ONE17 DESIGN

Date: October 2026

Design & Access Statement

Project: Demolition of existing barn and garage outbuilding and replace with New Dwelling at 9 Top O' Th' Bank, Thurstonland, Huddersfield, HD4 6XZ

Job No. 3503

N.B. Illustrations within this document are intended to illustrate the discussion and do not take precedence over the formal application drawing.

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1. Introduction

1.01. This statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the demolition of an existing barn and the erection a new single-family dwelling on land adjacent to 9 Top O' Th' Bank, Thurstonland, Huddersfield. The site lies within the designated Green Belt. This statement demonstrates why the proposal meets the relevant criteria for development that is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, having regard to its contribution to Green Belt purposes, the identified unmet need for housing and its location. It also demonstrates that the site is considered to satisfy the definition of Grey Belt land and that the design, reduced developed area and consolidated built form would preserve the openness of the Green Belt whilst delivering a high-quality dwelling that responds positively to its rural setting.

1.02. The site is accessed of Top O' Th' Bank, approximately 300m south-west of its junction with Thurstonland Bank Road. Top O' Th' Bank continues south east from the site for approximately 585m until it reaches a boundary with Occupation Lane.

1.03. The site is within the ownership of 9 Top O' Th' Bank which is across the lane on the east side of Top O' Th' Bank. The land is bounded to the south and west by a stone wall that separates it from woodland that falls away down to Occupation Lane below. The eastern boundary abuts the lane and the North part of the land is an allotment garden within the domestic curtilage of No.9. The site is surrounded on 3 sides by existing woodland and as such cannot be seen from long distances. It can only be seen form the lane, which serves just a limited number of houses.



Figure 1: Satellite image from Google Maps showing application site with a red dot

1.04. All of the buildings with frontages onto Top O' Th' Bank are residential, and there are no listed buildings.

1.05. 9 Top O' Th' Bank is located in the Green Belt to the south of the Huddersfield, outside of small village of Thurstonland. It is a Semi-detached property with a small disused farm holding on the opposite side of the lane.

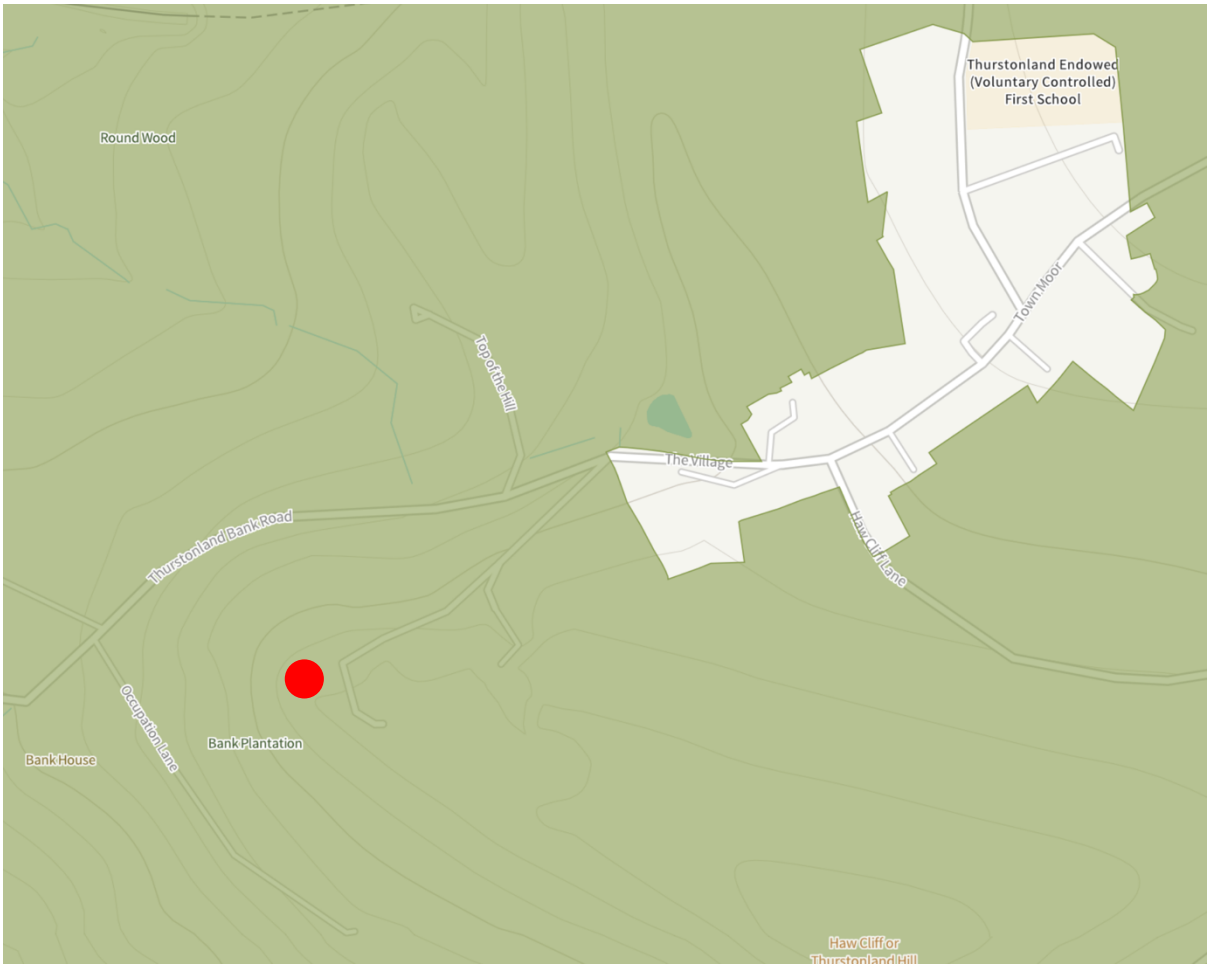


Figure 2: Site shown with red dot in relation to the green belt

1.06. The application site is the former small farm holding which currently houses two redundant agricultural buildings, both in a poor state of repair and unusable due to their level of dilapidation. These include a barn built from a mix of stone, blockwork, vertical timber boarding and a profiled sheet roof, along with a double garage of lightweight structure. Neither building is deemed to have any architectural merit or usability.

1.07. The current proposal seeks to remove the existing dilapidated buildings and consolidate the built form on the site into a single, cohesive structure that responds to the vernacular of the surrounding area, rather than perpetuating the disparate and utilitarian appearance of the existing development. The proposed dwelling has been designed to respect the rural character of the area through its scale, form, materials and relationship with the surrounding landscape, this will be further discussed in section 3 of this document.

1.08. The existing woodland and stone boundary walls provide a degree of enclosure, limiting the visibility of the site from the wider landscape. The proposal seeks to make efficient use of the existing developed area whilst retaining the site's established landscape characteristics and minimising its visual impact on the Green Belt.

2. Policy

2.01. With regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Kirklees Local Plan, the principal considerations relate to the impact of the proposal upon its location within the Green Belt.

NPPF

2.02. GB6 of the NPPF makes clear that development is harmful to the Green Belt unless deemed inappropriate; GB7 sets out forms of development that are considered appropriate in the Green Belt:

- GB7(e) is particularly relevant to this application, which states that the following is appropriate development: '*The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt'*.
- GB7(b) also states: *'the reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the original building. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.'* is also deemed an exception to inappropriate development.
- GB7(g) also states that development in the grey belt is not inappropriate. This is further discussed in section 4 of this report.

2.03. Section 14 of the NPPF places significant emphasis on achieving well-designed development. The proposal has been designed to respond positively to the scale, character and appearance of the adjacent buildings and their wider setting. Further detail is provided within Section 3 of this statement.

2.04. DP3.5 of the NPPF is also relevant to the consideration of new housing within the countryside. The paragraph establishes *'Substantial weight should also be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability,*

or which help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they are consistent with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.'

Kirklees Local Plan Policies

2.05. Paragraph 11.4 states *'Development in the Green Belt should wherever possible ensure the use of vernacular building styles and traditional materials and that surface and boundary treatments are sensitive to their setting.'*

2.06. Policy LP57 states that proposals for the extension, alteration or replacement of existing buildings in the Green Belt will be acceptable provided that: *'in the case of extensions the original building remains the dominant element both in terms of size and overall appearance. The cumulative impact of previous extensions and of other associated buildings will be taken into account. Proposals to extend buildings which have already been extended should have regard to the scale and character of the original part of the building'* (LP57a) and where *'the proposal does not result in a greater impact on openness in terms of the treatment of outdoor areas, including hard standings, curtilages and enclosures and means of access'* (LP57c).

2.07. Policy LP24, Design, requires all development proposals to demonstrate high quality design. It states that development should: *'respect and enhance the character of the... landscape'*.

2.08. In summary, the relevant planning policy establishes that development within the Green Belt must preserve openness and avoid encroachment into the countryside. Replacement buildings and extensions may be acceptable where they are proportionate in scale, and are sensitively designed and constructed to a high quality so as not to harm the character or openness of the Green Belt.

3. Design and Access (Amount, Scale, Layout, Landscaping and Access)

3.01. Policy LP58 of the Kirklees Local plan states that development within the Green Belt must be 'appropriate to its setting and is of a high quality of materials and design'.

3.02. The proposal seeks to replace the existing dilapidated agricultural buildings with a single dwelling, consolidating the built form within the established site boundaries. The existing barn has evolved incrementally over time and incorporates a variety of materials, including natural stone, blockwork and timber boarding. This has resulted in a visually incoherent structure that contributes little to the overall quality of the site.

3.03. The proposed replacement building has been designed as a single, clearly articulated scheme with a restrained palette of natural materials that reflects the surrounding area. This approach reduces visual clutter within the plot and results in a more orderly and legible arrangement of built form.

3.04. The material palette has been deliberately restrained, drawing on materials associated with the local rural and agricultural vernacular. Reclaimed natural walling stone would be used to the lower, single-storey element, establishing a visual connection with traditional stone buildings in the surrounding area. Vertical timber cladding to the upper storey introduces a contrasting texture and materiality, distinguishing the contemporary element whilst maintaining a natural, muted appearance.

3.05. The roof design combines blue slate to part of the building with profiled fibre-cement corrugated roof sheets to the remaining section. This variation reflects the mix of traditional and utilitarian roofing materials commonly associated with agricultural buildings and found within the local area. Rooflights and solar panels are incorporated into the roofscape, allowing natural light into the dwelling and providing renewable energy generation.

3.06. The two-storey element is cantilevered above the lower level, creating a sheltered area beneath whilst introducing a degree of visual separation between the building and the ground plane. A visible structural steel beam supports the projecting form,

expressing the contemporary construction approach and providing a deliberate contrast with the solid masonry of the lower building. The arrangement combines the solidity of traditional agricultural buildings with a lighter, more contemporary architectural expression.



Figure 3: 3D impression of proposed building

3.07. A vertical timber screen is proposed to part of the upper elevation, providing a degree of visual permeability while adding depth and rhythm to the facade. The combination of stone, timber, slate and corrugated roofing creates a clear architectural hierarchy, with the traditional lower element grounding the building and the contemporary upper storey providing a contrasting, lightweight form. Overall, the design seeks to reinterpret local agricultural character through a contemporary architectural approach rather than reproduce a traditional building in a pastiche manner.

3.08. The landscaping would complement the proposed dwelling and soften its relationship with the surrounding land. The retention of the existing boundary treatments, together with the introduction of garden and landscaped areas, would create a more appropriate transition between the built form and the wider countryside. The proposed arrangement would also reduce the extent of

hardstanding and built development across parts of the site, improving its overall appearance and reinforcing the distinction between the developed plot and the surrounding landscape.

3.09. There would be no alterations to the access of the site.



Figure 4: 3D impression of the proposed

4. Principle of Development in the Green Belt

4.01. The application site lies within the designated Green Belt and the proposed development must therefore be assessed against Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LP57 of the Kirklees Local Plan.

4.02. The site comprises previously developed land, having been lawfully developed and occupied by permanent structures and associated infrastructure. The proposed development would represent the efficient reuse of this established developed site, making effective use of land which has already been developed rather than requiring development to extend into previously undeveloped land.

4.03. In this respect, particular regard is given to Policy GB7(e) of the NPPF, which identifies the redevelopment of previously developed land as a form of development that is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided that it would not cause substantial harm to its openness. This is further discussed in section 5.

4.04. Furthermore, GB7 (g) states a number of factors that taken together, deem development to be 'not inappropriate'.

4.05. GB7 (g.i) states '*The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan*'. The site is considered to satisfy the definition of Grey Belt land, as it does not strongly contribute to the Green Belt purposes of checking unrestricted sprawl, preventing neighbouring towns from merging or preserving the setting and special character of historic towns (points (a), (b) or (d) in policy GB2 of the NPPF).

- *A) Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas*
  The application site is not adjacent to a large built-up area, the nearest being Thurstonland Village which is approximately half a kilometre away. The site is deemed to be not adjacent to a large built up area therefore has a 'weak or none' contribution to purpose A according to the guidance notes.

- *B) Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another*

The site sits between Thurstonland Village - 0.5km to the east, Thongsbridge - 0.8km to the west, New Mill – 1km to the south and Farnley Tyas – 2.5km to the north. Steep hillside and woodland separate the site physically from the areas to the south and west. It is deemed that the site only forms a very small part of the gap between towns and therefore has a 'weak or none' contribution to purpose B according to the guidance notes.

- *D) Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*
  The application site does not form part of the setting of a historic town (as per the Guidance wording) and therefore makes no contribution to Purpose D.

4.06. The proposed development would be contained within these established boundaries and located directly adjacent to the existing built form. Furthermore, the proposal would reuse the footprints of existing buildings that are to be demolished, resulting in a reduction in the overall building footprint from 281m² to 250m², representing a decrease of approximately only 11%. Whilst the overall built volume would increase from 1,195m³ to 1,515m³, representing an increase of approximately only 26%. In addition, much of the existing previously developed land to the south of the buildings would be converted to garden and landscaped areas, improving the transition between the developed site and the wider Green Belt.

4.07. GB7(g.ii) of the NPPF states *'There is an evidenced unmet need for the type of development proposed'*. Footnote 41 confirms that a demonstrable unmet need for housing may arise where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, including the relevant buffer where applicable, or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that housing delivery has fallen below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.

4.08. It is reported that Kirklees Council can no longer demonstrate a five-year supply of specific deliverable housing sites, and housing delivery has fallen to 54% of the local housing requirement over the previous three years. This is below the 75% threshold identified in Footnote 41 and demonstrates a significant shortfall in housing delivery. The proposal therefore satisfies the requirement of paragraph

GB7 (g.ii), as the development would contribute towards addressing the identified unmet need for housing.

4.09. GB7 (g.iii), states *'The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3 of this Framework'* (*Location should limit the need to travel by private car, offer a genuine choice of transport modes and utilise existing or proposed transport infrastructure).* The application site is located approx. a quarter of a mile (less than 10-minute walk) from the nearest bus stop, which is in line with the NPPF's definition of 'Reasonable walking distances' for 'well-connected spaces'. As well as this, the application site is approximately 1.2 miles (less than 30-minute walk) from Brockholes train station and approximately 1.7 miles from Stocksmoor train station.

4.10. Taken together, these considerations provide a clear basis for assessing the acceptability of the proposed development under the NPPF, subject to the assessment of any other material planning considerations.

5. Impact on Openness of the Green Belt

5.01. The NPPF and Kirklees Local Plan identify openness as an essential characteristic of the Green Belt and requires substantial weight to be given to any harm arising from development. Openness relates to both spatial and a visual openness, relating to scale, massing, position and how the development is perceived from sensitive viewpoints.

5.02. In spatial terms, the proposal would not extend development into previously undeveloped land, the replacement building would occupy an area that already contains buildings and associated hardstanding and would not result in the outward spread of development further into the adjoining countryside.

5.03. Furthermore, the development would reduce the amount of hardstanding land on the site, returning this back to the greenbelt.

Total existing developed area = 1051m2
Total proposed developed area = 529m2
Total decrease = -50%

5.04. By consolidating the existing built form into a single building, the proposal creates a more compact and coherent arrangement of development within the site. This reduces the existing spread of built form to the east and helps to minimise its overall impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

5.05. The site is surrounded to three sides by vegetation, meaning opportunities to view the existing buildings and the proposed development are limited by the established vegetation and woodland surrounding the site, particularly to the north, west and south.

5.06. Views towards the site from Top O' Th' Bank to the east are limited and partial. The intervening vegetation and surrounding built form prevent a clear or comprehensive view of the application site as a whole, resulting in no effect on the openness of the views from the surrounding area.