



Proposed development of land for residential purposes – Permission in Principle Application

Land Rear Of 22 Birch Avenue, Wardle, OL12 9QH

Supporting Planning Statement

Prepared by:

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1 Introduction & Site Description

- 1.1 This supporting statement has been drafted by Civitas Planning Limited in support of this Permission in Principle (PIP) application for the development of up to 8 No Dwellings on the land shown on the plans associated with the application.
- 1.2 The site forms an area of land situated between houses located on Birch Avenue to the west and on Birch Hill Crescent and Mayflower Gardens to the east. The total site area is 3,967.8m², under the threshold for PIP arguments.
- 1.3 The site lies within the defined Urban Area as designated in the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan 2006. The site is not subject to any heritage or ecology-related designations or protections.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 The application seeks Permission in Principle (Stage 1) for the erection of up to 8 dwellings on the site.
- 2.2 To conclude, we are firmly of the view that there is ample evidence, decisions and case law to demonstrate that the site is indeed in a sustainable location. However, without prejudice to any of that, we would also draw attention to the appeal decisions at Appendix M in this regard. It is of note that the Council are in a worse off position in terms of housing supply than some of the Councils subject of these appeal decisions.

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 When determining an application for Permission in Principle (PIP), the council is limited to considering issues that relate solely to the location, land use, and the amount of development proposed. These core matters form the basis of the decision-making process under the PIP route, which is designed to provide

a fast-track mechanism for assessing whether a site is, in principle, suitable for housing-led development. The scope of consideration at this stage deliberately excludes detailed matters such as design, layout, access, drainage, or environmental mitigation, which are instead addressed at the technical details consent stage.

- 3.2 As such, when assessing a PIP application, the council will focus on whether the proposed land use aligns with local and national planning policies, whether the site is in a suitable location for the type and scale of development proposed, and whether the indicative amount of development falls within acceptable parameters. The council must also take into account relevant constraints that may render the site unsuitable in principle—such as flooding, heritage assets, or protected designations—where these relate to the overarching suitability of the site. Any considerations outside this narrow scope cannot influence the outcome of a PIP application.
- 3.3 As stated above, the site lies within the Defined Urban Area (as designated on the saved UDP Proposals Map). The site can therefore be considered to be in a sustainable location in line with the NPPF and Places for Everyone (PfE) policy JP-S1.
- 3.4 The Council's approach to residential development in the Borough is set out in policies C1 to C5 of the adopted CS. It is considered, that in the context of the PIP application, policies C1 and C3 are particularly relevant.
- 3.5 Policy C1 *Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places* sets out the Council's priorities for residential development in different parts of the borough, mainly distinguishing the borough's southern, more urban area from the northern Pennine Fringe area. The application site lies within the latter north part of the borough as designated in the Core Strategy.
- 3.6 C1 notes that: *'In the north of the borough, we will deliver an overall scale and density of development that reflects the accessibility and character of the Pennine fringe (Policy C3);'*

And:

'We will consider the sustainable development of greenfield sites within the urban area where it is demonstrated that:

- a. the development would have limited adverse impact on green infrastructure or amenity value in and around the site; and*
- b. green infrastructure is, wherever possible, incorporated into the scheme.*

3.7 The application site comprises a greenfield site within the urban area and as such residential development on the site could comply with the points noted at paragraphs a) and b) above.

3.8 Many detailed elements of applications can be put aside for the determination of the PIP, but in terms of housing density and mix, the Core Strategy supports a range of homes to meet different needs of the Borough, including high value homes. Policy C3 *Delivering the right type of housing* notes in general that the Council will:

'...deliver the right types of homes, well designed and built to appropriate densities, to meet the overall needs and aspirations of the borough. To do this we will:

- Ensure new development provides housing types that take account of local needs and aspirations;

- Ensure that the supply of larger and higher value housing in the borough is improved; - Require a high standard of design and layout that produces attractive places and takes account of energy efficiency and climate change;

- Promote densities that make efficient use of land whilst delivering a range of housing to widen choice in the borough and reflect local character; and

- Support the provision of housing on appropriate sites to meet the needs of specific groups including older people and other vulnerable groups'

3.9 Of particular relevance to the site, C3 goes on to note that:

'In the north of the borough there will be a focus on providing a range of higher value housing to attract and retain residents. To do this we will:

- a. Support lower density development if it delivers higher value dwellings of a type and size that are currently in short supply across the borough; (...)*
- b. Limit higher density development (50 dwellings per hectare and above) to sites in the centre of Littleborough, close to transport interchanges, and along the canal corridor.*

3.10 Although the final density is not yet agreed, it is evidently clear that the scale of the scheme as proposed would likely achieve a lower and would deliver higher value dwellings, at least relative to typical housing in the established residential areas to the west of the site.

3.11 It is therefore clear that the above housing policies support the residential development of the site as a matter of general principle.

3.12 It is clear that the site is large enough to accommodate the number of dwellings proposed whilst also protecting the amenity of neighbouring properties, in line with the Rochdale Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD.

3.13 All other relevant matters are not to be considered as part of the PIP, however, the applicant is confident that matters such as ecology, access etc can be dealt with at the detailed stage.

Conclusion

3.14 It is therefore demonstrated that the proposals are compliant with all relevant planning policy at this stage, and that planning permission in principle should be granted.