LCA) (Site location denoted by star)

2.3.2 The site has the appearance of an un-developed building plot with a degraded and un-managed character. This contrasts to the overall strong character of Hollins Close which has a uniform layout of well-maintained, large red brick detached dwellings which sit within large garden plots. The site is adjacent to Bury Golf Course but contrasts in character to the greens and fairways and is physically fenced off along the west boundary.

2.3.3 The position of this parcel of land between the built-up edge of Unsworth and the golf course means it does not have a strong countryside character but rather a close affinity with the suburban character and layout of development on Hollins Close.

2.3.4

Conclusion – Landscape Character of the site

The character of the site would change from un-managed wasteland with a mature tree and hedgerows to a single dwelling within a generous garden plot. The scale and type of development would be appropriate in character, and would be in keeping with the other residential buildings on Hollins Close.

The site is currently degraded and poor quality but closely related both physically and visually with the Hollins Close residential development. A single dwelling on this plot would improve the character of the settlement edge on Hollins Lane and complete the layout of houses on Hollins Close.

2.4 Landscape Character of the area around the site

(Refer photographs, Bold highlight added by Leeming Associates)

2.4.1 The site is on the edge of development between the urban areas of Unsworth to the south and Hollins to the west. The built-up areas are contained by the major transport route of the M66 which physically and visually separates the area from the open countryside to the east. To the west Bury Golf Course and pockets of open land wrap around the areas of urban development. The River Roch, approximately 1km to the west of the site has limited influence on the topography around the site.

2.4.2 The area is included in the broad Local Character Type (LCT) 'Incised Urban Fringe Valleys' described in the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Study and Sensitivity Assessment (LUC 2018) (LCSA). The land-use of golf courses and infrastructure of the M66 motorway is very dominant and the area does not demonstrate many of the special landscape qualities and sensitive key attributes.

2.4.3 At a more local level the LCSA places the site in a distinct geographical Local Character Area LCA 16 River Irwell (south Bury) and River Croal and gives the LCA an overall landscape sensitivity rating of '*medium-high*' for potential development of 2-3 story residential dwellings. However, the local variation in landscape character (noted in the LCSA) reduces the sensitivity to '*medium*' due the fact that LCA16:

'contain[s] existing large development, such as...industrial complexes, as well as being crossed by motorways, such as the ..., M66... the surrounding urban areas also have a strong influence, detracting from the rural qualities and naturalistic character of the valleys.' (LCSA Overall assessment. Notes on variations)

Conclusion - Landscape Character of the area around the site
The landscape character <u>around the site</u> is degraded by a fragmented mix of sprawling settlements, mixed urban fringe land-uses, dominance of the Bury Golf Course and close proximity to the M66 motorway. This is recognised in the LCSA for Local Character Area LCA 16 where sensitivity to development is reduced to a medium level.

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 The Joint Places for Everyone (PfE) Development Plan Document was adopted by Bury Council in March 2024 and incorporates a number of saved policies from the Bury Unitary Development Plan (1997) policies. PfE landscape policies relevant to this statement are:

- PfE JP-P1 Sustainable Places
(replaced UDP policies EN1 Environment, ENV1/1 Visual Amenity and EN1/3 Landscaping Provision)
- PfE JP-G1 Landscape Character
(replaced UDP policy EN9 Landscape and policy EN9/1 Special Landscape Area)
- PfE JP-G7 Trees and Woodland
(replaced UDP policy EN8 Woodland and Trees)
- PfE JP-G9 The Green Belt
(replaced UDP policies OL1 Green Belt and OL1/1 Designation of Green Belt)
- Bury Unitary Development Plan 1997 Saved policy OL1/2
- New Buildings in the Green Belt

3.2 PfE JP-P1 Sustainable Places has the objective to make the region a 'beautiful and varied' place to live aiming that all development will achieve key attributes which include the following related to landscape :

- *Distinctive, with a clear identity that a. conserves and enhances the natural environment....c. Respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used*
- *Visually stimulating*
- *Safe, including by designing out crime*
- *Incorporating inclusive design within all spaces*
- *Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place*

- *Well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport*
- *Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure .. with....d. High quality landscaping with schemes*

- 3.3 PfE Policy JP-G1 Landscape Character refers to the special qualities and key characteristics identified in the Landscape Character Types defined in the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Study and Sensitivity Assessment (LUC 2018) (LCSA). (Refer Section 2)
- 3.4 PfE JP-G7 Trees and Woodland aims to '*significantly increase tree cover, protect and enhance woodland..*' and '*Where development would result in the loss of existing trees, requiring replacement ..of two new trees for each one lost, or other measures.....*'
- 3.5 PfE JP-G9 The Green Belt in addition to the NPPF 5 purposes of the Green Belt aims to increase the '*beneficial use of the Green Belt where this can be achieved without harm to its openness, permanence or ability to serve its five purposes.*
- 3.6 Bury UDP Saved Policy OL1/2 - New Buildings in the Green Belt aims to limit '*inappropriate development*' in the Green Belt with 4 exceptions which are not satisfied by the development proposals for this site. The justification states that the characteristics of '*potentially acceptable*' development includes:
- (development would) *have a low proportion of building area in relation to land area; or*
 - (development) *would not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt or be conspicuous from or within the Green Belt;*
- 3.6.1 Recent changes to NPPF suggest that proposed residential development which does not accord with the criteria of Policy OL1/2 may be permitted under NPPF guidance (December 2024) para 155 which gives the opportunity to develop grey belt land within the Green Belt provided the Green Belt purposes are not fundamentally compromised. (Refer Section 5)

3.7

Conclusion

PfE planning policy supports sustainable development that ensures that openness, permanence and function of the Green Belt is not compromised. Design of developments are encouraged to enhance the natural environment, respect the character and identity of the locality and protect or if necessary, compensate for any loss of existing trees.

The proposals for a single dwelling on this plot does not satisfy the criteria of an exception for New Building in the Green Belt under Bury UDP Saved Policies OL1/2 but may be permitted under NPPF para 155 guidance.

Compensation for removal of mature tree on the site to allow development would be required as part of the planning process.

4.0 Green Belt

(Bold highlight added by Leeming Associates)

4.1 The Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment LUC (2018) shows the extent of the Green Belt in 2018 within the 10 Great Manchester authorities. (Figure 4)

4.2 In the area around the site the Green Belt is formed from a number of fragmented pockets of open space located on the edge of Land Parcel BU35 which comprises Bury Golf Course and one large arable field. The land parcel separates the urban edges of Sunny Well above Whitefield to the south, Unsworth to the south- east and the small settlement of Hollins to the north-west (Figure 5).

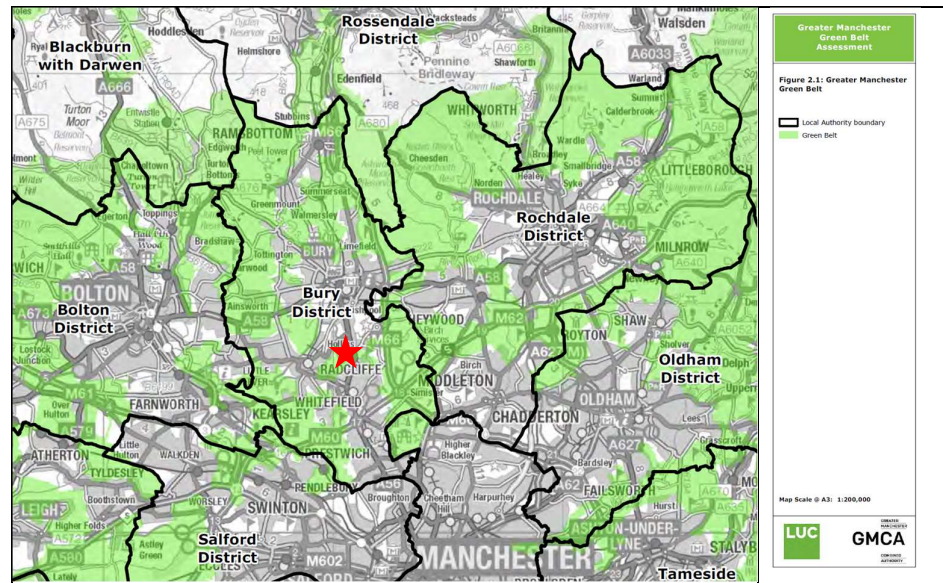


Figure 4 Green Belt plan extract from Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment Figure 2.1 (Site location denoted by star)

4.3 For the purposes of this landscape statement NPPF Purposes (a), (b) and (c) of the Green Belt (as stated in NPPF December 2024) are relevant.

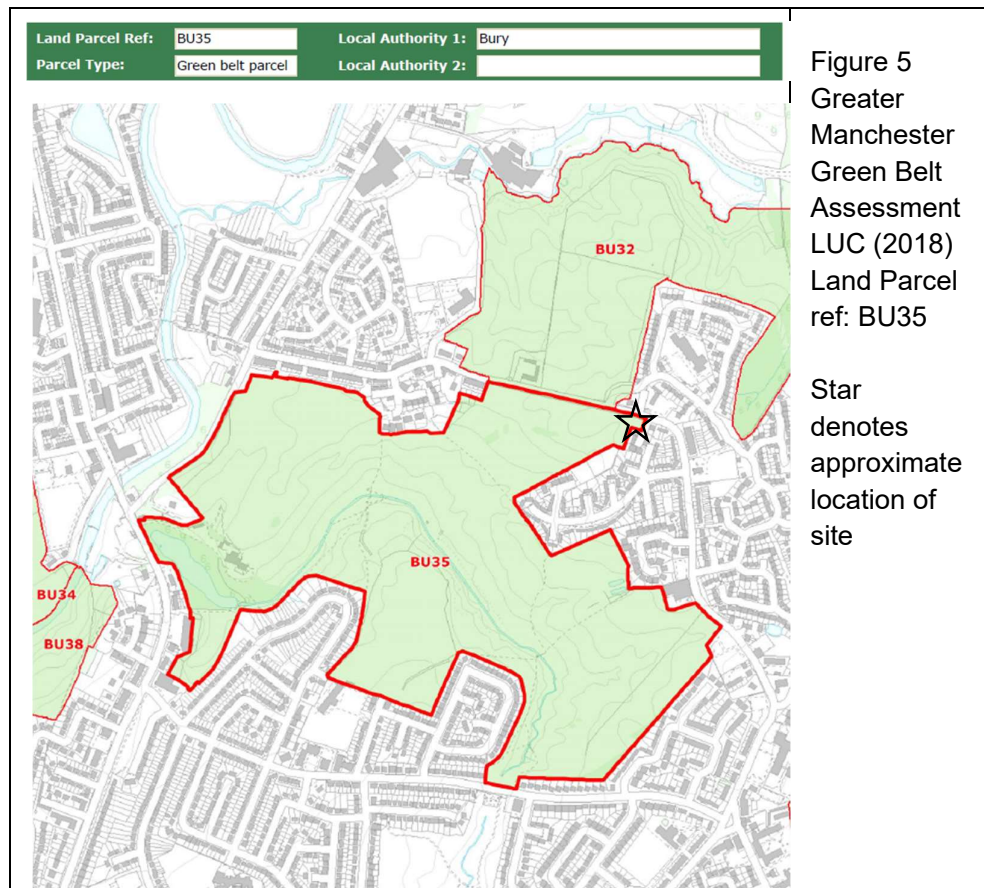
Paragraph 143. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

4.4 The LUC Green Belt Assessment, under NPPF Purpose (a) **to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas** looks at two specific questions for Land Parcel ref: BU35. (LUC Questions 1a and 1b)

4.4.1 *'Does the parcel exhibit evidence of existing urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?'* (LUC Question 1a). The LUC assessment rates Land Parcel BU35 as *'strong'* in fulfilling LUC Question 1a and notes that:

'There are few urbanising features within the parcel; development consists of the Bury Golf Course clubhouse, car parking and access. There is a strong sense of openness within the parcel because of the undulating golf course.'



4.4.2 *'Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?'* (LUC Question 2a). The LUC assessment rates Land Parcel BU35 as *'moderate'* in fulfilling LUC Question 1b and notes that:

'The parcel plays some role in inhibiting ribbon development south of Hollins Lane'

4.4.3

Conclusion for Green Belt NPPF Purpose (a) and LUC Questions 1a and 1b
In broad terms Land Parcel BU35 fulfils Purpose (a) across the whole area but the proposed site does not contribute to NPPF Purpose (a) or LUC Questions 1a or 1b.
1a The site is physically and visually associated with the C20th housing development on Hollins Close and does not contribute to urban sprawl or ribbon development along Hollins Lane. The site does not exhibit the same characteristics of openness as the golf course. (LUC Question 1a)
1b The site is an un-developed plot within the existing housing layout of Hollins Close. The role of checking unrestricted sprawl is fulfilled by the golf course and the site does not contribute to this function of the Green Belt in this location. (LUC Question 1b)

4.5 The LUC Green Belt Assessment, under NPPF Purpose **(b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another** rates Land Parcel BU35 as ‘*moderate*’ in fulfilling this purpose. The assessment specifically looks at the question:

*‘Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the **visual or physical gap** between neighbouring settlement?’* (LUC Question 2a)

The report notes that:

‘....Although there is a physical gap between settlements [Bury and Whitefields], a large degree of coalescence has occurred on both sides which is perceived within the parcel.’

4.5.1

Conclusion for Green Belt NPPF Purpose (b) and LUC Question 2a
In broad terms Land Parcel BU35 fulfils Purpose 2a and locally the golf course maintains the visual and physical gap between the local settlements of Hollins and Unsworth.
The site is a distinct parcel of land separated from the golf course by a close board boundary fence. The proposed development of a single dwelling would not compromise the function and NPPF Purpose (b) of the Green Belt in this location in preventing the merging of neighbouring settlements.

4.6 LUC Green Belt Assessment, under NPPF Purpose (c) **to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment** rates Land Parcel ref: BU35 as 'moderate' in fulfilling this purpose. The assessment specifically looks at the question:

'Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside? Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?' (LUC Question 3a)

The report notes that:

'The parcel has very little or no built development..... The parcel still displays some of the characteristics of the countryside despite..... urbanising influences.'

4.6.1

Conclusion for Green Belt NPPF Purpose (c) and LUC Question 3a
The site is not characteristic of the landscape in BU35 which is predominantly managed golf course with a strong urban fringe character. The site is un-developed wasteland, distinctly separated from the golf course and forms part of the urban fabric, closely aligned with the existing residential properties on Hollins Close. The site does not have any characteristics of the countryside (LUC Question 3a).
The development would not alter the character of the Green Belt in this location and Land Parcel BU35 would continue to fulfil NPPF Purpose (c).

5.0 Grey Belt

(Bold highlight by Leeming Associates)

5.1 NPPF (December 2024) Paragraph 155 Proposals affecting the Green Belt states that (extract):

*'The development of homes, commercial and other development 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 purposes** (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*

5.2 NPPF 2024 also includes a definition for Grey Belt in Annex 2 defined as:

*'For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, **does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d)** in paragraph 143.'*

(Note: Further updated guidance is expected in January 2025)

Conclusion Grey Belt designation NPPF December 2024

The site may be identified as Grey Belt under this guidance due to:

- The site does not fundamentally compromise the function of the Green Belt in Land Parcel BU35.
- The site does not contribute to the performance of NPPF Purpose (a) in restricting the sprawl of large built-up areas.
- The proposed development of a single dwelling would not compromise the function and NPPF Purpose (b) of the Green Belt in this location in preventing the merging of neighbouring settlements.
- The site has no connection, physical or visual with the setting of historic towns. (NPPF Purpose (d))

In addition in support of the residential development on the site:

- The site is currently wasteland, separate from the golf course physically and visually and closely associated with the existing dwellings on Hollins Close;
- The proposed house can be sensitively designed in the style of the existing C20th red brick houses on Hollins Lane, completing the existing layout and ensuring unity of the townscape character.
- The generous garden allows for 2-3 native trees and native hedgerows to be planted in compensation for vegetation removed from the site.
- It is a sustainable location with facilities and transport connections.

6.0 Summary

In response to the four key landscape issues the findings of this statement are:

6.1 Would the proposed development have a negative impact the local character of the area?

The character of the site would change from un-managed wasteland with a mature tree and hedgerows to a single dwelling within a generous garden plot. The scale and type of development would be appropriate in character and would be in keeping with the other residential buildings on Hollins Close. The development would improve the character of the settlement edge on Hollins Lane.

The landscape character around the site is degraded by a fragmented mix of sprawling settlements, mixed urban fringe land-uses, dominance of the Bury Golf Course and close proximity to the M66 motorway. This is recognised in the LCSA for Local Character Area LCA 16 where sensitivity to development is reduced to a medium level.

6.2 Does the proposed development support local planning policy for development in this location in a village without having a negative impact on the landscape character?

Assessment of the landscape character confirms that for a single dwelling in this location there would not be any change in the overall landscape character of the local area. Development would therefore support PfE and Bury UDP policies.

The proposals for a single dwelling on this plot does not satisfy the criteria of an exception for New Building in the Green Belt under Bury UDP Saved Policies OL1/2 but recent changes to NPPF suggest that proposed residential development which does not accord with the criteria of Policy OL1/2 may be permitted under NPPF guidance (December 2024) para 155.

Compensation for removal of a mature tree on the site to allow development would be required as part of the planning process.

6.3 Does the proposed development compromise the NPPF 2024 Purposes (a), (b) and (c) of the Green Belt in landscape terms in this area?

6.3.1 Green Belt NPPF Purpose **(a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas** is refined in LUC Green Belt Assessment to the questions '*Does the parcel exhibit evidence of existing urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?*' (LUC Question 1a) and '*Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?*' (LUC Question 2a).

In broad terms Land Parcel BU35 fulfils Purpose (a) across the whole area and the proposed site does not contribute to NPPF Purpose (a) or LUC Questions 1a or 1b. The site is an un-developed plot within the existing housing layout of Hollins Close and does not contribute to urban sprawl or ribbon development along Hollins Lane. The site does not exhibit the same characteristics of openness as the golf course which fulfils the role of checking unrestricted sprawl in this area of the Green Belt.

6.3.2 Green Belt NPPF Purpose **(b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another** is refined in LUC Green Belt Assessment to the question '*Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlement?*' (LUC Question 2a)

In broad terms Land Parcel BU35 fulfils Purpose 2a and locally the golf course maintains the visual and physical gap between the local settlements. The proposed development of a single dwelling, physically separated from the golf

course, does not compromise the Green Belt function of preventing the merging or erosion of the gap of neighbouring settlements.

- 6.3.3 Green Belt NPPF Purpose (c) ***to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*** is refined in the LUC Green Belt Assessment 2018 to the question: *‘Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside? Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?’* (LUC question 3a)

The site is not characteristic of the landscape in BU35 which is predominantly managed golf course with a strong urban fringe character. The site is a parcel of un-developed wasteland, distinctly separated from the golf course and forms part of the urban fabric, closely aligned with the existing residential properties on Hollins Close. The site does not have any characteristics of the countryside.

The development would not alter the characteristics of the Green Belt in this location and the Land Parcel BU35 would continue to fulfil NPPF Purpose (c).

- 6.4 Does the proposed development site fall within the category of Grey Belt as it is defined in NPPF (December 2024)?

The site may satisfy the NPPF 2024 definition of Grey Belt due to the fact that the site *‘does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143’*:

- The site does not fundamentally compromise the function of the Green Belt in Land Parcel BU35.
- The site does not contribute to the performance of NPPF Purpose (a) in restricting the sprawl of large built-up areas.
- The proposed development of a single dwelling would not compromise the function and NPPF Purpose (b) of the Green Belt in this location in preventing the merging of neighbouring settlements.
- The site has no connection, physical or visual with the setting of historic towns. (NPPF Purpose (d)
In addition in support of the residential development on the site:
- The site is currently wasteland, separate from the golf course physically and visually and closely associated with the existing dwellings on Hollins Close;
- The proposed house can be sensitively designed in the style of the existing C20th red brick houses on Hollins Lane, completing the existing layout and ensuring unity of the townscape character.

- The generous garden allows for 2-3 native trees and native hedgerows to be planted in compensation for vegetation removed from the site.
- It is a sustainable location with facilities and transport connections.

7.0 Conclusion

This landscape statement concludes a favourable response to the four identified landscape issues; these landscape issues should not present a barrier to development subject to local authority application and interpretation.

1	Negative impact on the local character of the area	No	No negative impact
2	Support for local planning policy for development in this location.	Yes	Subject to sensitive, layout and design etc on the site.
3	Compromise NPPF 2024 Purposes (a), (b) and (c) the Green Belt	No	Subject to local authority interpretation and application.
4	Categorised as Grey Belt as defined in the NPPF (Dec 2024)	Yes	Subject to local authority interpretation and application.

8.0 Recommendations

The outline or full planning application may require the following actions:

- a) Review of NPPF guidance due to be issued January 2025
- b) Prepare a Landscape Plan based on architect's layout and input from specialist consultants including arboriculture, ecology and hydrology/ drainage. The LPA may want this plan to be a detailed scheme of planting, boundaries treatments, hardworks including compensation of tree and hedgerows.

9.0 Site photographs of the site

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



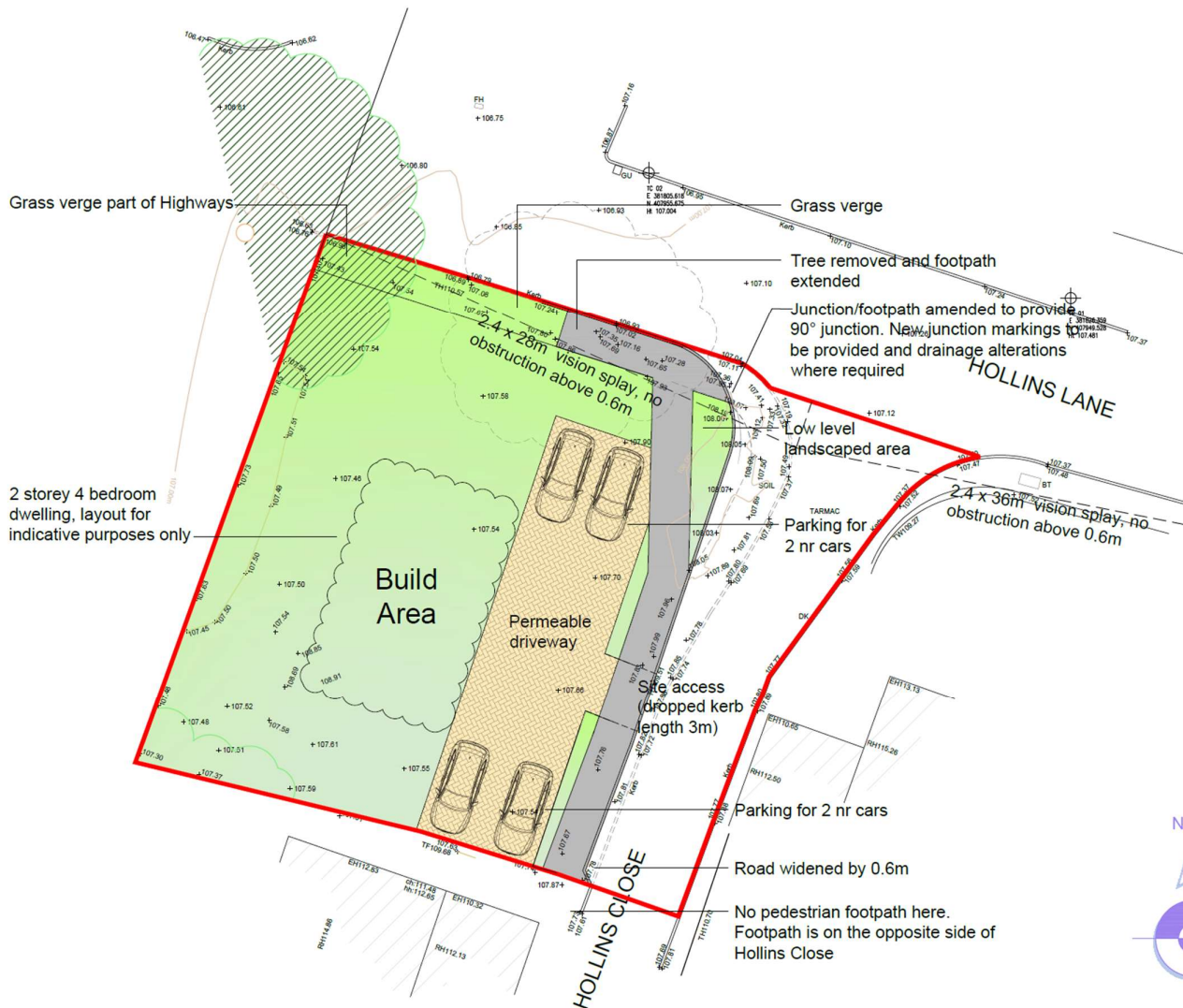
6.



7.



8.



- IMPORTANT	
- © This drawing is copyright and remains the property of this practice	
- Do not scale this drawing	
- All dimensions to be checked on site	
- Positions of existing services to be confirmed prior to proceeding	
REVISION STATUS	
S	Information issued for feasibility or scheme design.
T	Information issued for tender purposes only.
C	Information issued for Construction.
NB: Only those drawings containing a C revision to be used for construction.	
- NOTES	

S8	26.03.24	Kerline on Hollins Close amended
S7	24.10.23	General updates following comments from Highways
S6	18.10.23	Access and footpath at junction amended
S5	05.10.23	Tree removed and footpath extended
S4	18.09.23	Updated following comments from planning officer
S3	24.07.23	Updated following comments from planning officer
S2	19.05.23	Amended to match red edge on location plan
S1	14.12.22	Vision splay added
REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION

CLIENT
Cornell Group

PROJECT
Proposed Two Storey Dwelling
Land on Corner of Hollins Lane & Hollins Close

DRAWING TITLE
Proposed Site Plan
Layout For Indicative Purposes Only

SCALE 1:200@A3	DATE Feb '21	DRAWN PRH	CHECKED PRH
-------------------	-----------------	--------------	----------------

DRG NO. EAD_121_04	REVISION S8
-----------------------	----------------

Evolve Architectural Design Ltd
2 St Matthews School House
Stanhill Lane
Cheadle/Didsley
Accrington
Lancashire BB5 4PZ
T 01254 469702
M 07957 592102
E paul@evolvead.co.uk
www.evolvead.co.uk

