



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stockport Local Plan

Green Belt Topic Paper

September 2026



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1. Introduction

- 1) This is the ‘Green Belt Topic Paper’ and is one of a number of topic papers that has been written to support Stockport’s Local Plan.
- 2) All topic papers can be found online at Stockport Council’s website.
- 3) The main purpose of this document is to set out what the NPPF requires us to do with regards to reviewing our Green Belt boundaries and to outline our approach for carrying this out.
- 4) It should be read alongside the draft Local Plan itself as well as the key evidence that is referenced within it.

2. Understanding our approach for the review of Green Belt boundaries

- 5) The council is required to prepare a plan that promotes a sustainable pattern of development and which seeks to meet the development needs of its area. The needs for housing and employment are set out in the accompanying Housing Topic Paper and Employment Topic Paper and these papers should be read alongside this one for context.
- 6) However, 46% of the borough is protected by Green Belt. Should the council not be able to meet our identified needs within the urban area following an examination of other reasonable options, national planning policies allow for Green Belt boundaries to be altered in exceptional circumstances.
- 7) This topic paper sets out the national and local policy requirements that apply, the evidence used to assess potential changes to boundaries, a review of reasonable alternatives and a case for exceptional circumstances to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries. The document then outlines the methodology used to select the most suitable allocations for release from the Green Belt and the approach taken to identify proposed allocations and other amendments to the boundaries.
- 8) The following information sets out the background guidance and evidence.

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 9) **This topic paper has been prepared with regard to the 2024 version of the NPPF, in accordance with Annex A of the August 2026 NPPF.**
- 10) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024¹ provides, amongst other things, the basis for how all councils should develop their plans and identifies what the key purposes of local plans are, in the context of delivering sustainable development.
- 11) Paragraph 11(a) of the NPPF states that:

¹ See <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20250225172715/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

“all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;”

- 12) Paragraph 11(b) of the NPPF clarifies that our plan should contain strategic policies which provide, as a minimum, for our objectively assessed needs unless:

“i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

- 13) Para 11(b)i. of the NPPF is subject to footnote 7, which confirms that:

“The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.”

- 14) Section 3 of the NPPF provides the broad requirements for plan-making. In that section, paragraph 36 sets out that Plans are ‘sound’ if they are:

“a) Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;

b) Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;

c) Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and

d) Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.”

- 15) Chapter 13 of the NPPF focuses on Green Belt matters. Paragraph 142 states that:

“the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”.

- 16) This is elaborated in paragraph 143, which states that Green Belts serve five purposes, as set out below.

A - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;

B - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;

C - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;

D - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

E - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 17) Paragraph 145 states the following in respect of reviewing Green Belt boundaries:

“Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period.”

- 18) Paragraph 146 goes on to state that:

“where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means...authorities should review Green Belt boundaries in accordance with the policies in this Framework and propose alterations to meet these needs in full, unless the review provides clear evidence that doing so would fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt, when considered across the area of the plan.”

- 19) Paragraph 147 further states that:

“...the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph and whether the strategy:

a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;

b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift

in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and

c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.”

20) Paragraph 148 outlines that:

“Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt which is not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations. However, when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site’s location is appropriate with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework.”

21) Paragraph 149 states that when defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:

- demonstrate consistency with Local Plan strategy, most notably achieving sustainable development
- not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open
- safeguard enough non-Green Belt land to meet development needs beyond the plan period
- define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

22) ‘Grey belt’ is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as

“land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”

2.2 Planning Practice Guidance

23) Court judgements have determined that we have to give the same status to Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The PPG gives us more detailed directions on meeting some of the NPPF’s requirements.

Green Belt

- 24) Planning practice guidance on Green Belt² outlines how local planning authorities (LPAs) must identify and assess "grey belt" land under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 25) Paragraph 1 of the guidance sets out:
- the considerations involved in assessing the contribution Green Belt land makes to Green Belt purposes, where relevant to identifying grey belt land
 - the considerations involved in determining whether release or development of Green Belt land would fundamentally undermine the remaining Green Belt in the plan area;
 - guidance for considering proposals on potential grey belt land
 - guidance on identifying sustainable locations when considering the release or development of Green Belt land
 - updated guidance on how major housing development on land which is released from the Green Belt through plan making, or on sites in the Green Belt, should contribute to accessible green space
 - updated guidance on how to consider the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt
- 26) The guidance also makes it clear that the review and alteration of Green Belt boundaries should take place as part of the plan making process.
- 27) In relation to grey belt land, paragraph 2 states that:
- “In order to identify grey belt land, authorities should produce a Green Belt assessment, either as part of the review of Green Belt boundaries during the preparation or updating of a local plan, or at another relevant point.”*
- 28) Paragraph 5 provides detailed guidance on the assessment of parcels of land against the ‘purposes’ of Green Belt, in order to ascertain whether land can be considered ‘grey belt’ or not.
- 29) It also details at paragraph 8 that a Green Belt Assessment should also consider the extent to which release or development of Green Belt land (including but not limited to grey belt land) would fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the plan area as whole.
- 30) Paragraph 12 provides advice in relation to accessible green space, when major housing development is on land which is released from the Green Belt.

² See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/green-belt>

2.3 Local evidence

Stockport Green Belt Assessment (2025)

- 31) LUC undertook a Green Belt Assessment (GBA) covering the borough of Stockport in October 2025. The overall aim of the assessment is to identify how land performs against the five purposes of Green Belt consistent with the requirements of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This assessment is then used to define grey belt in line with national guidance.
- 32) The report clarifies that the purpose of the Green Belt Assessment is not to identify land that may be suitable for development or set out the necessary exceptional circumstances for releasing land from the Green Belt. As such it is the role of the Local Plan to carry this out whilst considering a wide range of evidence relating to sustainability and viability considerations, as this topic paper will set out.
- 33) The parcels were rated against four policy ratings of 'Very Strong', 'Strong', 'Moderate' and 'Weak/No Contribution'. The 'Very Strong' rating has been added to provide a more nuanced understanding of how strong land at the top of the rating scale performs. A decision was made to discount Purpose E (assisting urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other open land) from the assessment as it was judged to be difficult to distinguish the extent to which each parcel delivers against the purpose. A uniform level of 'Equal' contribution to Purpose E has therefore been applied to all Green Belt land in the borough.
- 34) The parcel ratings are presented in the report and are organised separately on a settlement basis. A series of overview maps show the variations in contribution to each purpose and two additional overview maps are provided illustrating:
 - Areas suitable for definition as 'grey belt' i.e. land judged not to perform strongly to purposes A, B and D and outside the defined footnote 7 areas and assets set out in the NPPF.
 - The number of 'Very Strong' and 'Strong' contribution ratings, and/or highest rating in a given location, as a high-level indicator of the overall contribution. This will assist in identifying any locations outside of identified grey belt locations where Green Belt release/development has the greatest potential to fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt, when considered across the Plan area.

3. Meeting our needs

3.1 Land supply position

- 35) The topic papers on housing and employment are issued alongside this topic paper and set out the land supply position and the rationale for why our needs cannot be met within the urban area alone.
- 36) In summary they demonstrate the following:
- 37) **Housing:** Against a need of 32,317, only 15,519 (48%) can be met within the urban area or from existing permissions.
- 38) **Employment:** A need of 19 hectares (ha) for B1 office space can be met within the urban area. 26 hectares (ha) of B2/B8 logistics and warehousing space cannot be met within the urban area as sites are required close to motorway junctions and to be of sufficient size and scale to meet occupier needs.
- 39) As such, the decision has been taken that our needs can only be met by releasing land from the Green Belt.

3.2 Identifying additional sites

- 40) The council have undertaken the following 'Call for Sites' exercises where property developers, landowners and the general public were formally invited to submit site suggestions for development and/or protection:
- Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Call for Sites (2016)
 - Local Plan Call for Sites (2017)
 - GMSF Consultation Submission Call for Sites (2019)
 - Local Plan Call for Sites (2020)
 - Brownfield Call for Sites (2021)
 - Local Plan Call for Sites (2024/25)
 - Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation (2026)
- 41) Each of the potential sites has been subject to our Green Belt site selection methodology which is set out in full later in this topic paper.

3.3 Consideration of the alternatives to using Green Belt

- 42) Paragraph 147 of the NPPF makes explicit the steps that local authorities must follow to examine fully all other reasonable options for meeting their identified needs for development before they conclude that exceptional circumstances

exist to justify altering Green Belt boundaries. These steps are addressed below, although the shortfall remains:

- **Making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land:** An assessment of the potential capacity has been carried out in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). Also, the ongoing £1 billion investment of the town centre overseen by Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) and the council continues to maximise the potential of the most accessible location in the borough, with 8000 units expected to be delivered over the plan period.
- **Optimising densities in line with the policies in chapter 11 ‘making effective use of land’ including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport:** The Stockport Character and Urban Density Study (SCUD) has explored the optimisation of brownfield land in the urban area to see where increased densities and taller buildings could be accommodated, including the town centre, district centres, large local centres and the A6 corridor. This work has informed the minimum densities specified in the Local Plan.
- **Discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development:** Regular meetings have taken place with neighbouring authorities to see if our needs can be met outside our borders although there is no capacity to meet this.

3.4 The case for exceptional circumstances

- 43) Paragraph 145 notes that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances and that these should be fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of plans. Paragraph 146 adds that exceptional circumstances in this context include, but are not limited to, instances where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means.
- 44) The housing topic paper and this topic paper set out that our housing need cannot be met within the urban area. This is supported by evidence in the SHLAA and SCUD. Additional sites within the Green Belt are required to deliver inclusive growth, choice of housing and flexibility of supply.
- 45) The employment topic paper and this topic paper set out that our employment need cannot be met within the urban area. This is supported by evidence in the ELR which also outlines that logistics sites which would be attractive to the market would need to meet a range of requirements, including that of being large-scale and with direct access to the Strategic Road Network. As such, the only opportunities to deliver large scale logistics development to meet modern requirements and address our economic disparities are within the Green Belt.

3.5 The site selection methodology

46) A site selection methodology has been developed by SMBC and the starting point for the methodology was the consideration of the following sources:

- Sites suggested through 'Call for Sites' exercises;
- Other land identified by the council as being potentially available for development.

47) Of these sites, officers then organised these into two routes depending on their location:

- **Land within the urban area:** Consider through the SHLAA process
- **Land within the Green Belt:** Continue assessing in the methodology

48) The following methodology was used to consider potential sites to release from the Green Belt.

STEP 1: Is the site at least 1 ha. or otherwise capable of delivering a minimum of 50 homes?

STEP 2: Is the site previously developed?
If Yes, proceed to STEP 4A

STEP 3: Is the site identified by the Green Belt Assessment as capable of being 'grey belt'?
If Yes, proceed to STEP 4A

STEP 4A: Does the site satisfy paragraphs 155-157 of the NPPF, including the requirement to be in a sustainable location (in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 115)?

STEP 4B: Is the site, with planning judgement and application of evidence, still capable on balance of delivering a minimum of 50 homes, including with mitigation?
Apply considerations in line with information set out below.

49) If the site fails to meet any of the steps above, it will not be taken forward as an allocation.

Considerations for potential sites

Do any of the following apply?

- Any part of its boundary is within 800 metres of a town centre, district centre or large local centre
- Any part of it has a Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) score of 4 or more
- Would future occupants benefit from pre-existing or already planned necessary infrastructure?

For each remaining site consider:

- Performance against purposes of Green Belt
- Landscape character and sensitivity
- Flood risk (apply sequential approach if zones 3a or 2)
- Compatibility with neighbouring uses
- Heritage impacts
- Ecological impacts
- Tree preservation orders
- Air quality
- Minerals areas of search
- Infrastructure impacts/improvements
- Delivery of other significant benefits other than meeting general housing needs
- Value as open space/sufficiency of open space in that typology
- Sustainability Appraisal outcomes

Notes on the methodology

- 50) The methodology has been applied to all sites that have been suggested for potential development in the Green Belt via the various Call for Sites exercises the council has undertaken. The council has taken a stepped approach such that sites that do not meet relevant criteria are removed from the selection process. Therefore, for those sites in the Green Belt, only sites of a minimum of 1 Ha have been included. A further sift is then applied to remove sites which are affected by the constraints identified in footnote 7 of the NPPF.
- 51) Sites that have potential for development within the urban area will be considered through the process outlined in the SHLAA. Please see the 2025 SHLAA at <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment-shlaa>.
- 52) In the event of sites that are both within the urban area and involve Green Belt land, these have been taken forward in the methodology.

- 53) Sites that are previously developed land are considered at Step 2 ahead of land considered to be grey belt at Step 3 in accordance with the priority order set out in paragraph 148 of the NPPF.
- 54) As noted in the 'Evidence' section of this topic paper, the Stockport Green Belt Assessment (2025) is the key report within the evidence base in relation to Green Belt matters and it identifies how land performs against the five purposes of Green Belt. The assessment follows a process of identifying parcels of land, although it should be noted that these are not pre-defined but are instead the product of an analysis process to identify variations in contribution to the five purposes. As such, the defined parcels reflect the range of variations in Green Belt contribution to the Green Belt purposes with areas varying in size depending on the range of factors involved.
- 55) The Green Belt Assessment also identifies parcels that are capable of being 'grey belt' as per the guidance in the NPPF and PPG. Figure 4.8 of the assessment illustrates these on a plan and also includes the extent of the footnote 7 areas and assets (see NPPF 2025) that act as absolute constraints. Areas suitable for definition as grey belt land that overlap with the footnote 7 areas and assets are only 'provisionally' defined as grey belt land pending further detailed work to establish whether specific proposals in these locations would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.
- 56) Stage 4A and 4B operate concurrently and recognises that there are other factors which may make a site more or less suitable in addition to its Green Belt location. Not all brownfield and grey belt land will necessarily be developable for a variety of reasons.

Assessment of sites

- 57) The outcomes of the assessments of the sites submitted for development or protection in the Green Belt will be available to view on the council's website at [Assessment of sites in the Green Belt - Stockport Council](#).
- 58) The categories of the assessment and examples of the data considered are detailed below.
- Category: Environment.
Data considered: Protected Species, Priority Species, Priority Habitats, Ancient Woodland, Sites of Biological Interest.
 - Category: Hydrology.
Data considered: Flood Zone 2, Flood Zone 3, risk of surface water flooding.
 - Category: Green Belt and landscape.
Data considered: Green Belt, Landscape Character Area, National Parks, Country Parks.

- Category: Land use.
Data considered: Open Space, Agricultural Land Classification, Historic Landfill, Sites of Possible Contamination, Minerals Safeguarding Areas
- Category: Pollution and hazards.
Data considered: Air Quality Management Area, Control of Major Accident Hazards, Manchester Airport restrictions.
- Category: Heritage and townscape.
Data considered: Ancient Monuments, Historic Environment Record, Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest, Statutorily Listed Assets, Locally Listed Assets, Conservation Areas.
- Category: Accessibility.
Data considered: Rail stations, Metrolink stops, Bus stops, motorway access, nearest schools and colleges, nearest supermarket, nearest centre.
- Category: Grey infrastructure.
Data considered: National Grid lines, National Grid substations, broadband coverage.
- Category: Social data.
Data considered: Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

59) The separate climate and nature topic paper considers some of the topics above, and in particular the evidence relating to flood risk and ecology.

4. Our proposed allocations

- 60) The sites listed within the Local Plan under Policy HOM 2a (housing) and BUS 3b (employment) are proposed for release from the Green Belt. Policies HOM 2b and BUS 3b set out the detailed requirements in relation to those allocations.
- 61) The previous section outlined a range of factors that were considered as part of an assessment of all Call for Sites suggestions in the Green Belt. Subsequently, the council has considered this alongside more strategic transport matters discussed in the accompanying topic paper, and has sought to balance meeting objectively assessed needs for housing and employment need against any adverse impacts. As such, the proposed allocations are judged to represent the most optimal solution in delivering a plan that promotes a sustainable pattern of development.
- 62) A Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to assess the impacts of the proposed allocations which will be available on the council's website at [Supporting information and evidence - Stockport Council](#).
- 63) Paragraph 146 of the NPPF sets out that, should an authority not be able to meet its identified needs as part of a case for exceptional circumstances, Green Belt boundaries should be reviewed and alterations made to meet these needs in full, unless the review provides clear evidence that doing so would fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt, when considered across the area of the plan.
- 64) Further to this, the PPG notes that Green Belt assessments should consider whether, or the extent to which release would affect the ability of all remaining Green Belt from serving all purposes 'in a meaningful way'. The council's Green Belt Assessment (GBA) explores definitions of what 'meaningful' could look like for each purpose and later finds that locations should only be discounted if this test is not satisfied. At Figure 4.2 and in Chapter 4 of the GBA, areas are identified where Green Belt contribution is at its greatest within the Local Plan area, giving an indication where release could fundamentally and meaningfully undermine the purposes.
- 65) The GBA concludes by recommending that the report cannot satisfy Paragraph 146 above, although the council will be in a position to do so alongside other evidence base documents, and when exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated. It advises that consideration can be given to assessing whether preferred or final releases would in combination fundamentally undermine the purposes (as outlined in Paragraph 146), or alternatively the cumulative effect of any proposed allocations on the Green Belt designation. Appendix A examines the identified areas of strongest contribution from Figure 4.2 of the GBA alongside the allocations involving release from the Green Belt which sit within those areas and provides a commentary on the justifications for these impacts. It is considered that the proposed allocations would in combination not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the Green Belt.

5. The remaining shortfalls

- 66) The topic papers on housing and employment are issued alongside this topic paper and set out the land supply position and shortfalls and the evidence that sits behind this. In summary, following the proposed release of Green Belt to meet needs, the remaining shortfalls for housing and employment are set out below.

5.1 Housing

- Shortfall against need: 8,064
 - Proportion not met (%): 25%
- 67) The council's position is that the balance of the unmet need for housing cannot be met without considerable impacts on other issues that would collectively threaten the soundness of the plan.
- 68) In respect of housing, further release of land from the Green Belt would:
- Lead to fundamental impacts on the openness of the remaining Green Belt.
 - Cause irreparable damage to the natural environment.
 - Cause very significant harm to river valleys/landscape character beyond that to the Green Belt alone.
 - Cause severe impacts on the ability of the borough's transport network to function effectively and which with mitigation could not address satisfactorily, thereby harming the economy and people's quality of life.

5.2 Employment (B2/B8)

- Land needs not met: 7.8 hectares
 - Proportion not met (%): 30%
- 69) The council's position is that the balance of the unmet need for employment at 30% cannot be met without considerable impacts on other issues that would collectively threaten the soundness of the plan.
- 70) In respect of employment, the areas with the most potential to meet the Employment Land Review requirements are restricted by other factors (see below). It is judged that no other land exists in the Green Belt that would satisfy these requirements:
- River valley and landscape considerations: The most attractive location in the borough for large-scale logistics development to meet modern requirements is at Bredbury although this has challenging topography and is adjacent to the Tame Valley. It is judged that further encroachment northwards beyond the proposed allocation boundary at Bredbury Gateway

- would cause significant adverse impacts on landscape character and the river valley which could not be remedied sufficiently by mitigation.
- Fundamental impacts on remaining Green Belt: The land north of Bredbury Gateway and adjacent the A555 between Bramhall and Poynton is identified by the Green Belt Assessment as having potential to fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt.

6. Other changes to Green Belt boundaries

6.1 Small-scale changes

- 71) There has been a number of small-scale amendments to the proposed boundary, largely in close proximity to the allocations, in order to ensure it better matches recognised features on the ground. For example, where a boundary previously bisected a row of back gardens, this exercise has ensured the boundary now follows the rear fenceline of those properties. There are also other cases where land has been removed from the Green Belt which, following release as an allocation on an adjacent site, no longer performs any function as Green Belt.
- 72) This rationalisation work will be expanded beyond the allocations prior to submission.

6.2 Woodford Predominantly Residential Area

- 73) Woodford was an area previously marked by ribbon development along several roads in the area. This character has changed as a result of major housing development at the former Woodford Aerodrome. In addition, there are sites in the Woodford area which are proposed to be allocated for housing development in the Stockport Local Plan. These are HOM 2.14, HOM 2.27, and HOM 2.38
- 74) Given the proposed housing allocations and the existing housing development at the former aerodrome site, this would result in area of land between Chester Road and the HOM 2.27 allocation which forms part of the parcel SEB 15 in the council's Green Belt Assessment and which is not part of any housing allocation.
- 75) That parcel has been assessed as performing moderately against Purpose A, with a weak/no contribution to Purposes B and D. and therefore has the potential to be grey belt land. Part of that parcel forms the HOM 2.27 allocation, thus leaving a smaller area of land which already performs no more than moderately against one purpose and which would be located between a housing allocation to the north and significant housing development to the south, either from the existing ongoing development, or from that allocated in the plan.
- 76) Consequently, the value of the land in Green Belt terms is regarded as low and with residential development sandwiching the remaining part of SEB 15, it is proposed that this area of land be removed from the Green Belt. To reflect the current character of the area, the land to be identified as 'predominantly residential area' (PRA) includes the houses which form a visual boundary to/from the wider Green Belt. The precise area of land to be removed from the Green Belt and designated as PRA is shown on the 'Stockport Local Plan to 2042: Policies Map'.

6.3 Local Green Spaces

77) Paragraphs 106 to 108 cover the designation of Local Green Spaces and note that these should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated. The following sites have been taken out of the Green Belt and designated as a Local Green Space as they are judged to no longer serve any function as Green Belt and are not extensive in size, are local in character and are both in reasonably close proximity to and demonstrably special to adjacent communities.

78) The key reasons for their designation are as follows:

- Cow Lane – This protects land used as allotments site and is adjacent to the proposed housing allocation at HOM 2.22.
- Former Woodford Aerodrome – This protects land to the south of the former aerodrome site to serve as important open space for the residents of the two proposed housing allocations at HOM 2.14 and HOM 2.38, whilst also serving to maintain a level of openness in the area.
- Heathside Park Road – This protects land used as allotments and is adjacent to the proposed employment allocation at BUS 3.2 which, as part of the policy, will ensure its continued usage and that its quality will not be diminished.
- Hyde Bank Meadows – This protects land used as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), playing fields, play area (including play equipment and a multi-use games area) and for allotments. Collectively, this land has significant value locally. The site would also serve the residents of the proposed housing allocation at HOM 2.17 which will secure enhancements to the pitches and their associated changing facilities and nature conservation value of the LNR under Policy HOM 2b.

7. Safeguarded land

- 79) Paragraph 149 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to ‘where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term needs stretching well beyond the plan period’.
- 80) The council’s position is that it is not necessary to identify safeguarded land and nor is it justified for the following reasons:
- Our development needs for housing and employment cannot be met in full and so any land that would be suitable as safeguarded land would need to go towards the shortfall; and
 - If our unmet need was to be met by releasing further land from the Green Belt, the harm that would be caused to remaining Green Belt, the natural environment, the capacity of the transport network and on other physical infrastructure would be far exceed the benefits from new household growth. As such, this land would not be suitable for longer term needs as this approach would be unsound.

8. Conclusion

- 81) This topic paper has set out the council's evidence-led approach to reviewing Green Belt boundaries as part of preparing the Stockport Local Plan. It demonstrates that, having fully considered reasonable alternatives, exceptional circumstances exist to justify the release of selected sites from the Green Belt to meet our housing and employment needs. The proposed allocations have been assessed against national policy, local evidence and a comprehensive methodology and are considered to represent the most appropriate balance between meeting identified needs and limiting harm caused to the Green Belt and other considerations. It has been set out that to fully meet our housing and employment needs this balance cannot be achieved. The cumulative impact of release on the areas of strongest contribution to purposes, as identified by evidence, has been compared against the proposed allocations at Appendix A where it is found that the allocations would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 82) The plan takes a proportionate approach in releasing land where this is justified and deliverable, making small-scale boundary amendments where appropriate, designating Local Green Spaces where they meet the requirements of the NPPF, and setting out our intentions with regard to safeguarded land.
- 83) Overall, the approach provides a clear and justified basis for the proposed review of Green Belt boundaries whilst maintaining the integrity and long-term purposes of the remaining Green Belt.

Appendix A: Analysis of cumulative impact of allocations involving release from the Green Belt on areas of strongest contribution

Areas of strongest contribution (Para 4.7 of GBA report)	Impact on purposes as outlined in assessment	Allocations involving Green Belt release affected	Commentary
West of borough			
Between Cheadle and Heaton Mersey	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Cheadle and East Didsbury/Heaton Mersey would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	BUS 3.2 Heathside Park Road	It is considered that the site is in an optimal location to meet market requirements for logistics development. The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. The site is adjacent to Junction 2 of the M60 as is within 400m of a bus stop and cycle route and 800m from a centre. There are also hard defensible boundaries to the north and west from the M60 motorway and slip road.
Between Heald Green/Cheadle Hulme and Handforth/Wilmslow	- Release or development south of Heald Green and Cheadle Hulme that would merge the urban area of Handforth/Wilmslow with Heald Green/Cheadle Hulme would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A. - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Cheadle Hulme/Heald Green and Handforth/Wilmslow would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.25 Land at Cheadle Hulme School - HOM 2.33 Heald Green West - HOM 2.36 Heald Green East	Two of the allocations and part of HOM 2.36 are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. Much of the allocation at HOM 2.33 is within walking distance of Heald Green rail station, the local centre and a bus stop. The northern end of HOM 2.36 is within 400m of a bus stop and 800m of a local centre and the site as a whole has the potential to facilitate the provision of a new rail station to serve its prospective residents and that of the adjacent allocation at HOM 2.25. As such, all three allocations are in sustainable locations or can be made sustainable, and additionally are well-served by the A34 and A555. There is a hard defensible boundary at the A555.
Between Bramhall and Poynton	Release or development south-east of Bramhall that would merge the urban area of Poynton with Bramhall would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A.	HOM 2.26 Dairyground Farm	The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF.

Areas of strongest contribution (Para 4.7 of GBA report)	Impact on purposes as outlined in assessment	Allocations involving Green Belt release affected	Commentary
	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Bramhall and Poynton would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.		It is acknowledged that there are a significant number of allocations in this area of the borough and this is due to the high percentage of grey belt in this location with the potential to bring forward sustainable growth. Under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF, local authorities are required to prioritise is previously-developed land, then grey belt land that is not previously-developed before considering other Green Belt locations. Allied to this, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate. The proposed allocations in this area are adjacent the built-up area and so are better placed to provide access and make them sustainable locations with interventions, as opposed to alternative grey belt options in remote, unsustainable locations without the same offer and which are likely to cause significant harm to openness of the Green Belt such as those in the east of the borough, such as at Mellor and Marple Bridge. Only 1% of the site is restricted by environmental designations. The site is beyond the recommended walking distance from shops and services although is otherwise in a sustainable location on the edge of the urban area and with strong connections to Bramhall centre and the station.

Areas of strongest contribution (Para 4.7 of GBA report)	Impact on purposes as outlined in assessment	Allocations involving Green Belt release affected	Commentary
Between Hazel Grove and Poynton	- Release or development south-east of Hazel Grove that would significantly weaken the separation between the urban area of Poynton and that at Hazel Grove would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A (part of the existing gap between the two urban areas lies within neighbouring Cheshire East) - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Hazel Grove and Poynton would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.20 Jacksons Lane East - HOM 2.28a and HOM 2.28b Mill Lane, Hazel Grove - HOM 2.37a Land off Chester Road, Hazel Grove - HOM 2.37b Norbury Hall	HOM 2.20, HOM 2.28a and HOM 2.28b are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is acknowledged that there are a significant number of allocations in this area of the borough and this is due to the high percentage of grey belt in this location with the potential to bring forward sustainable growth. Under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF, local authorities are required to prioritise previously-developed land and then grey belt that is not previously-developed before other Green Belt locations. Allied to this, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate. The proposed allocations in this area are adjacent the built-up area and so are better placed to provide access and make them sustainable locations with interventions, as opposed to alternative grey belt options in remote unsustainable locations without the same offer and which are likely to cause significant harm to openness of the Green Belt such as those in the far east of the borough at Mellor and Marple Bridge. HOM 2.20 is within walking distance of a bus stop whilst HOM 2.37b is within walking distance of a local centre, supermarket and a bus stop. HOM 2.37a has no significant environmental constraints. HOM 2.28a and HOM 2.28b are within walking distance of a bus stop and a local centre and less than 1% is constrained by environmental designations. There is a hard defensible boundary at the A555.

Areas of strongest contribution (Para 4.7 of GBA report)	Impact on purposes as outlined in assessment	Allocations involving Green Belt release affected	Commentary
Between Hazel Grove and Bramhall	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Hazel Grove and Bramhall would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.26 Dairyground Farm - HOM 2.19 Jacksons Lane West - HOM 2.20 Jacksons Lane East	All of the sites are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is acknowledged that there are a significant number of allocations in this area of the borough and this is due to the high percentage of grey belt in this location with the potential to bring forward sustainable growth. Under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF, local authorities are required to prioritise previously-developed land and then grey belt that is not previously-developed before other Green Belt locations. Allied to this, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate. The proposed allocations in this area are adjacent the built-up area and so are better placed to provide access and make them sustainable locations with interventions, as opposed to alternative grey belt options in remote unsustainable locations without the same offer and which are likely to cause significant harm to openness of the Green Belt such as those in the far east of the borough at Mellor and Marple Bridge. HOM 2.19 and HOM 2.20 are within walking distance of a bus stop. Only 1% of HOM 2.26 is restricted by environmental designations, and whilst the site is beyond the recommended walking distance from shops and services it is otherwise in a sustainable location on the edge of the urban area and with strong connections to Bramhall centre and the station.

East of borough			
Between Hazel Grove and High Lane	Land east of Hazel Grove and west of High Lane that would significantly weaken the separation between the urban area of High Lane and the large built up area at Hazel Grove would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A.	- HOM 2.16 High Lane - HOM 2.18 Sandown Road - HOM 2.39 Land off Buxton Road, Hazel Grove - HOM 2.40 Land off Occupiers Lane	All of the sites are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is acknowledged that there are a significant number of allocations in this area of the borough and this is due to the high percentage of grey belt in this location with the potential to bring forward sustainable growth. Under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF, local authorities are required to prioritise previously-developed land and then grey belt that is not previously-developed before other Green Belt locations. Allied to this, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate. The proposed allocations in this area are adjacent the built-up area and so are better placed to provide access and make them sustainable locations with interventions, as opposed to alternative grey belt options in remote unsustainable locations without the same offer and which are likely to cause significant harm to openness of the Green Belt such as those in the far east of the borough at Mellor and Marple Bridge. HOM 2.16 is within 400m of a bus stop and only 5% is restricted by environmental designations. There is a hard defensible boundary at Middlewood Way. HOM 2.39 is within walking distance of a bus stop and local centre and is not subject to any significant environmental constraints. HOM 2.40 is within 400m of a bus stop and only 5% is constrained by environmental designations.
Between Hazel Grove and Marple	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Hazel Grove and Marple would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	HOM 2.18 Sandown Road	The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is acknowledged that there are a significant number of allocations in this area of the borough and this is due to the high percentage of grey belt in this location with the potential to bring forward sustainable growth. Under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF, local authorities are required to prioritise previously-developed land and then grey belt that is not previously-developed before other Green Belt locations. Allied to this, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate. The proposed allocations in this area are adjacent the built-up area and so are better placed to provide access and make them sustainable locations with interventions, as opposed to alternative grey belt options in remote unsustainable locations without the same offer and which are likely to cause significant harm to openness of the Green Belt such as those in the far east of the borough at Mellor and Marple Bridge.

Between Hazel Grove and Offerton	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Hazel Grove and Offerton would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.22 Cow Lane - HOM 2.30 Sanderling Road	The sites are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. Both allocations could be released without merging the two settlements, particularly as the strongest contribution at HOM 2.22 is recorded as 'weak'. HOM 2.22 is within walking distance of two centres, a bus stop and a supermarket, and is in the 2nd most deprived LSOA in the Index of Multiple Deprivation, HOM 2.30 is within walking distance of a bus stop and a centre.
Between Offerton and Marple	- Release or development west of Marple and east of Offerton that would significantly weaken the separation between the two distinct urban areas would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A. - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Offerton and Marple would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.21 Offerton Sand & Gravel - HOM 2.30 Sanderling Road	HOM 2.21 and HOM 2.30 are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. Neither site is considered to close the strategic gap between Marple and Offerton and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest contribution for both being 'moderate'. HOM 2.21 is within walking distance of a bus stop, a supermarket and a centre. 2.30 is within walking distance of a bus stop and a centre.
Between Offerton and Bredbury	- Release or development north of Offerton that would significantly weaken the separation between the urban area of Bredbury/Bredbury Green and that at Offerton/Offerton Green would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A. - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Offerton/Offerton Green and Bredbury/Bredbury Green would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.13 Former Offerton High School - HOM 2.21 Offerton Sand & Gravel - HOM 2.34 Shakespeare Road	HOM 2.21 and HOM 2.34 are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. HOM 2.13 is previously-developed and is also a high priority for release. The topography of the river valley and the hard defensible boundary of River Goyt to the north of HOM 2.13 and HOM 2.21 prevent further encroachment. None of the sites are considered to close the strategic gap between Bredbury and Offerton and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest contribution being 'moderate' and HOM 2.13 in particularly scoring as 'weak'. HOM 2.13 is not restricted by environmental designations, within only 1% constrained and is within walking distance of a local centre and a leisure centre. HOM 2.21 is within walking distance of a bus stop, a supermarket and a centre. HOM 2.34 is within walking distance of a bus stop and a centre and is in the 2nd most deprived LSOA in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

Between Romiley and Marple	- Land south of Romiley and north of Marple that would significantly weaken the separation between the two distinct urban areas would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A. - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Romiley and Marple/Marple Bridge would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.10 Romiley Board Mill - HOM 2.17 Hyde Bank Meadows - HOM 2.32 Compstall Road South	HOM 2.17 and HOM 2.32 are identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and are therefore high priorities for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. The release at HOM 2.10 will assist in the recycling of previously-developed land at the adjacent mill site. Further encroachment to the south is prevented by existing development and the hard defensible boundary of the Peak Forest Canal. None of the sites are considered to close the strategic gap between Romiley and Marple and this is recognised by the assessment at HOM 2.32 and HOM 2.17 with the strongest contribution being 'moderate' and part of the latter scoring as 'weak'. Furthermore, the release at HOM 2.17 has a hard defensible boundary to the south at the Manchester to Sheffield rail line. HOM 2.10 is within walking distance of a rail station, bus stop and a district centre. HOM 2.17 is within walking distance of a centre and a bus stop and is relatively unconstrained by environmental designations at less than 2%. HOM 2.32 is within 400m of a bus stop.
West of Marple and Marple Bridge	Release or development of parts of the valley of the River Goyt, including Brabyns Park, that are important to the setting and special character of Marple/Marple Bridge would likely have a fundamental impact on Purpose D.	None	There are judged to be no proposed allocations that affect the setting and special character of Marple or Marple Bridge.
North of Marple and Marple Bridge	Release or development of higher ground to the north and east of the Borough, including Werneth Low and Ludworth Moor, that form a wider Pennine setting to Marple/Marple Bridge would likely have a fundamental impact on Purpose D.	HOM 2.12 Compstall Mills	The Green Belt Assessment identifies Compstall village as an 'area of no openness' due as it is an area of significant existing development within the Green Belt. As such the site sits within an area that is excluded from the assessment. It is judged that there would be no impacts from development that would cause harm to the setting of Marple or Marple Bridge. The site is previously-developed land and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. The site is within 400m of a bus stop.
Between Stockport (Portwood) and Bredbury (Lower Bredbury)	- Release or development east of Portwood and west of Lower Bredbury that would significantly weaken the separation between the two distinct urban areas would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A. - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Stockport (via Portwood) and Bredbury (via Lower Bredbury) would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	HOM 2.34 Shakespeare Road	The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. The site is within walking distance of a bus stop and a centre and is in the 2nd most deprived LSOA in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.
Between Bredbury and Stockport	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Bredbury (via Lower Bredbury and Brinnington) and Stockport (via Portwood) would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	None	N/A

Between Reddish, Brinnington and Portwood	Release or development east of Reddish and south of Brinnington that would significantly weaken the separation between the urban areas of Brinnington and Reddish and Portwood would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A.	HOM 2.23 Brindale Road	The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is considered that the site's release would not close the strategic gap between Brinnington and Portwood and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest rating of the parcel being 'weak'. The topography of the valley side and the hard defensible boundary of the M60 to the south and east prevent further encroachment. The site is in the most deprived IMD decile in the borough and is within walking distance of a bus stop and a centre.
Between Reddish and Bredbury	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Reddish and Bredbury (via Brinnington) would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	HOM 2.23 Brindale Road	The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is considered that the site's release would not close the strategic gap between Brinnington and Bredbury and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest rating of the parcel being 'weak'. The topography of the valley side and the hard defensible boundary of the M60 to the south and east prevent further encroachment. The site is in the most deprived IMD decile in the borough and is within walking distance of a bus stop and a centre.
Between Bredbury and Denton	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Bredbury (via Brinnington) and Denton would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	BUS 3.1 Bredbury Gateway	It is considered that the site is critical in meeting the borough's employment needs in quantitative terms and is in an optimal location to meet market requirements for logistics development. The topography of the river valley and the hard defensible boundary of River Tame to the north prevent further encroachment. Less than 1% of the site is restricted by environmental designations. The site is 1.2 km from the nearest motorway junction and is in the 2nd most deprived decile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation in the borough. The western part of the site is within 400m of a bus stop.

Between Bredbury/Woodley and Denton (Tameside)	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Bredbury and Woodley and Denton (via Haughton Green) would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	- HOM 2.24 Gravel Bank Road and Unity Mill - BUS 3.1 Bredbury Gateway	HOM 2.24 is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. It is considered that the site's release would not close the strategic gap between Bredbury/Woodley and Denton and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest rating of the parcel being 'moderate'. The site also has a hard defensible boundary to the north at the Peak Forest Canal. In terms of accessibility, the site is within 400m of a rail station and a bus stop, and within 800m of a centre. In respect of BUS 3.1, it is considered that the site is critical in meeting the borough's employment needs in quantitative terms and is in an optimal location to meet market requirements for logistics development. The topography of the river valley and the hard defensible boundary of River Tame to the north prevent further encroachment. Less than 1% of the site is restricted by environmental designations. The site is 1.2 km from the nearest motorway junction and is in the 2nd most deprived decile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation in the borough. The western part of the site is within 400m of a bus stop.
Between Woodley and Hyde (Tameside)	- Release or development north of Woodley that would significantly weaken the separation between the urban area of Gee Cross and that at Woodley would have a fundamental impact on Purpose A (part of the existing gap between the two urban areas lies within neighbouring Tameside). - Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Woodley and Hyde (via Gee Cross) would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	HOM 2.24 Gravel Bank Road and Unity Mill	It is considered that the site's release would not close the strategic gap between Woodley and Hyde and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest rating of the parcel being 'moderate'. The hard defensible boundaries of the Peak Forest Canal and the Manchester to Romiley rail line prevent further encroachment. The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. In terms of accessibility, the site is within 400m of a rail station and a bus stop, and within 800m of a centre.
Between Romiley and Woodley	Release or development that would result in the physical or perceived merging of Romiley and Woodley would have a fundamental impact on Purpose B.	HOM 2.29 High Lane Farm	It is considered that the site's release would not close the strategic gap between Woodley and Hyde and this is recognised by the assessment with the strongest rating of the parcel being 'moderate'. The site is identified as being suitable for definition as grey belt in the Green Belt Assessment and is therefore a high priority for release from the Green Belt under Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. The site is within 400m of a supermarket and within 800m of a centre.

Borough-wide			
Purpose C: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Release or development of the vast majority of the open Green Belt land within the Borough would most likely have a fundamental impact on Purpose C.	None	The release of land from the Green Belt for development for either housing or employment will inevitably have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The council has had regard to the individual and cumulative impacts of sites in determining whether they are suitable for development in the context of openness, regardless of whether the site has been identified as part of a parcel that could potentially be grey belt.