

Dear Mr Daly

Thank you for your letter and please find my response below.

The site is not Greenbelt, the site comprises land at the edge of the settlement of Walmersley, allocated under policy OL2/1 as Other Protected Open Land. This Chapter outlines the key national and local planning policies relevant to the determination of this application.

The application is for residential development on a site that is identified as 'Other Protect Open Land' in the Council's UDP. The site is therefore protected by Policy OL2/1.

Please note that the weight that should be given to the policies within the UDP now has to be determined having regard to the Framework. This is especially the case in light of the absence of a 5YHLS where paragraph 11(d) sets out a mechanism for determining if policies are out of date. In this instance Policy OL2/1 which designates the site as an OPOL, is relevant to this case.

None of the policies within the UDP can be considered up-to-date, as they are time-expired. The plan was adopted in 1997 and is 24 years old. In fact, the policies in the plan only address housing need up until 2001 and since this plan period, limited meaningful progress has been made in producing a new Local Plan - this is due to ongoing delays with the GMSF.

Policy OL2/1 seeks to protect open land between the edge of the built-up area and the inner edge of the Green Belt. The policy does enable development, but restricts it to uses such as agriculture and outdoor recreation- in order to protect the open character of the land. At the time of adoption, the UDP

Inspector's Report indicated that the OPOL was not needed to meet housing needs at the time, but that it would need to be considered when looking at future housing targets for the Borough, given the tightness of the Green Belt against much of Bury's urban area. The Policy is therefore intrinsically linked to the supply of housing.

At present, Bury Council have a housing land supply of between 1.7 and 2 years, as demonstrated in their Housing Land Supply Statement (2020). In respect of the Housing Delivery Test [HDT], the document highlights persistent under delivery.

In the context of a shortfall in supply and expired Development Plan; the Council have reviewed Policy OL2/1 in a Topic Paper which accompanies the emerging New Local Plan for Bury. The Paper confirms that there is no longer a justification for protecting OPOL, as the land is required to help meet housing needs and will help to minimise the removal of land from the Green Belt. The Topic Paper sets a precedence for the redevelopment of OPOL land for housing.

Looking specifically at the site, it forms a natural rounding off of the settlement limits of Walmersley to the east. Given the sites proximity to existing service and infrastructure (as outlined in Section2 of this Statement), it is considered that the site also represents a sustainable location to deliver essential housing. The site is also 'deliverable', with constraints identified during pre-application discussions to be addressed through appropriate design, which can be addressed through Stage2 of the PIP process. The site also has no landscape value.

The suitability of the site for housing is supported by the Council's most recent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which identifies the application site

(ref:HL/2470/00) as having 'unconstrained potential', with the potential to deliver 14 dwellings.

However, this calculation does not take into account the character of the area and presence of Public Right of Way, easement alongside other constraints. The SHLAA notes that the emerging Local Plan intends to remove this allocation, and as such the site may then have the potential to achieve residential development over the plan period. There is no doubt that the principle of development is therefore suitable in this case.

Please note:

There is no relief road over Greenbelt.

Existing Right of Way kept and an additional one added

No Flood Risk

No Ecology Issues

Turning Head for Refuse Vehicles

The site has potential to deliver up to 14 units however consideration has been taken into account regarding the character of the area and presence of a Public Right of Way.

I do however appreciate you contacting me to reflect the views of your constituents and would also hope you will clarify back to your constituents that the land isn't Greenbelt and that there is no longer a justification for protecting OPOL, as the land is required to help meet housing needs and will help to minimise the removal of land from the Green Belt.

As someone that also lives in Bury, I would be very interested to hear your views on Bury having a Local Plan that is 24 years old, a housing supply of only 1.7-2 years which addresses housing needs only up to 2001?

Kind regards

Jamie Unsworth