

Green Belt Assessment

- 1.1 Rough Lee Farm is within the Green Belt, the proposal does not result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 1.2 The NPPF, July 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Adopted Core Strategy Policy G4 protects the Pennine rural fringe to the north and east of the borough where its primary role will be to prevent encroachment into the countryside (i.e. land north of Rochdale and Heywood, east of Rochdale). Development will be restricted to those limited types of development which are deemed not to be inappropriate by national planning policies unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Development will be supported where this maintains beneficial uses and does not harm the Green Belt.
- 1.3 Paragraph 147 of the NPPF sets out that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 1.4 Paragraph 150 of the NPPF confirms that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purpose of including land within it. Relevant to this application is exception e) of paragraph 150, materials changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds).
- 1.5 The proposal is to change the use of the land from agricultural to equestrian and to create an outdoor riding arena for the applicant and her family to use for their recreation. This meets the exception in paragraph 150 e) as the land will be used for outdoor sport and recreation.
- 1.6 Rochdale Core Strategy adopted policy G4 is supportive of sustainable development where it is in accordance with NPPF policies. Policy G/D/2 of the Rochdale UDP aims to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- 1.7 The development site is not visually prominent from public viewpoints. It is set at a lower ground level (283M AOD) than the A680 Edenfield Road that runs parallel to the site (294M AOD) to its north and is screened by the existing dry stone boundary field wall that will be retained.

Effect on openness

- 1.8 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF identifies openness as one of the essential characteristics of Green Belts. Openness can include both visual and spatial elements. In visual terms, the impact of the riding arena is limited. In terms of its spatial impact, the riding arena will harmonise with the scale, height, form and design of the surrounding buildings and will not be obtrusive in its location.
- 1.9 In summary the development is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and neither would it interfere with the openness of the land.