

**PLANNING PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE APPLICATION FOR THE POTENTIAL
ERECTION OF UPTO 2 No. CLASS C3 DWELLINGS**

**Land adjacent 455 Manchester Road, Blackrod,
BOLTON BL6 5SR**

PLANNING STATEMENT

October 2023

REF: 1154/MRB/PS



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/1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. BPD Architecture is retained by Miss Nicola Woods ('the Applicant') to progress a Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the erection of upto 2 no. dwellings ('the proposed development') at land adjacent 455 Manchester Road, Blackrod, BOLTON ('the application site'). The PIP application is made to Bolton Council ('the Local Planning Authority') (LPA) and relates to the red edge application site boundary, defined in the submitted Proposed Site Layout Plan.
- 1.2. The relevant legislation for a PIP application is found in the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017.
- 1.3. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application package, which includes the following documents:
 - Application form;
 - Proposed Site Layout Plan, illustrative (Drawing no. 1154/MRB/SLP).
 - Site Location plan (Drawing 1154/MRB/LP).

/2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is a secured plot of land that has been previously used as an allotment, located on Manchester Road, Blackrod with road frontage of approximately 37m narrowing to 28m along the rear boundary. The site depth is 33m to the northern party boundary and 32m to the southern party boundary. There is a medium-level height hedgerow forming the boundary to the west, fronting the highway, with a central 5 bar timber access gate. The ground on the site is mostly level falling away gently to the east. The remainder of the site is secured with a 1.2m high timber post and rail fence to all other boundaries.
- 2.2. The site's immediate setting is characterised by linear residential development along either side of Manchester Road. The detached dwelling of 455 Manchester Road is located on the adjoining plot immediately to the north of the site and the dwelling named Popes Farm is located to the south forming a cluster of dwellings created by the previous conversion of a former farmstead into 3 dwellings. A continuous cluster of dwellings and housing estate are sited to the west on the opposite side of Manchester Road known locally as Scot Lane End. While there are clusters of quasi-semi detached dwellings located immediately to the west of the site on Manchester Road, the prevailing development pattern is of semi detached dwellings with associated gardens. The site's wider setting is that of a semi rural settlement, mainly comprising dwellings and housing estates to the south and west with open land leading down to the A6 Blackrod bypass to the east.
- 2.3. The site sits within a sustainable location for residential development due to its close proximity to a range of services and amenities within the settlements of Blackrod, Aspull and Horwich. In Blackrod there are a number of local primary schools, churches, public houses and a town retail settlement, all within approximately 800m distance of the site. Additionally, there is an industrial complex located approximately 150m south of the site off Scot Lane B5238, and this comprises a number of small – medium sized industrial businesses. Slightly further afield, approximately 500m south east, lies a large hotel complex and housing estates.
- 2.4. There is existing vehicular access to the site from Manchester Road via a central access gate. The site benefits from excellent road connectivity with the A6 Blackrod Bypass approximately 300m to the south east of the site, accessed along Manchester Road, providing connectivity to the M61 motorway and wider area. The area also benefits from public transport connectivity, regular bus services 127, 521 and 575 serve the application site running along Manchester Road with a bus stop just 100m walk providing regular services to both Chorley and Bolton town centre's.

- 2.5. The site is located wholly within Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flooding is at its lowest. There are no active Tree Preservation Orders associated with the site. With regards to heritage designations, the site is not located inside or near to a conservation area, and it is not located in the setting of any listed building or other heritage asset. The site is located inside the designated greenbelt with the housing estate opposite allocated as a village settlement retaining certain planning allowances.

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS:



Photo 1 – Access to the site by means of an existing gateway



Photo 2 – Wider street frontage looking north towards 455 Manchester Road



Photo 3 – Interior view of the site looking North East from the access gate



Photo 4 – Google Streetview photo looking directly across Manchester Road from the application site to the west



Photo 5 – Red edged aerial site plan courtesy of Google Earth

/3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1. A planning search has been undertaken of Bolton Council's online planning register. 2no applications relate directly to the application site as follows:

- **93787/15 OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF ONE PAIR SEMI DETACHED DWELLINGS (ACCESS DETAILS ONLY). REFUSED 22 Jun 2015**
- **APP/N4205/W/15/3131636 PLANNING APPEAL RELATING TO THE ABOVE APPLICATION. APPEAL DISMISSED 08 Dec 2015**

As will be explained further, both of these applications were refused prior to the introduction of the new permission in principle route to obtain planning approval, however we believe that this application site should now fall within the permission in principle category given its road frontage location sited between domestic dwellings and can therefore be classed as an infill site.

3.2. There are planning approvals for housing developments at other sites in the local area that are directly relevant and material to the application proposal, as detailed below:

- **86434/11 455 MANCHESTER ROAD, BLACKROD FULL APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF FOUR-BEDROOM HOUSE. APPROVED 08 Aug 2011**
- **15509/23 | APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE ERECTION OF 2 NO. DETACHED DWELLINGHOUSES AND NEW ACCESS ON PART OF EXISTING GARDEN AREA | Hoskers Nook Farm Eatock Way Westhoughton Bolton BL5 2RB**
- **07758/20 | APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE ERECTION OF ONE DWELLING | 12 Chapel Street Blackrod Bolton BL6 5AH**

3.3. Another relevant approval is located within the adjacent borough of Chorley Council which is a site of similar National Policy Context. Chorley Borough Application reference 15/01185/FUL was approved at the local level, subsequent to a relevant appeal decision relating to a previous application at the site. In approving the proposal, Chorley Council's Planning Committee considered the Case Officer's report which recommended approval and confirmed that the proposal would constitute village infill development in the Greenbelt:

4. An appeal was made against this refusal and was dismissed on 10th March 2014. Although it was dismissed, the Inspector noted that since the appeal was refused in 2001 both national and local policies had changed and that the site would now meet the policy definition of infilling in a village. It would not therefore be inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and policy HS7 of the emerging Local Plan 2012-2026 that covers rural infilling.

3.4. Chorley Borough Application reference 21/00744/PIP was allowed on appeal where the Inspector determined that the proposal would meet an exception test for constructing new buildings in the Greenbelt, by virtue of constituting limiting infilling in a village. The Application Proposal has marked similarities to both cases, and they will be drawn-on in a later section to support the principle of the development.

The above application as aforementioned is not located within the Bolton borough but is relevant when considering the adopted national policy for which the planning inspectorate would review, should Bolton council not accept this proposal.

/4 PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

4.1 The PIP consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development.

4.2 The relevant legislation and guidance for this route is taken from the following:

- Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017; and
- National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) – Permission in Principle.

4.3 The former came into force on the 1st June 2018, whilst the latter was most recently updated in the same month. As such it is considered, whilst a relatively recent application route, up to date guidance is readily available regarding such proposals. This section of the statement seeks to summarise the relevant provisions of the above to enable the authority to better understand the proposals.

Process

4.4 The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages:

Stage 1: establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle;

Stage 2: ('technical details consent') is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This is much like a reserved matters application.

4.5 The process for Stage 1 varies depending on the scale of the proposed development and whether it relates to Greenfield land or land classed as previously developed. For minor forms of development i.e. less than ten units, an application must be submitted to the local planning authority; this applies whether the site is greenfield or previously developed.

4.6 For major development on previously developed land, the site must be entered to the local planning authority's brownfield land register; which in turn grants a PIP. It is not possible to gain a PIP consent for major development on a Greenfield site.

Requirements for a Valid Permission

4.7 The requirements for a valid PIP are laid out in Article 5D of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017.

4.8 In order to meet the requirements of a valid PIP application the following information must be provided:

- Completed application form;
- A plan to which identifies the land to which the application relates;
- The correct application fee.

4.9 The scope of Stage 1 PIP is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Other matters should be dealt with at the Stage 2 technical details consent stage of the application. Local authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for PIP in the same way they can for applications for planning permission.

4.10 Once a valid application for PIP has been received, the local planning authority should make a decision on the proposal as quickly as possible, and in any event within the statutory time limit of 5 weeks unless a longer period has been agreed in writing with the Applicant.

Planning Considerations

- 4.11 Proposals are determined in accordance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Although the scope of the local planning authority assessment of the first stage is limited to location, land use and amount of development.
- 4.12 The PPG details that statutory requirements like those related to both listed buildings or protected species are only applicable to Stage 2 Technical Consent applications (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 58-003-20190615). As stated above, local authorities cannot list the information they require for applications for PIP in the same way they can for applications for planning permission. Equally it is not necessary to provide a suite of technical reports at Stage 1, like you would for a full or outline application.

Implementation Period

- 4.13 Where Stage 1 permission is granted via an application, an applicant would have a further 3 years to apply for the Stage 2 Technical Details. The default duration of the permission is 3 years. The local authority cannot add further conditions to the grant of permission under Stage 1.
- 4.14 Where PIP is granted through allocation on a brownfield land register, the default duration of that permission is 5 years.

Determination Time Limits

- 4.15 The statutory time limit for a local authority to determine a Stage 1 application is 5 weeks. The statutory time limits for Stage 2 technical details is also 5 weeks (or 10 weeks for major development on previously developed land). The consultation process for applications is like that of a normal planning application.

Summary

4.16 The PIP application is a relatively new route to planning permission and as such examples of such applications are not plentiful. However, from the examples reviewed there does seem to be some confusions as to what matters can be considered.

4.17 Applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan and other material considerations such as national policy, where they relate to the principle of development. Policies related to technical matters do not represent valid considerations for the purposes of a Stage 1 application. In the context of this application, it is therefore prudent to note that policies relating to the following matters which could preclude the granting of a standard planning application should not be considered as part of this submission:

- Design;
- Ecology;
- Transport;
- Trees;
- Flood risk and drainage

4.18 These matters will however be considered as part of any future Stage 2 application.

/5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The application seeks to develop the land adjacent to 455 Manchester Road, Blackrod. The description of the proposal is as follows:

'Stage 1 Permission in Principle application for the erection of up to 2 no. dwellings.'

- 5.2 As the application is submitted as a PIP application, the proposed development is not required to be supported by a proposed site plan or an associated elevation/floorplan drawing. Submitted with this application, however, is an illustrative Proposed Site Plan (drawing no. 1154/MRB/SLP) which demonstrates how up to 2no. dwellings could be comfortably constructed on site, with appropriate access and amenity space. These proposals are purely illustrative at this stage and any future Stage 2 technical application will seek to ensure the design of the property will fit well in the site's setting, including with respect to the choice of materials.
- 5.3 Although the design of the new dwellings would be determined at the Stage 2 technical details stage, it should be noted that it is applicant's intention to a build 2.no two-storey detached dwellings, suitable to accommodate the applicant and her family members. It should also be noted that the proposed dwellings would fall within the definition of self-build homes developed by local people to provide accommodation on land which they own.

/6 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan. The determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Adopted Policies relevant to the application

The Development Plan Core Strategy:

P5 Transport and Accessibility;

S1 Safe Bolton;

CG1 Cleaner and Greener;

CG3 The Built Environment;

CG4 Compatible Uses;

SC1 Housing;

OA1 Horwich and Blackrod.

Material considerations Supplementary Planning Document General Design Principles 2015.

Emerging [currently unadopted] Blackrod Neighbourhood Plan

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG): Permission in principle

The Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017

6.2 According to the Bolton Adopted Policies Map, as shown below in Figure 4, the site is in the Green Belt.



Figure 4: Extract from the Bolton Adopted Policies Map (2011). Green shading denoted the Green Belt

ADOPTED LOCAL POLICIES

Bolton Council Local Development Scheme (LDS)

This is a programme document for the review of Bolton's Development Plan Documents and sets out the documents the council needs to prepare over the next three years with timescales and milestones for their preparation. The first Local Development Scheme was published in March 2005 and covered the period to March 2008. It has been revised several times since it was first produced, most recently in September 2020. This Local Development Scheme covers the period up to March 2024.

POLICY P5

The council and its partners will ensure that developments take the following into account:

1. Accessibility by different types of transport, prioritizing pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users over other motorized vehicle users.
2. The design of developments to enable accessibility by public transport.
3. Freight movement for industrial and storage uses.
4. Servicing arrangements.
5. Parking, including parking for cycles and powered two-wheelers, in accordance with the parking standards set out in appendix 3.
6. The transport needs of people with disabilities.
7. The requirement for a transport assessment and travel plan with major trip generating developments.

POLICY S1

The council and its partners will:

1. Ensure that the design of new development will take into account the need to reduce crime and the fear of crime.
2. Promote road safety in the design of new development.
3. Target expenditure on road safety to locations with the worst safety record.

POLICY CG1

The council and its partners will:

1. Safeguard and enhance the rural areas of the borough from development that would adversely affect its biodiversity including trees, woodland and hedgerows, geodiversity, landscape character, recreational or agricultural value; or its contribution to green infrastructure, reducing flood risk and combating climate change.
2. Safeguard and enhance biodiversity in the borough by protecting sites of urban biodiversity including trees, woodland and hedgerows from adverse development, and improving the quality and interconnectivity of wildlife corridors and habitats.
3. Safeguard and enhance parks, gardens, allotments, civic spaces, cemeteries and playing fields and improve the quality and multi-functional benefits of these assets.
4. Allow some development on informal greenspaces in the urban area, provided that it allows for the improvement of remaining greenspaces and helps to meet the strategic objectives for housing.
5. Reduce the risk of flooding in Bolton and other areas down stream by minimising water run-off from new development and ensuring a sequential approach is followed, concentrating new development in areas of lowest flood risk.
6. Work towards minimizing energy requirements, improving energy efficiency, lessening the reliance on fossil fuel-based energy and reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.
7. Maximise the potential for renewable energy development and encourage proposals that contribute towards the renewable energy targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

POLICY CG3

The council and its partners will:

1. Expect development proposals to display innovative, sustainable designs that contribute to good urban design.
2. Conserve and enhance local distinctiveness, ensuring development has regard to the overall built character and landscape quality of the area.

3. Require development to be compatible with the surrounding area, in terms of scale, massing, grain, form, architecture, street enclosure, local materials and landscape treatment including hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment. Historical associations should be retained where possible.
4. Conserve and enhance the heritage significance of heritage assets and heritage areas, recognizing the importance of sites, areas and buildings of archaeological, historic, cultural and architectural interest and their settings.
5. Ensure development is designed in an inclusive manner which is accessible and legible to all, regardless of age, gender, background or disability.
6. Encourage the incorporation of design measures into new developments that allow adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events and also to reduce the threat of fuel poverty, through the careful selection of aspect, layout and massing, and by making buildings increasingly energy efficient.
7. Maintain and respect the landscape character of the surrounding countryside and its distinctiveness. Any soft landscaping and landscape enhancement schemes should enhance biodiversity and be compatible with the nearby landscape character types identified by the Landscape Character Assessment.

POLICY CG4

The council and its partners will:

1. Ensure that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses and occupiers, protecting amenity, privacy, safety and security.
2. Development should not generate unacceptable nuisance, odours, fumes, noise or light pollution, nor cause detrimental impacts upon water, ground or air quality.
3. Development proposals on land that is (or is suspected to be) affected by contamination or ground instability must include an assessment of the extent of the issues and any possible risks. Development will only be permitted where the land is, or is made, suitable for the proposed use.

POLICY SC1

The council and its partners will:

1. Identify a range of housing sites for additional provision of 694 dwellings per annum between 2008 and 2026.
2. At least 80% of housing development will be on previously developed land in accordance with

the Regional Spatial Strategy; the Transforming Estates programme will provide up to 20% of housing development on Greenfield land.

3. Ensure that 35% of new housing is affordable, broken down into 75% for social renting and 25% for intermediate housing. All developments which incorporate open market housing and with a capacity of 15 or more dwellings should ensure that provision of affordable housing is made on previously developed land 15% of total provision should be affordable and in the case of Greenfield land 35%. A lower proportion and/or a different tenure split may be permitted where it can clearly be demonstrated that development would not be financially viable and affordable housing provision is being maximised.
4. Ensure that for market and social rented housing, about 50% of dwellings are 3-bedroomed or larger, and no more than 20% (for market housing) or 10% (social rented) are 1-bedroomed. Ensure that for intermediate housing about 20% of dwellings are 3-bedroomed, and no more than 40% are 1-bedroomed.
5. Ensure that new housing has a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, and achieve higher densities where possible taking into account local character.
6. Provide an adequate supply of sites for gypsies and travellers, and travelling show people, taking into account such considerations as proximity to local services, the amenity of adjoining occupiers, the effect on the environment and the strategy of concentrating development in the existing urban area.

POLICY OA1

The council and its partners will:

1. Continue to promote Horwich town centre as being suitable for a mix of retailing, leisure, employment and housing uses.
2. Identify Horwich town centre as serving the western part of the borough for retailing.
3. Ensure the local centre at Blackrod will continue to serve local needs.
4. Concentrate sites for new housing in Horwich town centre, at Horwich LocoWorks and on other sites within the existing urban area.
5. Maintain current Green Belt boundaries.
6. Ensure Protected Open Land around Horwich and Blackrod remains undeveloped, except to the west of Horwich LocoWorks where development will be allowed to support the regeneration of the LocoWorks site.
7. Recognise the Community College site at Victoria Road as the principal focus for post-16 education in the western part of the borough.

8. Protect significant recreational areas in the West Pennine Moors and around Blackrod, including the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, from adverse development.
9. Conserve and enhance the character of the existing landscape and physical environment, especially the conservation areas at Horwich town centre, Horwich Loco Works and Wallsuches.
10. Ensure that development in Horwich and Blackrod respects street patterns, the grain and the form of predominant architectural styles and where possible makes sympathetic use of locally distinctive materials such as stone.
11. Ensure that new development does not harm the landscape setting and protects views from public areas to the surrounding landscape.
12. Develop new or expanded medical and health facilities at both Horwich and Blackrod.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework, last update September 2023

- 6.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The golden thread running throughout the Framework is the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11) whereby developments which correctly balance the requirements of economic, social and environmental issues should be granted planning permission unless there are strong reasons that permission should not be granted.
- 6.4 Sustainable development is broadly defined in Paragraph 8 of the Framework as having three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental.
- 6.5 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. For decision taking this means:
- c) Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
 - d) Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, grant planning permission unless:
 - i. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significant and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework as a whole; or
 - ii. Specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 6.6 Paragraph 38 directly refers to Permission in Principle applications stating:

"Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available,

including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.”

6.7 Section 5 details the need to continually deliver a sufficient supply of homes. The section details guidance on affordable homes, small and medium development sites and rural housing amongst other matters. This section represents the most up to date guidance on matters related to housing supply calculations and is particularly relevant given the Council are currently unable to demonstrate a sound supply of housing.

6.8 Paragraph 59 confirms the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and specifically states that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

6.9 Paragraph 63 makes clear that affordable housing will not be sought for minor developments, as is the case in this instance.

6.10 Paragraph 68 details that 10% of new homes should come from sites which are no larger than one hectare in size, whilst Paragraph 84 within the following section (Building a strong, competitive economy) states:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.”

6.11 Paragraph 78 states that rural housing should be in areas which enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, and planning policies should identify opportunities to help villages and grow to support local services.

- 6.12 Section 6 of the Framework is concerned with building a strong, competitive economy, with specific guidance in relation to supporting a prosperous rural economy.
- 6.13 National Green Belt policy is set out within Section 13 of the NPPF. Paragraph 137 states that the Government attaches great importance to the Green Belt. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of the Green Belt is its openness and permanence. Paragraph 138 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration,
- 6.14 Paragraph 147 states inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 6.15 Paragraph 148 builds upon this, stating that 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.
- 6.16 Paragraph 149 details how a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this rule are listed, with point (e) considered relevant to this proposal:
- 'e) limited infilling in villages;'*

- 6.17 The Framework also offers guidance in relation to transport, making efficient use of land, achieving well-designed places and with regard to enhancing the natural environment.

Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017

- 6.18 The relevant provisions of the Order are summarised in section 4 of this statement.

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 6.19 The relevant provisions of the NPPG are summarised in section 4 of this statement.

Other Relevant Local Guidance

- 6.20 The Blackrod Neighbourhood Plan is a strategically important legal document which will set out the vision and objectives of the community for the next 15 years. Covering Housing development, Infrastructure, Environment, Heritage & other areas determined by the residents & broader Blackrod community.

At a full meeting of Bolton Council on the 23rd June 2021 it was unanimously agreed that the Blackrod Neighbourhood Plan be Made part of the statutory development plan for the borough. This means that our Neighbourhood Plan is now a legal document. Work on the Plan is now complete but there are a number of Community Projects outlined in the Plan that we will need to help implement.

17 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 7.1 *Pertinent to establishing the principle of development at the site is the proposed scheme's compliance with Green Belt policy. National Green Belt policy is set out within Section 13 of the NPPF, specific to proposals affecting the Green Belt are Paragraphs 147 to 151. Paragraph 147 states that 'inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'. Paragraphs 149 and 150 list developments that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt. In relation to the construction of new buildings, Paragraph 149(e), is considered directly relevant to the proposal at hand, identifying 'limited infilling in villages' as an appropriate form of development.*
- 7.2 While the site does not lie within one of the formal settlement areas defined on Bolton Council Policies Map but the site is considered to be closely linked with both Blackrod, Aspull and Horwich Local centres.

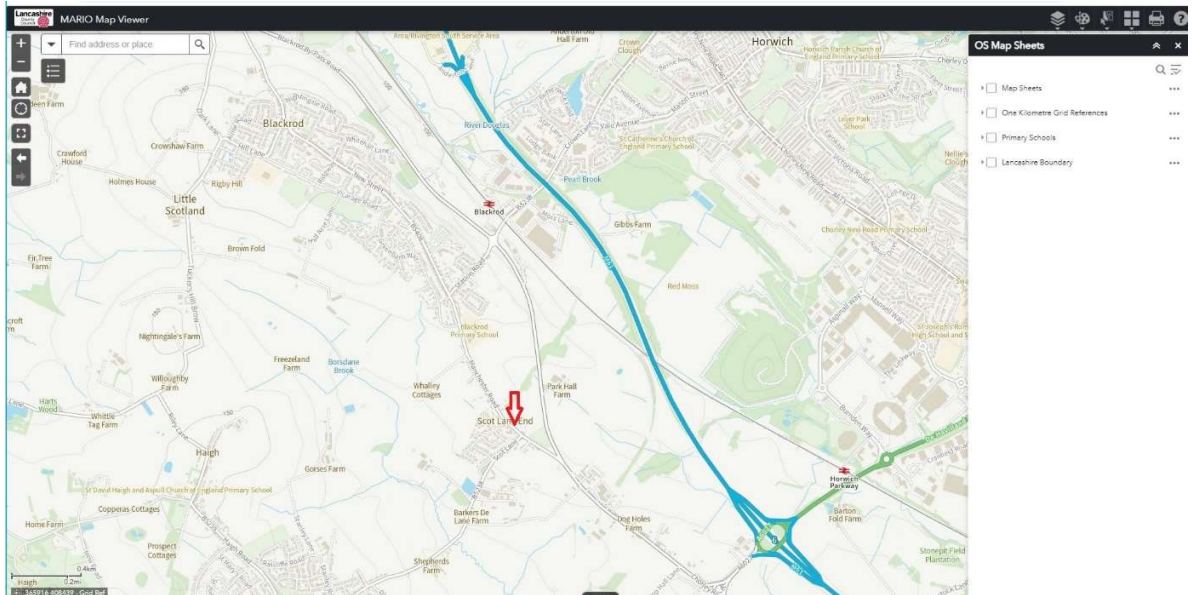


Figure 5: Application Site in relation to Blackrod and Horwich.
Image source: Lancashire CC.maps.argis.com

- 7.3 The site lies within an existing group of dwellings situated to the north, south and west sides, and directly opposite, on Manchester Road. The site forms part of the established development pattern providing a functional link to the formal settlement of Blackrod, which is defined on the Policies Map. The formal settlement boundary is located less than 500m to the north of the site, which is a five-minute walk along the footpath of Manchester Road.
- 7.4 Blackrod has a range of amenities for future residents within close proximity of the site, including a primary school, church, public houses, cafes, shops and public transport connections. Given the proximity of the site to the urban settlement and access to its range of services, the site should therefore be deemed to function as part of the town of Blackrod, where appropriate infill development is acceptable under Paragraph 149(e) of the NPPF.
- 7.5 The principle of this kind of residential road outside of the formal settlement boundary, constituting a 'smaller village' in the context of paragraph 149(e), was established in an appeal decision for a one dwelling proposal on Dark Lane, Whittle le Woods, Chorley (APP/D2320/A/13/2208852), and later reinforced by Chorley Council in their decision to allow two dwellings on that same site (15/01185/FUL). Although located in a different council borough it reinforces the premise of permission in principle applications determined by the planning inspectorate.
- 7.6 Similarly, a more recent appeal decision for erection of a single dwelling in the Greenbelt at Chapel Lane, Heapey, Chorley was also allowed, where the Inspector determined that the proposal would meet an exception test for constructing new buildings in the Greenbelt, by virtue of constituting limiting infilling in a village despite it being outside of the settlement boundary. (21/00744/PIP & APP/D2320/W/21/3283978). Chorley Council also agreed with this point in their defence of the appeal.



Figure 6: Application Site in relation to approved Greenbelt village infill dwellings, referenced in preceding paragraphs.

- 7.7 Further Planning inspectorate appeal decisions in Chorley borough for two dwellings at Parr Lane, Eccleston (17/00538/FUL & APP/D2320/W/18/3195499), and for a single dwelling at Coppull Moor Lane Nurseries (15/01098/FUL & APP/D2320/W/16/3154595), further support this; both being deemed as appropriate infill development with functional links to their nearest settlement, despite their locations outside of the defined settlement boundary, as defined the Local Plan Proposals Map.
- 7.8 In a 2015 Supreme Court decision (Julian Wood v SoS CLG and Gravesham Borough Council), the Local Planning Authority and the Planning Inspectorate were taken to task over refusal of an infill development on the grounds that it fell outside of the defined settlement boundary in the Local Plan, and therefore did not fall within the definition of infilling in villages. In that ruling, it was found necessary to consider whether, as a matter of fact on the ground, a site appears to be within a village rather than relying solely on the boundary provided in the local plan. As noted above, the existing development along Manchester Road within the village settlement of Scot Lane End, and the site's close proximity to Blackrod village means that the site effectively adjoins and functions as part of

the settlement and should therefore be deemed an appropriate location for infill development, in line with the 'in villages' requirement of paragraph 149 (e) of the NPPF.

- 7.9 The site shares a party boundary and adjoins the plot accommodating 455 Manchester Road which was approved for the erection of a dwelling within the same greenbelt settlement in recent years (2011).
- 7.10 The submitted illustrative Site Plan demonstrates how two dwellings, of a comparable scale to the existing dwellings along Manchester Road, could be comfortably configured on site within the frontage. It is noteworthy that the site is a similar size to the curtilages of the neighbouring dwellings located either side. Like these dwellings, the application proposal would retain a considerable amount of amenity space around the proposed dwellings, ensuring the sense of openness at the locality. It is proposed to retain the existing trees along the site's southern and eastern boundaries, both to maintain the natural appearance of the street-scene and for the privacy of future occupiers of the proposed dwellings.
- 7.11 While the NPPF does not define 'limited' infilling, it is considered that the application proposal would constitute as such. The preceding images show that the application site has a 75% wider comparable frontage size to the plots that neighbour it either side. Each of these plots accommodates a single dwelling with associated outbuildings. The infill proposal at the application site would be 'limited' in its density and plot size.

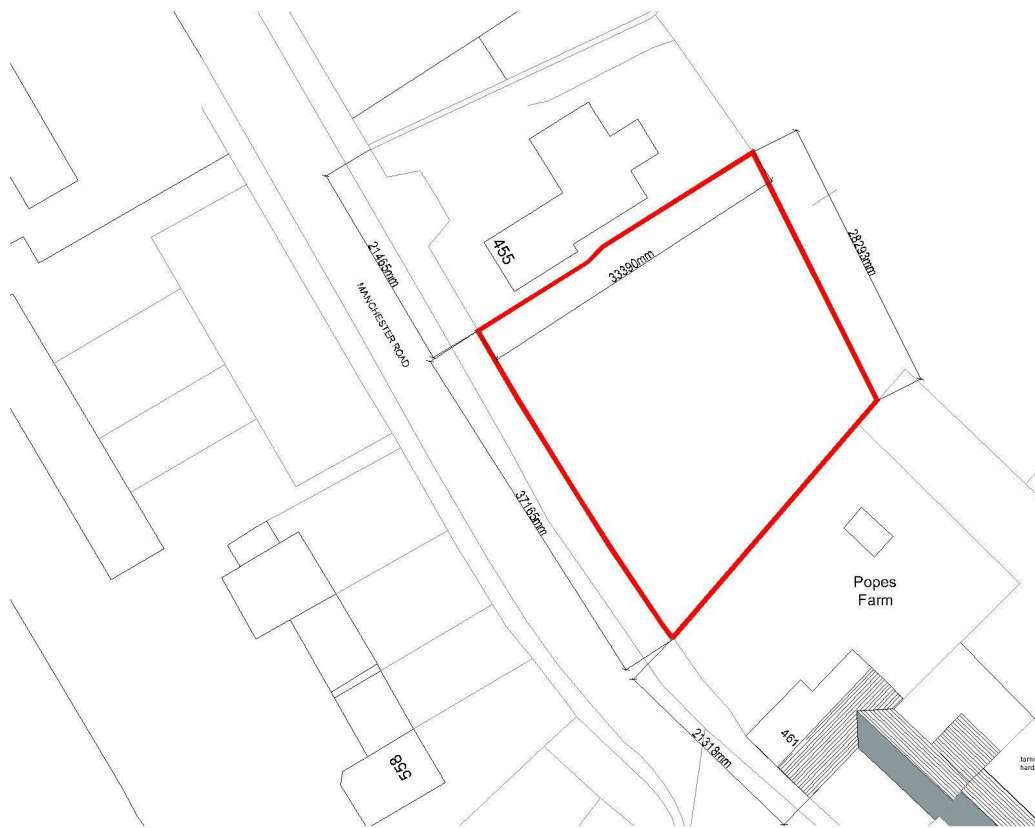


Figure 7: Plot frontage measurement – 37m – Adjacent properties approx. 21m each

7.12 Whilst design and layout are not matters of relevance to this Stage 1 PIP application, it is considered that two dwellings can be developed on site that will complement the setting and character of the existing street scene and local area. Taking the above factors into account, the proposals are deemed to fully accord with the requirements of the NPPF, representing appropriate infill development. The proposals represent appropriate development within the Green Belt, representing limited small-scale infilling in a village in accordance

with Paragraph 149(e) of the NPPF. Furthermore, the proposals would contribute towards the Council's requirement to provide a minimum number of new homes in Chorley as per Core Strategy Policy 4. It should also be noted that Bolton Council currently cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, with their current supply position being 3.9 years. One inspector recently stated that the housing need in Bolton is 'critical'¹. The proposed dwelling would make a small but valuable contribution to Bolton's housing supply which is currently at 79% provision deficit.

- 7.13 Considering the wider Framework, it is important to note that Paragraph 7 of the NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At Paragraph 8 it states that: "*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)*".
- 7.14 The first objective is with regards to the economy, where the planning system should help to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. The second objective is a social objective whereby the planning system should help to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being. Finally, an environmental objective, whereby the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and minimising waste and pollution.
- 7.15 The proposals would see the development of a parcel of land which benefits from clear links to the formal settlement of Blackrod. The scheme would deliver two dwellings, with the scale and appearance saved for a future Stage 2 PIP submission, which as above would contribute to Bolton's housing supply need. Given the nature of the scheme as a minor development, it is considered more than likely that before and during construction, the

development would contribute to the local economy directly through the employment of local companies to facilitate the build. This would include town planners and architects/designers as part of the Stage 2 application process, local contractors involved in the physical build and the local supply chain through the provision of materials. Once occupied, new residents of the proposals would use and support the growth of local services. It is considered that the proposed development would therefore assist in achieving the economic aims of sustainable development.

- 7.16 The application is not accompanied at this stage by the technical assessments, which would allow for adherence to the environmental aims of sustainable development to be demonstrated, though it is again reiterated that such matters are not relevant to the application at hand. The location of the site is considered sustainable in the context of the NPPF given its location within walking distance of a range of facilities within Blackrod, including primary school, pubs, cafes and shop, and to local public transport options.
- 7.17 The Framework also provides support for small to medium sized sites in Paragraph 65, detailing that 10% of a Council's housing requirement should be delivered on sites no larger than 1 hectare. We are not aware of any statement made by the Council which suggests they are in a position to meet this requirement. As such it stands to reason that 10% of the annualised requirement – 50 dwellings a year, will need to come forward as windfall sites that the Council are yet to account for. Consequently, the application at hand can be considered to make a valuable contribution in aiding the Council to meet this requirement.

- 7.18 Finally, it should be noted that the proposed development would fall within the definition of a self-built homes as per the NPPF, being houses built by individuals to be occupied by that individual, which is a type of housing that the Government is keen to encourage.
- 7.19 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would constitute sustainable development in the context policy SC1 and policy of the NPPF. Furthermore, the above analysis would also suggest the proposals can be viewed positively in the context of the adopted Development Plan.

Design and Technical Considerations

- 7.20 Further to the information detailed in Section 4 of this statement, it is again important to reiterate that design and technical matters are not appropriate/relevant considerations to the application at hand. The nature of PIP applications infers that development could be permissible at Stage 1, but subsequently fail to gain Stage 2 consent. Whilst this is correct, concerns regarding technical matters, such as heritage or ecology, should not form part of the determination of this application. It is only when the Council have the technical information provided as part of a Stage 2 application that an informed position on such matters can be reached.
- 7.21 Whilst details of design in the PIP process are reserved until Stage 2, it remains the intention of the applicant to ensure that future submissions achieve the aspirations set out within planning policy. An indicative Site Plan has been submitted to illustrate how a single dwelling could be configured on site, with appropriate amenity space and access. In this respect, the single dwelling proposed within the red line is of a scale in keeping with the character of the area, which is defined by large, detached dwellings.
- 7.22 As noted in Section 5 of this statement, it is the applicant's intention that the new dwellings would be two-storey detached dwellings for the applicant's family. The fact that the dwellings would be true self-build projects would ensure that the family's living needs are met. In the future, the proposals would also add to the stock of detached family dwellings in Bolton.

Planning Balance

- 7.23 This section of the Planning Statement has succinctly detailed how the proposed development can be judged as acceptable in the context of the Development Plan and the Framework. Whilst the site lies within the Green Belt, the proposals represent appropriate infill development, with the site lying within an existing built-up frontage with properties in the locality. The scale of the proposals for two dwellings represents small-scale infill, appropriate to the site's local context. The site is considered to function as part of the village of Blackrod, which lies in close proximity to the site and provides a range of amenities and services within walking distance of the site. The existing properties along Manchester Road connect to the settlement boundary, with the site having a clear connection to the settlement.
- 7.24 This Stage 1 PIP application asks the Council to consider the submission in the context of location, land use and amount of development and in relation to all three variables, the proposals are considered acceptable in principle.

/8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 BPD Architecture is retained by Miss Nicola Woods to progress a Stage 1 Permission in Principle application for the erection of 2 no. dwellings at land adjacent 455 Manchester Road, Blackrod, Bolton.
- 8.2 The proposals are considered appropriate within the Green Belt, representing limited infill development within an existing built frontage in a village settlement. The site is deemed to function as part of the settlement of Scot Lane End and Blackrod, with the formal settlement boundary of Blackrod lying within 500m of the site and a number of existing dwellings in the immediate surrounds. By virtue of the nearby facilities, including a primary school, shop and bus stops, the proposed development is considered to be located sustainably. Whilst the design and layout of the proposals are not matters for consideration at this stage, it is considered a single dwelling can be developed which is in keeping with street scene and character of the area.
- 8.3 At this first stage of PIP development, it is only the submitted plan and application form that are submitted alongside this statement. Other relevant technical considerations are not applicable at this stage, with this information to be submitted at the technical consideration stage of the application.
- 8.4 The works would result in a number of key benefits which are deemed relevant to the determination of the application, namely: -
- Delivery of 2 no. much needed new homes, assisting the Authority in meeting its housing delivery targets;
 - Support for existing businesses and suppliers in the area during construction, contributing to the local economy; and
 - Delivery of a site under 1ha, against a requirement as set out in the NPPF to deliver 10% of housing on such 'smaller' sites;

- The proposal would be for self-build dwellings, which is a type of housing that the Government actively encourages.

8.5 For the reasons identified within this Statement, it is considered that PIP for the proposed development should be granted, and the application is commended to the authority.