

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 (Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies) Examination

Examination Hearings

Matter 5 – Proposed Revision of Green Belt Boundaries (including CP13)

Wednesday 3rd February 2016

STATEMENT PREPARED BY:



Woolf Bond Planning
Chartered Town Planning Consultants

On behalf of:

TFP Developments

Representor No.: 877586

January 2016

Main Issue

Do the exceptional circumstances, as required by the NPPF (paragraphs 79-86), exist to justify the plan's proposed revision of the boundaries of the Green Belt, having particular regard to:

(c) The land to be removed from the Green Belt but not allocated for any particular use?

1. In order to avoid repetition we do not repeat the comments made in our representation made on behalf of Mr Douglas Bond (Representor No. 874670). However we support the principle that there is a fundamental need for sites to be released from the Green Belt in the areas closest to Oxford so to meet pressing needs both in the Vale itself and the wider needs of Oxford City (consistent with Policies CP8 and CP2 respectively). The exceptional circumstances to justify the revision of the Green Belt boundaries therefore do exist.
2. As discussed in detail in our Matter 8 Statement, our client controls a sustainably located site to the west of Lashford Lane, Wootton. Release of this site from the Green Belt would be consistent with NPPF paragraphs 80 and 85.
3. Paragraph 5 of the Council's 'Comments on the Green Belt Review' document acknowledges the larger villages in the Green Belt (including Wootton) are some of the most sustainable locations in the Vale (as defined in the Town & Villages Study). This acknowledged sustainability and their proximity to Oxford make these villages logical locations to meet wider needs arising from Oxford City in due course alongside the Vale's own needs.
4. With such wider housing growth pressures in mind, NPPF paragraph 83 is clear that when Green Belt boundaries are reviewed, this should be conducted such that the revised boundaries have permanence in the long term and will endure beyond the plan period. It is at this Part 1 stage, that the full Green Belt Review is being undertaken and this review must endure beyond the plan period (i.e. beyond 2031). It is for these reasons that it is essential that no logical Green Belt releases are missed at this stage. Of course, the more land that is removed from the Green Belt, the more flexible the Plan will be to respond to the needs of Oxford City in due course in an appropriate and sustainable manner.

5. One such additional site is our client's land to the west of Lashford Lane, Wootton that offers a logical site release from the Green Belt with a view to future housing development. Further details of its credentials are provided in our response to Matter 8. The addition of our client's site as a Green Belt release would assist in meeting the 'consistent with national policy' and 'justified' tests of soundness.
