

# STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR'S MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTION TO THE EXAMINATION OF THE YORK LOCAL PLAN

MATTER 3

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NOVEMBER 2019

LANGWITH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP LTD

PARTICIPANT REF: 378

Q70385

# Contents

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1	Introduction	1
2	Principles	2
3	The Approach to Defining the Green Belt Boundaries	4
4	Exceptional Circumstances	7
5	The Approach to Identifying Land to be 'Released' from the Green Belt for Development	9

## Appendices

Appendix 1	Summary of Reports by the Secretary of State's Inspectors for Local Plans with Green Belts
Appendix 2	Sustainable Garden Villages - The Sustainability Merits
Appendix 3	Garden Village Funding Letter from MHCLG - June 2019
Appendix 4	Garden Village Funding Letter from HCA - March 2017
Appendix 5	Sites to be Removed from York's Green Belt

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Langwith Development Partnership (LDP<sup>1</sup>) is the principle landholder of the land proposed to be allocated under Policy ST15, which is a strategic allocation (Policy SS13), in the draft City of York Local Plan (“Local Plan”). A new sustainable garden village proposed in the south east of the City is a key component of the Local Plan’s spatial strategy for housing delivery. The allocation of a new garden village in this part of the City is based on sound and sustainable planning principles. A new settlement is necessary, sustainable and appropriate in this part of the City if the City of York Council (CYC) are to meet their housing needs sustainably.
- 1.2 LDP have made representations to each of the relevant stages of the Local Plan preparation (Regulation 18, Regulation 19 and the more recent Modifications to the Regulation 19 Plan)<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.3 LDP have demonstrated throughout the Local Plan process the Local Plan’s spatial strategy in part based on delivering a new garden village in this part of the City is sound in principle.
- 1.4 Whilst this Hearing Statement is not specifically concerned with the specifics of the allocation, Matter 2 of the first stage of Hearings are of relevance to the strategic allocation of a new garden village in this part of the City.
- 1.5 This Statement deals with the various questions raised under Matter 3 including those under the following sections:
  - 1.5.1 Principles
  - 1.5.2 The Approach to Defining the Green Belt Boundaries
  - 1.5.3 Exceptional Circumstances
  - 1.5.4 The Approach to Identifying Land to be ‘Released’ from the Green Belt for Development

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<sup>1</sup> Langwith Development Partnership Ltd (participant ref: 378) (LDP) is a joint venture formed by Sandby and the Oakgate/Caddick Group who control all the land required to deliver the new garden village known as Langwith. LDP have joint land holding interests in the south east part of the City, to the north of Elvington (south of the A64). Both parties, have jointly, and individually, been participants in the preparation of the City of York Local Plan (the Local Plan) for over six years.

<sup>2</sup> Representations were submitted by LDP (or the companies that constitute LDP), including those (i) in September 2016 to the City of York Local Plan – Preferred Sites Consultation (June 2016), (ii) and the later submission of a Site Promotion Document (Quod) in October 2017, followed by (iii) representations (in March 2018) to the City of York Local Plan - Publication Draft (February 2018) and finally (iv) representations to the York Local Plan Proposed Modifications (June 2019) and associated Background Documents, in July 2019.

## 2 Principles

*Question 3.1: Paragraph 10.2 of the Plan states that “the plan creates a Green Belt for York that will provide a lasting framework to shape the future development of the city”. For the purposes of Paragraph 82 of the National Planning Policy Framework, is the Local Plan proposing to establish any new Green Belt?*

*a) If so, what are the exceptional circumstances for so doing, and where is the evidence required by the five bullet points set out at Paragraph 82 of the Framework?*

2.1 The Local Plan does not propose to establish any new Green Belt, as the saved policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy (‘RSS’) establish the general extent of the Green Belt around York when it was published (2008). A Local Plan is, therefore, concerned only with defining the detailed inner boundary of the York Green Belt, as well as any outstanding sections of the outer boundary.

*b) If not, does the Local Plan propose to remove any land from the established general extent of the Green Belt? If it does, is it necessary to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances exist to warrant that approach? Or is it the case that the Local Plan establishes the Green Belt boundaries for the first time, such that the exclusion of land from the Green Belt – such as at the ‘garden villages’, for example – is a matter of establishing Green Belt boundaries rather than altering them, in the terms of Paragraph 82 of the Framework?*

2.2 The Local Plan is proposing some incursions into the general extent of the Green Belt, whilst at the same time, defining the inner and outer boundaries. This includes releasing land from the Green Belt to accommodate the proposed allocation of new garden villages required to meet the housing need of the City within the plan period and beyond.

2.3 LDP Hearing Statement for Matter 2 explains the justification for the spatial distribution, and most notably, the circumstances that justify removing land from the general extent of the Green Belt.

2.4 Most notably, there is an acute housing need within the City that cannot all be satisfied within or beyond, on the immediate edge of, the Urban Area of the City; this need is acute even on the Council’s own OAHN, and LDP’s evidence suggests that it is even more acute given that the OAHN is in fact greater than that provided for by the Local Plan.

2.5 The heritage significance and setting of the City’s historic environment is a fundamental driver of the spatial distribution of the new Local Plan and, most notably, the City’s historic environment is internationally, nationally, regionally and locally recognised as being significant<sup>3</sup> and therefore of especial importance to protect. This is supported by the statutory duty requiring the protection and enhancement of heritage assets, as contained in S66 and s72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990.

2.6 Most notably, its principal characteristics<sup>4</sup> are one of a strong urban form, compactness, landmark monuments, architectural character, archaeological complexity and landscape and setting. All of these characteristics place a significant constraint on development within the City, and on urban extensions, given the prospect of harm to the setting of the City.

<sup>3</sup> SD-103 para 1.1.

<sup>4</sup> SD-103 para 7.2.

- 2.7 In order to protect the historic environment, the spatial approach in the Plan is to limit the amount of growth on the periphery of the built up area, in order to safeguard the principle characteristics of the City (as defined in the Heritage Topic Paper<sup>5</sup>). This is a spatial strategy supported and encouraged by Historic England.
- 2.8 The approach, therefore, to creating new free-standing garden villages, including that in the south east of the City, are recognised as being the most appropriate and sustainable response to the possible heritage impacts from the need for providing new homes. Historic England, in their response to the Regulation 19 consultation of the Local Plan<sup>6</sup> noted that “...a strategy in which part of York’s development needs are met in new freestanding settlements beyond the Ring Road would help to safeguard the size and compact nature of the historic City, the perception of York being a free-standing historic City set within a rural hinterland, key views towards York from the Ring Road, and the relationship of the main built up area of York to its surrounding settlements.” For these reasons, Historic England did not object to a new settlement in the south east of the City.
- 2.9 In response to the second limb of the Question, it is necessary to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for the proposed incursion into the general extent of the Green Belt, and LDP consider that these exceptional circumstances have been proven.
- 2.10 A schedule of recent Local Plans in Green Belt areas reviewed by the Secretary of State’s Inspectors is attached at **Appendix 1**, where it is demonstrated that meeting housing need could and was an exceptional circumstance. The same conclusion applies in the case of York, where there is simply no other sustainable approach to meeting housing need other than through incursions into the Green Belt, and meeting the City’s housing need is of great importance to achieving sustainable development.
- 2.11 The NPPF 2012, at paragraph 52, recognises that delivery of large scale housing can often be achieved through garden settlements. Advice from CLG (**Appendix 2**) similarly recognises the provision of new housing via garden villages is a sustainable response to meeting the nation’s housing need.
- 2.12 It is also informative that recently Homes England<sup>7</sup> (**Appendix 3**) and previously CHLG<sup>8</sup> (**Appendix 4**), have provided funding to CYC to assist in aiding the understanding how a new garden village can be delivered in the south east of the City.
- 2.13 The general extent of the Green Belt has been set by the RSS, and other than on the edge of the urban areas, where it is being defined in detail for the first time, it is already fixed. Therefore, within the rest of the general extent of the Green Belt, where the locations of the proposed new garden villages have been identified the Green Belt is being altered. These alterations are justifiable however and are proposed in light of proven exceptional circumstances.

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<sup>5</sup> SD103.

<sup>6</sup> PM SID 118.

<sup>7</sup> Homes England under CHLG’s housing infrastructure funding have awarded CYC £150,000 for aiding the delivery of a new settlement in the south east of the City.

<sup>8</sup> £75,000 of funding was paid to CYC in March 2017, as part of CHLG’s Garden Villages Fund and to assist with the planning aspects of the new settlement.

### 3 The Approach to Defining the Green Belt Boundaries

*Question 3.2: Paragraph 1.1.1 of the Council's "Approach to defining York's Green Belt" Topic Paper (TP1) [CD021] says "York's Local Plan will formally define the boundary of the York Green Belt for the first time". How has the Council approached the task of delineating the Green Belt boundaries shown on the Policies Map? In particular:*

*a) Is the approach taken in general conformity with those parts of the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber ('the RSS') that have not been revoked, namely Section C of Policy YH9, Sections C1 and C2 of Policy Y1, and the Key Diagram of the RSS insofar as it illustrates the RSS York Green Belt policies and the general extent of the Green Belt around the City of York?*

3.1 The boundaries of the Green Belt are being defined within the Local Plan in accordance with Policy YH9 (section C), Y1 and the Key Diagram. In particular YH9 Section C noted that detailed inner boundaries should be defined in order to establish development limits that safeguard the special character and setting of the historic City.

*b) How has the need to promote sustainable patterns of development been taken into account?*

3.2 The spatial strategy (Policy SS1) and the five spatial principles are an expression of sustainable locations for development within the City. These spatial principles have guided the pattern of development promoted within the Plan.

3.3 For the reasons explained in Section 2, the particular circumstances of York have dictated that opportunities for meeting development needs within the urban areas are limited but nevertheless fully exploited, and there are strong grounds, especially on the special character and setting of the historic city, to limit growth on the periphery of the City.

3.4 Consequently, the Green Belt boundaries around the City Centre had been defined having regard to these principles, and the need to accommodate development within the general extent of the Green Belt is justified by exceptional circumstances.

3.5 In the case of Langwith beyond the south east of the City, it is proven<sup>9</sup> that this will complement the existing settlement pattern, will not harm the historic or natural environmental, whilst ensuring it is accessible by a range of modes of transport (sustainable) and accessible to a range of services, will not lead to congestion/pollution/air quality diminution, manage any prospective flood risk and is viable and deliverable, and will involve a significant take up of previously developed land.

*c) With regard to Paragraph 82 of the Framework, how have the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary been considered?*

3.6 Topic Paper 1<sup>10</sup> demonstrates the systematic approach of the Plan's evidence and assessment to identifying and making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and under-utilised land<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> SID 378.

<sup>10</sup> EX/CYC/18.

<sup>11</sup> Paragraph 7.62 onwards.

- 3.7 The systematic review included the identification of sites above 0.2 ha, which had been included in the SHLAA (2018)<sup>12</sup> through a site selection process, to determine their appropriateness. It is noteworthy that this site selection process involved very small sites, some of which would yield less than five units.
- 3.8 The process also involved an assessment of windfalls, before taking account of sites with planning permission, and allowing for a non-implementation rate.
- 3.9 It was clear from this assessment that a substantial shortfall of new homes was identified, meaning that other options for meeting this need are to be considered.
- 3.10 Before considering Green Belt release, the Council sought to optimise the density of development that could be delivered on sites by setting high density targets<sup>13</sup> as well as holding discussions with neighbouring authorities whether they could accommodate any of the identified need<sup>14</sup>. Neither of these approaches were able to yield any material increase in housing opportunities and, therefore, justifying looking at sites beyond the urban boundary.
- 3.11 Whilst some sites on the edge of the urban area have been identified for development and, therefore, the Green Belt boundary drawn to exclude them, such opportunities are limited for the previously mentioned heritage reasons. It is clear from this exercise that in order to meet the housing needs of York, even on the low base of the Council's OAHN (which LDP do not agree with) it is necessary to release land within the general extent of York's Green Belt.

*d) How do the defined Green Belt boundaries ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development and/or include any land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open?*

- 3.12 LDP do not comment on this matter.

*Question 3.3: Will the proposed Green Belt Boundaries need to be altered at the end of the Plan period? To this end, are the boundaries clearly defined, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent? What approach has the Council taken in this regard?*

- 3.13 The Local Plan has been prepared on the basis of providing housing, along with other development forms, for a Plan period to 2032/33 and a five year period enduring beyond that to 2037/38. The spatial strategy however involves housing delivery through major garden villages, where the delivery trajectory 'over run' the plan period. To this extent the Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the Local Plan period.
- 3.14 LDP have presented evidence that demonstrates that the OAHN is, in fact, much greater than that provided for in the Local Plan, and consequently if this evidence is accepted, then the Green Belt boundary will need to be altered. It is appropriate and sound that the Green Belt boundary is altered at this stage, in those circumstances, ensuring that the Green Belt boundary endures beyond the current Plan period.

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<sup>12</sup> SD049A.

<sup>13</sup> Paragraph 7.79 to 7.83 of EX/CYC/18.

<sup>14</sup> Paragraph 7.85 to 7.94 of EX/CYC/18.

3.15 LDP do not comment specifically on the Green Belt boundaries defined in the Local Plan, other than in relation to ST15 and the alternative Langwith allocation promoted by LDP. The ST15 allocation in part adopts physical features that are readily recognisable, the southern extent of ST15 is more arbitrary (especially where it dissects the Elvington Airfield). In the alternative, the Langwith boundary is defined by definitive physical features, which are appropriate for setting permanent Green Belt boundaries.

*Question 3.4: Should the Plan identify areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period?*

3.16 Topic Paper TP1<sup>15</sup> as supported by the Heritage Topic Paper<sup>16</sup> and Heritage Impact Appraisals<sup>17</sup> demonstrates that opportunities for sustainable urban extensions are limited on the edge of the City, given its special heritage character and setting, therefore, opportunities for safeguarding land for future development are by implication limited, and in the specific case of York, none have been identified (or exist).

3.17 Moreso, CYC determined in the case of York that safeguarding did not provide the necessary certainty to the development industry about where development was considered appropriate and local communities who were concerned about the uncertainty of the concept of safeguarding land<sup>18</sup>.

3.18 In summary, safeguarding land beyond that allocated on the edge of the City would be inappropriate given the special character and setting of the historic character and setting of the City. The spatial strategy of the Plan, is consequently sound.

*Question 3.5: Overall, are the Green Belt boundaries in the plan appropriately defined and consistent with national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework, and is the Plan sound in this regard?*

3.19 LDP do not comment on the boundaries of the Green Belt, other than those in relation to ST15 and the alternative Langwith allocation. In this regard, it is LDP's view, supported by evidence<sup>19</sup> that the boundaries of ST15 are not soundly defined and that those proposed for Langwith are more appropriate.

3.20 For example, whilst the boundary of ST15 proposes to exclude the eastern area of the Elvington Airfield, it will in fact be required for development of a new secondary road, which is likely to lead to further urbanisation beyond the boundary of ST15. In the alternative, Langwith's proposed allocation boundary includes the secondary road access within the allocation and does not constitute any further urbanisation beyond that in the boundary itself (other than for the proposed Link Road to the A64).

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<sup>15</sup> EX/CYC/18.

<sup>16</sup> SD103.

<sup>17</sup> SD101 and SD102.

<sup>18</sup> Paragraph 5.66 of EX/CYC/18.

<sup>19</sup> Gilly footnote PM SID 378.



## 4 Exceptional Circumstances

*Question 3.6: Paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. It appears that the Plan proposes to 'release' some land from the Green Belt by altering its boundaries. In broad terms:*

*a) Do the necessary exceptional circumstances exist to warrant the proposed alterations to the Green Belt boundaries, in terms of removing land from the Green Belt? If so, what are they?*

4.1 It is demonstrated in Section 2 that given the scale of acuteness of housing need in the City and the inability to meet that within existing urban areas or sustainably on the edge of the urban area (beyond those defined), the necessary exceptional circumstances anticipated by paragraph 83 of the NPPF exist.

*b) What relationship, if any, is there between the exceptional circumstances leading to the alterations proposed to the Green Belt and the proposed spatial strategy/distribution of new housing?*

4.2 See answers to questions raised in Section 2.

*c) What is the capacity of existing urban areas to meet the need for housing and employment uses?*

4.3 The physical capacity of the urban areas to meet the need for housing and employment uses is summarised in Topic Paper TP1 Addendum<sup>20</sup> at Section 7. Notably, it demonstrates that CYC have undertaken a systematic approach to determining the scale of housing provision that can be accommodated within the City's urban areas, and have also explored the opportunities for achieving greater levels of housing provision through densification, which is largely inappropriate given the heritage significant of the City's environment.

*d) Is there any non-Green Belt rural land which could meet all or part of the District's housing and employment needs in a sustainable manner (having regard to any other significant constraints)?*

4.4 There is no evidence to demonstrate that there is any rural land that is not defined as Green Belt, suitable to meet the City's housing and employment needs.

4.5 CYC have undertaken a systematic review of all sites available for development (as included in their SHLAA 2018)<sup>21</sup>, which has identified no suitable additional sites in non-Green Belt/non-urban areas.

*e) What is the justification for excluding the identified Strategic Sites (e.g. ST7, ST8, ST14 and ST15) from the Green Belt?*

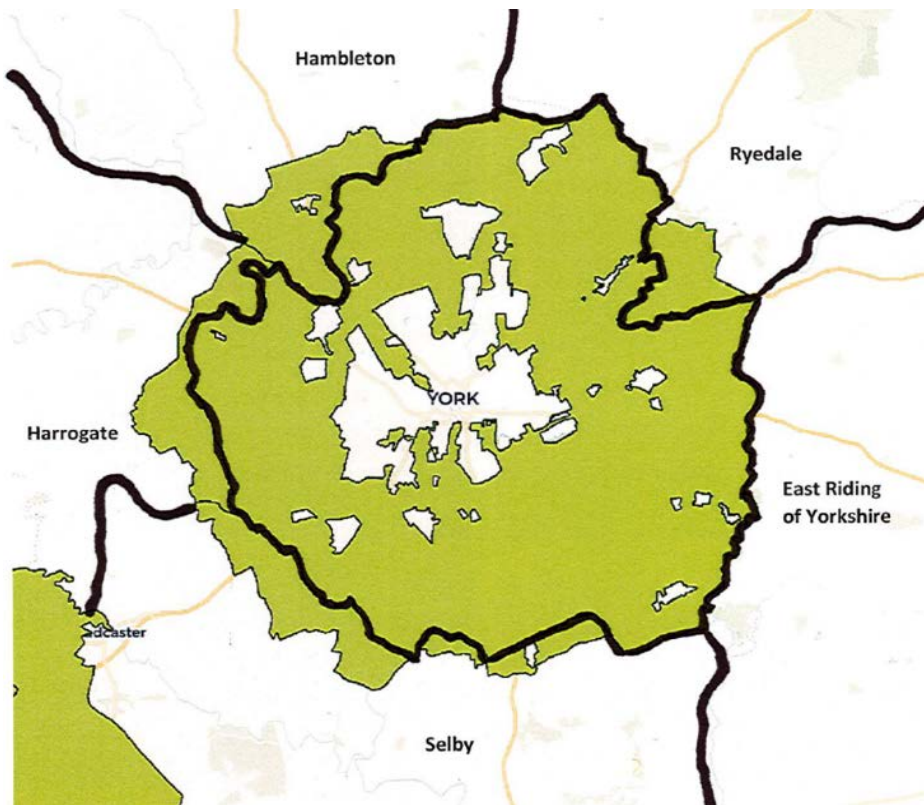
4.6 This Hearing Statement, and that associated with housing matters (Matter 2) has demonstrated that the spatial approach to meeting York's housing need is heavily influenced by the limited capacity for accommodating the totality of York's housing needs in the urban area, and that there are sever constraints (heritage related) on accommodating development on the edge of the urban areas.

4.7 Other than incursions into the general extent of the Green Belt, there are no other opportunities for meeting the City's housing needs in the City's administrative area (as the Green Belt extends up to the boundary of the City, and beyond it as shown in Figure 4.1).

<sup>20</sup> EX/CYC/18.

<sup>21</sup> SD049A.

Figure 4.1: York's Green Belt and surrounding Areas



- 4.8 Consequently, meeting the need beyond the Green Belt could only take place in adjoining Local Authorities where save for East Riding, further Green Belt land is identified . No adjoining Local Authorities are willing to satisfy any of York's housing need and, therefore, the only available source of land to address the short fall is within the general extent of the Green Belt within the administrative area of CYC( Topic Paper TP1 Addendum<sup>22</sup>). Nor would it be sustainable to meet York's needs in adjoining Districts given that provision would have to be a substantial distance from York, especially if it was to be located south and east of the City, leading to unsustainable patterns of travel.

<sup>22</sup> paragraphs 7.85-7.94 of EX/CYC/18.

## 5 The Approach to Identifying Land to be ‘Released’ from the Green Belt for Development

*Question 3.7: How has the land proposed to be removed from the Green Belt been selected? Has the process of selecting the land in question been based on a robust assessment methodology that:*

- a) reflects the fundamental aim of Green Belts, being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open;*
- b) reflects the essential characteristics of Green Belts, being their openness and permanence;*
- c) takes account of both the spatial and visual aspects of the openness of the Green Belt, in the light of the judgements in Turner<sup>23</sup> and Samuel Smith Old Brewery<sup>24</sup>;*
- d) reflects the five purposes that the Green Belt serves, as set out in Paragraph 80 of the Framework, particularly that of preserving the setting and special character of the historic city (in answering this question, we ask that the Council refers specifically to the ‘wedges’ of Green Belt that would be created, for example those between the main urban area and Sites ST7 and ST8)*
- e) is in general conformity with RSS Policy Y1, which aims to protect the nationally significant historical and environmental character of York, including its historic setting, the need to safeguard the special character of the historic city and to protect views of the Minister and important open area; and*
- f) takes account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development?*

- 5.1 The approach to defining York’s Green Belt, and notably that which needs to be kept permanently open in terms of the five purposes of Green Belt, is explained in Section 4 of the Topic Paper TP1 Addendum<sup>25</sup> and assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal<sup>26</sup> which identifies how the five purposes of the Green Belt have been addressed through the evidence base.
- 5.2 This strategic and systematic review has led to a detailed understanding of the areas within the general extent of York’s Green Belt that needed to remain permanently open, in light of a variety of factors including those which contribute to the historic setting of the City especially, as well as those important for green infrastructure/nature conservation, safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, preventing coalescence and merging of towns, checking unrestricted urban sprawl.
- 5.3 It is notable that the scale of land proposed to be released from the general extent of York’s’ Green Belt is limited and does not materially alter the wider extent of the Green Belt. The Green Belt in York currently measures 27,990ha<sup>27</sup> (of which 22,410 ha are within CYC’s administration area); c407ha (see **Appendix 5**) of land are proposed to be removed from the Green Belt in the Local Plan, ie only 1.4% of the total York Green Belt.

<sup>23</sup> Turner v SSCLG & East Dorset Council [2016] EWCA Civ 466.

<sup>24</sup> Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) & Oxton Farm v North Yorkshire CC & Darrington Quarries Ltd [2018] EWCA Civ 489.

<sup>25</sup> EX/CYC/18.

<sup>26</sup> CD008.

<sup>27</sup> [MHCLG, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Local Planning Authority Green Belt: England 2018/19, \(page 7\).](#)

*Question 3.8: Have the Green Belt boundaries – as proposed to be altered – been considered having regard to their intended permanence in the long term? Are they capable of enduring beyond the plan period?*

- 5.4 LDP do not comment specifically on any other Green Belt boundaries than ST15 and the alternative Langwith boundary. Both of these boundaries have been set to ensure beyond the Plan period, as demonstrated by the housing delivery trajectories for ST15<sup>28</sup> and the trajectory for Langwith<sup>29</sup>.

*Question 3.9: In this regard, what is the justification for the proposed alteration to the Green Belt boundary, as set out in Annex 6 of the Topic Paper 1: Addendum [EX/CYC/18]?*

- 5.5 LDP do not comment on this matter.

*Question 3.10: Overall, is the approach to identifying land to be ‘released’ from the Green Belt robust, and is the Plan sound in this regard?*

- 5.6 CYC’s evidence base, in terms of the overall spatial approach to meeting the City’s housing needs, and the need to alter the general extent of the Green Belt are well founded.
- 5.7 Releasing land from the general extent of the Green Belt is required if the Council is to satisfy its own housing needs (that is whether CYC’s OAHN is accepted or a greater housing need is recognised by the Inspectors in light of the evidence of LDP and others) whilst at the same time protecting the special character and setting of the historic city.

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<sup>28</sup> EX/CYC/17B.

<sup>29</sup> Appendix 5 of PM SID 378.



## APPENDIX 1

### SUMMARY OF REPORTS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S INSPECTORS FOR LOCAL PLANS WITH GREEN BELTS

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## Appendix 1 – Reports by the Secretary of State’s Inspectors for Local Plans with Green Belts

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Wycombe District Council</a>	Local Plan	19.08.2019	32, 82-95, allocation specific alterations to GB: 137, 139-140, 146, 148-149, 153-155	<p><b>85:</b> “The findings of the Green Belt review concluded that there were 10 sites within the designation that were suitable for release and that the development of these sites would result in the provision of an additional 1,139 new dwellings and 17 hectares of new employment land. To accommodate this level of development, changes are proposed to the Green Belt boundary which would result in the removal of approximately 77 hectares of land from the designation. This equates to approximately 0.5% of the District’s Green Belt.”</p> <p><b>86:</b> “The combination of all of the sites identified as suitable for development within, and outside the Green Belt, would result in the provision of land for the development of 10,927 new dwellings (83% of the OAHN) and 21 hectares of new employment land within the District (66% of the OAEN). The unmet need for 2,275 new dwellings will be met, through the DtC, in Aylesbury Vale. The remaining 10 hectares of new employment land will be delivered in the FEMA outside the District.”</p> <p><b>137:</b> Policy HW8 - Land off Amersham Road including Tralee Farm, Hazlemere - “The site could accommodate 350 dwellings and associated public open space. It is anticipated that the allocated site will be brought forward in conjunction with the adjoining site known as ‘Land Off Earl Road’ which is in Chiltern District. The site is situated within the Green Belt and adjacent to the AONB. The allocated site, which comprises approximately 12 hectares of land currently occupied by agricultural buildings, warehousing, a former equestrian centre and some residential dwellings, is enclosed largely by residential development and is located adjoining the Tier 1 settlement of High Wycombe. The conclusions of the GB2 Assessment indicate that the Green Belt parcel, which contains the allocation: only fulfils the Green Belt purposes defined in the NPPF relatively weakly; is in a sustainable location for growth; capable of being removed from the Green Belt; and suitable for the proposed use. Having regard to my conclusions on Issue 1 and 4, and considering the evidence presented, I consider that exceptional circumstances exist to justify the alteration of the Green Belt boundary to remove the site for housing development.”</p>
<a href="#">City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council</a>	Local Plan	18.07.2019	41-46, 73	<p><b>41:</b> “CBMDC has identified the exceptional circumstances needed to justify the release of Green Belt land, in order to fully meet the development needs for housing and to support the regeneration and long-term economic success of the district. Evidence in the SHLAA confirms that insufficient land can be identified outside of the Green Belt to fully meet identified housing needs; some 11,000 dwellings are likely to have to be accommodated on Green Belt land, given the availability and constraints on non-Green Belt land.”</p> <p><b>73:</b> “Some participants were particularly concerned about the potential impact on the Green Belt, some of which would be lost as a result of meeting the proposed level of housing required. The NPPF confirms that Green Belt is one of the restrictive policies which may constrain the ability to fully meet objectively assessed needs. However, CBMDC has fully examined the impact of the proposed level of development on the Green Belt and has shown that a sustainable pattern of development can be provided by making significant, but limited and focused amendments to Green Belt boundaries, without fundamentally undermining the purposes and functions of the Green Belt, as allowed for in the NPPF. As I have found earlier in my report, the exceptional circumstances justifying the alteration of Green Belt boundaries have also been demonstrated.”</p>
<a href="#">Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	11.06.2019	64-68, 104-132, 176, allocation specific alterations to GB: 143-156.	<p><b>66:</b> “The scale of need is such in the Borough (factoring in Coventry’s unmet need) that there are not enough low performing parcels. Accordingly, the Council has been justified in considering low-to-medium performing parcels and within those areas where the purpose and function of the wider Green Belt parcel was not unduly compromised, particularly in relation to preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another and checking unrestricted sprawl. I consider this an appropriate approach in establishing exceptional circumstances. Furthermore, it is important not to lose sight that high performing parcels of Green Belt are not being contemplated as part of this Plan. As a consequence of the Plan’s proposals 41% of the Borough (3,275 ha) would remain Green Belt.”</p> <p><b>67:</b> “The permanence of Green Belt must be given great importance. However, similar substantial weight applies to meeting the needs for homes and jobs in a way which addresses climate change through sustainable patterns of development. It is a balance which can be tested as part of preparing Local Plans. It is not the case that Green Belt boundaries are immutable. As demonstrated through the Joint Green Belt Study, SHLAA, ELR, SA and Housing Topic Paper, the Council has examined all reasonable non-Green Belt options and demonstrated these would be insufficient to meet the need identified. Other recent Local Plans in the same HMA have found exceptional circumstances to alter the boundaries of the West Midlands Green Belt. The submitted NBBP is not out of step with neighbouring authorities.”</p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Rugby Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	04.06.2019	66, 159-168, allocation specific alterations to GB: 169-203	<p><b>66:</b> "I have considered the proposed allocations under issues 4 and 5 below in the light of this evidence base and the representations submitted on them. For the reasons detailed there, I have concluded that the SUEs at South West Rugby and Coton Park East are appropriate as part of the proposed development strategy and their impacts capable of mitigation and that exceptional circumstances exist for the alteration of the Green Belt boundaries to justify the relevant allocations at the MRSs at Binley Woods, Long Lawford, Ryton on Dunsmore, Stretton on Dunsmore, Wolston and Wolvey"</p> <p><b>159:</b> "Paragraph 83 of the NPPF requires that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances through the preparation or review of a Local Plan. The exceptional circumstances put forward by the Council are that these sites are required to provide for rural housing needs; to support the role of the MRSs as sustainable rural communities; and to ensure a 5-year housing land supply on adoption of the Plan."</p> <p><b>168:</b> "The above factors combined with the absence of opportunities within settlement boundaries in principle justify altering the boundaries of the Green Belt around the MRSs. I consider below whether exceptional circumstances are fully demonstrated for each proposed MRS allocation having regard to the specific Green Belt harm which would be likely to be caused and other relevant considerations."</p>
<a href="#">Stevenage Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	22.05.2019	78-87	<p><b>78:</b> "For the reasons I have already set out, accommodating future development needs within Stevenage Borough is far more difficult than in other areas where land is more readily available. It is also the case that because the town is relatively new (built post-war) there are few opportunities for redevelopment, other than on a small scale. Consequently the capacity of Stevenage is extremely limited. Moreover neighbouring authorities are also reviewing their Green Belt boundaries to meet their own needs. Therefore, it would be unlikely that Stevenage's needs could reasonably be met in neighbouring authorities on land outside the Green Belt."</p> <p><b>81:</b> "The only way that Stevenage can meet its current identified housing need is to release any suitable land from the Green Belt. Through their extensive and thorough Green Belt review the Council have identified site HO3 (north of Stevenage), in the Plan as being suitable for housing development. In the assessment of defined areas of land against Green Belt purposes this site is considered (as part of a larger parcel of land – N4) to make a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes in all regards, with the exception of preventing merger where it is identified as making a significant contribution."</p> <p><b>84:</b> "In summary, there is a pressing need for housing within the Borough that cannot be met outside of the Green Belt. The value of the Green Belt has been thoroughly assessed by the Council and although it found that here a significant contribution comes from preventing the merging of settlements, there would still be a gap between settlements, even if the site in North Hertfordshire is allocated in their Plan and subsequently developed. Taking into account all of these factors I find that this site would be the most suitable, along with others, to meet the housing need in Stevenage. As such, exceptional circumstances exist to justify the release of this site from the Green Belt."</p>
<a href="#">Guildford Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	25.04.2019	78-90	<p><b>79:</b> "Guildford has a pressing housing need, severe and deteriorating housing affordability and a very serious shortfall in the provision of affordable homes. There is additional unmet housing need from Woking. There is no scope to export Guildford's housing need to another district; the neighbouring authorities in the housing market area are significantly constrained in terms of Green Belt and other designations and both have their own significant development needs. The overall level of provision will address serious and deteriorating housing affordability and will provide more affordable homes. The headroom can also accommodate the likely residual level of unmet need from Woking."</p> <p><b>86:</b> "Subject to the proposed Green Belt alterations, the Plan is capable of meeting objectively assessed needs with adequate flexibility. The alterations to the Green Belt boundary would have relatively limited impacts on openness as discussed in Issues 10 and 11, and would not cause severe or widespread harm to the purposes of the Green Belt. The allocations at A25 Gosden Hill Farm and A26 Blackwell Farm would be planned urban extensions rather than sprawl. Site A25 together with the allocations at Send and Burnt Common/Send Marsh would be visually and physically separate, as discussed in Issue 7 and would not add to sprawl or coalescence. A35 Former Wisley airfield would include a substantial amount of previously developed land and is separate in character from its wider Green Belt surroundings. The other Green Belt sites would be adjacent to settlements and would have very localised effects on openness. There is therefore no justification for applying a restriction on the quantity of development."</p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Kirklees Council</a>	Local Plan	27.02.2019	30, 44-50	<p><b>47:</b> “The assessment work shows that, although there are a range of potential housing sites within towns and villages, there is insufficient capacity to deliver the identified housing requirement on non-Green Belt land. The Council’s Green Belt Review Supporting Document indicates that the shortfall amounts to some 11,500 dwellings.”</p> <p><b>49:</b> “Without the release of Green Belt land in Kirklees a substantial level of new dwellings, potentially amounting to about one third of identified need, would not be delivered. Therefore, in the absence of reasonable alternatives, and given the benefits associated with local housing and economic growth, I conclude that exceptional circumstances exist in principle to justify the release of land from the Green Belt to deliver OAN for housing in Kirklees. This is supported by the Council’s Green Belt review and site assessment work, as detailed in Issue 7 below, which illustrates that the release of land to meet OAN needs could be accommodated without significantly harming the overall integrity of the Green Belt in Kirklees. However, it is subject to an assessment of environmental capacity and demonstration of exceptional circumstances on a site by site basis, as covered later in this report.”</p>
<a href="#">Barnsley Metropolitan Council</a>	Local Plan	03.01.2019	91-118 & 239	<p><b>92:</b> “Significant changes to the Green Belt boundaries are proposed in the plan together with the removal of approximately 654 hectares of land for employment and housing development, greenspace and for safeguarded land. This is approximately 2.2% of the Borough’s Green Belt.”</p> <p><b>93:</b> “The potential capacity of non-Green Belt housing sites within Urban Barnsley and the Principal Towns which are the principal locations for new development was assessed as 6100 dwellings with planning permission and 8994 on sites identified in the plan outside the Green Belt. The shortfall of approximately 6000 dwellings established that there was an insufficient supply of housing sites to meet objectively assessed need for housing without development of Green Belt land.”</p> <p><b>118:</b> “Subject to the MMs outlined, I conclude that there is a compelling case in principle for the release of land from the Green Belt to meet the objectively assessed need for employment and housing and for additional safeguarded land. This is, however, subject to exceptional circumstances being demonstrated for the alteration of Green Belt boundaries to justify the removal of specific sites from the Green Belt for development, a matter dealt with in Issue 5. Exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to add land to the Green Belt. In addition, the Green Belt boundary alterations to rectify anomalies, errors and reflect updated circumstances are appropriate and soundly based.”</p> <p><b>239:</b> “The plan’s site allocations are based on a logical and appropriate set of criteria and assessment methodology, SA and HRA. Subject to the MMs, the employment, mixed use and housing allocations are soundly based. Where necessary, exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify alterations to the Green Belt boundary and the removal of land from the Green Belt to meet the objectively assessed need for employment, housing and identify areas of safeguarded land.”</p>
<a href="#">Borough Council of Poole</a>	Local Plan	13.11.2018	63-77, allocation specific alterations to GB: 83-87	<p><b>74:</b> “In summary, there is a robustly and objectively identified need for 14,200 new dwellings in Poole to 2033 and this level of new housing is required to support likely economic growth in the area. However, despite the plan strategy of exploiting to the maximum land outside of the Green Belt, there is insufficient such land to accommodate this requirement, there being a shortfall of around 1,300 dwellings. Unlike a number of housing allocation sites elsewhere in the Borough, the evidence shows that the location and nature of sites UE1 and UE2 are suitable/viable for a large proportion of much-needed family homes and 40% affordable housing which would be of particular benefit to Poole, over and above benefits in relation to the meeting of the overall need for housing.”</p> <p><b>77:</b> “Overall, having regard to the significant housing (including affordable and family homes), community, leisure and economic growth benefits which would result from sites UE1 and UE2, the absence of non-Green Belt land on which to accommodate the necessary development and the limited harm which would be caused to the Green Belt, I conclude that the Council’s judgement that exceptional circumstances exist to alter the Green Belt boundary in connection with these sites is a sound one. Moreover, subject to the above-mentioned modifications, allocations UE1 and UE2 are positively-prepared, justified and effective.”</p> <p><b>83:</b> “The plan proposes the removal from the Green Belt of a tract of land between existing built development at Creekmoor and the A35 (parcel 3 in the Green Belt Review). Policy PP20 allocates the majority of this land for a new school and playing fields (A2), although smaller eastern parts of it are allocated by policy PP9 for housing (site U14, around 45 homes), by policy PP35 for safeguarding of the park and ride facility and by policy PP24 for the retention of existing public open space. Site U14 would make a small, but meaningful contribution towards meeting housing needs and the park and ride facility will continue to be of benefit in promoting use of alternatives to the car within the urban area – an objective central to the plan as a whole.”</p>



Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">East Hertfordshire Council</a>	Local Plan	23.10.2018	59-64, allocation specific alterations to GB: 65-73	<p><b>61:</b> <i>"All options have been explored: brownfield land has been assessed and prioritised; significantly higher densities in urban areas have been discounted because of the harm to local character, and a much larger range of smaller sites in the GB has been discounted because they could not bring forward the infrastructure necessary to support the quality of development needed in the District. Additionally, neighbouring authorities are also reviewing their GB boundaries to meet their own needs. The studies are comprehensive and demonstrate that in the absence of any reasonable alternative, the release of GB land for development is needed for the Plan period and beyond to provide land for homes."</i></p> <p><b>62:</b> <i>"In summary, East Herts seeks to meet its housing requirement within the District, as do its HMA partners and there is no scope for the homes to go elsewhere. Housing need is acute and the supply and suitability of land outside the GB is constrained. Without release from the GB, there would not be enough homes to meet the needs of people within East Herts. As such, exceptional circumstances exist to justify the release of land from the GB."</i></p> <p><b>73:</b> <i>"In summary, there has been a rigorous process of balancing the importance of the GB and the impact of development against the benefits. In each case the sites are the best and most sustainable, long term options contributing significantly to meeting needs of the District. Careful design, suitable landscaping and planting will mitigate impacts on GB. There is an acute need for housing and not building on the GB would mean that people in East Herts would not have homes. Therefore, there are exceptional circumstances for removing these areas from the GB."</i></p>
<a href="#">Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</a>	Sites and Policies Document	27.06.2018	37 – 40, 106, 117	<p><b>39:</b> <i>"Together with the IIA, which includes an assessment of other considerations including sustainability, location and constraints, the Green Belt Review documents are a sound basis for the review of Green Belt boundaries and the identification of safeguarded land in the RSPP. In my view this work constitutes the second stage in establishing whether exceptional circumstances exist to justify change to Green Belt boundaries. Apart from those Green Belt boundaries where changes are recommended in my report I accept that exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated that justify the other changes to Green Belt boundaries set out in the RSPP."</i></p> <p><b>40:</b> <i>"Consequently I conclude that the review of Green Belt boundaries in the RSPP and the identification of exceptional circumstances to justify that boundary review is soundly based, apart from those instances identified in my report."</i></p> <p><b>106:</b> <i>"I have already found that, apart from H84, exceptional circumstances exist to justify changing Green Belt boundaries to accommodate housing allocations in the submitted plan. However, exceptional circumstances also need to be demonstrated in those cases that have emerged during the Examination where revisions to allocation boundaries also involve changing Green Belt boundaries."</i></p> <p><b>117:</b> <i>"In summary, I conclude that the changes to the boundaries of the housing allocations identified above, and any associated Green Belt boundary changes, are justified and will ensure that the relevant policy is effective."</i></p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">London Borough of Redbridge Council</a>	Local Plan	15.03.2018	41-47, 65-68, allocation specific alterations to GB: 69-86	<p><b>43:</b> “The first is that without Green Belt sites the relevant housing requirement would not be met contrary to the aims of the NPPF and that there would not be general conformity with The London Plan. As explained above the yield envisaged from within the built-up area is realistic and there is no suggestion that obvious candidates for development have been omitted. Furthermore, the estimates of capacity have sought to maximise densities as far as possible”</p> <p><b>45:</b> “In short, the Council has done all it reasonably can to meet its housing requirement from existing ‘brownfield’ sites and to optimise potential, but the result is that a shortfall of just over 900 dwellings would occur.”</p> <p><b>46:</b> “There are two further factors that support the release of Green Belt sites. The first is that the recent record of housing delivery in Redbridge has been poor. In the five years from 2010-2015 the average number of completions was 359 per annum. Compared to the relevant housing requirements for those years there has been a shortfall of 2,149 units. Furthermore, the objectively assessed need for Redbridge is 34,296 over the plan period according to the updated Outer North East London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (CED003). The housing required by Policy LP1 equates to only 51% of the objectively assessed need so that the “gap” between supply and need is a substantial one. Without greenfield allocations this position would be even worse. These considerations mean that it is important for the Council to ‘up its game’ in terms of housing delivery as far as possible.”</p> <p><b>86:</b> “There are exceptional circumstances to warrant altering the Green Belt boundary to allow housing development at Billet Road and King George and Goodmayes Hospital sites. This is because of the limited contributions they make to Green Belt purposes, locational and site specific matters, the provision of new education and health facilities and the need for releases to meet the requirement for housing. These sites would promote sustainable patterns of development as referred to in paragraph 84 of the NPPF. However, when the overall loss of playing pitch provision is added into the balance that is not the case for Oakfield and Ford Sports Ground. Once spaces of this nature are gone they are gone for good. In response to my advice (IED012) the Council proposes to remove these allocations from the RLP.”</p>
<a href="#">Croydon London Borough Council</a>	Local Plan and CS Partial Review	27.02.2018	196	<p><b>196:</b> “The exceptional circumstances for amending Green belt boundaries by the removal of three areas of land are clearly set out in section 2 of the Council’s Review of Metropolitan Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land July 2016 (evidence document LBC-07-803). The principal reason, other than a desire to reinforce the protection given to each piece of land by ensuring that it is correctly designated, is that they do not form part of a wider area that checks the unrestricted sprawl of London as a whole. This includes Sanderstead Plantation, which is clearly separated from Green Belt land to the south by a ribbon of development. I therefore consider that these three de-designations are correctly arrived at and their inclusion in the plan does not make it unsound.”</p>
<a href="#">Waverley Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	20.02.2018	33, 70-76	<p><b>33:</b> “The plan proposes that land is released from the Green Belt at Godalming, Milford, Witley, Elstead and Chiddingfold. The amount of land is relatively modest and this report concludes that the release of each of those sites would not have a substantial effect on the function of the wider Green Belt and that strong new Green Belt boundaries could be established.”</p> <p><b>71:</b> “As previously discussed, there is a pressing need for housing in Waverley, and a serious issue of housing affordability. Delivering the housing to meet the needs of present and future generations is a key aspect of the social dimension of sustainable development. The Council has acknowledged that it is not possible to meet identified housing need solely within its towns and villages and has recognised that the implementation of a sustainable spatial strategy will require a proportion of development to be located on greenfield sites outside the main towns and larger villages, some of which fall within the Green Belt. The Council therefore commissioned a Green Belt Review, which was published in two parts in August 2014.”</p> <p><b>75:</b> “The areas of land to be released from the Green Belt in the submitted plan as modified are sufficient to cater for housing needs over the plan period and no further land will need to be released from the Green Belt in Local Plan Part 2. There is a pressing need for new housing which should be delivered in accordance with the spatial strategy and sustainability objectives of the plan, and this need is such that the selective release of limited areas of land from the Green Belt, in the areas chosen, is justified and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes served by the Green Belt. The detailed changes are dealt with below under the relevant sections on Godalming and the villages, but considered strategically, these changes are justified by exceptional circumstances.”</p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council</a>	Joint Core Strategy	11.12.2017	163, 167	<p><b>163:</b> “Therefore, taking full account of constraints and the outcomes of cross-border exploration, removal of land from the GB is needed, so far as is justified, to contribute to housing provision and the five year supply. In coming to this conclusion, I have considered paragraph 14 of the NPPF. For the GB releases identified below, I find that the adverse impacts of removing land from the GB would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of contributing towards housing and other development needs. Nor are there policies within the NPPF that indicate that development on this land should be prevented in principle.”</p> <p><b>167:</b> “There are exceptional circumstances for GB release at four of the five proposed strategic allocations within the GB. These are Innsworth (plus land at Longford), South Churchdown, Brockworth and North West Cheltenham. However, exceptional circumstances do not exist for GB release at the fifth proposed strategic allocation of North Churchdown”</p>
<a href="#">Coventry City Council</a>	Local Plan	06.12.2017	99, 106-108, allocation specific alterations to GB: 125-140, 141-144, 149, 153	<p><b>99:</b> “Initial analysis through the SHLAA pointed to approximately 17,000 new homes being capable of being delivered in the existing urban area, representing 80% on brownfield land. However, changes to Green Belt boundaries would be required to accommodate homes to meet Coventry’s housing need. As outlined earlier in this report, it was identified that it would not be possible to provide all the required housing in Coventry without there being significant and unacceptable impacts on historic landscapes and the natural environment. It was shown that a proportion of development would need to be provided in the wider Warwickshire HMA area. Also, options to meet the development needs of Coventry more sustainably may exist adjacent to the City’s boundary.”</p> <p><b>108:</b> “Unless some of the Green Belt is released, a substantial level of new dwellings -amounting to nearly one third of the planned supply - would not be delivered. The scale of potentially unmet need in the City is exceptional. The selective release of parcels of Green Belt to provide in the region of an additional 7,000 dwellings would make a very substantial contribution towards meeting the shortfall. However, even with the release of the Green Belt and greenfield sites the Plan will leave a shortfall of nearly 18,000 dwellings that will need to be met elsewhere in the wider HMA. The DtC requires neighbouring authorities in the HMA to help meet the shortfall, in line with the MOU. It also requires that Coventry City Council should seek to maximise housing land provision within its own administrative boundary to meet the identified need. The release of Green Belt sites is necessary to do this.”</p> <p><b>153:</b> “For the above reasons I conclude that, subject to the MMs that are necessary for soundness, the Plan complies with national planning policy in its approach to the Green Belt; that the allocations of Green Belt land, including the SUEs at Eastern Green and at Keresley, would not have a significant effect on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, either alone or in combination with the other allocations of land in the Green Belt and are justified and deliverable; and that no other Green Belt or greenfield allocations are necessary. Furthermore, the allocated sites are appropriate and deliverable and the detailed requirements for their delivery are clear and justified.”</p>
<a href="#">Warwick District Council</a>	Local Plan	21.09.2017	Allocation specific alterations to GB: 206-213, 217-255, 264-296, 342-343	<p><b>208:</b> “There are very limited opportunities for housing development on any scale within the built up area. Other than one area of land at Crackley (see below), there is no potential to allocate housing sites on the edge of the urban area without altering the boundary of the Green Belt.”</p> <p><b>209:</b> “These factors, along with the scale of housing requirements and limited opportunities outside of the Green Belt elsewhere in the District, amount to exceptional circumstances which justify altering the boundaries of the Green Belt around Kenilworth.”</p> <p><b>251:</b> “Given the scale of housing requirements and its role as a focal point for growth in delivering the spatial strategy, there is a need to identify sites for a significant amount of housing at Kenilworth. There are very limited opportunities to do so within the built up area or on sites not currently within the Green Belt. There are exceptional circumstances to justify altering the boundary of the Green Belt to accommodate housing development.”</p> <p><b>296:</b> “In light of the above and my wider conclusions in relation to land to the south of Coventry there are exceptional circumstances which justify altering the boundaries of the Green Belt at Kings Hill. The proposed further site allocation (H43) put forward by the Council is required to ensure that the Local Plan is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.”</p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Dacorum Borough Council</a>	Site Allocations Plan	12.07.2017		<p><b>38:</b> <i>“The Borough is heavily constrained by Green Belt which has resulted in a limited number of ‘reasonable alternatives’. Indeed the CS Inspector found that the Council could not meet all of its objectively assessed housing need without a review of the remainder of the Green Belt land.”</i></p> <p><b>62:</b> <i>“As detailed in paras 9 and 10, the CS identifies these specific allocations to be necessary and recognises that they will require changes to the Green Belt boundary and this was deemed sound by the CS Inspector. I have determined that the precise boundaries of these allocations are soundly-based. Having regard to this, the adopted CS and all other matters relevant to these allocations I concur with the Council that the exceptional circumstances exist to justify the removal of these sites from the Green Belt.”</i></p>
<a href="#">Birmingham City Council</a>	Local Plan	10.01.2017	214-219	<p><b>214:</b> <i>“Assessments of the contribution that the Langley and Peddimore sites make to the purposes of the Green Belt, as defined in NPPF paragraph 80, are made in PG1. Given their location, neither plays any significant role in preventing the merger of neighbouring towns or in preserving the setting and character of historic towns. In my view, preserving their Green Belt status is not essential in order to encourage the recycling of derelict and other urban land, given the clear evidence of a shortage of land to meet Birmingham’s overall development needs. The decision to release these two defined areas of land for development will not lead to “unrestricted sprawl”, and both have defensible boundaries formed by main roads and topographical features.”</i></p> <p><b>216:</b> <i>“Birmingham is not the only local planning authority area that faces difficulties in providing sufficient housing land to meet the needs arising within its own boundaries. But the scale of potentially unmet need in the city is exceptional, and possibly unique. Without strategic Green Belt release, there are sites for around 46,000 new dwellings – only just over half the objectively-assessed need for 89,000. The release of Green Belt to provide an additional 5,000 dwellings at Langley over the Plan period, and a further 350 dwellings at Yardley, would make a very substantial contribution towards meeting the shortfall. For the reasons set out above, the evidence does not support any additional strategic residential allocations in the Green Belt.”</i></p> <p><b>219:</b> <i>“In my view, this combination of factors means that exceptional circumstances exist to justify alterations to the Green Belt boundary in order to allocate the SUE site at Langley (policy GA5), land for housing at the former Yardley sewage works (policy GA8) and the strategic employment site at Peddimore (policy GA6). In the case of Yardley, MM22 is needed to set out this rationale, as it is currently absent from the reasoned justification to policy GA8.”</i></p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Vale of White Horse District Council</a>	Local Plan	14.12.2016	27, 76-88 (housing sites 1 to 4)	<p><b>86:</b> "In summary there is an objectively-assessed need for more than 20,000 new dwellings in the Vale during the period to 2031. Whilst the majority of these dwellings will be located in the South East Vale and Western Vale areas it is appropriate to provide for some housing in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area, in particular to meet the future housing needs of people already living in this area. However, the Council's evidence shows there is minimal potential to provide for this housing within the existing main settlements in the area and Abingdon, Botley, Cumnor, Radley and Kennington are closely bounded by Green Belt or land subject to other constraints. It would not be a sustainable solution to meet the increasing housing needs of these settlements distant from them in the villages or countryside beyond the Green Belt. Housing on sites 1-4 (on GB) would be well-related to existing settlements and their services and for access to both Abingdon town and Oxford city centres, including by public transport, cycling and walking. Evidence also indicates that housing on these sites could be delivered quickly."</p> <p><b>87:</b> "I recognise that the Green Belt around Abingdon, Kennington and Radley is much valued by many people and the alteration of its boundaries would not be entirely without harm. However, the Council's proposal to remove from the Green Belt housing sites 1,2 3 and 4, enabling some 1500 or so dwellings to be built, would have only limited impacts on the function of the Green Belt, primarily being localised encroachment of the countryside."</p> <p><b>88:</b> "Balancing all of these factors I conclude that the Council's assessment that the exceptional circumstances exist to justify removal from the Green Belt of housing allocation sites 1, 2, 3 and 4 is a soundly based one."</p>
<a href="#">Gateshead Council and Newcastle Upon Tyne City Council</a>	Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Newcastle and Gateshead	26.03.2015	53, 106	<p><b>51:</b> "These matters have been addressed. The capacity of the urban areas has been carefully assessed, many inset towns and villages are designated as Growth Areas, and development beyond the Green Belt has been regarded as unsustainable to meet Newcastle's and Gateshead's needs. The Councils have determined that the Green Belt Growth Areas are the most sustainable locations outside the urban area which are consistent with the CSUCP's spatial strategy (policy CS1) of creating thriving communities and a more prosperous economy. For these reasons the Councils contend that exceptional circumstances exist."</p> <p><b>53:</b> "As indicated above, sustainable development is at the forefront of the Councils' approach and they have determined that Green Belt releases are a necessary component of the sustainable development of their areas, as set out in policy CS1 "Spatial Strategy and Sustainable Growth". Alternative strategies have been tested and found to be less sustainable. Thus in principle exceptional circumstances exist and, subject to my conclusions on individual allocations under issues 7 and 8, the chosen strategy is sound."</p> <p><b>106:</b> "The analysis of housing and employment sites in Newcastle and Gateshead is predicated on my finding that in principle, following the assessment processes addressed under issues 2 and 3, the Councils' proposals to release land from the Green Belt to meet objectively assessed housing and employment needs are sound and satisfy the exceptional circumstances test of the Framework."</p> <p><b>155:</b> "As with consideration of the Newcastle sites, the analysis which follows is predicated on my finding that in principle, following the assessment processes addressed under issues 2 and 3, the Councils' proposals to release land from the Green Belt to meet objectively assessed housing and employment needs are sound and satisfy the exceptional circumstances test of the Framework. Exactly the same factors apply as are outlined in paragraphs 106-107."</p>
<a href="#">Lichfield District Council</a>	Local Plan	17.02.2015	122, 207	<p><b>122:</b> "Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. Given that there is an alternative, more sustainable, site outside the Green Belt capable of helping to meet both the Council's and Rugeley's housing needs then it is reasonable for the Council to select that site."</p> <p><b>207:</b> "Nonetheless, the additional sites selected by the Council are in Green Belt and land should be released from Green Belt only in exceptional circumstances. In my judgement the lack of more sustainable sites outside the Green Belt to meet the identified need for housing in a way that is consistent with the Plan's urban and key centre strategy amounts, in this instance, to the exceptional circumstances that justify the release of Green Belt land at Deanslade Farm and Cricket Lane and their allocation for development (together with additional housing land at Fradley East) as proposed in MM12 – MM24. I am also satisfied that the additional sites selected by the Council are the most suitable having considered reasonable alternatives."</p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Cheshire West and Chester Council</a>	Local Plan	29.01.2015	74-75,	<p><b>74:</b> "On this basis there is a residual need for at least 830 additional dwellings to achieve the proposed level of growth (5,200 dwellings) and to provide flexibility should some sites not come forward as envisaged."</p> <p><b>75:</b> "There is insufficient capacity within the urban area to deliver the amount of housing growth planned for Chester, which as I have concluded above, is necessary to sustain its role. Diverting some of this growth to other parts of the Borough would not achieve this key objective. It is also important to ensure that a reasonable range and choice of deliverable housing land is available. I consider therefore that these constitute the exceptional circumstances necessary to justify altering the Green Belt at Chester in principle."</p>
<a href="#">Rushcliffe Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	22.12.2014	64, 89	<p><b>64:</b> "As for the other sustainable urban extensions, I agree with the Council that the need for new housing and economic development in Rushcliffe provide the exceptional circumstances for altering the tightly drawn Green Belt boundary in the Borough. The site which contains Nottingham (Tollerton) Airport with its runways and prominent buildings is not wholly open countryside. Development here provides the opportunity to re-use brownfield land at the airport. Polser Brook and Grantham Canal provide potential defensible boundaries to the north and east. Structural planting could be used to create a strong green edge limiting the visual impact of new development, as the land is relatively flat. The proposed site would be physically and visually separate from Tollerton and Bassingfield villages, providing such measures were taken."</p> <p><b>89:</b> "There is convincing evidence that the level of development set out in Policy 2 of the Local Plan cannot be delivered without removing significant amounts of land from the Green Belt. As explained under Issue 1 above, the need for sustainable development to provide an uplift in new housing provision and support economic growth by accommodating new employment constitute the exceptional circumstances to alter the Green Belt boundaries in Rushcliffe."</p>
<a href="#">Broxtowe Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council and Nottingham City Council</a>	Aligned Core Strategies	17.09.2014	67-70, 111	<p><b>67:</b> "However, the work which has been done to identify the site and will continue to take it forward has been undertaken by the Council as a democratically elected local planning authority. It considers that it has made its decisions in the best interests of the Borough and its people, particularly those who now or in the future will need a home of their own. Having regard to the housing requirements and limited availability of alternative, sustainable sites, the Councils' decision to allocate this site in the ACS meets the exceptional circumstances' requirement as set out in the NPPF for the alteration of Green Belt boundaries. Field Farm's inclusion as a strategic allocation in the ACS is justified."</p> <p><b>70:</b> "the Toton location has good sustainability credentials for new development, whether or not HS2 goes ahead, being in the south of the Borough and adjoining the main built up area of Nottingham. It is within walking distance of the new tram terminus with park and ride facilities. Although the road network is very busy and local people question its ability to accommodate additional traffic, the responsible transport authorities have considered the impact of new development and are satisfied that the network could cope, with appropriate improvements. I share the Councils' view that the potential for land at Toton to help meet the requirements for housing and mixed use development in Broxtowe Borough constitutes the exceptional circumstances needed to remove the land from the Green Belt. Its potential to maximise the economic benefits from the proposed HS2 station reinforces the Councils' case for changing the Green Belt boundary at Toton."</p> <p><b>111:</b> "The NPPF continues the well-established planning policy of protecting Green Belt land. The Green Belt boundaries are drawn tightly around Nottingham, and to promote development beyond the Green Belt's outer edge would extend travel to work and for other purposes in an unsustainable fashion. Areas of safeguarded land exist in Gedling Borough, but these are unlikely to meet all the plan area's development requirements outside the main built up area. I agree with the Councils that the exceptional circumstances required for alterations to Green Belt boundaries exist."</p>

Council	Local Plan	Adoption	Relevant Paragraphs	Inspector Commentary
<a href="#">Bath and North East Somerset Council</a>	Local Plan	10.07.2014	165, 205, allocation specific alterations to GB: 209-217, 234	<p><b>165:</b> "I consider that there are the exceptional circumstances to justify removing land from the Green Belt and for major development within the AONB. The need for housing and the benefits of additional housing in this location at Bath outweigh the harm that would arise, taking into account the great weight that must be given to protecting the AONB and heritage assets. The Council's decision to allocate this site represents positive planning and is justified. This allocation is needed to make the plan sound."</p> <p><b>205:</b> "Overall, there would be a loss of Green Belt in a sensitive location, but the fundamental purpose of the Green Belt here would still be achieved. There would be a loss of well appreciated countryside and the opportunity for informal recreation. There would be no other significant harm. The allocation would achieve 220 - 250 dwellings in a highly sustainable location at the most sustainable town in the district after Bath. Of these dwellings, 30% would be affordable. The allocation would also provide additional employment to complement housing growth in the town. There are no better alternative sites at Keynsham (see below) which could replace the contribution to housing and employment that this site would make. Overall, there are the exceptional circumstances to justify removing land from the Green Belt. The Council's decision to allocate this site represents positive planning and is justified."</p> <p><b>216:</b> "Overall, there would be a loss of Green Belt, but not in a sensitive location and the wider purposes of the Green Belt in this area would be maintained. The wider visual impact would be limited. There would be no other significant harm. The allocation would achieve 180 -200 dwellings in a location that offers some alternatives to the use of the car. Of these dwellings, 30% would be affordable. There are no better alternative sites at Keynsham (see below) which could replace the contribution to housing that this site would make. There are the exceptional circumstances to justify removing the land from the Green Belt and the Council's decision to allocate this site represents positive planning."</p>
<a href="#">South Gloucestershire Council</a>	Local Plan	11.12.2013	49, 140	<p><b>49:</b> "The Council has set out the exceptional circumstances to explain why it is proposing to release two areas of land from the Green Belt in the North Fringe. It believes there is no requirement to identify further areas in the short term but that does not guarantee boundaries will not need to be altered towards the end of the plan period. In this respect, the Council has not had regard to planning guidance. This places a responsibility on local planning authorities to consider longer-term development needs when preparing local plans in order to avoid having to alter Green Belt boundaries at the end of a plan period"</p> <p><b>140:</b> "The Council is advocating future housing needs are met in a limited number of locations on the periphery of the (Bristol) urban area and at two freestanding towns on the outer edge of the Green Belt. This is a sustainable approach and one which I consider should be endorsed."</p>
<a href="#">Hyndburn Borough Council</a>	Local Plan	19.01.2012	64-65	<p><b>64:</b> "The new housing allocation at Huncoat Colliery is effectively a replacement for a site previously allocated in the HBLP at Central Huncoat. This site is no longer available, following HBC's resolution to protect the land for open space, reflecting strong views from the local community. Issues about the future of this land will be determined in the SADPD. Insufficient land exists within the existing urban area to provide for this scale of housing development (c.400 dwellings) without eroding existing environmental quality and open spaces. This strategic allocation is needed to ensure the Borough has sufficient housing land to meet its housing needs over the plan period, and to provide a large site, well located to provide for high-quality family homes. The need to make qualitative improvements to the housing market and provide "aspirational" housing within a high quality environment is a key objective of the PLMAA &amp; Housing Strategy and the SHMA. This site is referred to in the PLSG, and would make a significant contribution to the quantitative and qualitative housing needs of Hyndburn, as well as complementing the proposed strategic employment site."</p> <p><b>65:</b> "The site is currently in the Green Belt, and the Green Belt &amp; Huncoat Topic Papers and other statements outline the exceptional circumstances to justify releasing this Green Belt land and confirm that it would not compromise the functions of the Green Belt in this locality. The lack of sequentially preferable alternative sites within the urban area and the need to provide land for high quality houses are conclusive reasons justifying its release. The site is well located, with access via the WHLR (Phase 1), partly funded by the developers. As a former colliery, the site is likely to be subject to some development constraints and, although there are few deep mine shafts, landowners and prospective developers confirm that there are no overriding constraints to its development for housing."</p>



## APPENDIX 2

### SUSTAINABLE GARDEN VILLAGES – THE SUSTAINABILITY MERITS

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## APPENDIX 2 - SUSTAINABLE GARDEN VILLAGES- THE SUSTAINABILITY MERITS

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### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This note refers to various policy documents and good practice guidance, which demonstrate the key sustainability merits that arise from Garden Villages (GVs).

### 2 Policy and Guidance

#### Town and Country Planning Association Best Practice Guidance in Urban Extensions and New Settlements

- 2.1 [The Guidance](#) was published in 2007 by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and sets out the key sustainable merits of new settlements as well as urban extensions. These include:

- Higher densities with a mix of housing types and tenures;
- Opportunities to create green infrastructure networks;
- Enabling opportunities for green technologies and infrastructure; and
- Increases in land values.

#### Eco-Towns Prospectus

- 2.2 The [Eco-Towns Prospectus](#) was published in 2007 by CLG.

- 2.3 Although the document is of age and no longer in circulation, the points made on how sustainable GV can be is still relevant. These are:

- Delivering a range of house types and tenures that meet local demand;
- Providing homes for workers to live closer to where they work;
- Ability to test for new technologies to achieve zero carbon;
- Self-sufficient communities;
- Provision of a range of facilities within the town such as schools, leisure facilities and good quality business space; and
- A greater quantity and quality of green space that can enhance biodiversity.

#### Eco-Towns Supplement to (the now revoked) Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1)

- 2.4 [The Supplement](#) was published in 2009 by CLG. It sets out a range of standards that can be achieved through the design of eco-towns. These include:

- Opportunity to ensure energy emissions related to the built environment in eco-towns are zero or below;
- Designed with climate change in mind;
- Delivering a range of housing types and tenures;
- Creation of mixed-use communities that reduce unsustainable commuter trips;

## APPENDIX 2 - SUSTAINABLE GARDEN VILLAGES- THE SUSTAINABILITY MERITS

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- Take advantage of significant economies of scale and increase in land value to deliver new technology and infrastructure such as for transport, energy and community facilities;
- Ability to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport nodes to reduce the reliance on private cars; and
- A greater quantity and quality of green open spaces.

### Garden Communities Prospectus

- 2.5 The [Garden Communities Prospectus](#) was published by the MHCLG in August 2018.
- 2.6 It sets out the Government's vision and expectations for high quality GVs across the country.
- 2.7 The Prospectus identifies a critical mass of 1,500-10,000 new dwellings for GVs and a minimum of 10,000 for Garden Towns.
- 2.8 Within the Prospectus it is noted that development on this scale allows a new settlement to exploit a number of opportunities and benefits, notably:
- Enabling opportunities for infrastructure that allows communities to be self-sufficient;
  - Creation of vibrant mixed-use communities that support a range of local employment types, retail opportunities and recreational and community facilities;
  - Delivering a wide range of high-quality and distinctive homes;
  - Provision of integrated and accessible transport options that support economic prosperity and wellbeing for residents;
  - Generous, accessible and good quality green infrastructure that can deliver environmental gains; and
  - Ability to be designed to be resilient that allow for changing demographics, future growth and the impacts of climate change.



## APPENDIX 3

### GARDEN VILLAGE FUNDING LETTER FROM MHCLG – JUNE 2019

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Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Simon Ridley**

Decentralisation and Growth

**Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local  
Government**

Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Mary Weastell  
Chief Executive, City of York Council

Email:  
GardenCommunities@communities.gov.uk  
Tel: 0303 444 0000

[www.gov.uk/mhclg](http://www.gov.uk/mhclg)

**27 June 2019**

Dear Mary,

**Re: West of Elvington Lane**

I am delighted to confirm that, following a competitive bidding process, you have been selected to join the Garden Communities Programme. We have allocated £150,000 of capacity funding to support the delivery of West of Elvington Lane for the 2019/2020 financial year.

There was a very strong response to the prospectus we published last summer inviting local partners to come forward with ambitious locally-supported new Garden Communities. I am pleased that West of Elvington Lane is one of 19 Garden Villages selected.

The creation of well-planned and designed, locally-led Garden Villages makes a critical contribution to our ambitions both to build 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s, and to provide a stable pipeline of homes for the future. But this is not a numbers game – these places have the potential to become vibrant new communities where people can live and work, and to create a legacy that will be enjoyed and valued by future generations. Our ambition is that your new Garden Village sets a new standard for planning and delivering new settlements at scale that can support a local area's housing and economic growth ambitions.

As you know, delivering a Garden Village carries costs that go beyond the typical remit of local authorities: capacity funding ensures that places have the resources to fulfil their growth ambitions. We will be in touch to discuss your plans and approach, including how the funding can be put to best use. Other aspects of our support include expert delivery advice from

Homes England and cross-government brokerage to resolve strategic policy barriers to delivery.

The Garden Communities Programme demonstrates how local partners and central government can work together innovatively to transform local communities. Our support will be focused on enabling the creation of Garden Villages that are beautiful and sustainable; that are supported by the right infrastructure; and that benefit new and existing communities alike.

If you have any questions please contact Frank Danielsigbinobaro, who will be leading on this area of the Garden Communities work on: [GardenCommunities@communities.gov.uk](mailto:GardenCommunities@communities.gov.uk)

I welcome your ambitious plans for high quality housing growth that West of Elvington Lane represents and look forward to working with you.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SR', with a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Simon Ridley**

Director General, Decentralisation and Growth  
Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government



## APPENDIX 4

### GARDEN VILLAGE FUNDING LETTER FROM HCA – MARCH 2017

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Homes &  
Communities  
Agency

Mr Martin Grainger  
City of York Council

Delivered by email: [martin.grainger@york.gov.uk](mailto:martin.grainger@york.gov.uk)

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Email: [Garden.villages@hca.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Garden.villages@hca.gsi.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Grainger,

**Re: Elvington Lane Garden Village proposal**

I'm pleased to advise you that although Elvington Lane garden village was not one of the 14 Garden Villages announced in early January, that as part of a supplementary support package to help you develop your thinking and strategy for your garden village proposal further, you have been allocated capacity funding of £75,000. The funding takes the form of a section 31 grant and will be transferred to the council imminently. **To enable us to process the funding allocation to you as quickly as possible, could you please forward the relevant bank details including bank name, account name, sort code and account number to Shahzana Begum at [Shahzana.Begum@hca.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Shahzana.Begum@hca.gsi.gov.uk).** Please note that it is not intended that there will be any ministerial announcement or formal press release about the award of this garden village early support capacity funding to local authorities.

There is much interest in the success of this programme in delivering garden villages that are great places to live and we will be undertaking some light touch monitoring of the progress with developing the Elvington Lane garden village proposal. We will be in touch with you about this and to explore how you will use the funding allocation, and what further support you may need from the Agency to help you develop the proposal.

As part of establishing a support mechanism for the garden village programme, we intend to establish a Garden Village Forum for those local authorities who are receiving support as part of the Garden Villages programme. The Forum is intended to enable dissemination of good practice, shared learning and mutual support in taking forward successful garden villages. Fionnuala Lennon who is managing the Garden Villages & Town Programme for the Agency will be in touch with you shortly about this.

Kind Regards

**OFFICIAL SENSITIVE - COMMERCIAL**

Homes and Communities Agency  
Woodlands, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW

0300 1234 500  
[homesandcommunities.co.uk](http://homesandcommunities.co.uk)



## APPENDIX 5

### SITES TO BE REMOVED FROM YORK'S GREEN BELT

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## NOTE

### APPENDIX 5 – SITES TO BE REMOVED FROM YORK'S GREEN BELT

Location	Allocation	Site Name	Site Size (ha)	Potential Residential Units	Potential Employment (sqm)
<b>Residential</b>					
Freestanding settlement	ST7	East of Metcalfe Lane	34.50	845	
Urban extension	ST8	Land to the North of Monks Cross	39.50	968	
Urban extension	ST9	North of Haxby	35	735	
Freestanding settlement	ST14	Land to the West of Wigginton Road	55	1,348	
Freestanding settlement	ST15	Land to the West of Elvington Lane	159	3,339	
Village extension	ST31	Land to The South of Tadcaster Road Copmanthorpe	8.1	158	
Village extension	ST33	Station Yard Wheldrake	6	147	
Urban extension	H6	Land to the Rear of the Square	1.53	0	
Village extension	H29	Land at Moor Lane Copmanthorpe	2.65	88	
Village extension	H31	Revised Eastfield Lane Dunnington	2.51	76	
Village extension	H38	Land RO Rufforth Primary School Rufforth	0.99	33	
Village extension	H39	North of Church Lane Elvington	0.92	32	
Village extension	H53	Land at Knapton Village	0.33	4	
Village extension	SP1	The Stables, Elvington		3 plots	
<b>Total</b>			<b>346.03</b>	<b>7,775 (exc. 3 plots)</b>	
<b>Employment</b>					

## NOTE continued

Freestanding employment	ST26	South of Airfield Business Park	7.6	25,080
Urban extension	ST27	University of York	21.5	21,500
Urban extension	ST37	Whitehall Grange	10.1	33,330
Urban extension	ST19	Northminster Business Park	15	49,500
Urban extension	E16	Poppleton Garden Centre	2.8	9,240
Freestanding employment	E18	Towthorpe Lines	4	13,200
<b>Total</b>			<b>61</b>	<b>151,850</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>407.03</b>	

Source: [City of York Local Plan, Topic Paper TP1, Approach to Defining York's Green Belt, Addendum, March 2019 \(page 81\)](#).