

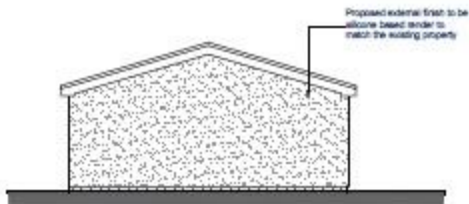
PLANNING STATEMENT (including Design & Access Statement)

19 March 2026

Extension of Dwelling House



Proposed North Elevation
Scale (1:100)



Proposed East Elevation
Scale (1:100)

At: The Stables, Arthur Lane, Ainsworth, Bury, BL2 5PN

Prepared by MacMarshalls Rural Chartered Surveyors & Planning Consultants
on behalf of Mr & Mrs Wright.



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This statement has been prepared and submitted alongside a planning application for the extension of an existing single storey house at The Stables, Arthur Lane, Ainsworth, Bury, BL2 5PN.
- 1.2. This follows refusal of an earlier application which also incorporated a porch on the north side of the building.
- 1.3. The statement provides assessment and justification in respect of the scheme having regard to National Policy, the Development Plan for the area, and material planning considerations.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1. The application site comprises a detached single storey house on a site which originally housed stables - hence the current name 'The Stables'. The application relates to the site of a former brick/render stable block (approx 190 cu.m)
- 2.2. The red edged site measures 0.72ha and is accessed from Arthur Lane via a single track driveway which terminates in a turning head and parking to the east and north of the house. The site is enclosed by a mixture of fencing and mature hedging along the western boundary.
- 2.3. The site is located within the open countryside to the west of Ainsworth Village and is designated Green Belt, West Pennine Moors and is a Special Landscape Area.

3. HISTORY

- 3.1. The relevant history for the site is as follows:

60784 - Change of use of stable to dwelling with single storey extension - Approve with Conditions 25/01/2017

63321 - Change of use of stable to dwelling and single storey extension at side with subterranean accommodation and window/door modification - Approve with Conditions 21/11/2018

65373 - Demolition of existing stable building and erection of 1 no. dwelling - Approve with Conditions 18/06/2020

72639 - Extension of dwelling house - Refused 27/02/2026

- 3.2. The officer report relating to application 72639 whilst noting that permitted development rights were removed when rebuilding and converting the stables, acknowledges that there is maybe room for a small extension, although the porch was considered rather ‘clunky’ and incongruous. This latter element has now been deleted. The remaining single bedroom is the minimum size to provide for a room with facilities that is usable for family purposes and provides for limited growth in the future as the family grows up.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1. The new proposal involves only the addition of a 4 metre extension on the east end of the existing house to add an extra bedroom. The design of the extension is a continuation of the built form of the existing house and other than the increase in length, there will be no significant change to the look of the property.
- 4.2. The proposed layout adds a single modestly sized bedroom with a small en-suite given that the bathroom is at the opposite end of the property. The bedroom adds a run of wardrobes as storage space is at a premium within the existing house which does not benefit from a garage and the house is relatively small with no attic or other storage space suitable for family use.
- 4.3. The proposed materials for the bedroom extension would be cream render to match the existing property. The porch is a brick finish. Roof tiles and grey steel window surrounds will match the existing property. These are materials compatible with the adjacent area.
- 4.4. Additional planting has already been undertaken along Arthur Lane to the north and east, but the proposal also introduces further additional planting which will help to further screen the property.
- 4.5. The existing space simply cannot provide the essential facilities the growing family needs. At the time of the original conversion of the stables the family only had a single child and there was a single additional bedroom to accommodate that child. As a result of the birth of a second child the baby is sleeping in the parents’ bedroom, and the other child is significantly older and of an age where they need their own space. The difference in age between the children makes the sharing of a small bedroom very difficult and the proposal provides the essential additional space required to enable the applicant and their family to remain in their family home.
- 4.6. Site security is a problem in the area and even before construction of the existing house the applicants had their vehicle and tools stolen from the property. A modern security monitored camera based security system has been installed but the applicants are understandably concerned to allow for sufficient storage to protect their possessions. The addition of the porch will go some small way towards addressing this issue by providing some limited storage space without encroaching further into the garden.

5. PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) ('the Framework') is a material consideration. There is significant support for housing development generally and for making the most effective use of land in urban areas especially.
- 5.3. Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way... Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.
- 5.4. Paragraph 75 states that plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.
- 5.5. The Framework states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Openness and permanence are essential characteristics of the Green Belt.
- 5.6. It goes on to say that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 5.7. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 5.8. Under paragraph 149 of The Framework 'the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building' is not considered to constitute inappropriate development. The term 'original building' is defined in the Framework as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after that date, as it was built originally.

LOCAL POLICY

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

- 5.9. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan simply states that in Green Belt areas the beneficial use of the Green Belt will be enhanced where this can be achieved without harm to its openness, permanence or ability to serve its five purposes.

- 5.10. Paragraph 4.12 of the plan states that *‘Maximising the reuse of previously-developed land and delivering higher densities in the most accessible locations will together help to reduce the total amount of land required for new buildings and hence minimise the need for development of greenfield sites.’* This is further reflected in Policy JP-SP1: Sustainable Development which seeks to use as much as possible of suitable previously-developed (brownfield) land and vacant buildings.

Bury Unitary Development Plan

- 5.11. Bury Unitary Development Plan was adopted on July 11, 2012. A revised local plan is in preparation following the adoption of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan in March 2024.
- 5.12. Policies H2/3 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (1997) (the UDP) also amongst other things seeks to ensure developments are of a high standard and sympathetic to the host property and surrounding area. It has already been accepted that the extension on the gable end simply continues the existing built form.
- 5.13. Supplementary Planning Document 6 (SPD 6) Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties was formally adopted by the Council’s Cabinet on 11 December 2019 and applies to all relevant applications submitted on or after 13 January 2020. It is therefore particularly relevant to applications such as this.
- 5.14. It states that the aim of the SPD with regards to Green Belt policy is to ensure that proposals do not impact on the Green Belt’s basic character and appearance.
- 5.15. Policy H2/3 – Extensions and Alterations states that applications for house extensions and alterations will be considered with regard to the following factors:
- a) the size, height, shape, design and external appearance of the proposal;
 - b) the character of the property in question and the surrounding area;
 - c) the amenity of adjacent properties; and
 - d) visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of motor vehicles.
- 5.16. Associated general guidance covers issues of design seeking to ensure that any extension does not impact detrimentally on the existing property or area or on amenity. This is considered in the assessment below.
- 5.17. Proposals for domestic extensions in the Green Belt should not normally exceed a third of the volume of the original dwelling. Every application is assessed on its own merits however.

Bury Draft Local Plan

- 5.18. Although the new Local Plan is not as yet adopted, it is at an advanced stage of preparation and consultations into the draft plan have closed. The policies indicate the current thinking of the authority although the old plan remains the plan against which proposals will be assessed.

- 5.19. Draft Policy LP-H1 - The Council will seek to ensure that best use is made of the existing housing stock and vacancy rates are reduced.
- 5.20. Draft Policy LP-H9: Alterations and extensions to residential properties is particularly relevant covering issues such as the size, shape and external appearance of the proposal (similar to SPD6). Also, the character of the property and surrounding area and amenity of adjacent properties.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1. The original building is derived from the single storey former stables structure approved under application reference 65373. It is acknowledged that what is proposed following the extension is larger, but many planning authorities permit modest extensions of between 33 and 35% with some as much as 50% within their policies.
- 6.2. The footprint and volumes of the original dwelling and proposed extensions are set out in Table 1 below

	Original dwelling	Scheme with extension	% Increase
Surface area M2	100.65	135.17	26.50
Volume M3	228.18	291.84	27.9

- 6.3. The extension adds approximately 26.67 square metres of living space which is significantly less than the $\frac{1}{3}$ extension provided for under policy and is appropriate and consistent with normally expected guidelines. In the context of the particular site in question, the volumetric increase and the impact upon openness is not substantial. It should also be noted that following the erection of a fence and development on the adjacent neighbour's land, the proposed extension will have a very limited impact upon openness.
- 6.4. The extension is also compliant with policy in seeking to make efficient use of already developed land.
- 6.5. A key determinant is whether extension of an existing dwelling would result in a disproportionate addition to the existing building. National planning policy does not define 'disproportionate' precisely which allows for differing interpretations. As already noted, most local authorities regard extensions increasing the volume of the original dwelling by 30-40% or more as acceptable. It is accepted that the original stables have increased in size, but the latest design has been tailored to respect the character of the existing property and to minimise any impact on the openness of the Green Belt on a site that is not prominent in any way.

- 6.6. It is accepted that it is a subjective assessment whether any extension will have a material impact upon openness as referenced in the Samuel Smith Old Brewery case below. In this particular case, it is submitted that a small extension as proposed is immaterial in the context of what already exists and when considering the new developments to the south.
- 6.7. Even with the proposed extension, a single storey building of the size proposed is still relatively small. In contrast, the benefits accruing from the extension are significant and assist in creating a truly family friendly home when compared with the small compromised dwelling that currently exists.



- 6.8. Case law also confirms that openness is not narrowly limited to a volumetric, spatial approach.

- 6.9. In the Euro Garages judgement (*Euro Garages Limited & (1) The Secretary Of State For Communities And Local Government (2) Cheshire West And Chester Council (2018)*) the Inspector for the planning appeal considered that increased floor area and volume meant a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and that a lack of visibility did not in itself mean that there would be no loss of openness. However, in upholding Euro Garages' challenge to the Inspector's decision, Mrs Justice Jefford observed that for there to be a greater impact on openness, there must be something more than merely a change, and an assessment should be made as to the harm caused by the change. The question of whether the openness of the Green Belt is preserved will generally involve an assessment of the visual or perceived impact.
- 6.10. In the 2020 case of *R (Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) and others) v North Yorkshire County Council [2020]* it was confirmed that it is for the decision maker on a case by case basis and as a matter of planning judgement, not law, to assess whether visual openness is relevant and if so to what extent.

Design and Visual Amenity

- 6.11. The statement will now focus further on addressing the specific matters of detail relating to this site.

Overbearing, Overdominant and Loss of Openness

- 6.12. In this instance, it is considered that the lack of visual and perceived impact of the development should be afforded significant weight. There is no increase in the eaves height and the footprint of the building is only increased by a modest amount. Visually, it would have very little if any perceived impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The principal elevation is not extended northwards and the proposed side extension would result in a small visual change, but would not lead to visual harm or perceived harm to openness as it simply fills in a gap between the existing gable and a 1.8 metre high domestic fence.
- 6.13. The additions are set back from both the road and enclosed behind the fencing which partially obscures it. It would not be prominent from public vantage points (indeed, it will be barely discernible from most angles) such that any impact upon openness will be minimal. Impact is clearly subjective, but in this particular case it is considered that the extent of the extension is not material. The photograph above shows the existing gable, the fence and the neighbour's development (to the left). Any extension will be lost in the bulk of the existing developments.
- 6.14. The development either in part, or in whole would not lead to a visual or perceived loss of openness to the Green Belt. It would not appear as a disproportionate addition, irrespective of the volume calculations. There are no neighbouring habited properties immediately adjacent and any changes would only be seen from a distance.
- 6.15. Additional planting has already been installed (see photograph plus extra planting on the Arthur Lane road boundary) and as this matures, it will further screen the extension. This can be enhanced further as part of the development to further mitigate any impacts if required.

- 6.16. Without prejudice to the above, although the development would be larger than the original dwellinghouse, the SPD 6 does state that each case is viewed on its own merits, with development being controlled to '*ensure that proposals do not impact on the basic character and appearance of the Green Belt*'. In this instance, it is considered that the basic character and appearance of the Green Belt is not negatively impacted upon.

The Form of Development, Character of the Area and Visual Amenity

- 6.17. The design has been formulated carefully to overcome any concerns with regards to the visual impact of the extension on the character of the property. There would be only a modest increase in the footprint of development which would not be prominent and which continues the footprint shape and roofline. The extension is also visually contained.
- 6.18. The proposed extension is of a size, height, design and uses materials that are compatible with those used in the original conversion.
- 6.19. Any development will change the outlook slightly but the question thereafter is would such development result in a feature which is overbearing and overdominant in relation to the host site. This is clearly a matter of opinion and there are no policies which inform such an assessment, but such a small extension set in the context of the immediate surrounding built form will have minimal impact.
- 6.20. Boundary treatments will not change other than the addition of further boundary planting if required. Accordingly the scheme would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and the street scene, and would not be overly dominant in relation to the existing dwelling or neighbours which are some distance away and far larger in mass than the property in question. There would be no adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.

Residential Amenity

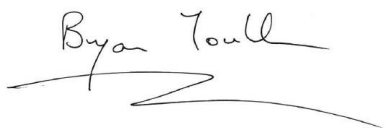
- 6.21. The proposal will complement the residential character of the area. There should be no unacceptable impacts arising from the development.
- 6.22. In compliance with the SPD the gable end of the extension sited adjacent or close to a boundary has a blank side facing the neighbour which is open land in any event (with a large garage/storage building under construction).

Highway Safety

- 6.23. The proposal would not require any additional parking and the site already provides parking to a standard far in excess of that required.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. The efficient use of available land in a sustainable location should take precedence over a limited reduction in perceived openness, particularly where no significant harm to residential or visual amenity would result. There is no significant increase in the intensity of the use and there will be no resultant additional demand for parking or other ancillary uses that would impact upon the Green Belt.
- 7.2. Although some very limited visual impact will occur as a result of development, the applicant has responded to concerns raised by officers in a previous application with the revised reduced application.
- 7.3. it is considered that in terms of spatial openness, the effect of the proposed development would be minimal and certainly not inappropriate. Further, the containment of the site means that spatial harm is not perceived from most views so that harm to the Green Belt is further reduced. The scheme ensures sufficient separation distances, maintains residential and visual amenity, and incorporates suitable boundary treatments which mitigates any perceived harm.
- 7.4. In conclusion, the wider benefits of the scheme significantly outweigh any loss of openness or change in character. This statement and submission has demonstrated that the development is acceptable in principle, and the site can appropriately accommodate a modest extension to the dwelling without detriment to the visual amenities of the area and surrounding properties.



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