

# Hyndburn Local Plan 2040

## Exceptional circumstances for Green Belt Release Addendum

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## Introduction

Following the examination in public, the Inspector requested that Hyndburn Borough Council (HBC, *the Council*) review the areas which are proposed to be added to the Green Belt (as set out in Table 5 of the Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt Release [HBC8.004](#)) and also provide further information on compensatory measures for sites that have been proposed for removal from the Green Belt as part of the submitted plan.

HBC has previously submitted a Background Paper on the Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt Release ([HBC8.004](#)). This paper should be read in conjunction with the background paper and the submission version of the Hyndburn Local Plan 2040 ([HBC1.001](#)).

This document includes three sections:

- Assessment of proposed new green belt– This reassesses the sites proposed for reintroduction to the green belt against the tests set out in paragraph 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- Compensatory measures for Green Belt release – This section provides further information on the compensatory measures for proposed areas of Green Belt release as per the requirements of NPPF paragraph 142.
- Conclusions – This section will set out the conclusions of the above sections and propose main modifications to the Local Plan to ensure soundness.

HBC has submitted a further paper setting out a schedule of minor changes to the Green Belt and urban boundary. This paper should be read in conjunction with this document to reflect the conclusions of the assessment of the proposed new Green Belt sites.

Please note that these changes will be reviewed by the Inspector and it is up to their discretion whether they consider the modification necessary to the soundness of the Plan.

## Assessment of land proposed for addition to the Green Belt

The Council's background paper on the Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt release sets out three sites proposed for addition to the Green Belt in Table 5. These sites are:

- Land to N. of Blackburn Road, Oswaldtwistle (1.5ha)
- John Street and Tinker Brook allotments, Oswaldtwistle (6.1ha)
- Land to S. of Moorfield Industrial Estate, Clayton le Moors (2.9ha)

Of these sites both Land to N. of Blackburn Road and John Street and Tinker Brook Allotments are areas of former special restraint as previously allocated in the 1996 Hyndburn Local Plan. The historical context of these sites is set out in Paragraphs 4.14 to 4.17 ([HBC8.004](#)). The Land to S. of Moorfield Industrial Estate has been identified through the review of the boundaries of existing employment site allocations.

As set out in the NPPF new Green Belt should only be established in exceptional circumstances. In paragraph 139 the NPPF sets out five criteria that need to be met for proposed new Green Belt to be allocated. These are:

- demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
- set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
- show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
- demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with strategic policies for adjoining areas; and
- show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.

The Council acknowledges that based on the five criteria set out above the three proposed sites do not meet the requirements set out in paragraph 139.

The Council have previously argued in the exceptional circumstances paper for Green Belt release ([HBC8.004](#)) that the three proposed sites do not constitute "new green belts" and instead should be considered against NPPF paragraph 140 which requires any changes to be justified. This is set out in paragraph 6.32 of the background paper ([HBC8.004](#)).

Based on the information contained in this paper, the background paper ([HBC8.004](#)) and the NPPF, the Council considers that both Land N. of Blackburn Road and John Street and Tinker Brook allotments should not be included within the Green Belt and propose a main modification to the plan to remove the sites from the Green Belt and amend the urban boundary. This is incorporated into the addendum paper on amendments to the Green Belt boundary (EL4.AP10).

The Council considers that the proposed changes at Land at S. of Moorfield Industrial estate would provide a more defensible boundary following the existing farm track, which is bounded by a line of trees rather than the current boundary which is not following any tangible physical boundary (only a line of pylons). The Council, while accepting of the requirements in paragraph 139, believe that the proposed amendment to the boundary would support the requirements in paragraph 143 part f of the NPPF and therefore on balance would be acceptable. However, the Council accepts that this may not meet the requirements within the NPPF and therefore accept that a main modification may be required for the remove of the site from the Green Belt.

## Compensatory measures for Proposed Green Belt Release

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 142, states that “*where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for developments, plans...should set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land*”.

Paragraph 145 states “*once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use*”, including looking for opportunities to provide access, recreation, landscape enhancements or biodiversity.

Where it has been demonstrated that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, strategic policy-making authorities should set out policies for compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land. These may be informed by supporting evidence of landscape, biodiversity or recreational needs and opportunities including those set out in local strategies, and could for instance include:

- new or enhanced Green Infrastructure;
- woodland planting;
- landscape and visual enhancements;
- improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;
- new or enhanced walking and cycling routes;
- and improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision

The submission Local Plan ([HBC1.001](#)) includes wider policies that support compensatory measures identified above for proposed Green Belt site allocations through policies SP14 Green Infrastructure, SP15 Landscape Character, SP16 Natural Environment Enhancements and SP24 Cycle and Footpath Networks. The Council considers that Policy SP3 Planning Obligations provides for securing provisions for compensatory improvements either through planning conditions or S106 obligations.

The Council has set out in the background paper for exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release ([HBC8.004](#)) a detailed assessment of the proposed allocations in the Green Belt in table 10. This includes information on some potential mitigation measures for sites. The following sections of this report look at each of the individual sites proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and their compensatory measures set out within the policies for each site allocation.

### **H9 Ringstonhalgh Farm**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Part i of the policy requires that the design of the development integrates with the wider countryside.
- Part ii includes the prioritisation and enhancement of the public right of way (PRoW) that runs to the northern boundary of the site for pedestrian and cyclists, ensuring better accessibility to the wider Green Belt.
- Part iii includes planting of native hedgerows and trees facing the footpath securing improvements to biodiversity, green infrastructure and providing landscape and visual enhancements.

### **H12 Huncoat East Strategic Site North**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Section 3 part b of Policy SP2 requires development to provide multi-functional green infrastructure supporting the creation of new green infrastructure.
- Section 7 part c of Policy SP2 requires the development of the Huncoat Wheel cycleway which provides wider access to the remaining Green Belt.

- Section 8 part d of Policy SP2 requires the development of a comprehensive network of pedestrian routes, cycleways, green space and formal play areas as proposed by the HGV Masterplan. Supporting accessibility to the wider Green Belt.
- Section 9 part c of Policy SP2 requires the retention of important woodland, trees and hedgerows on site and their integration into the development.
- Section 9 part d of Policy SP2 requires development to develop a streetscape that extends the green infrastructure into the Garden Village with creative landscaping schemes, planting of trees and grass verges alongside roads, landscaping of public and private spaces in accordance with the requirements of the HGV Masterplan, supporting the creation further green infrastructure.

The Council also considers that compensatory measures are further set out in the Huncoat Garden Village Masterplan Framework ([HBC5.003a](#)). These are detailed in section 9.7.

### **H13 Huncoat East Strategic Site South**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Section 3 part b of Policy SP2 requires development to provide multi-functional green infrastructure supporting the creation of new green infrastructure.
- Section 7 part c of Policy SP2 requires the development of the Huncoat Wheel cycleway which provides wider access to the remaining Green Belt.
- Section 8 part d of Policy SP2 requires the development of a comprehensive network of pedestrian routes, cycleways, green space and formal play areas as proposed by the HGV Masterplan. Supporting accessibility to the wider Green Belt.
- Section 9 part c of Policy SP2 requires the retention of important woodland, trees and hedgerows on site and their integration into the development.
- Section 9 part d of Policy SP2 requires development to develop a streetscape that extends the green infrastructure into the Garden Village with creative landscaping schemes, planting of trees and grass verges alongside roads, landscaping of public and private spaces in accordance with the requirements of the HGV Masterplan, supporting the creation further green infrastructure.

The Council also considers that compensatory measures are further set out in the Huncoat Garden Village Masterplan Framework ([HBC5.003a](#)). These are detailed in section 9.7.

### **H14 Land to W. of A56 / N. of Burnley Road**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Section 3 part b of Policy SP2 requires development to provide multi-functional green infrastructure supporting the creation of new green infrastructure.
- Section 7 part c of Policy SP2 requires the development of the Huncoat Wheel cycleway which provides wider access to the remaining Green Belt.
- Section 8 part d of Policy SP2 requires the development of a comprehensive network of pedestrian routes, cycleways, green space and formal play areas as proposed by the HGV Masterplan. Supporting accessibility to the wider Green Belt.
- Section 9 part c of Policy SP2 requires the retention of important woodland, trees and hedgerows on site and their integration into the development.
- Section 9 part d of Policy SP2 requires development to develop a streetscape that extends the green infrastructure into the Garden Village with creative landscaping schemes, planting of trees and grass verges alongside roads, landscaping of public and private spaces in accordance with the requirements of the HGV Masterplan, supporting the creation further green infrastructure.

The Council also considers that compensatory measures are further set out in the Huncoat Garden Village Masterplan Framework ([HBC5.003a](#)). These are detailed in section 9.7.

## **H20 Land to NE of Cut Lane**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Part i of the policy requires that designs of any development should make provision for a transition to the Green Belt and acknowledge the wider landscape from the canal corridor. This provides for landscape and visual enhancements.
- Part iii of the policy requires the site to incorporate into the wider pedestrian and cycle links to the canal and wider footpath network including into the greenbelt. Part xiv also requires the enhancement of the ProW along Cut Lane for pedestrians and cyclists ensuring improved access to the remaining Green Belt.
- Parts V and VII includes planting of native hedgerows and trees securing improvements to biodiversity, green infrastructure and providing landscape and visual enhancements.

## **H22 Land off Fielding Street and Barn Meadow Crescent**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Part i and ix of the policy recommends a buffer zone along the southern and eastern sides of the site to protect and enhance wildlife corridors and woodland ensuring improvements to habitat connectivity between the site and the surrounding Green Belt.
- Part ii and vi requires planting native hedgerows and trees securing improvements to biodiversity, green infrastructure and providing landscape and visual enhancements.
- Part xiv requires a new pedestrian route to be created between the site and the canal towpath to provide improved access to the wider countryside.

## **GT4 Land off Enfield Road**

The Council does not have site-specific policies for the gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council considers that the provisions in the wider local plan policies in SP14, SP15, SP16 and SP24 provide an adequate policy provision to ensure suitable compensatory measures will be achieved on site.

## **GT5 Extension to Sough Lane**

The Council does not have site-specific policies for the gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council considers that the provisions in the wider local plan policies in SP14, SP15, SP16 and SP24 provide an adequate policy provision to ensure suitable compensatory measures will be achieved on site.

## **EMP3 Land to S. of Altham Business Park**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Parts v, vi, vii, viii and x provide requirements for design considerations for reducing the impact on landscape and visual amenity including buffer zones to development to the south of the site and consideration of building heights and materials to reduce visual impact.
- Parts vii, xi and xiii provide for retention, enhancement and new planting to enhance biodiversity, green infrastructure and mix of habitats.
- Parts xvii and xviii provides for the development of cycleway and footpath links from the canal towing path into the employment development ensuring access to the wider countryside and greenbelt as well as to the Huncoat Garden Village.

The Council further considers that the assessment of compensatory measures will be reflected in the master planning work for the site.

#### **EMP4 Land between Blackburn Road and M65 Slipway**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Part ii, vi and vii provides for existing hedgerows to be retained and reinforced and new tree planting supporting biodiversity and new woodland planting to support green infrastructure.
- Part viii requires new planting in and around the proposed industrial estate should be designed to enhance biodiversity and provide a mix of habitats., supporting biodiversity improvements.

The Council further considers that the assessment of compensatory measures with be reflected in the master planning work for the site.

#### **EMP5 Land between Blackburn Rd, Sidebeet Lane, Leeds & Liverpool Canal & railway**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Parts vi, vii, viii, ix, xii, xiv and xv provide requirements for design considerations for reducing the impact on landscape and visual amenity including appropriate scale landscaping, buffer planting to the eastern part of the site and consideration of building heights and materials to reduce visual impact.
- Part ix and xiii requires retention of existing hedgerows and waterside vegetation and tree planting to ensure biodiversity requirements.
- Part xvii requires the retention of plantation woodland and improved accessibility as a recreational space.
- Parts xviii and xix provides for new access points for pedestrian and cycling to the canal towpaths and Sidebeet Lane ensuring wider accessibility to the green belt.

The Council further considers that the assessment of compensatory measures with be reflected in the master planning work for the site.

#### **EMP6 Land N. of railway between Sidebeet Lane and Leeds & Liverpool Canal**

The Council considers that the following compensatory measures have been included within the policy to offset harm to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land:

- Parts vi, vii, viii and x provide requirements for design considerations for reducing the impact on landscape and visual amenity including appropriate scale landscaping, buffer planting to the eastern part of the site and consideration of building heights and materials to reduce visual impact.
- Parts xviii and xix provides for new access points for pedestrian and cycling to the canal towpaths ensuring wider accessibility to the green belt.

The Council further considers that the assessment of compensatory measures with be reflected in the master planning work for the site.

## Conclusions

From the evidence provided above the Council believes, subject to the proposed main modifications in relation to the sites proposed to be added to the Green Belt which are set out in document EL4.AP10, that the Local Plan Submission is sound in relation to the proposed changes to the Green Belt and that the proposed Green Belt releases can be adequately offset through compensatory measures as set out in paragraph 142 of the NPPF.