

Greenbelt Statement

Proposals: *Extension to form new
Garden Room / Sun room*

Located at: *Brearley Farm,
Littleborough, Rochdale*



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1 Introduction

This Green Belt statement has been prepared on behalf of our client with regards to the proposed works to create a sun room/garden room extension to the existing building at Brearley Farm, Littleborough. The site and building is located approximately 0.6km north-east of Hollingworth Lake, with latitude and longitude for the site of 53°36'0"N, 2°4'42"W. The postcode for the site is OL15 0AG.

The existing property and general site details are as follows:

- The site is within the green belt boundary,
- the site contains a farmhouse, converted barn and garage,
- the site is not within flood zones 2 or 3,
- the land where the sunroom is to be situated is classed as previously developed land (PDL) and is currently hard surfaced,
- the site is not within a conservation area nor close to one,
- the site does not contain a listed building or NDHA,
- the proposals would not affect the setting of a heritage asset,
- the proposals would not remove or effect habitat or effect any existing trees or shrubs.

Our aim under this application is to provide a new single-storey sun-room/garden room extension to the north-west gable of the property; the extension will be made from a timber frame but will be clad in facing stone and glazing with stone surrounds (i.e. heads and sills); stonework will match the stone in use on the main building in order to respect the main building's character. We also propose to create new hard and soft landscaping to soften the approach to the dwelling, and which will enhance the setting of the building.

This statement is intended to clarify that the proposals are in full accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (Dec, 2024), Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land.



The enclosed drawings may not be to standard scales, due to the need to represent them at the largest possible scale for clarity; as such scale bars have been excluded. For accurate dimensions please refer to the separate planning drawings contained within the application submission.

2 Green Belt Policy:

2.1 Policy

Extensions to buildings within Green Belt Land are subject to specific criteria. The aim of the governments Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024) under section 13, Protecting Green Belt Land; provides five 'purposes' of Green Belt policy in paragraph 143; these are:

- 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, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

Local planning authorities are instructed to regard the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt as inappropriate. However, there are exceptions to the policy. NPPF Paragraph 154, states:

154. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- c) 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;*
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- e) limited infilling in villages;*
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and*
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.*

- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:*
- i. mineral extraction;*
 - ii. engineering operations;*
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;*
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;*
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and*
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.*

This Greenbelt Statement will focus on the 'exception' clause which fits this particular site and proposal, namely:

- c) 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;*

The term 'original building' is a specifically defined planning term and is described in the Town and Country Planning Act as:

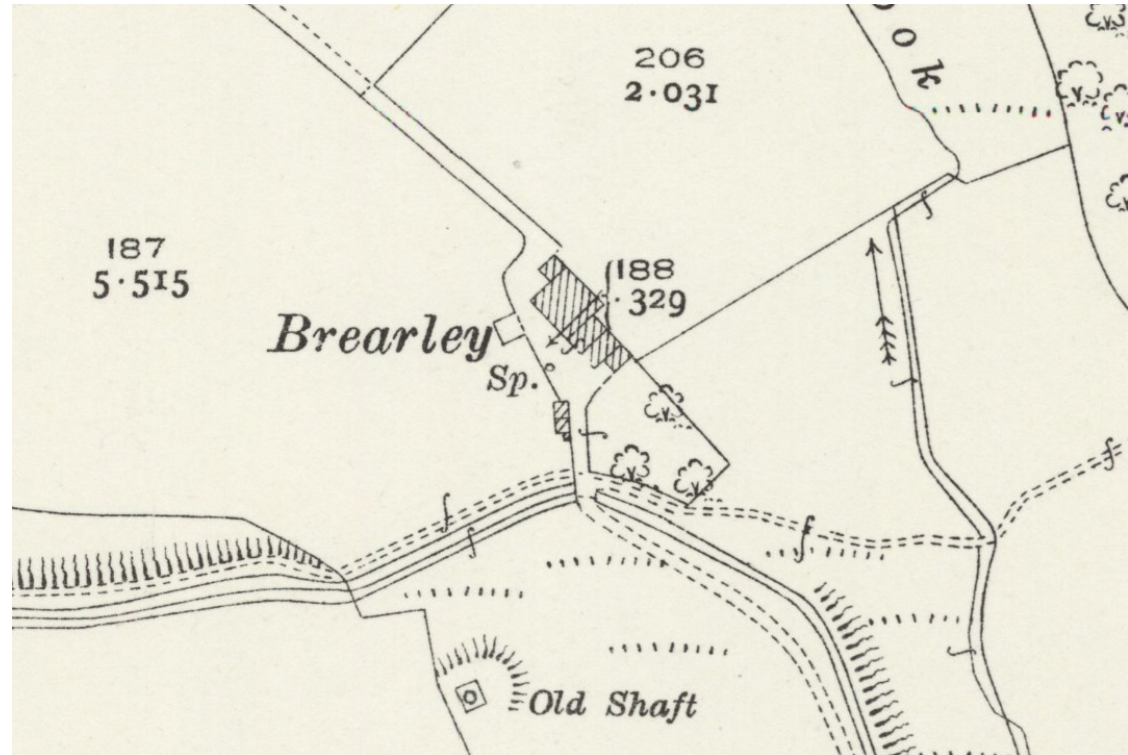
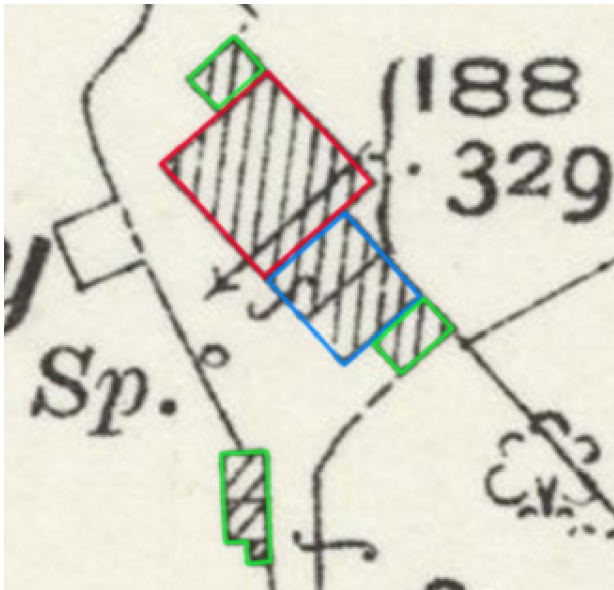
'...a building as it existed on 1st July 1948 where it was built before that date, and as it was built when after that date.'

There is no defined term for what constitutes '*disproportionate additions*' to a building but a general rule of thumb often used by planning authorities is a 33% increase in mass/volume over the original building. The following sections will show that these proposals are a small increase in the size of the 'original building' (as it existed in 1948) and as such qualify for greenbelt exception policy c), thereby making the proposal suitable for approval under both local and national green belt policy.

3 'Original Building' Assessment

3.1 1948 Development ('existing building')

The map (right) is an extract from the 1930 OS map (ref: *OS Lancashire Sheet LXXXI.15 – 1928-1930*). This is the closest map to 1948 available. It shows that the site contained several buildings in a long terrace along with a separate smaller building to the south. The main barn and farmhouse appear to remain intact on-site now; the enlarged inset (below) has been highlighted with the existing barn (red), the existing farmhouse (blue) and several extensions which no longer exist (green). Although we can't be certain from the map it is likely that the extensions (green) were all single storey buildings used for storage, housing animals or as workshops; regardless, they count as footprint and volume as part of any Green Belt 'original building' calculation.



We have searched for historic photographs of the site and wider area (for the period circa 1948) from a variety of sources without success.

3.2 Present-Day Development

The image right shows the 1930 building outlines (taken from the previous image) and overlayed over the 2025 satellite image. As can be seen the existing barn (red) and the existing farmhouse (blue) still remain in their original size and shape; however, the three green buildings have now gone.

The image below shows the same information but with the two present day extensions added in orange; these consist of a rear extension to the farmhouse (east of the site) and a detached double garage (south of the site).



Several other structures are also present but these are not permanent or of substantial construction (such as a small portable woodshed to the west of the garage, a moveable fabric pergola to the south of the garage, trampoline, etc.) so should not be considered for green belt purposes as these are residential paraphernalia covered under permitted development rights.

The image below includes all extensions forming the 'original building' which have now been lost (green) compared alongside, and also overlayed, with the extensions present on-site today (orange). The comparison overlay (bottom left) shows that the amount of present-day building is only slightly more than was present in the 'original building' as it existed in 1948; if all extensions, both 'existing' and 'present-day' and assumed to be single storey there would be perhaps a 5% increase overall.

Elsewhere on the site there are several other shed buildings which are used for agricultural use, i.e. the storage of animals and their feed; these volumes have not been included in this assessment as these are already permissible and 'appropriate' under Greenbelt exception policy 154 a), and as they are a reasonable distance from the farmhouse complex and not within the garden curtilage area they should not be included in this assessment.



3.3 Proposed Development

The map (right) shows the present-day situation plus these proposals (purple) for a new garden room located to the northern end of the barn.

The proposals consist of a single storey orangery type structure some 4m wide x 8m long when measured externally. If, based on the previous assessment images provided, the existing development present consists of a nominal 5% increase over the size of the 'existing building' as it stood in 1948; then we would be looking for no more than a further 28% increase in volume for this proposal (before we hit the notional 33% max). As can be seen in the image right the proposals would not constitute a 28% increase in volume (over a quarter increase) in the footprint or volume of the property, especially considering the proposals are single storey – it is more likely a 10% increase max.

The proposals cannot therefore be considered 'disproportionate additions' and consequently comply with NPPF policy. Thereby becoming 'appropriate development'.



4 Conclusion

NPPF Greenbelt policy provides the following ‘exception’ clause at paragraph 154:

- c) *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;*

The term ‘original building’ in planning terms relates to a specifically defined term and is described in the Planning Portal glossary of terms as:

- *‘...a building as it existed on 1st July 1948 where it was built before that date, and as it was built when after that date.’*

The previous sections have clearly shown that the volume and footprint of these proposals (estimated at 10% increase in volume), including any increases or decreases in volume as the site stands presently (estimated at a 5% increase from ‘existing’) is significantly less than the volume and footprint of the ‘original building’ as it was in 1948. It is therefore clear that the proposals do not result in *‘disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building’*, and consequently they meet Greenbelt exception policy 154 c.

As stated several small sheds are also located within the farmstead, however these are for purely agricultural use (housing animals and feed) and are already permissible under NPPF exception policy 154 a, which also makes them ‘appropriate’ volumes within the Greenbelt; considering their distance from the main farm complex they should not be included in this assessment.

Further, officers are reminded that proposals that meet ‘exception policy’ criteria are automatically considered ‘appropriate’ and are held against their own exception policy criteria alone; and not against the criteria of other exception policies or other greenbelt policy clauses; that is to say that ‘impacts on the openness of the greenbelt’, or other such clauses, do not form part of any assessment in relation to compliance with NPPF exception policy 154 c.

With all the above in mind we trust Rochdale planning officers will fully support and approve these proposals on greenbelt policy grounds.