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Supporting Statement
PiP application for the erection
of up to 9No. dwellings
Land off Whalley Road,
Ramsbottom
Cornell Group
October 2025



RTPI

mediation of space - making of place

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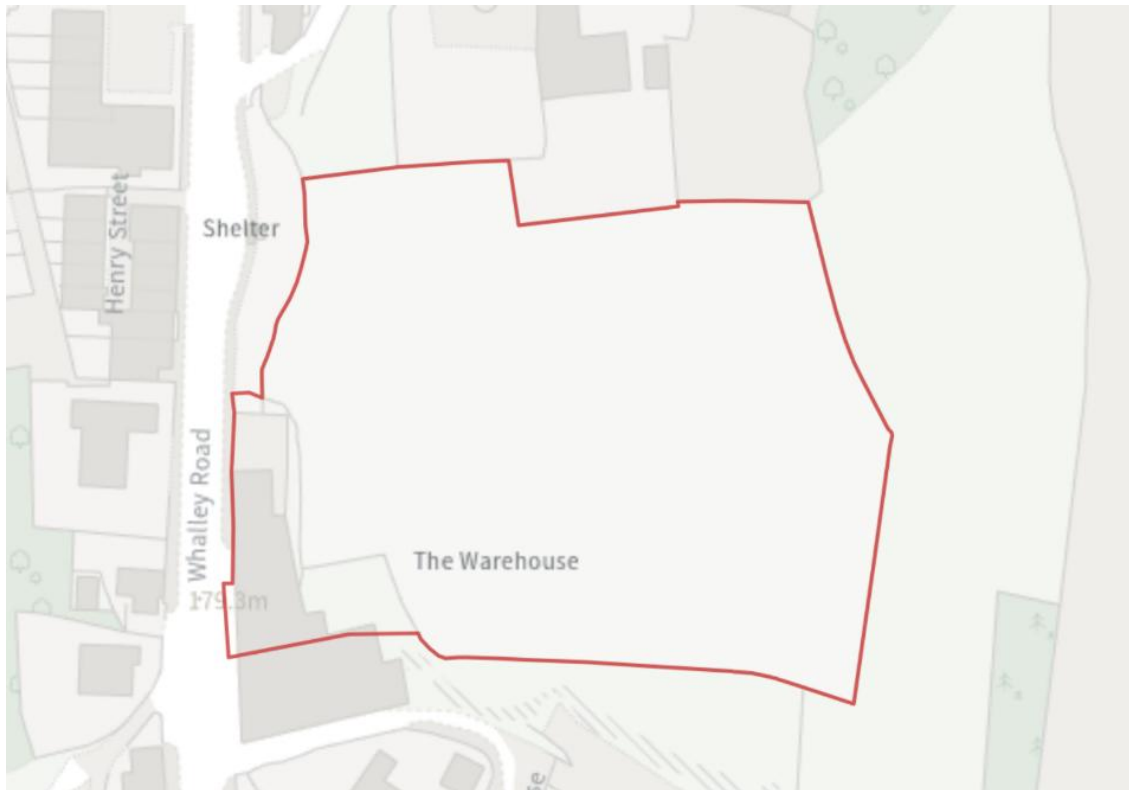
1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Supporting Statement has been prepared by Edgeplan, to accompany a Stage 1 Permission in Principle application for the erection of up to 9No. dwellings at Land off Whalley Road, Ramsbottom.
- 1.2 A Permission in Principle application represents an alternative way in which to obtain planning permission for residential development, whereby the matters of principle are separated from the technical details. Therefore, there are two stages to obtaining this type of consent:
- Stage 1: establishes whether a site is suitable in principle for housing-led development
 - Stage 2: concerns the consent of technical details and assessment of the detailed development proposals
- 1.3 Permission in Principle applications are considered in much the same way as standard planning applications in that they are determined in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, considering the relevant policies in the Development Plan and any other material considerations. However, the scope for assessment of Stage 1 applications of this type is limited to, it's location, land use and the amount of development proposed. As such, a technical suite of reports is not required at the initial stage. Should Stage 1 approval be granted, technical details consent could be applied for under a future Stage 2 application.
- 1.4 This Statement therefore seeks to provide a description of the site's context and the development proposals, alongside an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme as part of an assessment of the relevant planning policies. The conclusion is then reached that Stage 1 Permission in Principle should be granted.
- 1.5 In order to allow an assessment of the proposals and to satisfy the requirements for validation of an application of this type, the following documentation is included with this submission:
- Application form;
 - Location Plan;
 - Locational Sustainability Statement;
 - Land Availability Assessment;
 - Density Analysis; and,
 - Landscape Statement.

2 THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

The Site

- 2.1 The land, as edged red below, is some 0.93 hectares in extent. It is predominantly greenfield land but also incorporates a previously developed land (PDL) element; there is a single storey former industrial unit along the road frontage, along with its associated parking/service area.



- 2.2 The industrial unit and parking/service area are at the same level as the adjoining Whalley Road. A grass verge and retaining walls separate the road and unit from the greenfield element of the site, which is at a higher level. The land, which is sporadically grazed and devoid of features, continues to rise to its eastern boundary.

Setting

- 2.3 As shown in image 1, the site is well contained:
- To the north, the site is bound by dwellings and an industrial unit accessed via Higher Fold Lane. The topography of this land is similar to that of the site, with the buildings sat higher than those along Whalley Road. Higher Fold Cottage lies to the north, separated from the site by Bank Lane Farm, and is a Grade II Listed Building
 - Whalley Road forms the western boundary to the site. A mix of uses run along its length near the site. Generally, buildings are at the same/similar level to the road along its western side with a more varied street scene to the east. A number of buildings sit at a higher level than the road.
 - Dwellings and industrial uses also lie to the south of the site. Again, the topography is similar to the site, with buildings following the incline of the slope.

- Fletcher Bank Quarry lies to the east of the site. It is an active quarry but is not visible from Whalley Road due to a landscaped bund.

2.4 A Density Assessment has been submitted in support of the application, demonstrating that the density of existing residential development adjoining the site is some 29 dwellings per hectare to the west, 14 dph to the south and 7 dph to the north. Upon visiting the site, it is evident that higher density development runs along Whalley Road, with lower density sat behind.

Constraints

2.5 As stated, the area edged red for the application is some 0.93ha in extent. However, it is important to note that the developable area will be significantly smaller. At this Stage, it is not possible to determine the exact extent of the developable area; the necessary technical assessments have not been undertaken and will follow at Stage 2 of the PiP process.

2.6 However, it is evident that:

- Access to the site is not straightforward. Preliminary advice has been sought from a highways consultant. It is envisaged that the existing frontage buildings will need to be demolished to enable an access to be delivered.
- The access will of course need to take account of the topographical nature of the site. It will need to achieve an appropriate gradient(s), which is likely to result in a significant parcel of land being dedicated to access provision. It is expected that the residential development will be set back some distance from Whalley Road as a result.
- The site is predominantly greenfield land and the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) baseline assessment has not been undertaken. It is reasonable to allow for on-site BNG as part of the development and as such, the developable area must be further reduced. It is common for 33% of a site to be set aside for BNG requirements.
- The topography of the greenfield element of the site will also be a constraint. The site rises towards the quarry.
 - Internally, retaining walls may be required and internal interface will need to be carefully considered.
 - Likewise, the interface with the existing properties will need to be carefully considered, particularly dwellings along Whalley Road which are much lower. The Council's interface distance guidelines will need to be taken into account, along with the proposed dwellings being set at a higher level due to existing topography.
 - The visual impact of development higher up the slope will also need to be given due consideration. At this stage, it is envisaged that good design can be achieved by respecting existing ridge lines to the north and south though this may require a stand off from the eastern site boundary.
- Thought will need to be given to the existing adjoining land uses, in case there are incompatible uses that may require a standoff.

- 2.7 There are a number of constraints that will result in the developable area being far smaller than the full extent of the site. It is envisaged that these can be discussed with the LPA during the application process.

Locational Sustainability

- 2.8 The site is located within walking/cycling distance of a number of services and facilities in the immediate locality. It is also well connected to Ramsbottom by footways and the Public Right of Way Network. A bus stop is located immediately adjacent to the site, connecting users to the surrounding area.
- 2.9 The LPA has previously acknowledged the locational sustainability of this part of Ramsbottom, having recently granted permission for residential development in the locality (e.g. application 62081).

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This Permission in Principle application seeks consent for the construction of up to 9 no. dwellings on land off Whalley Road, Ramsbottom. It is proposed that all dwellings are self-build properties.
- 3.2 Given the nature of self-build and the character of the surrounding area, it is expected that all (up to) 9 properties will be detached dwellings of 1.5 – 2-storeys in height. The materials palette will reflect that of the surrounding area, ensuring a development that achieves good design.
- 3.3 The density of the proposed development will also reflect that of the surrounding area, forming an effective transition to the open countryside as the development to the north and south does. As discussed in Section 2 of this Statement, there are numerous constraints that will reduce the developable area significantly. The density will therefore undoubtedly reflect that surrounding the site.

4 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Planning policy is set out within the development plan, which comprises the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Places for Everyone (PfE).

Development plan

Proposals map

- 4.2 The combined UDP/PfE Proposals Map demonstrates that the site lies within the Green Belt.



Unitary Development Plan

- 4.3 The UDP was adopted in 1997, and policies were saved in 2007. However, the majority of UDP policies have now been superseded by PfE policies.
- 4.4 The following policies are considered relevant to the residential development of the site:

Policies considered most important to the principle of residential development

- H1/2: Further housing development
- OL1/2: New buildings in the Green Belt

Other Policies

- H2/1: The form of new residential development
- H2/2: The layout of new residential development
- EN1/2: Townscape and built design
- EN1/5: Crime prevention
- EN6/3: Features of ecological value
- EN6/4: Wildlife Links and Corridors
- HT2/4: Car parking and new development
- HT6/1: Pedestrian cyclist movement

Places for Everyone

- 4.5 The PfE is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts, including Bury for new jobs, homes and sustainable growth. It was adopted by Bury Council on 21/03/2024.
- 4.6 The following policies are considered relevant to the residential development of the site:

Policies considered most important to the principle of residential development

- JP-H1: Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Development
- JP-G9: The Green Belt

Other Policies

- JP-S1: Sustainable development
- JP-S2: Carbon and Energy
- JP-S4: Flood Risk and the water environment
- JP-S5: Clean Air
- JP-H2: Affordability of New Housing
- JP-H3: Type, Size and Design of New Housing
- JP-H4: Density of New housing
- JP-G1: Landscape Character
- JP-G7: Trees and Woodlands
- JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- JP-P1: Sustainable Places
- JP-P6: Health
- JP-C5: Streets for All
- JP-C6: Walking and Cycling
- JP-C8: Transport requirements of new development

Other Local Documents

Supplementary Planning Document 8: New buildings and associated development in the Green Belt (Adopted 10/01/2007)

- 4.7 This SPD is based on out-of-date National Policy. It does however provide some useful guidance on the Council's approach to new buildings in the Green Belt.

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

- 4.8 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The following sections of the NPPF are considered relevant to this application:

- Achieving sustainable development;
- Decision-making;
- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- Building a strong, competitive economy;
- Promoting healthy and safe communities;
- Promoting sustainable transport;
- Making effective use of land;
- Achieving well-designed and beautiful places;
- Protecting Green Belt land;
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5 HOUSING SUPPLY, HOUSING DELIVERY AND HOUSING NEED

Housing Land Supply

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if their adopted plan is less than five years old, and that plan identified at least a five-year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.
- 5.2 Bury's Five year Housing Land Supply Statement states that the Council's deliverable five-year housing land supply, based on a five year requirement of 488 dwellings per annum, is 2,440 dwellings, which equates to 5.8 years supply therefore demonstrating a five year housing land supply. However, Edgeplan considers that the supply should be reduced to below 5 years.

Housing Delivery Test

- 5.3 It is identified that Bury failed to score above 75% on the recent Housing Delivery test, scoring 64%.

Self-build Housing

- 5.4 The Council acknowledges that there is a demonstrable unmet need for self-build housing in Bury. This is confirmed Council's own evidence base work.

6 PLANNING CASE

- 6.1 The scope of consideration for Stage 1 PiP applications is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Any future Stage 2 application will enable the consideration of other, technical matters.

Grey Belt

- 6.2 The site is in the Green Belt and current development plan policy does not permit the form of development that is proposed. However, the 2024 NPPF is a material consideration and introduced Grey Belt. As stated at para. 155 of the NPPF:

The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- 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;*
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and*
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.*

Ai: Can the site be classed as Grey Belt land?

- 6.3 The glossary to the NPPF provides the following definition of Grey Belt:

Grey belt: *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. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.*

Green Belt Assessment

- 6.4 As part of the PFE process, a Green Belt Assessment (GBA) was undertaken. The site was assessed, but as part of a much larger parcel (BU03), which incorporated the quarry. The site is very well contained and is effectively disconnected from the wider parcel.
- 6.5 As a result, the GBA is not particularly relevant to the overall assessment of the Grey Belt credentials of the application site. The Landscape Assessment considers the Grey Belt credentials of the site in isolation.



Purpose (a) – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

- 6.6 Noting that the GBA stated that BU03 plays a limited role in checking the unrestricted sprawl of Ramsbottom, the LA concluded that the land off Whalley Road makes no contribution to purpose (a).

- 6.7 It can therefore be concluded that the site does not make a strong contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area.

Purpose (b) – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

- 6.8 Noting that the GBA stated that BU03 makes no contribution to fulfilling this purpose, LA concluded that the land off Whalley Road makes no contribution to purpose (b).

Purpose (d) – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 6.9 Noting that the GBA stated that BU03 is considered unlikely to be important in the setting or significance of historic settlements, LA concluded that the land off Whalley Road makes no contribution to purpose (d).

Footnote 7

- 6.10 The development of the site would not impact upon any of the following:

- Habitat site;
- SSSI;
- Local Green Space;
- National Landscape National Park; or,
- Irreplaceable habitat.

- 6.11 The application of policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 would not provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

Conclusion

- 6.12 The site can be classed as Grey Belt land.

Aii: Would the development fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan?

- 6.13 The proposed development would not fundamentally undermine Parcel BU03, let alone the remaining Green Belt across Bury, which is extensive.

B: Is there a demonstrable unmet need for the development being proposed?

- 6.14 The most recent Housing Delivery Test was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years and as such, there is a demonstrable need for the residential-led development of this site. There is also an unmet demonstrable need for self-build housing, as set out in the Council's own evidence base documents.

C: Would the development be in a sustainable location?

- 6.15 The land off Whalley Road is locationally sustainable, as previously acknowledged by the LPA when granting permission for residential development in close proximity to the site. There are a number of services and facilities within easy walking distance of the site, including the centre of Ramsbottom.
- 6.16 There are also bus stops to the immediate west of the site with regular services running north towards Rawtenstall and south to Bury town centre and beyond. The site is evidently locationally sustainable.

D: Does the development being proposed meet the 'Golden Rules' requirements?

- 6.17 As the proposals are for up to 9No. dwellings, the Golden Rules are not applicable. However, it is worth noting that the site will accommodate some public open space, as landscaped buffering will likely be required to the east and land will also be needed for BNG.

Amount of Development

- 6.18 Section 4 has identified PfE policy JP-H4 as being relevant to the consideration of the amount of development. This policy seeks to deliver a development density of 35 dph but states that lower densities may be acceptable where they can be clearly justified by:
1. Local housing market issues, such as a demonstrable need for a particular type of housing that cannot be delivered at a higher density; or
 2. Site specific issues, such as the design context and any potential impact on the wider landscape or townscape.
- 6.19 The self-build housing cannot be delivered at a higher density than that being proposed. The 9No. dwellings will need to be detached units. Furthermore, as set out in Sections 2 and 3 of the Statement, there are site specific issues relevant to justifying the proposed density.
- 6.20 Section 2 of this Statement, the Landscape Report and the Density Assessment have considered the existing character and appearance of the area, including the existing density in the immediate environs of the site. Furthermore, this Statement has set out a number of technical constraints that will inevitably lead to the developable area being significantly smaller than the site area.
- 6.21 It can be reasonably concluded that the amount of development is entirely appropriate for this site.

Summary

- 6.22 The proposed development is appropriate in the Green Belt:
- A. The site is Grey Belt:
 - i. it does not perform strongly against purposes (a), (b) or (d) of the Green Belt and in fact, only makes a weak contribution to each purpose.
 - ii. Its development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of remaining Green Belt across Bury.
 - B. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development being proposed.
 - C. The development would be in a sustainable location.
 - D. The amount of development is appropriate to the site and self-build proposals.
- 6.23 The application proposals accord with the NPPF and relevant development plan policies. Stage 2 will consider all technical details.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This application seeks to obtain Stage 1 Permission in Principle for up to 9 no. dwellings on land off Whalley Road, Ramsbottom.
- 7.2 As a Stage 1 application, the proposals should only be assessed on the basis of the acceptability of the site's location, land use and the amount of development. Any technical matters beyond this are to be considered under any future Stage 2 submission.
- 7.3 This assessment has demonstrated that the site is Grey Belt and is locationally sustainable. The development of the site for up to 9No. dwellings is appropriate development in the Green Belt and the density is appropriate to the setting of the site, its constraints and the self-build scheme being proposed.
- 7.4 It is therefore considered that the development is acceptable in respect of its location, land use and the amount of development proposed, is in accordance with relevant planning policy and as such, the PiP should be granted.

