



ARETÉ RURAL PLANNING

ARETÉ (noun) The ancient Greek concept of striving for excellence

PLANNING STATEMENT

CARAVAN STORAGE

HARGATE HILL EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

SEPTEMBER 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

NOTE ON THIS EDITION

1.1. This statement supersedes the Planning Statement dated April 2026, which was prepared against the National Planning Policy Framework as revised in December 2024. A new National Planning Policy Framework was published on 17 August 2026 and replaces that version.

1.2. The 2026 Framework is not a further revision of the previous document. It is a structural recasting of national policy. Sequentially numbered paragraphs have been replaced throughout by lettered and numbered policies; the policies are separated into those for plan-making and those for national decision-making; and a number of the tests relevant to this application have been reworded. The statement has therefore been rewritten in full rather than annotated.

1.3. The planning case is unchanged in substance and the outcome is unchanged. Three of the applicable tests have altered. Each change is identified expressly in the text where it arises, and a full concordance between the two versions of the Framework is provided at Appendix 2.

BACKGROUND – PLANNING HISTORY

1.4. The application site was recently subject to an application for *‘the change of use of the land to B8 storage use, with associated operational development comprising the engineering operations and laying of hardstanding to form the yard area’*. During the application the Council altered the description of development so that they could issue a positive certificate in respect of part of the proposal, while setting aside the aspect they could not support through that process. As a result, the application site has a lawful development certificate¹ for:

Operational development comprising of hard standing and modifications to northern boundary

¹ HPK/2025/0337

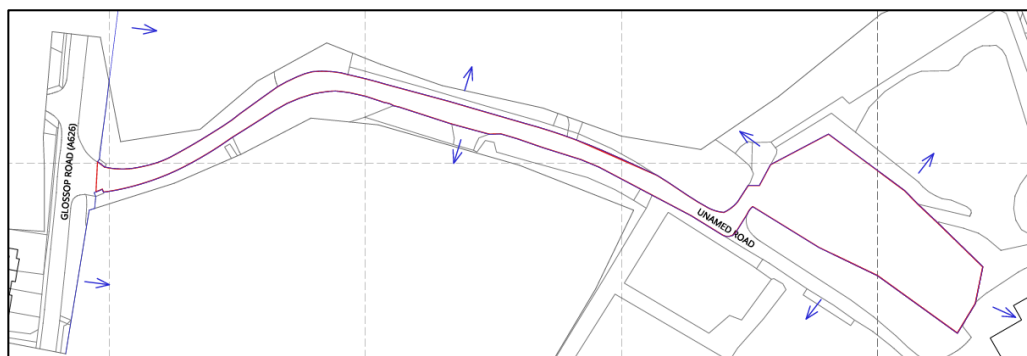


Figure 1: Location plan of HPK/2025/0337

1.5. The applicant recognises the Council’s pragmatism in determining the certificate as such. It remains their case that the land subject of this application has been used as set out within the supporting documents to that application for storage use for a period greater than 10 years.

1.6. It is also considered the case that the use of the land for storage use (B8) meets the relevant planning policy requirements and as such a retrospective application is made to regularise matters.

BACKGROUND – WIDER SITE

1.7. A certificate² was issued on land immediately to the south of the site for:

Change of use of land for storage of caravans, motorhomes and horse trailers, and associated operational development comprising the engineering operations and laying of hardstanding to form the yard area.

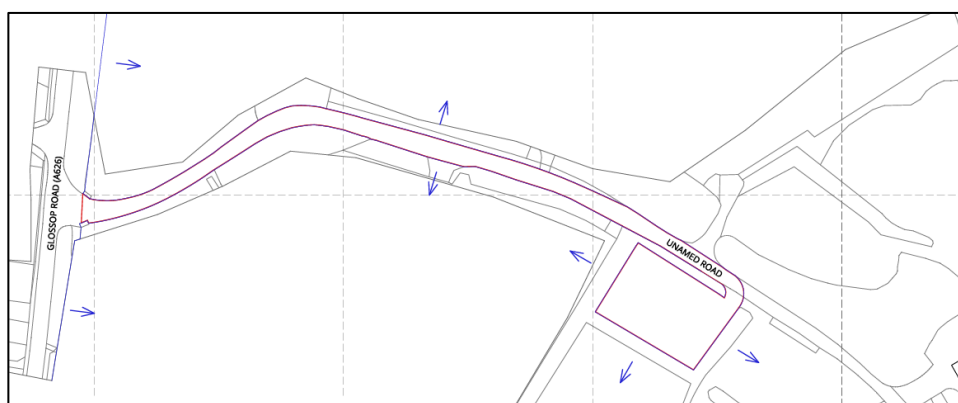


Figure 2: Location of HPK/2025/0339

² HPK/2025/0339

1.8. This demonstrates the ongoing lawful business of the applicants extends to caravan storage.

THE BUSINESS IN NUMBERS

1.9. On the site to the south, granted a lawful permission there are 27 caravans/campervans stored with rolling monthly agreements.

1.10. On the application site, there are 29 caravans/campervans³ stored with rolling monthly agreements.

PROPOSAL

1.11. The proposal is therefore made for:

Retrospective change of use of land at Hargate Hill Equestrian Centre, Glossop, for caravan and motorhome/campervan storage

SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING CASE AND THIS STATEMENT

1.12. The proposal is policy compliant. Under the 2026 Framework the case that the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt is advanced on three independent limbs of policy GB7(1): limb (g) (grey belt), limb (f) iii. (material changes in the use of land) and limb (e) (redevelopment of previously developed land). Each is independently sufficient.

1.13. Because the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, policy S5(5) directs that the proposal should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects. They would not.

1.14. This statement addresses the Green Belt, countryside and economic considerations. There is also a highly comparable appeal decision which, notwithstanding that each case is dealt with on its own merits, provides a clear road map for the interpretation of the grey belt policy now found at GB7(1)(g).

2. THE 2026 FRAMEWORK AND ITS APPLICATION TO THIS APPLICATION

2.1. Annex A, paragraph 1 of the 2026 Framework confirms that its policies are material considerations which must be taken into account in decision-making from the day of publication, there are no transitional arrangements for the determination of planning applications. The application accordingly falls to be determined against the 2026 Framework.

³ In this statement reference to caravans includes campervans and motorhomes

2.2. The Framework is now structured around policies rather than sequentially numbered paragraphs. Each thematic chapter is divided into plan-making policies and national decision-making policies. The national decision-making policies, taken together with the procedural decision-making policies at Chapter 3, comprise the set of national policies against which planning applications fall to be assessed.

2.3. Green Belt policy is at Chapter 13, policies GB1 to GB8. Policies GB6, GB7 and GB8 are national decision-making policies. Policy GB6(1) provides that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the categories in policy GB7.

2.4. Much of the policy relied upon in the April 2026 planning statement is carried forward unchanged. The five Green Belt purposes are restated at policy GB2(1). The definition of ‘grey belt’ is retained in the Annex B glossary and continues to turn on previously developed land and/or land which does not strongly contribute to purposes (a), (b) or (d). The definition of ‘previously developed land’ is retained in the Annex B glossary in materially identical terms, including the express inclusion of large areas of lawfully developed hardstanding.

2.5. Four changes are material to this application and are each addressed in full where they arise:

- The material change of use limb, previously paragraph 154(h) limb v., is now at GB7(1)(f) limb iii. and is subject to a materially less demanding test. This change is favourable to the applicant and is addressed within this statement.
- The grey belt limb, previously paragraph 155, is now at GB7(1)(g). The unmet need criterion is expressed as an ‘evidenced’ rather than a ‘demonstrable’ need; the sustainability criterion cross-refers to policy TR3 rather than to paragraphs 110 and 115; and the Golden Rules criterion applies only to major development involving the provision of housing. These changes are neutral or favourable and are also addressed further.
- The redevelopment limb, previously paragraph 154(g), is now at GB7(1)(e) and contains a new parenthetical confirming that a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential constitutes redevelopment. The parenthetical is inclusive and does not exclude other changes of use. The limb continues to apply to this proposal, and the point is addressed within this statement.
- The presumption in favour of sustainable development has been restructured into policies S3 to S5, and the ‘tilted balance’ at paragraph 11(d), triggered by out-of-

date development plan policies, does not appear in the 2026 Framework in that form. For proposals in the Green Belt, policy S5(5) provides the operative balance. This is addressed at section 7. The applicant no longer needs to rely on the out-of-date status of Local Plan Policy S4 as a gateway to a tilted balance.

2.6. Annex A, paragraph 2 provides that development plan policies which are materially inconsistent with the national decision-making policies should be given very limited weight, but that other development plan policies should not be given reduced weight simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the Framework.

2.7 The concordance table setting out the relationship between the December 2024 and August 2026 provisions (appendix 2) is for the assistance of the decision-maker.

3. PRECEDENT APPEAL

3.1. This section identifies an appeal where almost the exact circumstances were considered by an Inspector within the Green Belt.

3.2. Presenting this appeal doesn't seek to claim that because it was approved in one location, it should be here. However, there are very helpful guidelines in how the critical matters within the National Planning Policy Framework were considered and addressed.

APPEALS 3342201 AND 3341893 AT DODINGTON LANE, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE⁴

3.3. The appeals were determined under the December 2024 Framework. The findings are nonetheless directly transferable, for the reasons given below.

GREY BELT AND COMMERCIAL USE

3.4. The decision confirms that grey belt land is capable of accommodating commercial uses, including B8 storage and distribution, and that grey belt status is not limited to residential or housing-led development.

3.5. That position is, if anything, put beyond doubt by the 2026 Framework. Policy GB7(1)(g) is expressed in wholly general terms as 'development where all of the following apply', without restriction by use class or development type. The Golden Rules criterion at GB7(1)(g)(iv) is now expressly confined to major development involving the provision of housing, which confirms that the balance of the limb is intended to apply to development of all kinds.

⁴ See appendix 1 for the decision letter

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ROLE OF USE CLASS

3.6. The Inspector considered the rural location and the absence of public transport links but concluded that the development nonetheless met the sustainability test. Critical to that finding was the nature of the use itself. The Inspector noted that a B8 caravan storage use does not generate a large number of traffic movements and, fundamentally, does not give rise to a need for public transport accessibility; by its very nature, users arrive by private vehicle to deposit or collect a caravan. The Council did not resist the scheme on accessibility or highway safety grounds.

3.7. That reasoning links directly across to policy TR3. TR3(1)(a) is expressly engaged for development proposals ‘which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated’, and is further qualified by the words ‘unless the nature of the development would make this impractical’. The Inspector’s finding, that the trip generation profile of caravan storage is inherently low and that public transport accessibility is not a relevant measure for a use of this character, is precisely the judgement which TR3 responds to. The 2026 Framework has reinforced the Inspector’s reasoning.

3.8. The assessment is strengthened by policy E4(2), which provides that development proposals to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be located outside settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport, and that in those circumstances proposals should take opportunities to use previously developed land and sites physically well-related to existing development.

3.9. The decision therefore remains a useful precedent for grey belt applications for commercial uses where the trip-generation profile and operational characteristics mean that conventional public transport accessibility is not a relevant measure of sustainability.

4. WHETHER THE PROPOSAL IS INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT

4.1. The application site is located within the Green Belt. Policy GB6(1) provides that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the categories in policy GB7. Policy GB6(2) confirms that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

4.2 It is not necessary to reach the very special circumstances test in this instance. The proposal falls within policy GB7 on three independent grounds, each sufficient in itself:

- Policy GB7(1)(g), grey belt land meeting the four stated criteria;
- Policy GB7(1)(f) limb iii, a material change in the use of land where the impact on openness is minimised and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes; and
- Policy GB7(1)(e), the redevelopment of previously developed land which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

THE GB7(1)(G) EXCEPTION – GREY BELT

4.2. Policy GB7(1) provides that the following category of development is not 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:

g. Development where all of the following apply:

- i. 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;*
- ii. There is an evidenced unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
- iii. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3 of this Framework; and*
- iv. In the case of major development involving the provision of housing, the development proposed complies with policy GB8.*

4.3. Each criterion is examined in turn.

GB7(1)(G)(I) – GREY BELT LAND

4.4. The Annex B glossary defines grey belt as:

Grey belt: For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in policy GB2.

4.5. The application site qualifies on both bases, as set out below.

4.6. It is noted that the second sentence of the December 2024 definition, which excluded land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development, does not appear in the 2026 definition. The site is not subject to any such designation, and no national decision-making policy relating to designated areas or assets is engaged.

PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

4.7. The Annex B glossary defines previously developed land as:

Previously developed land: Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed but where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures ...; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

4.8. The definition is unchanged in every respect relied upon in this statement. It requires that the land has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure or fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, and it expressly includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed.

4.9. The application site benefits from Lawful Development Certificate HPK/2025/0337, issued by High Peak Borough Council, confirming the lawfulness of the operational development comprising the hardstanding and modifications to the northern boundary. That certificate confirms, as a matter of legal fact, that the hardstanding on the application site was lawfully carried out. The land therefore satisfies the definition on two grounds.

4.10. First, it is occupied by fixed surface infrastructure, the hardstanding, which has been lawfully developed, as confirmed by the certificate. This falls squarely within the express inclusion in the definition.

4.11. Second, the certificate resolves any question as to the lawfulness of the development of the site. The Council's own decision to issue the certificate is

determinative on this point. Whatever the Council's position on the nature of the subsequent storage use, the physical development of the hardstanding is confirmed as lawful, and it is on that basis that the assessment is made.

4.12. The exclusion for land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings does not apply. The land is not and was not last in agricultural use. The equestrian activity on the wider site is not agricultural use for planning purposes, and the storage of wrapped hay associated with equestrian rather than agricultural activity does not bring the land within the exclusion. In any event, the exclusion is directed at land last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings, and no such building has occupied the application site. The conclusion that the site is previously developed land is robust.

CONTRIBUTION TO PURPOSES (A), (B) AND (D) OF POLICY GB2

4.13. Policy GB2(1) sets out the five Green Belt purposes. Annex E now provides, within the Framework itself, the criteria by which the contribution of land to purposes (a), (b) and (d) is to be evaluated, replacing the guidance formerly found only in the Planning Practice Guidance.

4.14. Annex E is framed in the context of plan-making assessments. The criteria it contains nonetheless represent the government's stated view of what constitutes a strong, moderate or weak contribution to each purpose, and are the most authoritative available guide to the judgement required by the glossary definition, which applies expressly 'for the purposes of plan-making and decision-making'. They are applied below.

4.15. Purpose (a), to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. Annex E, paragraph 3 confirms that this purpose relates to the sprawl of large built-up areas and that villages should not be considered large built-up areas. Annex E indicates that assessment areas making a weak contribution or none are likely to include those which are not adjacent to or near to a large built-up area, or which are adjacent or near to a large built-up area but are contained or largely enclosed by significant existing development. The site meets both descriptions. It sits within open countryside and is not adjacent to a large built-up area; and it is largely enclosed by the significant existing development of the Hargate Hill Equestrian Centre. The contribution is weak or none.

4.16. Purpose (b), to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another. Annex E, paragraph 4 confirms that this purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages, and that land which does not form part of a gap between towns makes a weak contribution or none. The site does not form part of a gap between two towns. The contribution is none.

4.17. Purpose (d), to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. Annex E, paragraph 5 confirms that this purpose relates to historic towns, not villages, and that a strong contribution requires the land both to form part of the setting of the historic town and to make a considerable contribution to its special character. The site does not form part of the setting of a historic town. The contribution is none.

4.18. The site is therefore grey belt.

GB7(1)(G)(I), SECOND LIMB — THE PURPOSES OF THE REMAINING GREEN BELT

4.19. The second limb requires that the development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes, taken together, of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan. This is a plan-wide test directed at the integrity of the Green Belt as a whole, rather than at the merits of the individual site.

4.20. Purposes (a), (b) and (d) have been examined above and are not engaged. Purpose (c), to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, is engaged only to the most limited degree. The application site occupies a very small percentage of the Green Belt across the plan area. It is previously developed land, constrained on three sides by other existing development, and involves no new land take. Taking the Green Belt across the plan as a whole, the proposal does not fundamentally undermine this purpose.

4.21. Purpose (e), to assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land, is unaffected. The proposal is not on greenfield land and does not detract from brownfield-first principles. Opportunities for recycling derelict and other urban land across the plan area remain wholly unchanged.

4.22. The criterion at GB7(1)(g)(i) is satisfied in both of its limbs.

GB7(1)(G)(II) — EVIDENCED UNMET NEED

4.23. The December 2024 Framework required a ‘demonstrable’ unmet need. The 2026 Framework requires an ‘evidenced’ unmet need for the type of development proposed. Footnote 41 to policy GB7 defines what constitutes an evidenced unmet need in the case of applications involving the provision of housing and in the case of traveller sites. It prescribes no definition for other forms of development, which are therefore to be assessed on the evidence.

4.24. Policy E2(2) supplies the framework for that assessment. It provides that, where a development proposal is required to demonstrate whether an unmet need exists, consideration should be given to whether:

a. Market signals indicate an undersupply of specific types of business land or premises, taking into account the anticipated catchment area for the type of development proposed, the changing needs of different sectors and the availability of suitable existing land and buildings; or

b. The specific locational requirements of the proposal are met by existing allocations in the development plan. This includes, but is not limited to, situations where: i. Existing businesses plan to expand or improve their premises ...

4.25. This is significant and helpful. Policy E2(2)(a) expressly directs the decision-maker to the anticipated catchment area for the type of development proposed and to the availability of suitable existing land and buildings. That is precisely the assessment undertaken below, and it is the same approach as was accepted by the Inspector at Dodington Lane.

4.26. Understandably, the owners of caravans seek to have them stored within proximity of their homes so that they are accessible for maintenance and for taking them to holiday destinations. The caravan storage at Hargate Hill Equestrian serves Glossop and the immediate villages. The evidence is set out below under three heads: the employment land position, the catchment assessment, and the position beyond the catchment.

EMPLOYMENT LAND REVIEW

4.27. Reference is made to the High Peak Borough Council Authority Monitoring Report 2024-2025 (AMR)⁵, published December 2025. This is the Council's most recent annual monitoring report, covering the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and represents the most up-to-date authoritative record of land supply within the Borough.

4.28. The AMR monitors employment land supply and completions across all B use classes, including B8 storage and distribution. It is therefore the appropriate starting point for assessing whether any existing or allocated employment land within the Glossopdale sub-area could realistically accommodate caravan storage.

4.29. During the monitoring year 2024-25 the AMR records total gross gains of B8 land of 1.6362 hectares and 1,449 m² of floorspace, with no B8 losses recorded. However, across all B use classes combined, the AMR records a net loss of 3.1507 hectares and 29,463.9 m² of floorspace during the same period (Table 26). This net loss position demonstrates that employment land supply across the Borough is under significant pressure and that there is no surplus capacity from which specialist storage needs could be met without

⁵ https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/media/10694/Authority-Monitoring-Report-2024-2025/pdf/04HPBC_Authority_Monitoring_Report_2024-2025_V2.pdf?m=1770026400360

displacing other employment-generating uses. This is a market signal of undersupply for the purposes of policy E2(2)(a).

4.30. Within the Glossopdale sub-area, the AMR identifies one remaining undeveloped allocated employment land site: land off Wren Nest Road, Glossop, with an allocated area of 2.5 hectares, all of which remained undeveloped as at 31 March 2025 (Table 27). As a development plan allocation, this site is reserved for conventional employment-generating uses. Its use for caravan storage, which by its nature generates minimal employment, would represent an inefficient use of a scarce and strategically important employment allocation and would be contrary to the purpose for which it has been identified. Policy S4(2)(a)(i) of the Framework recognises the substantial adverse impact of development which prejudices the allocation or safeguarding of land for particular uses in the development plan.

4.31. The AMR identifies two existing employment sites within the Glossopdale sub-area retaining undeveloped capacity (Table 28):

- Rossington Park / Graphite Way, Hadfield, with 4.77 hectares remaining as at 31 March 2025; and
- Waterside, Hadfield, with 0.80 hectares remaining as at 31 March 2025.

4.32. Both are established, active industrial estates. The undeveloped capacity identified in the AMR is retained to accommodate conventional employment-generating development. Neither site is available, allocated or identified for leisure storage uses such as caravan storage. Rossington Park in particular, at 4.77 hectares, represents a significant strategic employment asset for the Glossopdale sub-area, and its retention for employment-generating purposes is consistent with the objectives of the Local Plan and with policy E1(1)(c) of the Framework.

4.33. Critically, the AMR makes no reference to any allocated, consented or available site within the Glossopdale sub-area which could accommodate caravan or leisure vehicle storage. No planning permissions for caravan storage were granted within Glossopdale during the monitoring period, further confirming the absence of any pipeline of provision for this use.

4.34. It is further material that caravan storage, whilst falling within the B8 use class, is by its nature a passive economic use generating no meaningful employment. There are no staff permanently stationed on site, no logistics operations and no supply chain activity associated with the use. Its accommodation on allocated or available employment land within established industrial estates, where the policy objective is to retain and create

jobs, would displace genuinely employment-generating uses without any commensurate employment benefit.

4.35. This point is reinforced by the Inspector's findings at Dodington Lane, who noted that caravan storage does not generate a large number of traffic movements and is not a use which generates a need for accessibility by public transport, given its inherently passive operational nature. It is therefore entirely logical that caravan storage is accommodated on land where such use is already established. The co-location of the proposed use with an existing operation is the most rational means of meeting the identified need without placing pressure on the finite supply of employment land within the Glossopdale sub-area. This engages policy E2(2)(b) directly: the specific locational requirements of the proposal are not met by existing allocations, and E2(2)(b)(i) expressly contemplates the position of existing businesses planning to expand or improve their premises.

4.36. The AMR evidence therefore confirms that there are no available or suitable sites within the Glossopdale employment land supply capable of accommodating caravan storage.

ASSESSMENT OF CARAVAN STORAGE PROVISION WITHIN THE CATCHMENT AREA

4.37. Given the nature of the use (caravan owners requiring accessible storage within reasonable proximity to their homes) a catchment area of approximately 5 kilometres from Glossop has been used as the primary assessment area. This is the 'anticipated catchment area for the type of development proposed' contemplated by policy E2(2)(a), and is consistent with the approach adopted by the appellant in the Dodington Lane appeal (APP/P0119/C/24/3342201), which was accepted by the Inspector as an appropriate basis for assessing local need.

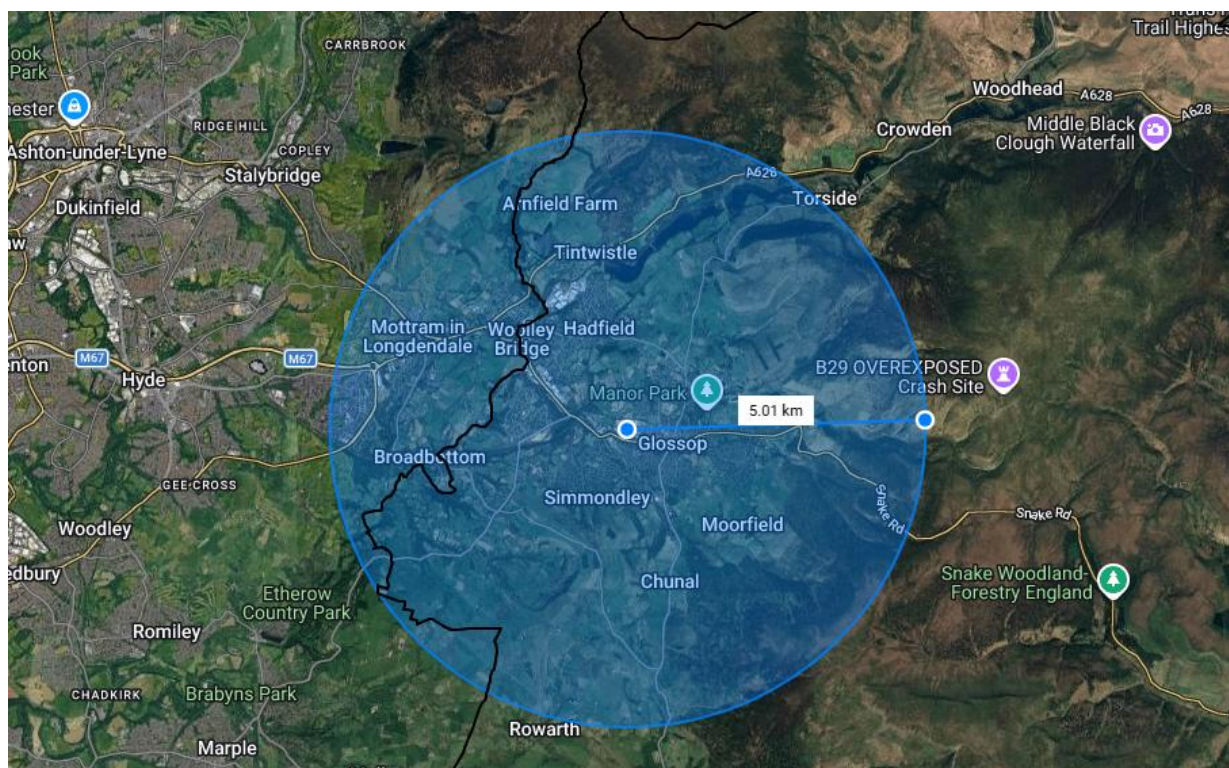


Figure 3: 5km of the site

4.38. There is one identified caravan storage facility within the catchment area, on land adjacent to High Peak Steels Ltd on Peakdale Road, Glossop (Brookfield Industrial Estate). A review of current aerial imagery confirms that this yard is operating at capacity with no ability to expand. The site is constrained on all sides by existing development and there is no evidence of any land available for additional storage spaces. It is therefore unable to absorb any additional demand.

4.39. A review of commercial property listings and known industrial estates within the 5 kilometre catchment has been undertaken. No other commercial caravan storage facilities have been identified within this radius. The review included the principal employment sites within the Glossop sub-area as identified in the AMR 2024-2025, which are active industrial estates retaining undeveloped capacity for employment-generating uses and are neither available nor suitable for caravan storage, as set out in the employment land review above.

4.40. Beyond the 5 kilometre catchment, the options for caravan storage become increasingly impractical for Glossop-based caravan owners. The topography of the High Peak and the designation of significant areas of land as Green Belt, National Park and open countryside severely constrain the availability of suitable land. There are no known commercial caravan storage facilities in the immediately surrounding area beyond the 5

kilometre radius which would represent a realistic and sustainable alternative for caravan owners residing in and around Glossop.

4.41. The position is therefore as follows. Within the relevant catchment area there is one existing caravan storage facility, operating at capacity with no ability to expand. There are no other known commercial caravan storage sites within the catchment. The employment land supply within Glossopdale provides no realistic alternative, as confirmed by the AMR evidence. The application site and the adjacent lawfully certificated land together represent the only meaningful caravan storage provision in the area, currently accommodating 56 caravans under rolling monthly agreements. That level of active, contracted occupation is itself direct evidence of a need which existing provision cannot otherwise meet.

4.42. This assessment is consistent with, and reinforces, the finding of the Inspector at Dodington Lane that there was a local need for caravan storage which the development was fulfilling. The evidenced unmet need required by policy GB7(1)(g)(ii), assessed in the manner prescribed by policy E2(2), is established.

GB7(1)(G)(III) – SUSTAINABLE LOCATION

4.43. The criterion requires that the development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3. It is acknowledged that the site is in a rural setting without direct access to public transport.

4.44. Policy TR3(1)(a) provides that development proposals ‘which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated’ should be in locations which are sustainable, meaning locations which limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users, ‘unless the nature of the development would make this impractical’.

4.45. The threshold in TR3(1)(a) is not met. Caravan storage does not generate a significant amount of movement in the context of this area. Users visit infrequently, typically at the beginning and end of a holiday season or for occasional maintenance. The trip generation profile is inherently low, and materially lower than that of most other B8 uses. The principle is therefore engaged only lightly, if at all.

4.46. In any event, the closing qualification to TR3(1)(a) applies. The nature of the development makes a genuine choice of transport modes impractical: a caravan cannot be delivered to or collected from a storage yard other than by towing it behind, or driving it as, a private vehicle. Public transport accessibility is not a relevant measure of

sustainability for a use of this character. This is the reasoning of the Inspector at Dodington Lane, and it is reasoning which the wording of TR3 now expressly accommodates.

4.47. The remaining limbs of TR3 are satisfied. There is no significant adverse impact on the transport network in terms of capacity or congestion, and none on highway safety, requiring mitigation under TR3(1)(c); the site is accessed via an existing driveway to the public highway serving a busy commercial equestrian and fishing facility. The environmental impacts of traffic under TR3(1)(d) are negligible, the use being low-volume and infrequent. TR3(1)(e) invites opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport in rural areas ‘where they exist and can be supported by the development proposed’; no such opportunity arises from a low-intensity storage use on existing hardstanding, and none is required.

4.48. The wider Framework confirms that this is the correct approach. Policy E4(2) expressly recognises that development proposals to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be located outside settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It directs that, in those circumstances, proposals should take opportunities to use previously developed land and sites physically well-related to existing development, and that siting and design should be appropriate having regard to the character of the surroundings. The proposal does each of these things: it uses existing lawfully developed hardstanding, it sits within and is physically well-related to an established equestrian complex, and it introduces no built form.

4.49. Assessed in the round, and with reference to the nature and operational requirements of the use, the application site represents a sustainable location. The criterion at GB7(1)(g)(iii) is satisfied.

GB7(1)(G)(IV) – THE GOLDEN RULES

4.50. The criterion applies only ‘in the case of major development involving the provision of housing’. This application does not involve the provision of housing and is not major development. Policy GB8 is not engaged.

CONCLUSION ON POLICY GB7(1)(G)

4.51. All four criteria are met. The site is previously developed grey belt land which does not strongly contribute to purposes (a), (b) or (d), and the development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the plan area. There is an evidenced unmet need for caravan storage within the catchment, assessed in accordance with policy E2(2). The site is a sustainable location for this form of

development having particular regard to policy TR3. The Golden Rules do not apply. The development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt.

THE GB7(1)(F) LIMB III. EXCEPTION — MATERIAL CHANGE IN THE USE OF LAND

4.52. Policy GB7(1)(f) provides that the following are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt:

f. Certain other forms of development, provided the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. These are: ... iii. Material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); ...

4.53. The proposal is a material change in the use of land. It involves no operational development whatsoever: the hardstanding is already in place and is the subject of a lawful development certificate. The limb is squarely engaged. The examples given in parentheses are illustrative, introduced by the words ‘such as’, and are not exhaustive.

4.54. The applicable test has changed, and has changed in the applicant’s favour. Under paragraph 154(h) of the December 2024 Framework the requirement was that the development ‘preserves openness’ and ‘does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt’. Under policy GB7(1)(f) the requirement is that ‘the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised’ and that ‘there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes’. Both limbs have been relaxed. The first now accepts that there may be an impact on openness and asks whether it has been minimised. The second now asks whether any conflict with the purposes is significant, rather than whether there is any conflict at all.

IS THE IMPACT ON OPENNESS MINIMISED?

4.55. Openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects. The matters which may be relevant include the volume and visual impact of the proposal, the duration of the development and its remediability, and the degree of activity likely to be generated, including traffic generation.

4.56. Spatially, the land was laid as hardstanding and used for the ongoing storage of various items prior to the introduction of caravans. The proposal occupies the same area of land, with no new land take, no new structures and no new built form of any kind.

4.57. If this land were not used for the storage of caravans it would be used for the same storage use to which it has been put over time. The submission of application HPK/2025/0337 included aerial imagery and sworn statements on the land use, including

the use of the land for wrapped hay for equestrian customers, horse trailers and boxes, and commercial vehicles.

4.58. The Council has previously challenged the use of the land. However, even taking the Council's point regarding the storage of wrapped hay for equestrian customers, wrapped hay would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the caravans. Wrapped hay is stacked to a taller overall height than the caravans, could occupy the entire footprint of the hardstanding, and is placed there all year round.

4.59. Visually, the site is not readily visible from public vantage points and benefits from substantial screening by established planting. The closest footpath is approximately 130 metres to the north, and views from it are filtered by planting alongside the right of way. There are established trees on the immediate northern boundary of the site. The public right of way is on lower ground, so views upwards towards the site are obscured by existing tree planting.

4.60. The site is enclosed by other existing development on three sides and sits within the setting of a significant equestrian facility with several large buildings and frequently full car parks. The caravans are read against that context, not against open countryside.

4.61. As to duration and remediability, the use is inherently and completely reversible. Caravans are mobile. No structure has been erected and no ground has been disturbed. The land could be returned to an equivalent or improved state of openness at any time. The number of caravans and the area over which they may be stored is self limiting and their maximum height are capable of precise control by planning condition.

4.62. As to the degree of activity generated, the use is passive and low-intensity, generating infrequent and low-volume traffic movements, as addressed above.

4.63. The impact on openness is, on any view, minimised. Indeed, on the comparison with the fallback storage of wrapped hay, the proposal represents an improvement in openness rather than a diminution of it.

WOULD THERE BE A SIGNIFICANT CONFLICT WITH THE GREEN BELT PURPOSES?

4.64. The assessment of the five purposes above applies equally here. Purposes (a), (b) and (d) are not engaged. Purpose (c) is engaged only to the most limited degree, on previously developed land constrained on three sides by existing development and involving no new land take. Purpose (e) is unaffected. There is no significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes.

CONCLUSION ON POLICY GB7(1)(F) LIMB III.

4.65. The proposal is a material change in the use of land, 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 development falls squarely within policy GB7(1)(f) and is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

THE GB7(1)(E) EXCEPTION – REDEVELOPMENT OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

4.66. Policy GB7(1)(e) provides that the following is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt:

e. 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;

4.67. The image below shows, as a minimum, the land and buildings that would fall within the definition of previously developed land.



Figure 4: Previously developed land

4.68. The land is previously developed land, for the reasons given above. Two questions therefore arise: whether the proposal constitutes ‘redevelopment’ of that land, and whether it would cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

'REDEVELOPMENT' INCLUDES THIS CHANGE OF USE

4.69. The December 2024 equivalent at paragraph 154(g) referred to 'the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land'. The 2026 formulation adds a parenthetical which expressly brings within the concept of redevelopment a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential.

4.70. That parenthetical is inclusive, not exhaustive. It is introduced by the word 'including'. It identifies one category of material change of use which is to be treated as redevelopment; it does not provide, and does not say, that other material changes of use are excluded. Had the drafter intended to confine the limb to physical works together with a single category of change of use, express words of limitation would have been used. None appear. There is no definition of 'redevelopment' in the Annex B glossary which would import any such restriction.

4.71. That reading is confirmed by the structure of the Framework. The identical formula appears at policy S5(1)(d), which lists among the forms of development to be approved outside settlements 'the redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential)'. The parenthetical is therefore a standard drafting formula deployed consistently across the Framework, evidently directed at putting beyond doubt that a change of use to residential qualifies as redevelopment, a point on which there had been argument, rather than at narrowing the concept of redevelopment in the Green Belt specifically. Nothing in Chapter 13 suggests a Green Belt-specific restriction.

4.72. Nor does the existence of GB7(1)(f) limb iii. displace limb (e). Policy GB7(1) provides that 'the following categories of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt'. The categories are alternatives, not mutually exclusive compartments, and overlap between them is inherent in the structure: limb (g), for example, is plainly capable of applying to development which also falls within limbs (e) or (f). The policy establishes no hierarchy and contains no provision that a more specific category ousts a more general one. A proposal which falls within any one category qualifies.

4.73. The proposal constitutes redevelopment. The change of use is from an uncontrolled mixed storage use (involving wrapped hay, horse trailers, commercial vehicles, caravans and general equipment) to a defined, regulated and managed B8 caravan storage use, with rolling monthly agreements in place, defined areas for individual caravans and an operational model which differs materially from the previous mixed activity. This is a purposeful and formalised transition of lawfully developed land to

a specific, lawful and controlled employment use. It is the developing of something again, and differently, in the ordinary meaning of the word.

NO SUBSTANTIAL HARM TO OPENNESS

4.74. The threshold at GB7(1)(e) is substantial harm, a demanding one, and expressly higher than the requirement at GB7(1)(f) that the impact be minimised. For the reasons above, the impact on openness is minimised: there is no new land take, no new structure and no new built form; the site is enclosed on three sides by existing development and screened by established planting; the nearest public right of way is some 130 metres distant on lower ground; and the use is wholly and immediately reversible. Measured against the fallback storage the proposal is neutral or beneficial in openness terms. An impact which is minimised on that analysis cannot be substantial.

CONCLUSION ON POLICY GB7(1)(E)

4.75. The site is previously developed land, the proposal constitutes redevelopment of it, and the development would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The development falls within policy GB7(1)(e) and is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

GREEN BELT CONCLUSION

4.76. Three separate exceptions to the general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt have been demonstrated.

4.77. First, under policy GB7(1)(g), the site is grey belt land which does not strongly contribute to purposes (a), (b) or (d) and would not fundamentally undermine the remaining purposes across the plan area. There is an evidenced unmet need for caravan storage within the Glossopdale area, confirmed both by the absence of any alternative provision and by the active occupation of the site itself. The site is a sustainable location for this low-trip-generating, passively operated use. The Golden Rules do not apply.

4.78. Second, under policy GB7(1)(f) limb iii., the proposal is a material change in the use of land where the impact on openness is minimised and there would be no significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes.

4.79. Third, under policy GB7(1)(e), the site is previously developed land, the proposal constitutes redevelopment of it, and the development does not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

4.80. On any one of these grounds the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Each is independently sufficient. It follows that policy GB6(2) is not engaged and no very special circumstances need be demonstrated.

5. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE FRAMEWORK

GREEN BELT

5.1. Local Plan Policy EQ4 defers to national Green Belt policy. There is no conflict, and the assessment at section 4 above applies.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

5.2. Local Plan Policy EQ3 (rural development) supports the ‘redevelopment of a previously developed site’ ... ‘providing it does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the rural area’, and ‘rural employment in the form of ... commercial enterprises ... where a rural location can be justified’. Both limbs are satisfied. The site is previously developed; the proposal introduces no built form and has no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the rural area; and a rural location is justified for the reasons above.

5.3. Local Plan Policy E1 (new employment development) supports ‘*business development within the countryside that accords with Local Plan Policy EQ3 – Rural Development*’. Policy EQ3 is satisfied, and therefore so is Local Plan Policy E1.

5.4. These development plan policies are consistent with the national decision-making policies in the 2026 Framework and should be afforded full weight under Annex A, paragraph 2. Framework policy E4(1) supports the sustainable growth of businesses in rural areas. Framework policy E4(2) recognises that development proposals to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be located outside settlements and in locations not well served by public transport, and directs the use of previously developed land and sites physically well-related to existing development. Framework policy E1(1)(a) requires a positive, proactive and realistic approach to encouraging sustainable economic growth in both urban and rural areas.

5.5. Framework policy E2(1)(a) is directly engaged. It provides that substantial weight should be given to the economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt. The proposal is exactly that: an established rural business at Hargate Hill Equestrian Centre which has expanded its caravan storage operation to cater for demand and now seeks to regularise and formalise that expansion.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY S4

5.6. The Council’s monitoring document indicates that Local Plan Policy S4 (maintaining and enhancing an economic base) has been out of date for development management purposes since June 2022, and that adoption of a replacement Local Plan is not anticipated until Autumn 2026.

5.7. Under the December 2024 Framework, that status engaged the ‘tilted balance’ at paragraph 11(d). The 2026 Framework does not contain that mechanism. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is now expressed at policies S3 to S5 and does not turn on whether development plan policies are out of date. The consequences of the position on Policy S4 are therefore narrower than previously argued, and the applicant does not rely upon it as a gateway to a tilted balance. Policy S5(5) stands on its own, for the reasons at section 7 below.

5.8. Two points nonetheless remain material. First, there is no up-to-date development plan policy identifying or allocating land to meet specialist B8 storage needs, including caravan storage, within the Glossopdale area. That is directly relevant to the assessment of unmet need under policies GB7(1)(g)(ii) and E2(2)(b). Second, the absence of an up-to-date economic base policy means there is no development plan policy with which the proposal could be said to conflict on economic grounds. The proposal accords with the development plan taken as a whole.

6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

LANDSCAPE

6.1. The development benefits from existing, mature landscaping surrounding the application site and within the wider area. Limited views are possible from the right of way to the north, but these are filtered by planting alongside the right of way itself and by existing planting near the parked caravans. The siting of caravans does not have an undue impact on the immediate or wider landscape.

ECOLOGY

6.2. The application site comprises existing hardstanding within an established equestrian complex. The land has been in active use for storage and equestrian-related activity over an extended period and does not contain features which would be considered to have significant ecological value.

6.3. The proposed use introduces no new built form, lighting, drainage infrastructure or ground disturbance. As a change of use of an existing surfaced area, the ecological impact is negligible. No national decision-making policy in Chapter 19 of the Framework is engaged so as to require refusal.

HIGHWAYS

6.4. The site is accessed via a driveway to the public highway which serves a busy commercial equestrian and fishing facility. The proposal will not cause a material impact on highway safety or capacity. The requirements of policy TR3(1)(c) are met.

DRAINAGE

6.5. The caravans are sited on existing permeable hardstanding. The land holding owned around the site of the caravans is extensive. The proposal would not create any additional run-off. The land is already hardstanding, with no further intervention proposed.

RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION AND POLICY DM8

6.6. The application is retrospective. Policy DM8(2) provides that, in cases of unauthorised development where consideration is being given to an application for retrospective planning permission, if it is concluded on the evidence that the unauthorised development was intentional, that fact should be given substantial weight in considering whether to grant permission.

6.7. DM8(2) is not engaged on the facts. The applicant's case, supported by aerial imagery and sworn statements submitted with application HPK/2025/0337, is that the land has been used for storage for a period greater than 10 years and that the use is lawful. The applicant applied to the Council for a lawful development certificate in respect of that use, and the Council issued a certificate confirming the lawfulness of the operational development while altering the description so as to set aside the use element. The present application has been made promptly and in good faith to regularise the position following that outcome.

6.8. That is the opposite of intentional unauthorised development. It is a proactive attempt to bring the use within the planning system through the correct statutory route. There is no evidential basis on which the decision-maker could conclude that the development was intentionally unauthorised, and DM8(2) attracts no weight against the proposal.

7. THE PLANNING BALANCE

7.1. Policy S5(5) is the operative provision for this application. It states that policy S5 does not apply to development proposals in the Green Belt, which should instead be determined in accordance with policies HC8, GB6, GB7 and/or GB8 as appropriate, and continues:

However, where development would not be inappropriate in these locations (through the application of policies HC8 and GB7), proposals 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, and applying paragraph 2 of this policy.

7.2. The proposal is not inappropriate development, through the application of policy GB7, on three independent grounds. Policy S5(5) is therefore engaged and directs that permission should be granted unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects. The direction is a positive one and does not depend upon the status of any development plan policy.

7.3. Policy S5(2) identifies that the circumstances in which the benefits are likely to be substantially outweighed include, but are not restricted to, where a proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances. No such policy is engaged. There is no flood risk, heritage, protected landscape, biodiversity, pollution or public protection policy which directs refusal of this proposal.

THE BENEFITS

MEETING AN EVIDENCED UNMET NEED

7.4. The proposal meets a clear and evidenced unmet need for caravan storage within the Glossopdale area. The only other known provision within the catchment is at capacity with no ability to expand, and no alternative sites are available. The 56 caravan owners currently accommodated across the application site and the adjacent certificated land have no realistic alternative. This is a tangible benefit to local residents.

SUPPORT FOR AN ESTABLISHED RURAL BUSINESS

7.5. The proposal supports the ongoing operation and expansion of Hargate Hill Equestrian Centre, an established rural business. The caravan storage operation generates income for the landowner which contributes to the viability and sustainability of the wider equestrian facility. Policy E2(1)(a) directs that substantial weight be given to

the economic benefits of commercial development which allows businesses to invest, expand and adapt. This benefit therefore attracts substantial weight as a matter of national policy, a materially stronger position than under the December 2024 Framework.

USE OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

7.6. The proposal makes use of an existing area of hardstanding which has been lawfully developed and is confirmed as previously developed land. No new land is taken into use, no new structures are erected and no greenfield land is affected. This accords with policy E4(2)(a) and with the brownfield-first principles embedded throughout the Framework.

REGULARISATION OF AN EXISTING USE

7.7. Granting permission would bring the use within the planning system, subject to appropriate conditions including controls on the extent of the storage area, maximum heights, the nature of the use and any landscaping requirements. This provides certainty and enables the use to be managed and monitored. Policy DM3(1)(e) directs local planning authorities to consider whether otherwise unacceptable proposals could be made acceptable through conditions; here, conditions provide positive control over a use which would otherwise continue in an unregulated form whether at this site or elsewhere.

LOW ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.8. The development generates no significant adverse impacts in respect of landscape character, visual amenity, ecology, highway safety or drainage. The use is passive and low-intensity, generating infrequent and low-volume traffic movements. It introduces no built form, noise, odour or other adverse environmental effects.

THE ADVERSE EFFECTS

7.9. No significant harms have been identified. The development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt. The impact on openness is minimised and, measured against the fallback use of the hardstanding for the storage of other items, is neutral or beneficial. There is no significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. The proposal does not conflict with any relevant development plan policy. No national decision-making policy requires refusal. No statutory consultee objection is anticipated on environmental, ecological or highway grounds. Policy DM8(2) is not engaged.

CONCLUSION ON THE BALANCE

7.10. The benefits of granting permission are clear, evidenced and, in the case of the economic benefit, expressly required by policy E2(1)(a) to be given substantial weight. The adverse effects are limited and in several respects absent altogether. The benefits are not outweighed by adverse effects, let alone substantially outweighed. Policy S5(5) therefore directs that the proposal should be approved.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1. This statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective application for the change of use of land at Hargate Hill Equestrian Centre, Glossop, for caravan storage. The proposal seeks to regularise an existing use which has developed organically in response to a clear and evidenced need for caravan storage provision within the Glossop area, a need which cannot be met by any other known site within the catchment.

THE GREEN BELT CASE

8.2. The case that the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt is established on three separate and independent grounds under policy GB7, each sufficient in itself.

8.3. Under policy GB7(1)(g) the site is grey belt land. It is previously developed land, confirmed as such by Lawful Development Certificate HPK/2025/0337, and separately it does not strongly contribute to Green Belt purposes (a), (b) or (d) when assessed against the criteria at Annex E. The development would not fundamentally undermine the remaining purposes of the Green Belt across the plan area. An evidenced unmet need for caravan storage has been established through a catchment-based assessment of the kind expressly contemplated by policy E2(2)(a). That assessment confirms that the only known alternative site within 5 kilometres is operating at capacity with no ability to expand, that no other commercial caravan storage provision exists within the catchment, and that the employment land supply within Glossopdale offers no realistic alternative. The site is a sustainable location having particular regard to policy TR3, whose sustainable location principle is engaged only for development generating a significant amount of movement and is qualified where the nature of the development makes a choice of modes impractical. The Golden Rules do not apply.

8.4. Under policy GB7(1)(f) limb iii. the proposal is a material change in the use of land involving no operational development at all. The impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised: there is no new land take, no new built form, the site is enclosed on three sides by existing development, it is screened by established planting and lies some 130 metres from the nearest public right of way on lower ground, and the use is wholly

and immediately reversible. Measured against the fallback storage of various items, which could be taller, could occupy the whole hardstanding and is present year-round, the proposal improves rather than diminishes openness. There is no significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes.

8.5. Under policy GB7(1)(e) the site is previously developed land and the proposal constitutes redevelopment of it. The parenthetical reference to a material change is inclusive rather than exhaustive: it is introduced by the word ‘including’, it contains no words of exclusion, and the identical formula appears at policy S5(1)(d) in relation to land outside settlements, which confirms it as a standard drafting formula rather than a Green Belt-specific restriction. The change of use from an uncontrolled mixed storage use to a defined, regulated and managed B8 caravan storage use is redevelopment of lawfully developed land, and it does not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

8.6. The proposal is consistent with the development plan taken as a whole. Local Plan Policy EQ4 defers to the Framework on Green Belt matters and is satisfied by the Green Belt case set out above. Local Plan Policy EQ3 supports the redevelopment of previously developed sites in rural areas and the provision of rural commercial enterprises where a rural location can be justified. Local Plan Policy E1 supports business development within the countryside which accords with Policy EQ3. Both are satisfied. The proposal is equally consistent with Framework policies E1, E2 and E4, which support the sustainable growth of rural businesses, direct that substantial weight be given to the economic benefits of commercial development enabling businesses to expand, and recognise that sites to meet business needs in rural areas may need to be found outside settlements and in locations not well served by public transport.

THE BALANCE

8.7. Because the development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, policy S5(5) directs that the proposal should be approved unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects. They plainly would not. The benefits are clear and evidenced, and the economic benefit attracts substantial weight as a matter of national policy under E2(1)(a). The adverse effects are limited or absent. No national decision-making policy directs refusal.

OVERALL

8.8. This is a proposal which meets a real and evidenced local need, on land which is previously developed, in circumstances where policy at both national and local level supports the grant of permission. The Green Belt case is established on three independent grounds. The balance under policy S5(5) favours approval. There are no material considerations which would justify refusal.

8.9. Planning permission should be granted.

9. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Appeals 3342201 and 3341893 at dodington lane
- Appendix 2: NPPF. December 2024 and August 2026 comparison