

Officer Report

Case Reference: 25/01104/FUL
Location: Land to the Side of 19 Salley Street, Calderbrook, Rochdale
Littleborough OL15 9NG
Proposal: PROPOSED ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL
EQUIPMENT AND FEED STORAGE BUILDING WITH
ASSOCIATED STABLES
Recommendation: Refuse
Officer: Anna Hayes

SITE

The application site consists of a small field measuring approximately 0.12 hectares, located within the designated Green Belt. The site is situated to the northwest of Salley Street in the Calderbrook area of Rochdale, just north of Littleborough town centre.

The site is in a relatively exposed and elevated position, bordered by land and buildings associated with Denehurst Farm to the north and east, and by residential terraced houses (nos. 9–19 Salley Street) to the south. Nos 9 -19 Salley Street are locally listed non-designated heritage assets. The site also shares a southern boundary with a wooden-clad structure known as Summit View Cabin and its surrounding land. This cabin was subject of a retrospective planning application (24/00692/FUL) for its use as a holiday let, which was subsequently refused planning permission and dismissed at appeal (APP/P4225/W/24/3356528)

The site is mostly vacant except for three small deteriorating wooden shed structures. During the Officer's site visit, the field was observed being used for horse grazing. To the immediate north and northwest lie the Pennine Bridleway and Mary Town Loop, beyond which are open fields. To the south-east, on the opposite side of Salley Street are open fields leading down into the valley and over Summit in the direction of Snoddle Hill.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the erection of an agricultural equipment and feed storage building with associated stables.

The proposed building would be steel framed, extend 15m x 15m in footprint and be built under a dual-pitch roof with a maximum height of 6.3m above the resultant ground level.

The agricultural storage area has been designed to accommodate a small tractor, ride-on mower, fencing materials and wood-chipping equipment. This area will be internally separated from a feed and bedding store and six stables with two tack and feed rooms.

The proposed materials to the external elevations of the walls and roof comprise juniper green box-profile metal cladding with a juniper green metal roller shutter door upon a concrete base.

The proposed building is required to:

- Provide secure storage for agricultural equipment, feed, and hay to avoid spoilage.
- Replace four dilapidated timber sheds with one consolidated, fit-for-purpose building.
- Support animal welfare through compliant stabling with adequate ventilation and protection from the elements.
- Ensure continued and sustainable management of the applicant's landholding.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's policies for plan making and for making decisions on development proposals in England. It is a material consideration of critical importance in both contexts.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Development Plan

Under section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The development plan for the proposal consists of the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, Rochdale Core Strategy (CS), adopted 2016, saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies, and the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan April 2013. The Council also has an adopted series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) (2024)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant:

Sustainable and Resilient Places

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-S2 Carbon and Energy

JP-S3 Heat and Energy Networks

JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment

JP-S5 Clean Air

JP-S6 Resource Efficiency

Greener Places

JP-G1 Landscape Character

JP-G5: Uplands

JP-G7 Trees and Woodland

JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

JP-G9 The Green Belt

Places for People

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

JP-P2 Heritage

Connected Places

JP-C1 An Integrated Network

JP-C6 Walking and Cycling

JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development

Rochdale Core Strategy (CS)

SO1 To deliver a more prosperous economy

E6 Supporting and diversifying the rural economy

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving image

P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a Greener Environment

G6 Enhancing Green Infrastructure

G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

G8 Managing water resources and flood risk

G9 Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

G10 Managing mineral resources

SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving accessibility

Managing delivery and monitoring progress

DM1 General Development requirements

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

G/D/2 - Green Belt

EM/7 – Development and Flood Risk

EM/8 – Protection of Surface and Ground Water

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

24/01137/FUL – Erection of one new residential dwelling – Refused

Reasons for refusal:

1. The proposed development comprises inappropriate development in the Green Belt that is harmful by definition and furthermore, fails to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it through encroachment. Very special circumstances do not exist as the identified harm (by definition and other harm) is not clearly outweighed by other considerations, and the application is therefore contrary to policies PfE Policy JP-G9 (The Green Belt) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The proposed development would significantly diverge from the established character of the area and would fail to respect and respond to the overall form and layout of its surroundings and its distinctive features. The proposal would not amount to good design and would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The constrained design would also contribute to poor quality residential accommodation in parts of the home due to a lack of natural light and overshadowing to habitable rooms. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Policies DM1, P2, P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and UDP, Policies JP-S1 and JP-G1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and Chapter 12 of the Framework in this respect, in particular paragraphs 135 and 139.

3. In the absence of an up-to-date Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, the Local Planning Authority is unable to assess the potential impacts of the development on biodiversity,

including any impacts on protected species and habitats. As such, the proposal is contrary to the requirements of paragraphs 187 and 193 of the NPPF, PfE Policy JP-G8, Core Strategy Policy G7 and the statutory duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended in 2021) to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways and Engineering

Summary: Confirms no objection to the proposal.

Environmental Health

Summary: No comments received.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

Summary: No objection to the proposal subject to conditions including a sensitive lighting scheme, nesting bird protection measures, Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs), a Biodiversity Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and the provision of biodiversity enhancements such as bat and bird boxes. To secure a net gain on site, a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is required to be secured by a Section 106 agreement to ensure delivery and monitoring. The statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition will also apply, requiring submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan, completed DEFRA metric, and HMMP.

LLFA

Summary: The surface water drainage proposals are acceptable in principle. Details relating to the sizing and location of the Cess Pool should be secured by condition and the 60mm diameter orifice relating to surface water drainage should be reviewed.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the application has been advertised by neighbour notification letters and site notice.

2 number of objections have been received. These are summarised below:

Highway safety

- Increased traffic and parking problems associated with the scale of the proposal (construction traffic, feed deliveries).
- Salley Street is a narrow through road raising concerns of safety and road blocking

Environmental

- Air Quality (slurry emissions).

- Noise and pollution risks arising from daily operations including during the construction period.
- Drainage concerns due to boggy site.

Ecology / Biodiversity

- Building works detrimental to wildlife and their habitat.
- Requests if any permission is given that major construction work is forbidden during the nesting season.

Other

- Strongly believe that the applicant intends to convert the stables to a dwelling. Notes that there is no grazing land attached to the applicant's land for stabling therefore this would contradict the stabling of horses.
- Development would negatively impact on the users of the nearby Pennine Bridleway and Mary Townley loop.

Officer response:

- Noise arising during the construction period is not a material planning consideration relevant to the decision.
- Relevant consent from the Local Planning Authority, that being planning permission or prior approval, is required to convert an agricultural building into residential home(s).

Principle

NPPF policy S5 sets out that only certain forms of development, including (but not limited to) development for agriculture, outdoor sport and recreation, should be approved outside settlements and should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the Framework.

The site falls within the designated Green Belt to which the Government attaches great importance. The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that the objective of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential features of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

Policy GB6(1) sets out that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the categories set out in NPPF policy GB7. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. NPPF Policy GB6(2) sets out that such circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposed development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt which would be caused, including harm to its openness.

Falling within one of the categories in Policy GB7(a), 'development which is for agriculture, horticulture and forestry, or which is solely for nature conservation, restoration and/or enhancement', is not deemed to be inappropriate in the Green Belt and therefore should not be regarded as harmful to the Green Belt or be required to demonstrate very special circumstances.

Policy GB7(f)(iv) sets out that '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', is also not inappropriate development, 'provided that the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes'.

The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, at policy JP-G9, states that the beneficial use of the Green Belt will be enhanced where this can be achieved without harm to its openness, permanence or ability to serve its five purposes.

The proposed building would be laid out to accommodate a range of uses, including 6no. stables, 2no. tack rooms and a storage barn designed to accommodate a small tractor, ride-on mower, fencing materials and wood-chipping equipment. The applicant's Planning Statement (October 2025) relies on paragraph 154(a) of the December 2024 NPPF and states that the proposal constitutes a building for agriculture and forestry and is therefore not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The Council does not agree with this assessment. Equestrian activities are a distinct planning use and do not fall within the definition of agriculture. Given that a substantial proportion of the building would comprise stabling and associated tack room facilities (and so not found to be ancillary), the development cannot reasonably rely on this exception/category and is more appropriately considered as a building/facility associated with outdoor sport and recreation rather than agriculture, as set out under Policy GB7(f)(iv).

Under Policy GB7, facilities for outdoor sport and recreation may be regarded as not inappropriate development provided that their impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised and they do not result in a significant conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. In this regard, it is found that the proposal fails to satisfy these requirements. In spatial and visual terms, the development would have a substantial impact on openness. The proposed building, by virtue of its scale (approximately 225sqm) and height (up to 6.2m), would introduce a visually prominent and intrusive form of built development into an otherwise relatively open area, noting topography, boundary treatments and minimal vegetation screening following the more recent removal of the trees to the front boundary. This harm would be exacerbated by the extent of engineering operations required to facilitate the development, including the excavation of approximately 500sqm of land to depths of up to 3 metres to create a level development platform. These works would materially alter the existing landform and further erode both the spatial and visual openness of the site. Furthermore, the scale of the building and the extent of associated earthworks are considered excessive and disproportionate to the needs of the stated use and go beyond what could reasonably be described as an "appropriate facility" for outdoor sport and recreation. As such, the proposal conflicts with the requirements of Policy GB7(f)(iv) and does not seek to minimise the impacts on the openness of the Green Belt.

No very special circumstances have been put forward that would clearly outweigh the definitional harm to the Green Belt and the additional harm identified to openness.

Policy GB7(g) is not applicable or relevant to this decision, nor are the 'Golden Rules' as set out in policy GB8.

Overall, the proposal may be capable of being considered as a facility associated with outdoor recreation in principle. However, due to the scale of the building and the extent of the engineering operations required, the proposal does not minimise its impact on the openness of the Green Belt and so results in significant conflict with Green Belt purposes, including encroachment into the countryside. Consequently, it does not satisfy the requirements of policy GB7 and is inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is not outweighed by any very special circumstances.

Whilst the proposal includes storage for agricultural equipment, the building would be predominately used for equestrian purposes and so is not characterised as agricultural development. Officers have had regard to the support offered to rural/economic development and the management of the applicant's landholding under policy E6. However, this does not outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt and conflict with Policies GB6 and GB7 as set out above.

Design and Heritage

Character and appearance

The NPPF at chapter 14 seeks to promote high quality, healthy, inclusive and sustainable places, whilst chapter 20 seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Policy DP3(1) of the NPPF states that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. Policy DP3 (2) sets out a number of key design principles in order to create well-designed places.

Rochdale Core Strategy Policies DM1 and P3 also seek proposals to demonstrate high-quality design. Policy P2 also states that the Council will protect and enhance the Borough's character, including the quality of its countryside. New development is required to integrate successfully.

PfE Policy JP-G1 (Landscape Character) requires development to reflect and respond to special qualities and sensitivities of the key landscape characteristics of its location having regard to various features.

The NPPF is clear at Policy DP3(3) that development proposals should be refused if, without clear justification, they conflict with DP3(1), or the relevant aspects of the design principles set out in DP3(2).

This application is located within open moorlands and enclosed upland fringes character area as defined by Figure 8.1 of PfE. The existing site undoubtedly has a strong distinction with the surrounding countryside since the site surrounds are verdant in character with open fields to the front and rear; however, this site is not isolated and is viewed within the context of other buildings. These other buildings generally comprise of traditional dwellings of primarily stone construction, typical of their rural setting, with an adjacent stable/agricultural building to the northeast.

Whilst the footprint and height of the building are broadly comparable to a typical agricultural structure, and the provision of stables is not uncommon in rural areas, the acceptability of the proposal turns on its physical impact. The extent of engineering operations required to facilitate the development, including the significant regrading of approximately 500m² of land to create a level platform, would result in a material alteration to the natural landform. This, when taken with the built form, would introduce a visually intrusive and heavily engineered feature within an otherwise naturally rolling landscape. The combined effect of the building and substantial earthworks would result in a development that appears unduly prominent, incongruous and out of character with the site's open and rural setting.

Officers acknowledge that the adjacent stable and agricultural building is also partially cut into the landscape. However, that building is of a lower overall height and sits within a different context, being located opposite Denehurst Farm, more effectively screened from longer ranging views and positioned directly adjacent to Salley Street. By contrast, the current proposal would be more prominently sited at a greater height with a greater expanse of hardstanding to the front and excavation, resulting in a more visually intrusive form of development.

Overall, the proposal fails to achieve high-quality design, as the combined scale of the building and extensive earthworks would result in a prominent and engineered form of development that is out of character with the wider open, rural landscape setting, contrary to Policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and Policy JP G1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and NPPF policy DP3.

Heritage

The application site is adjacent to a row of terraced weavers' cottages on Salley Street. The cottages are depicted on the first edition OS map dating from 1851 and are identified as non-designated heritage assets. Two ventilation shafts associated with the Summit railway tunnel are also within vicinity of the site.

NPPF policy HE5 states that development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The relevant historic environment record should be referred to in making this assessment, and appropriate expertise employed where necessary.

NPPF Policy HE7 states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

PfE Policy JP-H2 states that 'We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings... Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy'.

The application is supported by a Planning Statement (dated October 2025) which considers the impact of the proposed development on nearby features associated with the Summit Tunnel and adjacent non-designated heritage assets at 9-19 Salley Street.

In this context, the proposal would introduce additional built form within the vicinity of the Summit Tunnel features. However, the building would read as a functional rural structure, and it is not considered that it would materially disrupt the appreciation or understanding of the tunnel alignment or its associated features, mitigated heavily by the site's distance from these features.

Although the development would introduce a sizeable structure into the landscape, its rural setting, separation from the terrace and functional appearance mean it would not cause significant harm to the significance and setting of the non-designated heritage assets at 9–19 Salley Street. This does not override the identified harm to landscape character and Green Belt openness arising from its scale and associated earthworks.

Residential Amenity

NPPF Policy P3 sets out that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity.

Core Strategy policies DM1, G9, C1 and C6 cumulatively seek to reduce air and noise pollution, and DM1 in particular requires development to not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy. The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD refers to acceptable Space Standards at Section 4.1.

The nearest residential properties are at Denehurst Farm, approximately 30m away, and at nos. 9–19 Salley Street, which are orientated away from the application site. Given these separation distances and relationships, the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers in terms of light, outlook or privacy.

Environmental Health has not offered comments on the application and Officers note the objections received relating to noise disturbance. However, the site's relative proximity to Denehurst Farm is also noted, where similar operations are already established, reflecting the character of the area and is not expected to generate adverse cumulative impacts on local amenity.

Overall, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy policy DM1 and the NPPF in regard to amenity.

Access and Highway Safety

Policy TR6 of the NPPF states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network or an unacceptable impact on highway safety. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.

Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to improve accessibility by locating development where good access to public transport is available or can be provided and, in all circumstances, prioritises the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live or have business in the area. Policy DM1 also states that all development proposals should provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location.

The LHA have reviewed the application and note that the application site is located away from local amenities, and no details have been provided regarding the proximity of public transport links, raising concerns about overall accessibility and sustainability. Notwithstanding this, the traffic generation associated with the proposed use is expected to be minimal.

The revised site plan (17.1616.2.4B) indicates off-street parking for 3 vehicles which the LHA consider acceptable given the site's unsustainable location.

The proposed access arrangement is considered acceptable, and there are no alterations to the existing highway network, nor are any new highways proposed as part of the development. The proposal would not obstruct any Public Rights of Way and raises no additional road safety concerns. It is noted that refuse collection and servicing would be managed through a private arrangement. Care should be taken during construction to avoid damage to the adjacent highway.

On the bases of the above, the LHA have no objections to the proposal. Officers have no reason to disagree and consider the proposal to be acceptable in regard to highway safety and would not be in conflict the NPPF and Policy T2 of the Core Strategy.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Chapter 19 of the NPPF seeks new development to contribute positively to the natural environment and support nature's recovery, through conserving or enhancing the environmental qualities of the land proposed for development.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions including 'developments below the threshold', every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met. This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

PfE Policy JP-G8 also states that through local planning and associated activities a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought where relevant. Development will be expected to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%.

Policy G7 requires that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection and that opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported. It is expected that development proposals will protect and include existing biodiversity and take opportunities to promote biodiversity and create new habitats using landscaping and building and construction features

wherever possible. CS Policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

A BNG exemption form was submitted with the application. However, the proposed building would have a footprint of 225m², resulting in habitat loss well above the 25m² de minimis exemption threshold. A BNG assessment, including the statutory metric and supporting report, was therefore submitted on 18.05.2026.

On the basis of this submitted information, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) raise no objection in principle to the ecological aspects of the proposal, confirming that the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (May 2026) is robust and its findings acceptable. They recommend that all mitigation and enhancement measures set out within the report are secured by condition, including a sensitive lighting scheme, nesting bird protection measures, Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs), a Biodiversity Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and the provision of biodiversity enhancements such as bat and bird boxes.

In relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), initial concerns were raised regarding insufficient information on a ditch within the site, specifically whether it holds water for more than four months of the year and therefore requires inclusion within the BNG metric. Subject to clarification of this point, the remainder of the BNG assessment was considered acceptable.

Following the submission of additional information, GMEU confirm that the proposal would deliver significant on-site biodiversity enhancements, achieving an uplift of +0.28 habitat units (+85.93%), well in excess of the 10% requirement. As such, if approved, a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is required, and GMEU recommend this is secured via a Section 106 agreement to ensure delivery and monitoring. The statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition will also apply, requiring submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan, completed DEFRA metric, and HMMP.

Overall, GMEU are satisfied that the application can proceed to determination, subject to the recommended conditions, the statutory BNG requirements, and agreement of the mechanism to secure long-term habitat management.

Drainage

Policy G8 of the Core Strategy sets out the Council's strategy for managing water resources and flood risk more effectively in the interests of public safety, protecting property and infrastructure and the conservation of the natural environment. Policy EM/7 of the saved UDP states that development will not be permitted in areas identified as flood plains, or other areas where development could contribute to increased flood risk. The NPPF also establishes that inappropriate development in areas at risk at flooding should be avoided and that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

Saved UDP Policy EM/8 (Protection of Surface and Ground Water) sets out that development proposals will be expected to make satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of sewage amongst other things.

JP-S4 of PfE states flood risk will be managed by '2. Working with natural processes and adopting a natural flood management approach to slow the speed of water drainage and intercept water pollutants.

The application site is not in a flood risk area and is not a major development. However, the site is located within a defined critical drainage area. The Lead Local Flood Authority set out that the original submission (Drainage Strategy Report (calc-tjba-rollins-salley st-DSR-260721 24/10/2025) lacked sufficient drainage details for both foul and surface water management. Details of surface water run off mitigation should also be provided and the watercourse crossing the site, investigated.

The applicant subsequently provided an indicative drainage plan (dwg-tjba-rollins-salley st-300125 Sept 2026) and drainage strategy report (calc-tjba-rollins-salley st-DSR-260721 Sept 2026) on 22 September 2026. The LLFA confirmed that the revised surface water drainage proposals are acceptable in principle. Details relating to the sizing and location of the Cess Pool should be secured by condition and the 60mm diameter orifice relating to surface water drainage should be reviewed.

Subject to conditions, as set out above, the proposed development accords with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S4 of PfE and the NPPF.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

Policy S5 of the Framework states that development proposals outside of settlements, including development for agriculture or outdoor sport and recreation, should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

The proposal would provide storage and stabling facilities in connection with outdoor sport and recreation and support the management of the applicant's landholding through the storage of machinery and equipment. The proposal would not raise any significant residential amenity, highway safety, ecology and drainage issues, subject to appropriate conditions and the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements. Whilst these matters do attract weight, it is not demonstrated that such benefits could not be realised in a manner which would otherwise result in lesser, or no harm, thus can only be afforded limited weight in the overall planning balance.

Against this, the development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Substantial weight must be given to the resulting Green Belt harm, including harm by reason of inappropriateness, loss of openness and encroachment into the countryside. In visual amenity terms, the scale, siting, height and associated engineering works would also create a prominent and heavily engineered form of development that would harm the character and appearance of the open rural landscape.

The limited benefits of the proposal do not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and the other identified harm. Very special circumstances have not been demonstrated. In accordance with Policy GB6(2) and DP3(3) this matter is afforded considerable weight such that the level of harm and conflict with the policies contained within the Framework engages the provisions of paragraph 1 of Policy S5. In line with paragraph 7 of the NPPF, the proposal conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole and there are no material considerations which indicate that permission should be granted.

The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

S106 Contributions

As the proposal is deemed to be unacceptable, it is not necessary to secure a Section 106 agreement prior to determination. Planning obligations should only be pursued where they are required to make a development acceptable. If the decision is appealed, it would be the responsibility of the appellant to submit any necessary planning obligation at that stage for the Inspector's consideration.

Recommendation: Refuse

Refusal(s) (2)

- 1 The proposed development, by reason of its scale, height, siting and associated engineering operations, would fail to minimise its impact on the openness of the Green Belt and would result in encroachment into the countryside. The development would therefore constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. No very special circumstances have been demonstrated which would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, harm to openness and any other identified harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies GB6 and GB7 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy JP-G9 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.
- 2 The proposed development, by reason of the scale and height of the building, its prominent siting, and the extent of engineering works required to create a level platform, would introduce a visually intrusive and heavily engineered form of development within an open rural landscape. The proposal would fail to respond positively to the character, appearance and landscape qualities of the area and would not represent high-quality design. It would therefore be contrary to Policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, Policies JP-P1 and JP-G1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and Policy DP3 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

- 1 The proposal would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area nor does it comply with the development plan and therefore does not comprise sustainable development. There were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable, and it was therefore not possible to approve the application.
- 2 The application relates to the following plans and documents

Plans

- Site Location Plan 1:1250
- 17.1616.2.1A Existing Site Plan
- 17.1616.2.4B proposed site plan
- 17.1616.2.3B proposed elevations
- 17.1616.2.2A proposed floor plan and section 1-1

Documents

- Application form signed 26.11.2025
- Planning Statement and Combined Greenbelt assessment dated October 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Version 01 dated 5th May 2026 Miranda Cowan Ecology Ltd,
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Version 01 dated 5th May 2026 Miranda Cowan Ecology Ltd,
- X2 Biodiversity Metric Excel spreadsheet
- Drainage Strategy report prepared by T J Booth Associates. Dated 24.10.2025
- Indicative drainage plan (dwg-tjba-rollins-salley st-300125 Sept 2026)
- Drainage strategy report (calc-tjba-rollins-salley st-DSR-260721 Sept 2026)