
2018/0960

Applicant: Miss Amy Hawley

Description: Erection of combined indoor equestrian arena and agricultural storage barn

Site Address: Broadstone Farm, Browns Edge Road, Whitley Common, Barnsley, S36 7GR

No letters of representation have been received

Description

The site lies just beyond the north western edge of Whitley Common and Broadstone Reservoir lies approximately 250m to the north. The gated access to the farm is formed by dry stone walls from Browns Edge Road. The immediate surrounding fields are grazed by horses.

Broadstone Farm currently operates as an equestrian business 'Broadstone Equestrian' which includes a livery stable and training facility (D2) and a horse breeding programme (sui generis). The site comprises a timber clad agricultural building used for tack and hay storage, with adjacent stable block, a covered timber horse walker, an outdoor ménage and a lunge pen. To the west of the stable block, on the opposite side of the access road, is a timber log cabin which forms a temporary rural works dwelling, where the applicant currently lives.

The landholding Broadstone Farm has recently expanded its land ownership from 35 acres to 80 acres and also features a small scale wind turbine which is located to the west of the log cabin.

Proposed Development

The proposal involves the erection of a combined indoor equestrian arena and agricultural storage barn. The building measures approximately 38.85m by 67.85m and is approximately 7.5m in height. The horse arena has a floor area of approximately 1957sqm and the agricultural storage area being approximately 678sqm. The proposed building is sited to the north east of the existing buildings on an area currently used for grazing, and is of a standard agricultural design with timber cladding sides on a blockwork base and a metal sheet roof with rooflights. Two roller shutter access doors are proposed to the southern elevation. The highways and parking arrangements will remain as existing.

The applicant has submitted a supporting statement of justification, an Ecology Report and a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

In support of the application, the submitted statement states that: *'The proposed development includes the erection of an indoor arena for exercising and training horses, along with an agricultural storage building to safely house the equipment needed for making hay and other associated agricultural activities on the farm and the large quantities of hay produced. These are proposed to enhance the existing facilities on site and further develop the growing stud and livery business.'*

To provide an overall outline of the business on site, a state of the art stud farm/breeding/livery programme operates with respect to the level of facilities that are required, and the day-to-day activities that take place.

The application site is currently running a successful business in the breeding and training of the best possible mares and foals to achieve sporting excellence in the sport of eventing, and at present possesses 30 horses of this quality.

The applicant has represented Great Britain twice at European Championship level and is looking to develop a business which will provide the opportunity to breed and maintain horses of this calibre for the future. The applicant states that if these high standards are to be maintained then similarly high standards of training, breeding and stabling facilities need to be provided within a single site.

As the business has now been established and running for a number of years, the first horses out of the breeding programme are out competing on the eventing circuit. With the 2018 UK and International Young Horse Championships in late September. The applicant has three horses bred through the programme entered at the event, in the 4YO, 5YO and CIC** 7YO classes. This is testament to the level of competition that the applicant is aiming to produce horses to and for. Alongside this the applicant provides financial stability to the breeding programme through the provision of a start-of-the-art livery service.

These proposed all-weather facilities would complement the existing equestrian facilities available at Broadstone Farm providing the applicant and livery customers with training provision available all year round helping support the needs of this sport. The proposals are intended to further improve the equestrian facilities at the site bringing Broadstone Farm in line with similar international training venues throughout the UK. This further intended investment will provide Broadstone Farm with much needed all-weather training facilities which will further support this successful rural business.

The proposed application is also considered paramount to the delivery exemplar facilities, especially given the prevailing weather conditions at the site and its wind swept location. The supporting documents state that the location has been carefully selected on site to be sufficiently close to the existing facilities on site without affecting the existing internal access arrangements at the site for farm machinery.

Planning History

B/04/2293/PR -Change of use from agriculture to mixed use - agriculture and motorsport.
Refused 02/02/2005.

2008/0736 – Erection of horse riding arena – Approved with conditions 14/07/2008.

2009/1396 – Erection of a barn and formation of parking area - Approved with conditions 22/02/2010.

2012/0689 - Erection of 1 no. 50KW wind turbine (25m to hub and 34.5m to blade tip) – Refused but allowed at appeal 03/12/2013.

2013/0126 - Erection of a building for the purposes of hay and tack storage, use of the existing building, land and ménage as an equestrian livery (D2) and for the purposes of horse breeding – Approved 17/09/2014 subject to conditions and a S106 Agreement preventing the implementation of planning permission 2009/1396.

2013/0907 - Erection of temporary rural workers dwelling at land at Brown's Edge Road – Approved for a period of 3 years subject to other conditions on 23/10/2013.

2014/1078 - Erection of extensions to existing barn – Approved with conditions 18/11/2014.

2014/1156 - Erection of a covered horse walkers building and lunging pen – Approved with conditions 08/12/2014.

2018/1190 - Erection of a permanent rural workers dwelling – This is a live application that is still under consideration at the present time.

Policy Context

Planning decision 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 new Local Plan was adopted at the full Council meeting held 3th January 2019 after it was found to be sound by the appointed Planning Inspector following the examination process. This means that it now takes on full weight for decision making process in planning law terms as the development plan for the Borough, superseding the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011). The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

The site is located within the Green Belt as shown on the Proposals Map of the Adopted Local Plan

Adopted Local Plan 2019

Policy GD1 General Development

Policy T4 New Development and Transport Safety

Policy BIO1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making

Policy GB1 Protection of Green Belt

In accordance with the NPPF and as set out in GB1, we will not allow proposals for 'inappropriate' development in the Green Belt unless it can be shown that there are very special circumstances that justify setting aside local and national policy. As set out in paragraph 88 (now 143) of the NPPF very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Policy E6 Rural Economy

We will encourage a viable rural economy by allowing development in rural areas if it:

- Supports the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy;
- Results in the growth of existing businesses;
- Is related to tourism or recreation; or
- Improves the range and quality of local services in existing settlements.

Development in rural areas will be expected to:

- Be of a scale proportionate to the size and role of the settlement;
- Be directly related, where appropriate, to the needs of the settlement;
- Not have a harmful impact on the countryside, biodiversity, Green Belt, landscape or local character of the area;
- Consider the re-use of existing rural buildings in the first instance; and
- Protect the best quality agricultural land, areas of lower quality agricultural land should be used for development in preference to the best and most versatile land.

NPPF (July 2018)

In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

Section 13. Protecting Green Belt Land

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that: Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 145 (g) states:-

A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Section 6. Building a strong, competitive economy - Supporting a prosperous rural economy
Paragraph 83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Consultations

Dunford Parish Council – No comments received

Highways DC – No objection subject to conditions

Drainage – No objection

Regulatory Services – No objection

Yorkshire Water – No objection

Biodiversity Officer – No objection

Representations

No letters of representation have been received.

Assessment

Principle of development

The proposal lies within the Green Belt and the NPPF states that, a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. An exception to this would be for agriculture and the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation. In the case of the latter this is as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. In this case the site is in mixed use (part agriculture, part equine breeding, a livery and part equestrian sport and recreation. Whilst similar in nature to agricultural use and could be regarded as a form of farm diversification the largest internal area associated with the proposed development is intended to be used for equestrian recreation/sport purposes. As the proposal involves the erection of a large building that would impact upon the openness of the Green Belt it has to be classed initially as a form of inappropriate development. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

The NPPF states that *'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations'*.

In terms of very special circumstances and the justification for the need for the proposed building, the planning history shows that equestrian uses have now been established at the site in particular application 2013/0126 established the use of the existing building, land and ménage as an equestrian livery, and for the purposes of horse breeding/training. The proposed indoor arena and agricultural barn are proposed in connection with the existing Broadstone Equestrian Facility. The applicant has provided a statement of justification with the application, given that the building is of a significant size and to demonstrate that the building is an essential facility.

As the building is dual purpose, for agricultural use and equestrian uses, the two uses should be considered separately. In terms of the agricultural section of the building, the applicant has provided the following justification:-

'Broadstone Farm has recently expanded its land ownership from 35 acres to 80 acres. This is to ensure the quantity of hay production on site through the summer months is large enough to self sustain the animals on site throughout the year. The location of the site is subjected to extreme weathers and high winds all year round, so the animals on site are kept inside a lot of the time - only going out the graze during the day, raising the demand for hay further'.

Ensuring that the hay production is self sustained, will save a lot of money each year as it will mean that hay does not have to be purchased from external outfits elsewhere and shipped in at a premium price. Given the new investment in land, Broadstone Farm also needs to expand the machinery collection to ensure the production of hay. Given the extreme weathers, the machinery would be best placed to be stored inside; this ensures firstly its security, but secondly storing machinery inside and out of the weather also ensures its lifespan is maintained.

The intended agricultural store will therefore house all new machinery and also the large quantities of hay once produced, as this has to be stored inside and out of the weather otherwise it will rot and be deemed unusable. It is anticipated that the hay yield annually will be circa 480 large bales.'

The agricultural element of the building is considered to be justified, given the extent of the applicants land holding. In addition, the existing building which is currently used for hay storage is also used for the storage of tack and equipment, and is not of a sufficient size to accommodate the increased hay production proposed and the associated machinery. The size of the agricultural element of the building is considered to be acceptable and its scale is in line with other agricultural enterprises in the area in accordance with policy GB1.

Whilst the building is of a dual use, the equestrian arena occupies the majority of the floor space of the building. In terms of the equestrian arena and justification for its size, the applicant has provided the following information:-

'With regard to the size of the indoor school proposed - to give some background to the sport of eventing, eventing is an equestrian sport where a single horse and rider combination compete against other combinations across the three disciplines of dressage, show jumping and cross-country, and it is an Olympic sport. It is therefore important that the indoor arena provides a suitable all weather - all year round facility for both dressage and jumping training''.

The size of the internal horse arena would be 66m x 27m. This compared with 20m x 60m for an international dressage arena and 50m x 80m for an international showjumping arena. It is therefore slightly larger than the former but considerably smaller than the latter which provides reasonable justification for the development.

Policy E6 – Rural Economy states that: *'We will encourage a viable rural economy by allowing development in rural areas if it, supports the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy; results in the growth of existing businesses; is related to tourism or recreation; or improves the range and quality of local services in existing settlements.'* The proposal is related to existing agricultural, equestrian breeding and sport and recreation activities taking place on site as rural forms of activities and forms of farm diversification. I therefore consider that it fits within the aims of Local Plan policy E6 'Rural Economy' and paragraph 83 of the NPPF.

The rural windswept nature of the site means that outdoor training is limited during the winter months, especially given the prevailing weather conditions at the site. The proposal would comply with Policy E6 in that it would allow for indoor training provision available all year round to further improve the equestrian facilities at the site and would bring Broadstone Farm in line with similar international training venues throughout the UK. The applicant has also provided examples of similar sized training facilities around the country, and whilst the building is large, it is of a necessary size in order to allow for indoor dressage and jumping. Weight is afforded these considerations as Very Special Circumstances. In addition, there are no other buildings within the area of a sufficient size which could accommodate this use and it is felt that the need for the building has, on balance, been justified and is supported by Policy E6 – Rural Economy of the Local Plan. Whilst the need for the building has been established, consideration must be taken upon the impact of the size and scale of the building upon the openness of the Green Belt, which is assessed below.

Visual Impact

The proposed indoor equestrian arena would be located to the north east of the existing farm complex, within an area of land currently used for grazing. The land slopes up from north east to south west and the building is to be set into the land to allow for a level surface. The building appears as a large agricultural building with timber clad walls on a blockwork base with timber sliding doors and a second roller shutter door in brown, located on the south west elevation. The two lengths of the building (south east and north west elevations) would feature a series of small windows. The north east elevation of the building would not feature any windows or doors. In terms of design, the proposal is acceptable and would introduce an agricultural style building into a landscape that already features these buildings, and it is considered that the proposals will be in keeping with local vernacular.

In terms of the impact upon the openness and visual amenity, the building is large in size and scale; therefore the applicant has submitted a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment with the application. The assessment considers the potential for change to views and visual amenity. The aim is to establish the area in which the development is likely to be visible, and the types of receptors who may experience such views of the proposed development, and the extent to which views are likely to be altered. The submitted Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has considered a number of different visual receptors and the impact has been assessed as below.

Residential Receptors, PROW Users, and Road Users located to the north east of the Site.

The landscape to the north east of the site gently rises to a high point north of Windmill Lane. There are a small number of farmsteads and/or dwellings located in the landscape between Green Gate and Windmill Lane which afford views towards the Site. These include Broadstone Lodge, Green Lane Head and Green Lane End.

From visual receptors to the north east of the site, the proposed development would be seen in the context of the existing farm buildings at Broadstone Farm. Due to the contours of the land, the building would be seen in the context of other much taller features. The indoor arena is located on lower ground than the existing farm buildings and would not appear taller in the landscape than those buildings already visible at the farm. Overall, there would be no greater than a medium magnitude of change in the view available from the visual receptors located in the landscape to the north east, giving rise to a moderate visual effect.

Residential Receptors, PROW Users, and Road Users located to the north west

The landscape to the north west also rises to Windmill Lane, which follows a ridge line in the landform. The landscape is more undulating than that to the north east, which interrupts the extent of overall visibility towards Broadstone Farm.

There are a number of farmsteads and dwellings in the landscape off Windmill Mill Lane, Birds Nest Lane, Hey Slack Lane, and Dick Edge Lane with the potential for views towards the proposed development; however the indoor arena would be located beyond the existing agricultural buildings within the farm and would be screened from this view point. Overall, the magnitude of change in the views available from visual receptors to the north west of the Site is likely to be no greater than medium to low, giving rise to moderate/minor visual effect.

Residential Receptors, PROW Users, and Road Users located to the South

Visual receptors to the south include users of Brown's Edge Road, Whitley Road, and Spicer House Lane, and residents of Spicer House, Brown's Edge Farm. The ability to view the site from the South is interrupted by the presence of the wind turbines. However, the existing buildings at Broadstone Farm can be seen from Whitley Road and the northern part of Spicer House Lane. However these views are seen in the context of the wider landscape and in relation to other agricultural buildings in the area.

The existing buildings at Broadstone Farm cannot be seen from Brown's Edge Road due to the presence of a ridgeline in the near landscape. The proposed indoor arena would be located further north from the road and would not be seen. The arena would be visible at the junction with Broadstone Road, however from this point it would then be seen in the context of the existing farm buildings. Overall, there would be no greater than a medium magnitude of change in the view available from the visual receptors located in the landscape to the north east, giving rise to a moderate visual effect.

Views from other PROWs/Publicly accessible land

There is a further bridleway that runs to the west of the Site between Birds Nest Lane and Lower Maythorn Lane. There is also an area of publicly accessible land located to the immediate east of Broadstone Reservoir, north east of the site.

The building would be seen from both the bridleway and the land adjacent to the reservoir; however it would be seen in the context of the existing farm complex and wind turbine. The proposed development is typical of the local landscape, and would not appear incongruous in close proximity views from the north east or west.

Views from the A629

The A629 is the primary road which passes through the local landscape. The nature of views from the route is expansive across the surrounding upland landscape, with long distance views available to the east and north east across the lower lying Wakefield and Barnsley landscapes.

Broadstone Farm forms a small element in the view from the A629, and the proposed development would appear as part of the larger complex and would not appear isolated or a significant feature within the landscape. There would be no greater than a low magnitude of change in the view giving rise to a moderate/minor visual effect.

In conclusion, the building is set within the envelope of the existing equestrian complex. The building has been sensitively sited in a location which would ensure that the building would be seen against the existing buildings and has been designed to appear as a traditional agricultural building. The changes to landscape character would be seen in the context of the existing buildings, both from within the farm complex itself, and from the wider local landscape. With increasing distance from the proposed development would be seen in the context of the wider landscape that features other farms and their associated buildings. The building would not be seen from Browns Edge Road when approaching the site, and from the east the site is screened by an existing agricultural building at Hey Side Farm. Whilst the building is large, due to its sensitive siting and agricultural appearance that it would not appear incongruous within the landscape nor would it cause any significant adverse harm to the openness or visual amenity of the Green Belt, in accordance with the NPPF and policy GB1 of the Local Plan. The overall balancing exercise is set out in the conclusion section of this report.

Residential Amenity

There are no dwellings within immediate proximity of the site, with the exception of the temporary workers dwelling. The proposal is not considered to impact on residential amenity.

Highway Safety

Highways raise no objections to the proposal and it is not anticipated that the proposal would significantly increase the amount of visitors to the site. The highways arrangements will remain as existing. The proposal is considered to be acceptable from a highway safety point of view.

Drainage

The Drainage Officer and Yorkshire Water have no objections to the proposal.

Biodiversity

The Biodiversity Officer has been consulted and has no objection to the proposal. The submitted Ecology Report states that the proposed development will result in the permanent loss of small areas of species-poor improved neutral grassland. This habitat is of low conservation significance and does not present a constraint to development. No further ecological surveys are recommended; however, standard precaution/mitigation is recommended regarding badger and nocturnal wildlife which should be secured by condition.

Conclusion

The NPPF states that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Green Belt balance requires an assessment of whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm would be clearly outweighed by other considerations to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

It has been established that the development is that starting point for assessing this proposal is that it is a form of inappropriate development given that the largest internal space would serve equestrian sports and recreation and as the development would affect the openness of the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In this case it is considered that the proposed development is related to the existing operations being carried out on site which have similarities to an agricultural operation as a form of farm diversification. In addition the combined uses on site lend themselves much to a rural location in much the same way as a livestock farm would. In this regard the proposed development is considered to comply with the objectives of Local Plan Policy E6 'Rural Economy' and paragraph 83 of the NPPF.

The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which has established that the impact of the development on sensitive receptors and on long distance views would range from minor to moderate. As such the impact on openness and on the wider landscape would not be significant. In addition the applicant has supplied strong justification to explain the size of the proposed building. Also the reasons for the development to continue with their development of breeding horses to enter national and European wide competitions and achieve continued and improved sporting excellence are considerations which attract weight as very special circumstances. Furthermore the development would not conflict with any of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. The proposed building would not be distinguishable from an agricultural storage building of this type by its external appearance and by virtue of its external facing materials. Overall therefore it is considered that the weight afforded to the conflicts with Green Belt planning policy including the effect of the development on openness is low, compared with the planning policy reasons and very special circumstances involved which are sufficient in my view to clearly outweigh the limited harm that would occur. In addition no other areas of harm have been identified within the assessment which has also considered other material considerations including the impact of the development on highway safety and biodiversity. The Officer recommendation is therefore one of approval.

Recommendation – approve subject to conditions and referral to the Secretary of State.

As the proposal results in a non-residential development which exceeds 1000sqm within the Green Belt, in line with The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009: circular 02/2009, the application will need to be referred to the Secretary Of State.

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In order to comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans (Nos 18.137.03 P2, 18.137.04 P2, 18.137.06 P1, A(00)-01 Rev A, A(90)-02) and specifications as approved unless required by any other conditions in this permission.
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making.

- 3 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the mitigation measures detailed within submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report dated January 2019 by Brooks Ecological.
Reason: In the interests of Biodiversity, in accordance with Local Plan Policy BIO1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

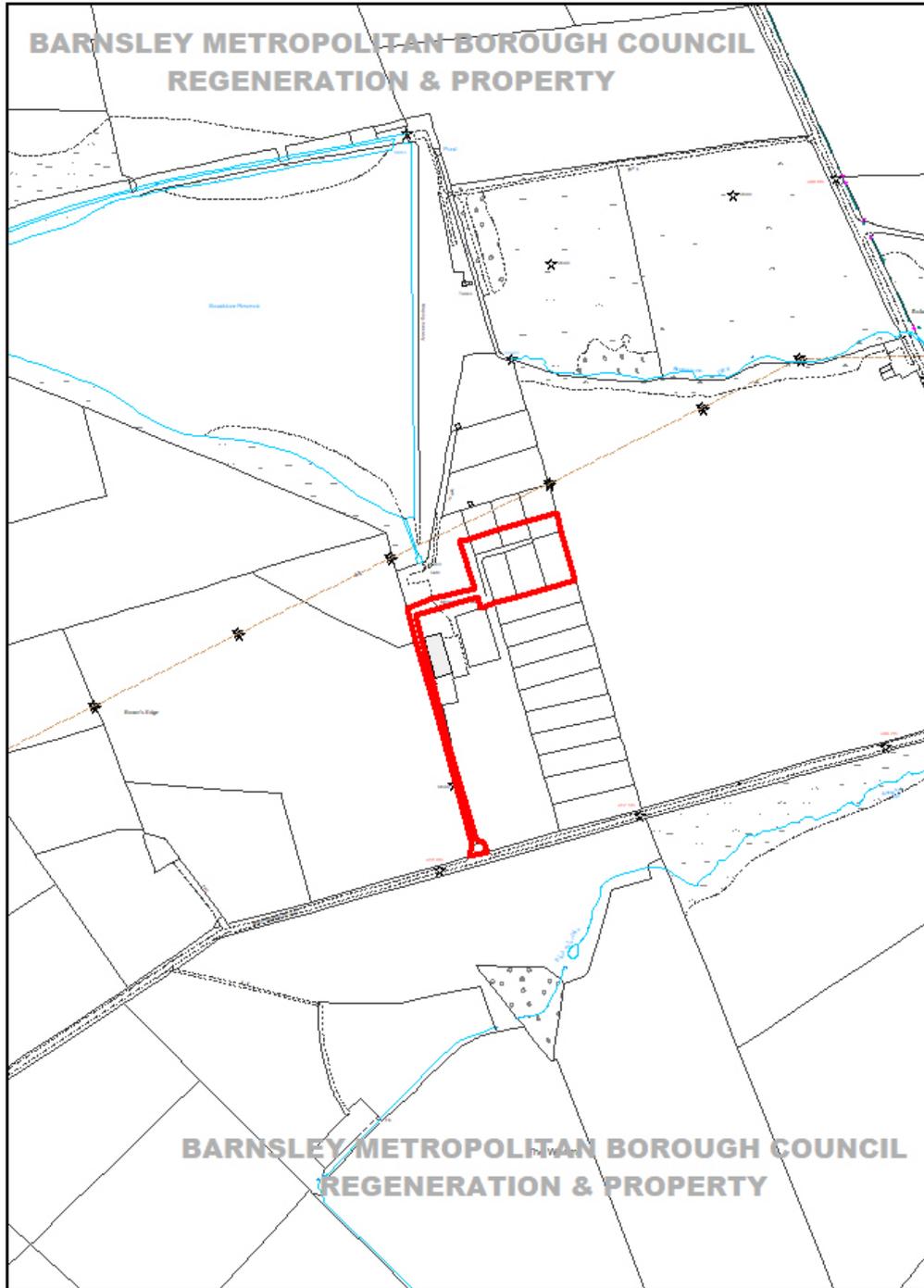
- 4 The parking/manoeuvring facilities, indicated on the submitted plan, shall be surfaced in a solid bound material (i.e. not loose chippings) and made available for the manoeuvring and parking of motor vehicles prior to the development being brought into use, and shall be retained for that sole purpose at all times.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory off-street parking/manoeuvring areas are provided, in the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic and in accordance with Local Plan Policy T4 New Development and Transport Safety.

- 5 All surface water run off shall be collected and disposed of within the site and shall not be allowed to discharge onto the adjacent highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Local Plan Policies T4 New Development and Transport Safety and POLL1 Pollution Control and Protection.

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BARNESLEY MBC - Regeneration & Property



Scale 1: -----