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GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING GARAGE TO FORM 1 DWELLING

1. Introduction

This Green Belt assessment has been prepared to support the proposed change of use of an existing garage located between Salley Street and Higher Calderbrook Road, Littleborough, Rochdale. The proposed change of use involves converting the garage into a habitable space, with no extensions or new openings being created. The garage has already been approved and constructed in accordance with the approved planning permission. This assessment considers the impact of the proposed change of use on the Green Belt, based on relevant planning policies and guidance.

2. Green Belt Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local planning policies seek to protect Green Belt areas from inappropriate development. The primary objectives of Green Belt policy are to:

- Prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
- Preserve the openness of the Green Belt and prevent encroachment into the countryside.
- Promote sustainable development by allowing for limited development where it does not harm the character or function of the Green Belt.
- Development within the Green Belt is generally restricted to certain types of development, such as the re-use of existing buildings, as long as it does not materially harm the openness or purpose of the Green Belt.

3. Site Context

The existing garage is situated within a Green Belt area, which is designated to prevent sprawl and maintain the openness of the land. The garage was previously granted planning approval and constructed according to the approved plans. The building's footprint and external appearance have not been altered since construction.

4. Impact of Proposed Change of Use

The proposed change of use from a garage to a habitable space involves no physical extension, enlargement, or creation of new openings, meaning that the overall size and appearance of the building will remain the same. As such, the following considerations apply:

a. Openness of the Green Belt

No Enlargement or Alteration: The change of use does not include extensions or new openings, and the building will retain its current size, shape, and visual impact. Therefore, the change of use will have no material impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Visual and Physical Impact: The visual impact of the garage, as a small outbuilding, will not increase as a result of the change of use. The building's scale, massing, and location on the site will remain unchanged.

b. Re-use of Existing Building

The conversion of the garage into a habitable space constitutes the re-use of an existing building, which is supported under Green Belt policy. The re-use of buildings within the Green Belt is generally seen as appropriate, as it limits the need for new structures and helps preserve the openness of the area.

There is no indication that the proposed change of use will create any negative impacts on the character or openness of the surrounding Green Belt land.

c. Compliance with Green Belt Objectives

The change of use will not lead to urban sprawl or encroach upon the countryside, as it involves only the adaptation of an existing building, with no new development or extensions.

The building will remain in its current position, and no changes to the external environment or the land surrounding the building are proposed. This ensures that the openness of the Green Belt is preserved.

5. Conclusion

The proposed change of use of the existing garage to a habitable space complies with Green Belt policies, as it does not involve any extension, enlargement, or significant alteration of the building. The re-use of the existing structure aligns with the objectives of protecting the openness of the Green Belt and preventing urban sprawl.

Given that there will be no physical change to the building or its surroundings, the proposal will not adversely affect the Green Belt or its openness. The change of use is considered appropriate and consistent with local and national planning policies designed to protect Green Belt land. Therefore, the change of use should be supported under Green Belt policy.