



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 November 2025

by **M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 February 2026

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### Appeal Ref: **APP/A4710/W/25/3369755**

#### **Land at Ingham Lane Farm, Ingham Lane, Halifax HX2 9PE**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Stuart Robertshaw and Mrs Susan Robertshaw against the decision of Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
  - The application reference is 24/00937/PIP.
  - The development proposed is three self- and custom-build dwellings.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission in principle is granted for three self- and custom-build dwellings on Land at Ingham Lane Farm, Ingham Lane, Halifax HX2 9PE in accordance with the terms of the application, reference 24/00937/PIP, and the plans submitted with it.

### Preliminary and Procedural Matters; Main Issue

#### *Permission in Principle*

2. The Planning Practice Guidance (“the PPG”) advises that permission in principle is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has two stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second (“technical details consent”) stage is when detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these two stages.
3. As explained in the PPG, the scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted<sup>1</sup>. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent technical details consent application, if permission in principle has been granted, and my determination of the appeal is made in this light.

#### *Background*

4. The appeal site is within the Green Belt. The Council refused to grant permission in principle for two reasons, the first of which related to its assessment that, having regard to Policy GB1 of the 2023 Calderdale Local Plan (“the CLP”) and national policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”), the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The second reason related to the density of the proposed development.
5. The appeal was initially scheduled to be determined by written representations only. The appellant’s appeal submissions challenged the Council’s position as to

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615

whether it could demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, and suggested that it had understated the demand for self-build and custom-build housing in the borough. The Council's 2023/24 *Housing Land Supply Monitoring Report* showed that it had a housing land supply of 5.22 years. The appellant's more recent analysis argued that the actual figure lay somewhere between 3.97 years<sup>2</sup> and 3.46 years<sup>3</sup>. I therefore arranged a Hearing, notwithstanding the relatively advanced stage to which the appeal had progressed, so that the evidence and arguments on this matter could be properly tested.

6. During the autumn of 2025 the Council carried out an interim review of its housing land supply position. In the run-up to the date scheduled for the Hearing, it stated that it could not demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites<sup>4</sup>, though it did not provide me with its own up-to-date figure for the number of years' supply. At the same time, it also acknowledged that there was a demonstrable unmet need for self- and custom-build housing in the borough.
7. Paragraph 155 of the Framework states that the development of homes in the Green Belt should not be considered inappropriate where all of a set of particular requirements apply; these are: a) that the development would utilise "grey belt" land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt; b) that there is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed; and c) that the development would be in a sustainable location<sup>5</sup> (there is a fourth criterion which relates only to "major development" and so does not apply to this scheme).
8. The Council had assessed the matters under Paragraph 155 in its original officer report, and concluded that the proposed development would comply with criteria a) and c); the development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the Green Belt, and its location on the edge of the village of Bradshaw, with some amenities (notably the village primary school, a pub, a church and a cricket club) nearby. In view of the Council's findings in respect housing land supply, and its recognition of there being a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed, it acknowledged that criterion b) of Paragraph 155 was also satisfied. It therefore stated that it no longer wished to maintain the first reason for which permission in principle had been refused.
9. Based on all the evidence before me, including what I saw during my site visit, I see no reason to disagree with the Council's assessment of this matter. Although the CLP was only adopted in March 2023, it pre-dates the December 2024 revision of the Framework, which introduced the "grey belt" concept. The development plan is not therefore consistent with the Framework in respect of the Green Belt, and conflict with Policy GB1 would carry very limited weight. It was therefore no longer necessary to hold the scheduled Hearing, and I reverted to dealing with the appeal based only on the written representations which had been made.

### *Main Issue*

10. Having regard to all of this, I consider that the main issue is whether the appeal site would be an appropriate location for housing development, having particular

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<sup>2</sup> In their initial appeal statement.

<sup>3</sup> At "final comments" stage.

<sup>4</sup> By e-mail to PINS, 23 October 2025.

<sup>5</sup> In the terms set out in Paragraphs 110 to 115 of the Framework.

regard to the type and amount (and therefore the density) of development proposed.

## Reasons

11. The appeal site is a piece of land on the edge of the small village of Bradshaw. To the south-east is Bradshaw Primary School, and to the north a loose grouping of dwellings and farm buildings around Ingham Lane Farm. To the south-west, across Ingham Lane, the site faces a small cluster of dwellings.
12. Policy HS2 of the CLP states that a minimum net density of 30 dwellings per hectare will generally be sought for developments on non-allocated sites. The appeal site has an area of approximately 0.2ha so, with only three dwellings proposed, the appeal scheme would represent a density of only around 15 dwellings per hectare. This is only half that normally sought by the development plan, which the Council considers would represent an inefficient use of land.
13. However, Policy HS2 goes on to say that lower densities may be appropriate on certain sites, taking not account factors including the character of the site and the surrounding area. The Council suggests that residential development nearby has a much greater density than has been proposed here, and I saw that within Bradshaw village there is indeed some relatively dense housing, including the terraces of traditional stone cottages of Horton Place on Bradshaw Lane close to its junction with Ingham Lane, and more modern mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century houses and bungalows on Ingham Close.
14. However, residential development in the appeal site's immediate setting is much less dense; the group of dwellings on the other side of Ingham Lane was described by the Council as a "dense cluster", but still appears to be at a considerably lower density than the rest of the village. Similarly, the housing around Ingham Lane Farm is also at a relatively low density. While this existing development pre-dates the current development plan, and therefore Policy HS2, it nevertheless sets the character of the appeal site. Not only would development on the appeal site be seen in the context of the surrounding housing, it marks the point where the built-up area of the village begins to give way to the surrounding countryside, and a lower development density might therefore be expected.
15. The Council has indicated that people looking for self- and custom-build housing land in the borough desired, on average, a plot of around 933m<sup>2</sup>. I agree with its comment that this desire for larger plots does not in itself outweigh the need to achieve appropriate housing densities, but note that the average plot size here, though still not small in absolute terms, would be some way below that desired average.
16. Given all this, I do not consider that the proposed development would be at an inappropriately low density, having regard to the character of its immediate surroundings. It would also meet a specific need for self- and custom-build housing. The appeal site would be an appropriate location for the proposed development. I therefore find no conflict on this matter with Policy HS2 of the CLP, the principal relevant provisions of which I have set out above. I also find no conflict with the provisions of Paragraph 129 of the Framework which seeks to ensure that development makes efficient use of land, while taking into account (among other things) the identified need for different types of housing, and the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting.

## Planning Balance and Conclusion

17. As the Council has confirmed that it cannot demonstrate an adequate supply of housing land, Paragraph 11 d) of the Framework indicates that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies.
18. The appeal site is in a sustainable location on the edge of Bradshaw, where some amenities are available, and where there are public transport connections to the wider range of services available in Halifax. The appeal scheme would make a modest contribution to the supply of housing, though in view of the Council's acknowledged position on this matter, the contribution would still be a valuable one. It would also contribute to meeting the specific demand for self- and custom-build housing in the borough. I find that any adverse impacts arising from the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when considered against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
19. Although there may be some residual conflict with Policy GB1 of the CLP, for the reasons I have set out in paragraph 9 above this would carry very limited weight in the overall balance. I have found no other conflict with the provisions of the development plan.
20. All the indications are therefore that the appeal should be allowed. Accordingly, permission in principle is granted, subject to the default time limit set out in the PPG<sup>6</sup> of three years for an application for technical details consent to be submitted.

*M Cryan*

Inspector

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<sup>6</sup> Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 58-014-20180615