

Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd

PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposal: Permission in Principle for up to 5 Dwellings

Site Address: Land at Orkney Close, Radcliffe, Bury, M26 2WR

Prepared by: Simon Plowman MA MRTPI, Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd

Date: February 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Statement

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd on behalf of BCR Estates Limited in support of a Permission in Principle (PiP) application for residential development comprising up to 5 dwellings on land at Orkney Close, Radcliffe, Bury.

Permission in Principle was introduced by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and provides a two-stage consent route for minor residential development. At this stage, only the location, land use, and amount of development are considered. Technical details relating to design, scale, appearance, access, and landscaping are addressed at the subsequent Technical Details Consent (TDC) stage. This approach is appropriate for this site as it allows the principle to be assessed alone.

Site and Context

The application site is located at land fronting Orkney Close to the rear of 77 Bury Road, Radcliffe, and extends to approximately 995 square metres. The site is currently vacant. The Metrolink line forms the western boundary of the site. Residential properties lie to the north and south, and 77 Bury Road lies to the east. Orkney Close is a residential cul-de-sac providing the primary means of access to the site.

The site is within the urban area of Radcliffe and is within close proximity to Radcliffe Metrolink station and bus routes along Bury Road. The character of the surrounding area is residential.

Supporting Documents

This statement should be read alongside the following documents:

- Location Plan (3443:01)
 - Indicative Proposed Site Plan (3443:10 Rev F)
 - Addendum Coal Mining Risk Assessment (LK Consult, LKC251286-LR1, February 2026)
 - Flood Risk Assessment (LK Consult, reference FRA21 1134, August 2021) and LKC Flood Risk Update Letter (Colin Crompton, LK Group, 24 February 2026)
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2. PLANNING HISTORY

Application Site and Adjacent Land – Summary

The application site and the immediately adjacent land at 77 Bury Road have a substantive planning history. The following applications are the most relevant to this proposal.

Application 50596 – Outline permission for the erection of a two/three storey care home at 77 Bury Road – Approved with conditions 24 December 2008.

Application 59984 – Outline permission for the demolition of the existing care home and erection of up to 13 dwellings at 77 Bury Road – Approved with conditions 20 December 2017. This approval is a significant material precedent. It establishes that residential development on land in this immediate context is acceptable in principle and that the site and surroundings are capable of accommodating residential uses. Whilst that approval related to a larger combined site including the curtilage of 77 Bury Road, its existence demonstrates the Council's acceptance of the principle of residential development in this location.

Application 66519 – Erection of a 23-bed care home facility on land fronting Orkney Close and 77 Bury Road – Refused 19 December 2023. This application was refused on seven grounds, all of which related to the detail and appropriateness of the specific care home proposal rather than the principle of development on this land. The reasons for refusal were: overdominant design; insufficient information regarding bin storage and parking for the adjacent care home; harm to trees on the Metrolink embankment; failure to provide a sequential test in relation to flood risk (the care home, as a more vulnerable use, required a sequential test to be submitted); insufficient highways information; inadequate parking provision for a care home; and failure to demonstrate accessibility for all in relation to the care home use.

The officer's report confirmed that the principle of development on the application site was acceptable under Policy CF1/1 of the UDP and Policy H4/2. The refusals were matters of detail relating to the specific care home scheme rather than any objection in principle to development on this land.

The current proposal for 5 residential dwellings is a fundamentally different type of development from the refused care home. The key distinctions that address the previous reasons for refusal are as follows.

Residential dwellings are classified as 'less vulnerable' development under the PPG Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification. Unlike a care home (which is 'more vulnerable'), residential development where the development area is within Flood Zone 1 does not require a sequential test or exception test. This directly addresses reason 4 of the previous refusal. LK Consult have confirmed that the edges of the site being are in flood zone 2 but that the proposed development area remains within Flood Zone 1, in both the current and future climate change flooding scenarios, removing the sequential test requirement entirely.

The residential use does not require servicing arrangements, disabled access standards, or parking provision that are specific to a care home. The previous reasons relating to

accessibility (reason 7), servicing and parking for the adjacent care home (reasons 2 and 6), and care home-specific access standards no longer arise.

The proposed dwellings would be consistent in scale and with the surrounding residential character, avoiding the dominant three-storey care home form that gave rise to reason 1.

The layout has been specifically designed with recourse to the trees on the Metrolink embankment, ensuring no harm to their root zones, addressing reason 3.

The proposed site layout would include 2.4 metre by 25 metre visibility splays at the junction of the new vehicular access with Orkney Close, addressing the highways information deficiencies in reason 5.

In summary, this application is fundamentally different to the previous reasons for refusal.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks Permission in Principle for residential development (Use Class C3) comprising up to 5 dwellings. At this stage, only the location, land use, and amount of development are for determination. Technical matters of design, scale, layout, appearance, landscaping, and detailed access arrangements will be addressed at the Technical Details Consent stage.

Whilst not for determination at this stage, indicative plans have been submitted to demonstrate that up to 5 dwellings can be accommodated on the site without harm to the Metrolink embankment trees or the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, and that the site can be accessed safely from Orkney Close. The indicative layout shows family houses with parking provision and gardens appropriate to the character of the area. The site plan (drawing 3443:10 Rev F) shows the proposed dwellings located clear of the mine shaft easement and mineshaft zone of influence, with the layout designed with full recourse to the LK Consult coal mining risk assessment.

The new vehicular access would be taken from Orkney Close with 2.4 metre by 25 metre visibility splays as required by the Council's highway engineers.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Legislative Framework

Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024)

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with the

development plan without delay and, where the plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development under paragraph 11(d) – commonly referred to as the 'tilted balance' – applies where the housing land supply is less than five years or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates delivery is substantially below requirements. As set out in Section 5 below, both triggers apply in Bury. The tilted balance therefore applies to this application.

Chapter 5 of the NPPF (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) requires local planning authorities to significantly boost the supply of homes. Paragraph 62 requires that local planning authorities identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites. Paragraph 76 confirms that where the tilted balance applies, the adverse impacts of refusing development must significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Development Plan

The statutory development plan comprises the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP, 1997) and the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan (adopted March 2024). The relevant UDP policies for a residential Permission in Principle application of this nature are as follows.

Policy H1/2 (Further Housing Development) establishes the general principle that further housing development will be permitted where it is consistent with the strategy and in appropriate locations. The site lies within the urban area of Radcliffe, within a residential context, and is therefore appropriate in principle.

Policy H2/1 (Form of New Residential Development) and Policy H2/2 (Layout of New Residential Development) address design and layout matters. Whilst these are primarily matters for the TDC stage, the indicative proposals demonstrate that 5 dwellings can be accommodated in a form consistent with the surrounding residential character.

Policy EN5/1 (New Development and Flood Risk) requires that development is not at risk of flooding and does not increase flood risk elsewhere. The Flood Risk Assessment prepared by LK Consult (reference FRA21 1134, August 2021) confirms that whilst the site boundaries touch Flood Zone 2, the proposed development area is within Flood Zone 1 in both the current and future climate change scenarios. Residential dwellings are 'less vulnerable' development under the PPG Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification. Less vulnerable development in Flood Zone 1 does not require a sequential test or exception test. Policy EN5/1 is satisfied. A full updated Flood Risk Assessment will be provided at the Technical Details Consent stage.

Policy EN8 (Woodland and Trees) requires that existing trees that are to be retained are protected during development. The indicative site layout demonstrates that the dwellings are positioned clear of the root protection areas of the trees on the Metrolink embankment.

Detailed tree protection measures can be secured by condition at TDC stage. A BNG metric and 10% uplift of biodiversity would be provided at the Technical Details stage.

Policies HT2/4 (Car Parking) and HT4 (New Development) require adequate parking and safe highway access. The indicative layout provides parking in accordance with SPD11 and incorporates appropriate visibility splays at the access junction with Orkney Close. Detailed highway matters will be addressed at TDC stage.

The PfE Joint Development Plan supports sustainable housing delivery across Greater Manchester. Policy JP-H 1 establishes that the 10 Greater Manchester authorities will work collectively to ensure sufficient housing is delivered. Policy JP-H 2 sets out that authorities will make provision for housing on a range of sites in accessible locations. The application site, in an established residential area of Radcliffe with good access to public transport and services, accords with these strategic housing policies.

5. HOUSING LAND SUPPLY AND DELIVERY IN BURY

Housing Delivery Test

The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) measures the number of homes delivered in a local authority area against the homes required. Where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement, the presumption in favour of sustainable development under NPPF paragraph 11(d) applies as the default position, and a 20% buffer must be added to the five-year housing land supply requirement.

Bury Council's HDT result remains below 75%. This means that the tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged. Accordingly, planning permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

There are no NPPF policies indicating that development should be restricted on this site. The site is not in the Green Belt, not within a flood risk area requiring a sequential test, not adjacent to a designated heritage asset, and not within an AONB or National Park. There are no footnote 7 policies providing a reason to restrict development. The tilted balance therefore applies with full force.

Housing Land Supply

Bury Council has reported a five-year housing land supply of 5.8 years as of March 2025. Whilst this marginally exceeds the five-year requirement, the tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) continues to apply by virtue of the HDT result falling below 75%. The Council's five-year supply position does not extinguish the HDT trigger.

Furthermore, the PfE Joint Development Plan identifies a significant housing requirement across Greater Manchester. Bury's contribution to addressing that requirement depends on the consistent delivery of housing on suitable urban sites. Small residential sites in sustainable

locations make a meaningful contribution to annual delivery figures and should be supported accordingly.

The delivery of up to 5 family homes on a vacant urban site in Radcliffe addresses demonstrable housing need within Bury. The benefits of this proposal include the delivery of housing that directly contributes to addressing Bury's HDT failure, the efficient use of a vacant urban plot within an established residential area, economic benefits through construction employment and future resident expenditure, and a visual improvement to a long-vacant and overgrown site.

Under the tilted balance, these benefits must be weighed against any adverse impacts. As the following sections demonstrate, no significant adverse impacts arise from this proposal. The tilted balance weighs decisively in favour of granting Permission in Principle.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

The application site lies within the established urban area of Radcliffe. It is surrounded by residential uses on all sides save for the Metrolink line to the west. The principle of residential development in this location is clearly established by the outline approval for 13 dwellings on the wider land at 77 Bury Road (application 59984, approved 2017). That approval, granted on land immediately adjacent and in the same residential context, is a highly material precedent supporting the principle of residential development here.

The Council's officer report on application 66519 confirmed that development on this land was acceptable in principle. The refusal grounds were all matters of detail relating to the specific care home scheme. No issue with the principle of development was identified.

The site is sustainably located. Radcliffe town centre, with its retail, service, and community facilities, is within comfortable walking distance. Bury Road, immediately adjacent, is a primary bus corridor providing frequent services to Bury and Manchester. The Metrolink East Manchester and Bury line is accessible from Radcliffe tram stop, within approximately 400 metres of the site. Local schools and health facilities are within walking distance. The site is an inherently sustainable location for residential development in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11 and Chapter 9.

Flood Risk

The flood risk position for this site has been assessed by LK Consult Ltd (LKC), who previously prepared a Flood Risk Assessment for the site in August 2021 (reference FRA21 1134). At that time, LKC identified that the majority of the site lay within Flood Zone 1 with the site boundaries touching Flood Zone 2. Following an update to the Environment Agency flood mapping in March 2025, LKC have confirmed that this position remains broadly unchanged: the SW, NW and NE boundaries of the site remain within Flood Zone 2, but critically the proposed development area itself remains within Flood Zone 1 in both the current epoch and the future climate change flooding scenarios. The flooding is associated with Crow Trees Farm

Brook. LKC confirm that the site should not be impacted by flooding during the climate change scenario and that access and egress to the site is available with a Low Hazard classification along nearby highways.

Residential dwellings are classified as 'less vulnerable' development under Table 2 of the PPG Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification. Less vulnerable development in Flood Zone 1 is appropriate and requires neither a sequential test nor an exception test. Policy EN5/1 of the UDP and the sequential approach in NPPF Chapter 14 are therefore fully satisfied.

This directly addresses reason 4 of the previous care home refusal, which arose because care homes are classified as 'more vulnerable' development and required a sequential test that was not submitted. That issue does not arise in respect of residential development where the development area is confirmed to be within Flood Zone 1. Following the grant of Permission in Principle, LKC propose to request new modelling data from the Environment Agency to confirm the current flood zone position and obtain more detailed floodplain levels around the site. This will inform the preparation of an updated Flood Risk Assessment to accompany the Technical Details Consent application, which will also address finished floor levels and access and egress requirements for the proposed dwellings in accordance with NPPF Chapter 14 and the PPG.

Coal Mining

The application site falls within a Coal Mining Development High Risk Area. There is a recorded mineshaft within the site (Coal Authority reference 378407-008) with an associated zone of influence and easement.

LK Consult Ltd has provided a Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) (ref. LKC 20 1743-01, October 2020) and an Addendum Coal Mining Assessment (ref. LKC251286-LR1, February 2026) specifically prepared to support this Permission in Principle application. The addendum confirms that the indicative site layout for 5 dwellings has been designed with full recourse to the mineshaft and its potential zone of influence. The mitigation measures proposed – comprising proof grouting as required and piled foundations taken below the level of the mineshaft's zone of influence – are the same measures that were reviewed and accepted by the Coal Authority in respect of the previous care home application (66519).

The Coal Authority had no objection to the previous development on this site, subject to a pre-occupation condition requiring confirmation by a suitably competent person that the site has been made safe. LK Consult confirm that the same condition approach is appropriate for the current residential scheme and that there is sufficient information to support this Permission in Principle application.

Trees and Metrolink Embankment

The previous care home refusal included a reason (reason 3) that the proposed building, by reason of its size and siting, would result in a threat to the wellbeing of trees on the Metrolink embankment, with consequential risk to the stability of the embankment and the safe running of the Metrolink line.

The indicative layout for the 5 residential dwellings has been specifically designed to demonstrate this issue is avoided. In addition, the Metrolink is on the same ground level as the site, it is not raised or below the site level. The two-storey dwellings are positioned with appropriate separation from the Metrolink boundary and the tree root protection areas on the boundary. The scale of the proposed dwellings is significantly less than the three-storey care home. Detailed tree protection measures, including an arboricultural impact assessment and tree protection plan, will be provided at the TDC stage.

Highways

The indicative site plan demonstrates that vehicular access to the site can be taken from Orkney Close with 2.4 metre by 25 metre visibility splays provided at the access junction, in accordance with the requirements identified by the Council's highways engineers in the previous application. The new access arrangement, swept path analysis, pedestrian access provision, and parking layout will be confirmed in detail at the TDC stage.

Five dwellings would generate a modest level of vehicle movements, broadly comparable to the existing residential properties on Orkney Close, and would not give rise to material highway safety concerns.

Residential Amenity

The officer report on application 66519 confirmed that the previous care home development would achieve adequate separation distances from the surrounding residential properties, with all key interfaces exceeding the relevant SPD6 standards. The proposed residential dwellings, being of comparable or lesser scale to the care home, would similarly achieve adequate separation distances. Detailed assessment of amenity impacts will be addressed at the TDC stage.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The previous application established that no protected species are present on the site. The site has the potential for nesting birds. Appropriate measures including avoidance of vegetation clearance during the nesting season, unless under supervision of a qualified ecologist, and biodiversity net gain enhancements will be addressed at the TDC stage. A minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain will be delivered in accordance with the statutory requirement.

7. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

The application site is a vacant urban plot within the established residential area of Radcliffe. The principle of residential development on this land is firmly supported by the outline planning approval for 13 dwellings on the adjacent land at 77 Bury Road (application 59984) and by the Council's own acknowledgement in the application 66519 officer report that the principle of development on the site is acceptable.

The proposal for 5 dwellings is a significant reduction in scale from both the previously approved 13-unit outline scheme and the refused 23-bed care home, making it inherently easier to accommodate without harm to the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Each of the previous reasons for refusal on application 66519 has been specifically addressed. The flood risk position is resolved by the FZ1 confirmation in the Flood Risk Assessment and by the fact that residential use does not require a sequential test. The coal mining issue is addressed by the LK Consult addendum. The tree and Metrolink concern is addressed by the revised layout. The highways deficiencies are addressed by the provision of proper visibility splays in the indicative layout. The care home-specific issues of accessibility, bin storage, and care home parking no longer arise.

Bury's HDT result below 75% engages the tilted balance under NPPF paragraph 11(d). This requires permission to be granted unless adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The benefits of this proposal are the delivery of 5 family homes in a sustainable urban location, efficient use of a vacant brownfield site, visual enhancement of a long-neglected plot, and a modest contribution to Bury's housing delivery. No significant adverse impacts have been identified. The tilted balance weighs decisively in favour of the proposal.

For all the reasons set out in this statement, it is respectfully requested that Permission in Principle be granted for residential development comprising 5 dwellings on land at Orkney Close, Radcliffe. The proposed development accords with the development plan, is consistent with national policy, addresses the previous reasons for refusal, is in a sustainable location, causes no significant adverse impacts, and benefits from the tilted balance. Permission in Principle should be granted.