

CITY OF YORK LOCAL PLAN

PHASE 4 HEARINGS

MATTER 1: GREEN BELT BOUNDARIES

STATEMENT BY FULFORD PARISH COUNCIL

AUGUST 2022

Q1.3 Are the Green Belt boundaries of 'Other Densely Developed Areas' (Topic Paper 1 Addendum Annex 4) reasonably derived?

- 1 The main concern of Fulford Parish Council is about the York Designer Outlet (McArthur Glen) which lies within Fulford Parish.
- 2 FPC considers that the Designer Outlet should not be excluded from the Green Belt. Instead, the site should be shown as over-washed and treated as a previously developed site in the Green Belt. It would be thereby subject to the policy set out in the last bullet-point of NPPF paragraph 89 which allows development that is compatible with the site's status as previously developed land within the Green Belt.
- 3 FPC's suggestion is consistent with the history of the site. The existing retail development was only allowed in 1989 as an exception to normal restrictions on development in the Green Belt because it was located on the site of the former Naburn Hospital. In line with then government policy (PPG2) the amount of built development, its extent, and the retention of the landscape setting of the hospital were all carefully controlled to ensure that the retail centre did not have any greater impact on the purposes of the Green Belt than the former hospital. For the same reasons the York Green Belt Local Plan Inspector recommended that that the site should remain in the Green Belt rather than being inset as proposed by the Deposit Local Plan, noting (D87.15) that "*the site serves important Green Belt purposes, and is indeed an important part of the Green Belt*" (EX/OTH/3a).
- 4 The effect of excluding the site from the Green Belt as now proposed by the Submitted Local Plan would be to allow unrestricted development within the boundaries of the inset (subject to the other policies of the Plan). The potential consequence would be a loss of much of the landscape setting of the Designer Outlet which currently helps to mitigate the impacts of the existing built development upon the wider Green Belt. This would have a

major adverse impact upon the functions and purposes of the Green Belt south of York. In this regard, the wider area of land around the Designer Outlet is identified by Submitted Local Plan Figure 3.1 as being special importance to the historic character and setting of York.

- 5 The owners of the York Designer Outlet have already promoted a major expansion of the building footprint of the retail complex onto the landscaped areas with the proposal that the present car parking occupied by the Park and Ride facility should be relocated onto land beyond the proposed inset, presumably on the basis that the new parking area would be appropriate development in the Green Belt as "local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location." This proposal would significantly harm the openness of the wider Green Belt, and it demonstrates the potential adverse implications of the inset proposed by the Local Plan.
- 6 In this regard, we are aware of Policy T2(viii) which says that the Plan will support development proposals that "facilitate the relocation of the Designer Outlet Park & Ride facility." The purpose and reasons for this policy is not explained. The Designer Outlet Park and Ride facility seems to operate acceptably at the present time. To our knowledge, the only possible reason to relocate it (presumably onto land currently open countryside) is to facilitate building development within the proposed inset boundary.
- 7 For these reasons, we consider that the proposed inset of the Designer Outlet is unsound as it would adversely affect the openness and purposes of the Green Belt contrary to national policy.
- 6 If the Designer Outlet is inset, the Green Belt boundary should be drawn tightly around the existing building complex, leaving the landscaped and parking areas within the Green Belt. This approach would be consistent with that taken by the Council to large institutions with grounds such as secondary schools.