

Design and Access Statement

Conversion of Existing Barn to a Contemporary Single-Storey Two-Bedroom Dwelling
Land adjacent Three Gates Farm, Turton Road, Tottington, Bury. BL8 3QG



1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the **conversion of an existing agricultural type barn** at land adjacent **Three Gates Farm, Turton Road, Tottington**, to form a **contemporary single-storey two-bedroom dwelling**. Associated **car parking, cycle spaces and refuse storage** are proposed within an **adjoining existing barn/outbuilding**.

The statement explains the design rationale and access arrangements for the proposal and demonstrates how the development responds appropriately to its rural context, Green Belt designation, and relevant national and local planning policy.

The dwelling will be occupied by family members of the owners of Three Gates Farm who are relocating from their current home in the Hebrides to assist with the running of the family business.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site forms part of Three Gates Farm, located along Turton Road, Tottington, within a rural setting characterised by open countryside, agricultural land, and a dispersed pattern of farm buildings.

The building is of traditional agricultural form and scale and forms part of an established group of farm structures. The site is remote in nature and well contained within the surrounding landscape, with limited visibility from public vantage points. Existing access arrangements serve the wider farmstead.

A public footpath (Ref: **16TOT**) passes through part of the farm and along the existing access road.

3. Design Principles

Use

The proposal involves the conversion of an existing agricultural type building to residential use. This represents a sustainable reuse of a redundant rural building and avoids the need for new-build development within the countryside and Green Belt.

Amount

The development comprises a single dwelling containing two bedrooms. All accommodation is contained entirely within the existing barn envelope, with **no increase in footprint, volume, or built form**.

Layout

The internal layout has been designed in accordance with best practice for barn conversions, responding directly to the existing structural form of the building. The accommodation will include a **Kitchen/Dining Room, Living Room, two bedrooms**, and a **shared Bathroom**, all arranged at ground floor level.

The layout is simple and legible, maximising natural light while maintaining a clear separation between living and sleeping areas. The single-storey arrangement ensures ease of movement throughout the dwelling and supports inclusive access.

Car parking is provided within an adjoining barn and to the side of the building to existing hardstanding, ensuring vehicles are accommodated discreetly and minimising the introduction of visually intrusive external parking or hardstanding.

Scale

The proposal retains the existing scale of the barn in full. There are no changes proposed to the footprint, ridge height, roof pitch, or overall massing. Retaining the established form ensures the development sits comfortably within its rural setting and preserves the agricultural character of the building.

Appearance

The external appearance of the barn will retain its agricultural identity, with a restrained design approach consistent with high-quality rural barn conversions. While a number of additional window openings are proposed to provide adequate natural light and a high-quality living environment, these openings are carefully positioned and proportioned to respect the existing building fabric.

The site is remote and well screened, and the proposed openings will **not be visible from any public vantage points**, including public highways or public rights of way. As such, the additional openings will not result in any material harm to the character or appearance of the building or its surroundings.

Contemporary detailing will be subtle and recessive, ensuring the building continues to read clearly as a converted agricultural structure rather than a new dwelling. Materials will be of high quality and appropriate to the rural context, likely including natural timber elements, simple metal detailing, and muted finishes that complement the existing barn and wider landscape.

Landscaping

Landscaping proposals are intentionally minimal, reflecting the agricultural nature of the site and its rural context. Existing boundaries and vegetation will be retained wherever possible. There will be no new hard landscaping and any materials used will be appropriate to a farmstead environment, avoiding suburban or domesticated treatments.

4. Access

Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the existing access serving Three Gates Farm from Turton Road. No alterations to the access arrangements are proposed. Parking is provided within an adjoining barn, minimising visual impact and preserving the openness of the site.

We would prefer to retain the use of the two adjacent buildings for self-storage purposes alongside the proposed conversion of the subject buildings into a residential dwelling.

The existing self-storage use is low-intensity in nature and is considered compatible with the proposed residential use. The two adjacent buildings are used exclusively for storage purposes only, with no commercial or industrial activities undertaken on site. Customers are permitted to access their units solely for the purpose of storing or retrieving items, and no work or business operations are carried out from the premises.

Activity associated with the self-storage use is minimal. Customer visits are typically infrequent and short in duration, generally limited to loading or unloading items for a few minutes at a time. The majority of users are long-term customers who are personally known to the site operators. As a result, daily activity levels are very low, with some customers visiting only occasionally, in some cases with several months between visits.

All customers are provided with a site etiquette document which sets out clear expectations regarding site operation. This includes controlled access hours (07:00 to 19:00), as well as requirements relating to noise, cleanliness, and general conduct within the yard. These measures help to ensure that the use of the site remains well managed and does not give rise to disturbance.

The proposed development, which would convert the identified buildings into a dwelling, would further reduce the overall level of activity on site. By removing two buildings from storage use, the number of units available to customers would decrease, resulting in a corresponding reduction in vehicle movements and general activity.

In terms of access and manoeuvring, the site has operated without issue to date. A designated turning area is provided to the right-hand side, adjacent to the north-east building, with hardstanding extending towards the field. This area allows vehicles to turn safely and will remain available for use by self-storage customers, as it lies outside the proposed residential curtilage. In addition, the width of the yard is sufficient to allow two vehicles to pass comfortably if required.

The low level of traffic associated with the self-storage use, combined with the managed nature of the site, means that vehicle movements can continue to be accommodated safely. Furthermore, vehicles are not permitted to be left unattended within the yard, ensuring that circulation routes remain clear at all times.

It is therefore considered that the continued use of the two adjacent buildings for self-storage would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of noise, disturbance, or highway safety. Given the reduction in storage capacity resulting from the proposed development, the overall level of activity on the site would decrease.

For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the continued self-storage use is compatible with the proposed residential conversion and should be supported.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access will be clearly defined and provide a safe and convenient route between the parking area and the dwelling entrance.

Inclusive Access

The dwelling is single storey and will provide level access throughout. Entrance thresholds and internal circulation will be designed to support inclusive access and ease of use for all occupants.

Servicing and Refuse

Refuse bin storage will be provided **within the adjoining barn/outbuilding**, as identified on the site layout plan. This arrangement ensures that bins are stored discreetly, avoids external domestic clutter, and preserves the rural character and openness of the site. Refuse collection can be undertaken via the existing access arrangements without detriment to highway safety.

5. Public Right of Way

A public footpath (Ref: **16TOT**) passes through part of the site and along the existing access road to the west of the site. The proposed development has been designed to ensure that the public footpath remains **unaffected**, with **no obstruction, diversion, or alteration** to its route.

The conversion works are confined to the existing barn, and no changes are proposed that would compromise the safety, accessibility, or amenity of users of the public right of way. The footpath will remain available for public use at all times.

6. Green Belt Considerations

The application site lies within the Green Belt, where national and local planning policy place significant weight on the preservation of openness and rural character.

The proposal involves the conversion of an existing agricultural barn and does not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The development does not result in any material increase in built form, footprint, or volume, with the existing building envelope retained in full.

By reusing an existing structure and avoiding new-build development, the proposal preserves the openness of the Green Belt and ensures that the visual impact of the site is not increased. The agricultural form of the barn remains clearly legible, and the design avoids domestic features that would undermine its rural character.

The provision of car parking and refuse storage within an adjoining existing building, together with minimal landscaping and the site's remote nature, ensures that the development has **no greater impact on the openness or purposes of the Green Belt** than the existing lawful agricultural use.

7. Planning Policy Context and History

The proposal accords with national planning policy and the Bury Local Plan, which support the sustainable reuse and conversion of existing rural buildings where their character is preserved and where development does not harm the openness of the Green Belt.

A Prior Approval application (Ref: **62011**) for **Class B8 (Storage and Distribution)** use relating to the immediate site area was granted in **2017**. The current proposal relates solely to the conversion of an existing barn and does not result in any greater impact in terms of built form, visual appearance, or openness when compared with the established lawful use of the site.

A pre-application consultation was submitted in respect of the proposed development (Ref: **03125E**). The proposal was **well received**, and the scheme has been developed having regard to the feedback provided through that process.

The scheme represents an efficient use of existing resources, secures the long-term future of a rural building, and respects the character and appearance of its setting.

8. Conclusion

The proposed conversion of the existing barn at Three Gates Farm, Turton Road, Tottington, to a contemporary single-storey two-bedroom dwelling has been carefully designed to respect the scale, form, and agricultural character of the original building.

By retaining the existing structure, providing discreet parking and refuse storage within an adjoining barn, limiting landscape intervention, ensuring additional openings are sensitively designed and not publicly visible, safeguarding the public footpath, and responding positively to pre-application feedback and the site's planning history, the proposal preserves the openness of the Green Belt and delivers a high-quality, sustainable form of rural development appropriate to its setting.