

Planning & Design and Access Statement

Proposal: Change of Use to Car Storage Yard

Site: Former Bury Fire Station, The Rock, Bury, BL9 0NJ

Date: October 2025

Site Area: 4,525.7 sqm

Existing Floor Space: 0 sqm

Demolition Loss: 0 sqm

Loss of floor space: 0 sqm

Proposed Floor Space: 0 sqm

1. Introduction

This combined Planning Statement and Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use of land at the former Bury Fire Station (*sui generis*) to a vehicle storage yard (*sui generis*).

The statement sets out the site's planning history, the design rationale, and an assessment of the proposal against relevant national and local planning policies. It demonstrates that the proposed development is appropriate, sustainable, and consistent with the planning framework for the area.

2. Site Description and Context

The application site is located at The Rock, Bury, BL9 0NJ, on land previously occupied by the Bury Fire Station. The fire station buildings have now been demolished, and the site comprises a cleared, level area of hardstanding enclosed by boundary walls and fencing.

The surrounding area is mixed-use, including commercial premises, light industrial units, and residential properties. The site benefits from existing vehicular and pedestrian access points from the public highway that were historically used by the fire service. These are to be retained without alteration.

There are no trees, hedgerows, or landscape features of ecological value within the site boundary.

3. Planning History and Background

The planning and operational history of the site is summarised as follows:

- July 2012: The fire station was vacated when Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service relocated to a new facility at Chamberhall Business Park.
- August 2012: Bury Council acquired the former fire station site from GMFRS.
- 2014: Planning permission for demolition of the fire station was granted (recorded in local and council reports).
- June 2020: Demolition and site clearance commenced; the site was left as cleared hardstanding.

- 30 June 2021: The Council's Cabinet approved the disposal of the cleared site under its *Accelerated Land and Property Disposals Programme*, confirming demolition had been completed in 2020.

The site is therefore previously developed (brownfield) land that is currently vacant and underutilised.

4. The Proposed Development

The application proposes to change the use of the cleared site to a vehicle storage yard, providing approximately 156 car storage spaces.

Key features:

- The site will be used solely for storage of vehicles (not retail or mechanical operations).
- No new buildings or structures are proposed.
- Existing boundary walls and fencing will be retained.
- Existing vehicular and pedestrian access points will remain unchanged.
- No new public roads or rights of way are proposed or affected.
- Surface water drainage will remain as existing — no new connections or alterations are required.

The proposed development represents a low-impact, reversible use of the site that makes productive use of previously developed land while maintaining its existing form and character.

5. Access and Movement

- Vehicular Access - The existing access point from the public highway will be retained and reused. No new or altered vehicular access is proposed.
- Pedestrian Access - Occasional access for staff or maintenance will occur via existing access points. No new or altered access is proposed.
- Public Rights of Way - There are no public rights of way within or adjacent to the site, and none are affected by the proposal.
- Traffic and Highway Impact - The proposed use as a storage yard will generate minimal vehicle movements, significantly less than the site's former operational use as a fire station. The development will not adversely affect the local highway network or road safety.
- Two number staff parking spaces are proposed and a single visitor space.

6. Layout, Appearance, and Design

The proposed site layout will accommodate up to 156 vehicles, organised in efficient rows across the existing hardstanding.

- No permanent buildings are proposed.
- The existing boundary treatments will be retained to maintain site security and visual containment.
- No signage or new surfacing works are required beyond potential surface marking.

- No alteration or addition to any existing lighting is proposed.

The proposal is inherently low-visibility and will have no adverse visual impact on the surrounding area.

7. Landscaping, Ecology, and Biodiversity

The proposed change of use will not impact any existing habitat or priority species.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Exemption

The development is exempt from the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements under the Biodiversity Gain (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, as it:

- Does not affect any priority habitat, and
- Impacts less than 25 m² (5 m × 5 m) of on-site habitat.

Accordingly, the proposal fully complies with BNG exemption criteria.

8. Drainage and Utilities

No new drainage works are proposed. Surface water will continue to drain as per existing arrangements.

Given the absence of new impermeable surfaces or structures, the proposal will not increase flood risk or affect surface water run-off.

9. Lighting and Security

No new lighting is proposed.

10. Planning Policy Assessment

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

The proposal aligns with key NPPF objectives:

- Efficient use of land: The reuse of previously developed land supports sustainable development principles.
- Economic support: The scheme provides secure vehicle storage that supports local business activity.
- Environmental protection: The proposal does not harm biodiversity, heritage, or local amenity.

Bury Local Plan and Core Strategy

While the emerging Bury Local Plan continues to evolve, relevant policies from the adopted Core Strategy (2011–2031) apply. The proposal aligns with:

- Policy SD1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development: Supporting reuse of brownfield land.
- Policy EC1 – Employment generating development: Facilitating low-impact, job-supporting uses.
- Policy EN1 – Built environment: Maintaining character and avoiding visual harm.
- Policy EN5 – Flood risk and drainage: No adverse impact on local drainage.
- Policy EN6 – Conservation of the natural environment: No adverse ecological impact.

The proposed development complies with these policies and contributes positively to the sustainable use of land.

11. Conclusion

The proposed change of use to a car storage yard at the Former Bury Fire Station, The Rock, Bury, BL9 0NJ represents a sustainable, appropriate, and low-impact reuse of a cleared brownfield site.

In summary:

- The site was cleared following demolition in 2020, with no remaining buildings.
- The existing access and boundaries are retained and unchanged.
- The proposal creates 156 car storage spaces without introducing new structures or infrastructure.
- There is no adverse impact on biodiversity, drainage, or local amenity.
- The development complies with national and local planning policy and contributes to the productive reuse of vacant land.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in planning terms and is respectfully submitted for approval.