Walmersley Golf Club
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Planning Statement for the Erection of a 20,000 litre non potable water storage tank situated on land at Walmersley Golf Club.

Date: 27 December 2020

Planning Statement

- **Background**

Walmersley Golf Club is a Community Amateur Sports Club and comprises an 18 hole Golf Course situated to the North of Bury Town Centre with the majority of the Course being within Bury MBC. The land on which it is situated is owned on behalf of the Members of the Club.

In the Summer of 2018 and also April 2020 the Course suffered tremendously as a result of the extended very dry spells of weather. There is currently no irrigation system to the whole of the Course which could be used to water, especially the Greens and Tees. Due to the lack of water they, became very dry and as a result the grass stopped growing and basically died back.

With the effect of climate change, it is considered that extended dry periods will become more commonplace. Consequently to safeguard the Course in such periods, it is proposed to install a full irrigation system to ensure that key parts of it i.e. Greens and Tees can be watered when required.

- **The Green Belt**

The Golf Course is situated within the area in Bury designated as Green Belt. The land is currently and will continue to be used for a sporting activity. It is also used by walkers and cyclists who use the footpaths which traverse the Course. These footpaths are clearly marked and are maintained by the Golf Club. Should any walkers be seen on the footpaths, it is the rule that Golfers cease to play until they are safely out of range. It is important that these two pursuits can exist harmoniously. There is no intention in the application to affect the land which is available for walkers and cyclists to traverse. It is clearly the case that they will not be affected. Furthermore should the land cease to be a Golf Course at any time in the future then the tank would be redundant and could be removed.

- **The Application**

The planning application which was submitted on 30 October 2020, is for the siting of a 20,000 litre non potable water tank on rough land due south of a property called Broomses Farm. Copies of photographs showing the nature of the land in question are enclosed. The location is shown outlined in red on the plan forwarded on the 27th November 2020 (further copy enclosed). The purpose of this tank is to store water such that it can be distributed through a system of pipes to irrigate the tees and greens when required. The proposed tank will be 2.85m in diameter and 3.6m high. It will cover an area of 6.38sq. metres (0.000638ha). If required trees/hedging could be planted around the tank as a screen although we do not believe that this should be necessary given the proposed location of the tank. The tank will be filled from the Club's existing Borehole and needs to be sited at the proposed location which is at a high point to ensure that the area to the south of it can be gravity fed.

- **Other Considerations**

Due to the proximity of the proposed location of the tank to the property known as Broomses Farm, discussions have taken place with the owner of this property. They have not expressed any objection to it provided the tank is sited at such a location that it does not affect their view due south from the property. The location of the tank has been fixed to ensure this.

- **Development Control Policy Guidance Note 8 – New Buildings and Associated Development in the Green Belt – January 2007.**

Clearly not all of this document is relevant to the Club's proposal in the light of its limited scale and content, but comment is made on those sections which it is believed could be.

- Paragraph 4.19 states that the provision of essential facilities (buildings or other development) associated with an outdoor recreation use can be viewed as being an appropriate use in the Green Belt
- Under paragraph 4.22, it is not considered that the extent of this proposal should render the proposal inappropriate
- With regard to Section 5 of the Guidance Note, which addresses design considerations, it is believed that the proposal is consistent with the requirements set out under Siting and Visual Design, Scale and Form and Materials and Colour. The tank will be sited close to an existing building, with the Owner's consent, and will not be visible from any main roads or settlements. It will possibly be visible from the north/south dead end road to the east of the intended site but, by courtesy of its siting and colour will not be obtrusive. Under paragraph 5.16- 5.21, Surroundings, the tank should be rendered unobtrusive by the surrounding unimproved grassland and shrubbery, but further screening could be introduced in a form to be agreed with the Council (para 5.18) if deemed necessary
- Finally, with respect to Appendix 1 – UDP Policy. It is stated that for a development proposal to be acceptable within the Green Belt, it must, in addition to satisfying the broader requirements of the Guidance Note, possess at least one of the following characteristics: have a low proportion of building area in relation to land area; would not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt or be conspicuous from or within the Green Belt; be essential or traditional countryside uses; help to secure the proper management of the Green Belt land. It is believed that the proposal possesses all of these characteristics.

- **Conclusion**

It is considered that this application can be accommodated within the Council's green belt policy as set out in Development Control Policy Guidance Note 8. It is very small and unobtrusive in nature, will assist in presenting the Golf Course in good condition, which in itself will benefit the Club's viability through retained membership, and will enable the current labour intensive method of watering further parts of the Golf Course, which involves the use of a tractor towed bowser, to be replaced by a far more efficient and environmentally friendly irrigation system.

DLT/27/12/2020





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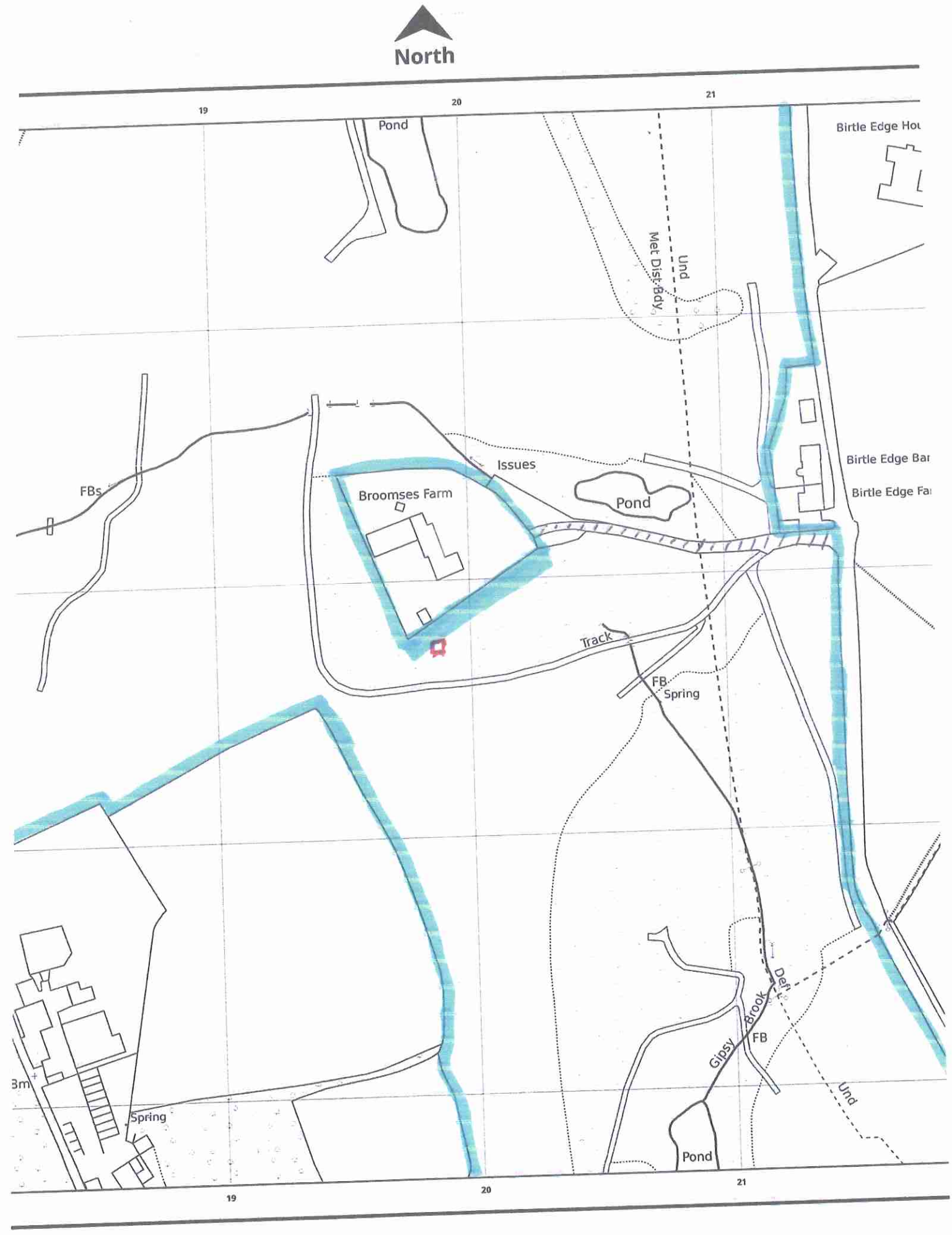

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