

YORK

CITY OF YORK

LOCAL PLAN

Topic Paper TP1

Approach to defining York's Green Belt

ADDENDUM

March 2019

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES..... | III |
| SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS DOCUMENT..... | 2 |
| SECTION 2: SCOPE OF THIS ADDENDUM..... | 3 |
| SECTION 3: POLICY CONTEXT | 6 |
| NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY | 6 |
| SAVED POLICIES OF THE YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY | 8 |
| SUMMARY | 10 |
| SECTION 4: YORK LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC APPROACH TO THE GREEN BELT | 11 |
| PURPOSE 4: TO PRESERVE THE SETTING AND SPECIAL CHARACTER OF HISTORIC TOWNS..... | 12 |
| PURPOSE 1: TO CHECK THE UNRESTRICTED SPRAWL OF LARGE BUILT-UP AREAS | 14 |
| PURPOSE 2: TO PREVENT NEIGHBOURING TOWNS MERGING INTO ONE ANOTHER | 15 |
| PURPOSE 3: TO ASSIST IN SAFEGUARDING THE COUNTRYSIDE FROM ENCROACHMENT | 17 |
| PURPOSE 5: TO ASSIST IN URBAN REGENERATION BY ENCOURAGING THE RECYCLING OF DERELICT AND OTHER URBAN LAND..... | 20 |
| OVERALL STRATEGIC AREAS TO KEEP PERMANENTLY OPEN | 20 |
| SUMMARY | 21 |
| SECTION 5: METHODOLOGY FOR DEFINING GREEN BELT BOUNDARIES..... | 22 |
| 5A. SETTING THE SCOPE..... | 22 |
| <i>Outer Boundary Scope</i> | 23 |
| <i>Inner Boundary Scope</i> | 27 |
| 5B. SUBDIVISION OF AREAS..... | 28 |
| <i>Outer Boundary Subdivision</i> | 29 |
| <i>Inner Boundary Subdivision</i> | 30 |
| SUMMARY | 30 |
| 5C. DEVELOPING CRITERIA FOR BOUNDARY DE-LINEATION | 31 |
| <i>Openness</i> | 33 |
| <i>Permanence</i> | 40 |
| SUMMARY | 42 |
| SECTION 6: URBAN AREAS IN THE GENERAL EXTENT OF THE GREEN BELTS | 43 |
| IDENTIFYING URBAN AREAS FOR ASSESSMENT IN THE GENERAL EXTENT OF THE YORK GREEN BELT..... | 43 |
| ASSESSING OPEN CHARACTER AND THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE OPENNESS OF THE GREEN BELT | 46 |
| DEFINING GREEN BELT BOUNDARIES AROUND URBAN AREAS..... | 48 |
| SUMMARY | 49 |
| SECTION 7: EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES | 50 |
| 7A. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT | 50 |
| 7B. ESTABLISHING THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT | 51 |
| <i>Establishing Housing Needs</i> | 52 |
| <i>Establishing a housing requirement</i> | 53 |
| <i>Establishing needs for ‘culturally suitable’ accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people</i> | 55 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| | <i>Employment Needs</i> | 58 |
| | <i>Educational Needs</i> | 59 |
| 7C. | ASSESSMENT OF OTHER REASONABLE OPTIONS FOR MEETING THE ESTABLISHED NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT | 61 |
| | <i>Consideration of spatial principles</i> | 61 |
| | <i>Spatial Distribution</i> | 62 |
| | <i>Making as much use as possible of suitable Brownfield sites and underutilised land</i> | 64 |
| | <i>Identification of sites</i> | 64 |
| | <i>Assessment of Windfalls</i> | 65 |
| 7D. | IDENTIFYING THE SHORTFALL..... | 66 |
| | <i>Housing shortfall</i> | 67 |
| | <i>Employment shortfall</i> | 68 |
| 7E. | ANALYSIS OF OTHER OPTIONS TO MEET IDENTIFIED SHORTFALL WITHOUT USING GREEN BELT LAND..... | 69 |
| | <i>Optimising the density of development - Housing Density</i> | 69 |
| | <i>Optimising the density of development - Employment Density</i> | 70 |
| | <i>Discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development</i> | 70 |
| | <i>Offsetting through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining green belt land</i> | 72 |
| 7F. | JUSTIFYING EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE EFFECT OF THE CHANGE IN THE OAN | 73 |
| | <i>Exceptional circumstances: Housing</i> | 73 |
| | <i>Exceptional circumstances: Employment</i> | 75 |
| 7.G | CONCLUSIONS..... | 76 |
| | SUMMARY | 78 |
| SECTION 8: DEVELOPMENT SITES IN THE GREEN BELT | | 79 |
| | HOUSING..... | 82 |
| | EMPLOYMENT LAND..... | 82 |
| | GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE | 82 |
| | EDUCATION..... | 82 |
| | SUMMARY | 83 |
| SECTION 9: CONCLUSIONS | | 84 |

Annexes

ANNEX 1: GIS MAP EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT SECTIONS 4 AND 5

ANNEX 2: YORK GREEN BELT OUTER BOUNDARY SECTION DESCRIPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

ANNEX 3: YORK GREEN BELT INNER BOUNDARY SECTION DESCRIPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

ANNEX 4: URBAN AREAS IN THE GENERAL EXTENT OF THE GREEN BELT DESCRIPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

ANNEX 5: SITES PROPOSED IN THE GENERAL EXTENT OF THE YORK GREEN BELT

ANNEX 6: MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED TO THE 2018 POLICIES MAP

List of Figures and Tables

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Figure 1: ‘Saved’ RSS policy</i> | <i>8</i> |
| <i>Figure 2: ‘Saved’ RSS Key Diagram</i> | <i>8</i> |
| <i>Figure 3: Areas important to York’s special character and setting.....</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>Figure 4: Access to services.....</i> | <i>15</i> |
| <i>Figure 5: Areas of the city essential for preventing coalescence</i> | <i>16</i> |
| <i>Figure 6: York’s Green Infrastructure, Nature Conservation, Green Corridors and Open Space .</i> | <i>19</i> |
| <i>Figure 7: Strategic areas to keep permanently open.....</i> | <i>21</i> |
| <i>Figure 8: York Green Belt within Hambleton District Council Area.....</i> | <i>23</i> |
| <i>Figure 9: York Green Belt within Harrogate Borough Council Area.....</i> | <i>24</i> |
| <i>Figure 10: York Green Belt within Ryedale District Area</i> | <i>25</i> |
| <i>Figure 11: York Green Belt within Selby District Area.....</i> | <i>26</i> |
| <i>Figure 12: The Scope of the Outer Limits of the Green Belt in York.....</i> | <i>27</i> |
| <i>Figure 13: The Scope of the Main Urban Area Limits of the Green Belt in York</i> | <i>28</i> |
| <i>Figure 14: Outer boundary limits requiring definition</i> | <i>29</i> |
| <i>Figure 15: Main Urban Area Inner boundary limits requiring definition</i> | <i>30</i> |
| <i>Figure 16: Identifying density of Built Structures.....</i> | <i>44</i> |
| <i>Figure 17: Urban areas identified for investigation within the General Extent of the Greenbelt</i> | <i>45</i> |
| <i>Figure 18: Proposed Boundares of Urban Areas Inset within the Greenbelt.....</i> | <i>48</i> |
| <i>Table 1: Identified sites within urban areas outside of the green belt</i> | <i>66</i> |
| <i>Table 2: Sites identified in the general extent of York’s Greenbelt.....</i> | <i>81</i> |

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 City of York Local Plan Topic Paper Approach to Defining York's Green Belt (2018) (TP1) sets out the approach to defining York's Green Belt for the first time, explaining the planning context, evidence base, guiding policy principles and general extent of York's Green Belt.
- 1.2 This Addendum to TP1 provides further detailed information about the York Green Belt and the Local Plan; specifically, the methodology and evidence for the setting of inner and outer Green Belt boundaries; the exceptional circumstances test for the removal of land from the Green Belt; the approach to Urban Areas within the Green Belt; and the allocation of strategic sites within the general extent of the Green Belt.
- 1.3 The diagram overleaf explains how to use this document and its annexes as well as the process undertaken.
- 1.4 Essentially the document is structured in line with the process undertaken which was to:
 - establish the current status of the York Green Belt and its general extent;
 - then establish the Local Plan's strategic approach to Green Belt;
 - use the strategic approach to set the scope for which boundaries need formal definition and a methodology for how to do this;
 - once the preferred boundaries of the York Green Belt were identified to establish if the objectively assessed needs for growth could be accommodated in land that was not identified as Green Belt;
 - identify whether exceptional circumstances exist;
 - evaluate the preferred sites within the Green Belt to accommodate any additional need; and
 - produce a policies map with a permanent Green Belt boundary capable of accommodating growth and enduring for a minimum of 20 years.

How to navigate this document

| Content | Report Section | Applicable Annex |
|---|---|--|
| The current status of York’s Green Belt | Section 3: Policy Context | |
| The Local Plan’s Strategic Approach to York’s Green Belt | Section 4: York Local Plan Strategic Approach to the Green Belt | Annex 1: GIS map evidence to support Sections 4 and 5 |
| Defining York’s Green Belt: Inner, Outer and Inset boundaries | Outer Boundary | Section 4: York Local Plan Strategic Approach to the Green Belt Section 5: Methodology for Defining Green Belt Boundaries |
| | Inner Boundary | Section 4: York Local Plan Strategic Approach to the Green Belt Section 5: Methodology for Defining Green Belt Boundaries |
| | Urban Areas in the General Extent of the Green Belt | Section 6: Urban Areas in the General Extent of the Green Belt |
| Demonstrating the Case for Exceptional Circumstances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they exist? • What are they? | Section 7: Exceptional Circumstances | |
| Applying Exceptional Circumstances | Section 8: Development Sites in the Green Belt | Annex 5: Sites Proposed in the General Extent of the York Green Belt |
| Conclusion | Section 9: Conclusions | Annex 6: Modifications as a result of 2018 mapping and data check |

Section 2: Scope of this Addendum

- 2.1 National, saved policies of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and local planning policies provide key parameters and principles for the York Local Plan approach to Green Belt. National policy advice, set out at paragraphs 82 to 85 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012¹), draws an important distinction between:
- establishing new Green Belt;
 - defining of boundaries to a Green Belt, where the general extent of the Green Belt has been established; and
 - the review and alteration of an existing Green Belt boundary to remove land from the Green Belt.
- 2.2 **The Local Plan is not proposing to establish any new Green Belt.**
- 2.3 Saved RSS policies YH9(C) and Y1 (C1 and C2) and the key diagram (insofar as it illustrates general extent of the Green Belt) establish the general extent of the Green Belt around York. This exercise has therefore already been completed; there is an existing Green Belt. The York Local Plan is tasked with formally defining the detailed inner and (outstanding sections of the) outer boundary of the York Green Belt for the first time.
- 2.4 **This addendum explains how and where detailed inner and outer Green Belt Boundaries have been defined through the Local Plan.**
- 2.5 In order to meet the requirement of RSS policies, and define for the first time the detailed inner (including all urban areas) and (outstanding sections of the) outer boundaries of the York Green Belt, it was important to set out the strategic approach the Local Plan has taken and how this relates to the NPPF 5 purposes as well as other policy considerations and set criteria to inform a methodology.
- 2.6 The strategic approach to the Green Belt with the York Authority Area was set out at a high level through TP1 (2018). Although it is not the purpose of the Local Plan to review the principle of the general extent of the York Green Belt, this approach involved assessing considerations which enabled some assessment of where any need to remove specific land from within the general extent of the Green Belt might be met in accordance with the plan strategy as well as informing the detailed definition of the inner and outer boundaries.
- 2.7 Section 4 explains how the strategic approach relates to the 5 purposes of Green Belt as set out by NPPF, and thereby feeds into the analysis of boundaries. This assessment was undertaken as part of the wider definition of those boundaries which is further expanded in Section 4 and 5 of this addendum

¹ In line with Paragraph 214 of Annex 1 of 2019 NPPF there are transitional arrangements in place which mean any plan submitted before 24 January 2019 (such as the City of York Local Plan) will be assessed against the 2012 NPPF.

- 2.8 The scope for which boundaries to the York Green Belt still require de-lineation is set out in Section 5 (and Section 6 in the case of other urban areas within the general extent of the Green Belt and the City of York authority area). The outer extent of the York Green Belt does extend beyond the outer boundary of the City of York administrative area in a number of locations. The authorities where this occurs are Hambleton District Council, Harrogate Borough Council, Ryedale District Council and Selby District Council but there are still some sections which remain undefined.
- 2.9 Criteria to inform the de-lineation of the detailed boundaries are set out in Section 5 and have been identified on the basis of considerations of national guidance, the strategic approach undertaken in the local plan core strategy and an appraisal of the essential characteristics of openness and permanence in York.
- 2.10 The detailed boundaries have then been assessed in the context of the existing built and rural environment and landscape - without taking account of the potential need for growth or expansion of the built-up area. Annexes 2, 3 and 4 therefore, present the potential boundary to the Green Belt should there be no unmet identified need or exceptional circumstances identified.
- 2.11 **This addendum explains the approach to urban areas in the Green Belt**
- 2.12 Consideration to additional urban areas (outside of the main built up area of York and within the general extent of the Green Belt) has been undertaken to determine if detailed Green Belt boundaries also need to be established in these areas in accordance with NPPF (2012) and in particular Paragraph 86. The approach to this is set out in Section 6 and the analysis is presented in Annex 4. The analysis has sought to determine:
- The location of urban areas.
 - If those areas need to be kept permanently open as part of the Green Belt or inset within it.
 - The proposed boundaries of those areas.
- 2.13 **This addendum also explains why exceptional circumstances exist to justify alterations to the general extent of the Green Belt, in order to bring forward strategic sites to meet development needs.**
- 2.14 The NPPF (2012) does not contain specific advice on circumstances where the need to provide for new development to meet the plan strategy may justify incursions into the general extent of the Green Belt alongside the process of defining the inner and outer boundaries. However, the council has assumed for the purposes of preparing the draft plan, that exceptional circumstances would have to be shown, as they would be if a defined boundary were to be reviewed and altered (under paragraph 83).

- 2.15 Section 7 of this Addendum examines how the Council has considered York's development needs and fully examined all reasonable options for meeting development needs, taking in to account the use of Brownfield and underutilised land, the application of different densities and discussions with neighbouring authorities. This section explores the Council's approach and concludes that it would not be possible to meet the housing needs, employment land requirements, gypsy and traveller and travelling show people housing needs and educational needs in York across the Plan period without releasing land from the Green Belt.
- 2.16 The removal of land from the Green Belt in the above circumstances is not specifically addressed in the NPPF (2012). However given the intended effect of the allocations and the underlying policy context, it is considered that in making such a decision it would be prudent to ensure that the exceptional circumstances test is met.
- 2.17 **This addendum sets out how strategic sites in the general extent of Green Belt have been selected and boundaries established**
- 2.18 Given that there are exceptional circumstances which justify alterations to be made to the extent of York's Green Belt - the Local Plan includes allocations of land for development within the Green Belt. These allocations for strategic sites remove land from the general extent of the Green Belt. A detailed assessment of the proposed boundary of each strategic site has been undertaken in line with the methodology and approach set out in Section 6 of this Addendum. Annex 5 analyses each proposed allocated site against the five purposes of Green Belt and the approach to establishing a defensible boundary and delivering a permanent Green Belt.

Section 3: Policy Context

National Planning Policy

- 3.1 TP1 (2018) (Section 2) explains that at the national level, the NPPF (2012), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and ministerial statements provide the policy and guidance context for the role and function of the Green Belt. Under 'transitional arrangements' for Local Plan preparation, it is the former March 2012 NPPF which applies (as opposed to the more recent 2019 NPPF).
- 3.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which has inter-related economic, social and environmental dimensions (NPPF (2012) paragraph 7). Core planning principles underpinning both the plan-making and decision-taking roles of the planning system (paragraph 17) include "*promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them*". The NPPF (2012) establishes the following key principles which guide the approach and content of this TP1 Addendum:
- The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open (paragraph 79).
 - The essential characteristics of a Green Belt are openness and permanence (paragraph 79).
 - There are five purposes that green belt serves (paragraph 80), to:
 - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
 - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
 - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
 - Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
 - assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
 - The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established (paragraph 82).
 - Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan (paragraph 83).
 - In drawing up and defining Green Belt boundaries authorities should:
 - take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development and consider the consequences 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 (paragraph 84);
 - ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development (Paragraph 85);

- not include land which is necessary to keep permanently open (Paragraphs 79 and 85);
- be satisfied that Green Belt boundaries should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period (paragraphs 83 and 85); and
- define boundaries clearly; using features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent (paragraph 85).
- If the open character of a village makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt it should be included in the Green Belt (paragraph 86).
- If a village needs to be protected for other reasons to the above point it should be excluded from the Green Belt (paragraph 86).

3.3 While acknowledging that the Plan has been written to comply with NPPF (2012), the following aspects of the 2019 NPPF are noted:

- Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries; where a need has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans (paragraph 136).
- The strategic policy making authority should be able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, having examined and demonstrated all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need, including whether the strategy:
 - makes as much use as possible of suitable Brownfield sites/underutilised land;
 - optimises development density; and
 - is informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development (paragraph 137).
- Building on the need to promote sustainable development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and/or well served by public transport before releasing Green Belt land for development, and set out means of providing compensatory improvements to environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt to offset loss (paragraph 138).

3.4 National policy for travellers is contained separately in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) (PPTS). At paragraph 15, the PPTS states that if a Local Planning Authority wishes to amend the Green Belt boundary in order to accommodate a traveller site to meet a specific and identified need, it should do so only through the plan-making process, not in response to a planning application. When doing so, the land should be specifically allocated as a traveller site.

Saved Policies of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy

3.5 The general extent of the York Green Belt is already established by way of the saved policies of the Yorkshire and Humber RSS. The Regional Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber (Partial Revocation) Order 2013 came into force on 22 February 2013 (Town and Country Planning, England, Statutory Instrument, 2013 No. 117). This Order partially revoked the Regional Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber (which comprised The Yorkshire and Humber Plan Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2026 and the Regional Economic Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber 2006-2015) but retained the policies in relation to the York Green Belt and Key Diagram.

Figure 1: ‘Saved’ RSS policy

SCHEDULE Article 2

RSS York Green Belt policies

POLICY YH9: Green belts

C The detailed inner boundaries of the Green Belt around York should be defined in order to establish long term development limits that safeguard the special character and setting of the historic city.

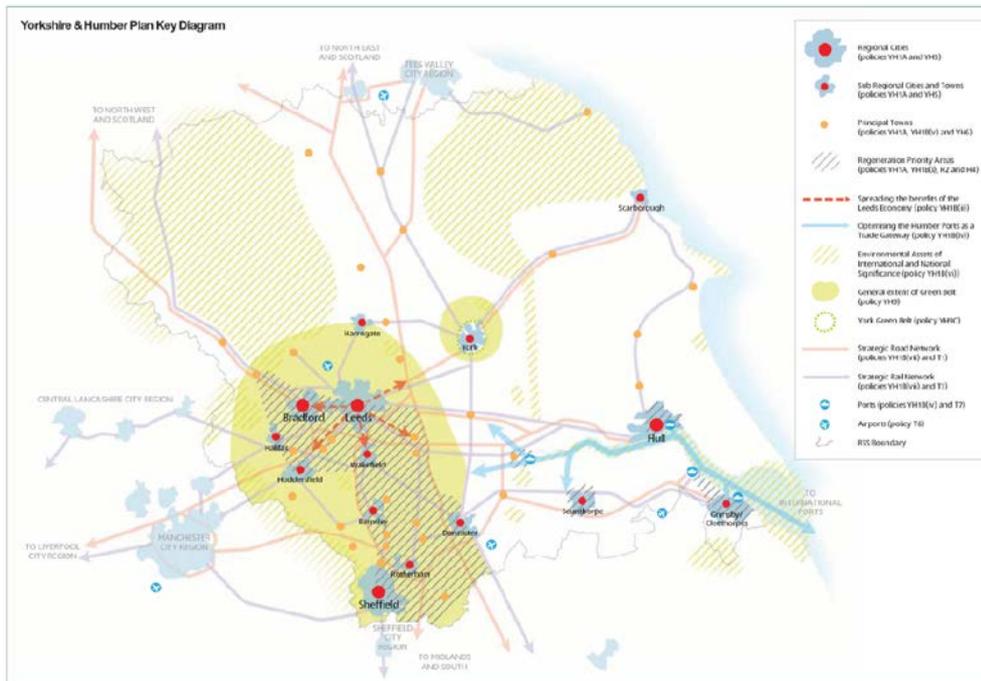
POLICY Y1: York sub area policy

Plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes for the York sub area should:

C Environment

1. In the City of York LDF, define the detailed boundaries of the outstanding sections of the outer boundary of the York Green Belt about 6 miles from York city centre and the inner boundary in line with policy YH9C.
2. Protect and enhance the nationally significant historical and environmental character of York, including its historic setting, views of the Minster and important open areas.

Figure 2: ‘Saved’ RSS Key Diagram



- 3.6 As set out in Figure 1 above, there are two RSS Green Belt policies 'YH9: Green Belts' and 'Y1: York Sub Area Policy'. RSS Policy YH9 sets out that the primary purpose of the Green Belt around York is to *"safeguard the special character and setting of the historic city."* RSS Policy Y1 requires York's next development plan document to define the detailed boundaries of the York Green Belt (both the inner and outstanding outer boundaries) and refers to the outer boundary being around 6 miles from the city centre.
- 3.7 The City of York Local Plan sets out a spatial strategy for York. The strategy for sustainable growth (Policy SS1: Delivering Sustainable Growth for York) is framed around meeting York's development needs and five spatial principles to guide the location of development. The strategy does not set out a settlement hierarchy, reflecting NPPF's 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. This tasks Local Authorities with positively seeking opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, meeting objectively assessed needs unless adverse impacts or specific NPPF policies advocate otherwise.
- 3.8 TP1 (2018) (Section 4) describes how the Local Plan spatial strategy aims to deliver the Plan's vision, setting out key 'drivers' and 'shapers' which establish levels of growth and other factors to guide development to the most suitable and sustainable locations through Policy SS1.
- 3.9 The key 'drivers' for growth reflect the need to provide land for housing and jobs to ensure sustainable economic growth, improve prosperity and build strong, sustainable communities which address the needs of York's current and future population. The evidence for the quantum of required land for employment was taken from technical work carried out by Oxford Economic Forecasting in the ELR (2016) [SD063] and ELR Update (2017) [SD064] incorporating sensitivity testing using the Regional Econometric Model (REM). The ELR update concluded that overall there was a need for York to accommodate 231,239 sqm (38.1 ha) of employment land to meet the requirements for business use classes. The technical work for housing needs was carried out by consultants GL Hearn and presented in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016) [SD051 and SD052], the SHMA Update (2017) [SD050] and the Housing Needs Update (2019) [EX/CYC/9]. The Local Plan submitted for Examination on 25th May 2018 incorporated a housing target of 867 dwellings per annum (dpa) in accordance with the Council's Executive decision following their consideration of the SHMA Update (2017). Since the submission of the Local Plan, there has been an update to the base data used to determine the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN). The latest Housing Need Assessment (2019) uses the same methodological approach but considers the updated population projections² and housing market information to conclude that the Council's OAN is 790dpa. This paper uses the latest evidence position for employment (38.1 ha) and housing (790 dpa) as a basis for considering the city's land requirements.
- 3.10 Key 'shapers' which have informed the Plan's spatial approach and process of site selection include, in summary:

² 2016 based Population Projections (May 2018) Office for National Statistics

- Conserving and enhancing York's historic and natural environment. This includes the city's character and setting and internationally, nationally and locally significant nature conservation sites, green corridors and areas with an important recreation function.
 - Ensuring accessibility to sustainable modes of transport and a range of services.
 - Preventing unacceptable levels of congestion, pollution and/or air quality.
 - Ensuring flood risk is appropriately managed.
 - Where viable and deliverable, the re-use of previously developed land will be phased first.
- 3.11 The key 'drivers' are a key Green Belt consideration given the importance of permanence for a Green Belt. The Local Plan site selection process applied the key shapers of the spatial strategy to determine if suitable land could be found to accommodate York's development needs. All available land (within and outwith the Green Belt) was appraised to determine the scope of sites consistent with the Plan's stated spatial principles. A two-stage suitability assessment determined firstly the reasonable alternatives to be considered and secondly the sites which have the most potential for development. Further testing also took place through the Sustainability Appraisal (2018) [CD008 and CD009].
- 3.12 Policy SS2 of the City of York Local Plan in the spatial strategy sets out the 'Role of the York Green Belt'. The primary purpose of the Green Belt is included in the policy "*to safeguard the setting and the special character of York and delivering the Local Plan Spatial Strategy*".

Summary

National policy states that the general extent of York's Green Belt is already established. 'Saved' Regional policy (Yorkshire and Humber RSS) tasks the emerging Plan with the role of defining the detailed inner and outer boundaries of York's Green Belt and describes its primary purpose as to 'safeguard the special character and setting of the historic city'. Emerging Local policy describes a series of 'drivers' and 'shapers' to guide sustainable development in York. The paper must ensure that it describes the local interpretation of factors defining a detailed boundary capable of accommodating sustainable growth and enduring for at least 20 years.

Section 4: York Local Plan Strategic Approach to the Green Belt

- 4.1 This section sets out how the Local Plan has defined land which needs to be kept permanently open in terms of the 5 purposes of Green Belt. TP1 provides a high-level explanation of the broad approach to defining York's Green Belt. This section adds further detail to TP1, in particular how the approach and evidence base relates to the five NPPF (2012) purposes of Green Belt (see paragraph 3.2 above).
- 4.2 Although it is not the purpose of the Local Plan to review the principle of the general extent of the York Green Belt, the approach taken in TP1 and this section involves assessing strategic considerations of evidence bases which were not only relevant to the detailed definition of the inner and outer boundaries but also enabled some assessment of where any need to remove specific land from within the general extent of the Green Belt might be met in accordance with the plan strategy.
- 4.3 Saved regional and local policies establish the primary purpose of York's Green Belt as preserving the setting and special character of the historic City of York.
- 4.4 The York Local Plan Preferred Options (2013) [SD005] considered two options in relation to the purpose and function of the York Green Belt:
- Option1 – Preserving the setting and special character of York should form the primary purpose of York's Green Belt.
 - Option 2 - equal weight should be given to all five NPPF Green Belt purposes.
- 4.5 The preferred approach (Option 1) was assessed by the Sustainability Appraisal (2013) [SD007] (SA) as performing better than the reasonable alternative (Option 2). The York Local Plan and its spatial strategy and policies have since progressed on this basis.
- 4.6 While prioritising the setting and special character of York, the Preferred Options Plan and SA did not conclude that no weight be given to the other purposes of Green Belt which land around York might serve. Therefore, in defining the boundaries of the York Green Belt, consideration has been given to these purposes as part of the process; this is important not only in terms of defining the most suitable boundary but also in relation to decisions around the level and type of harm which may be caused from the potential release of land to accommodate development needs and in terms of development management decision making. For example, a development of wind turbines may be judged to be less harmful in an area of Green Belt whose purpose relates to assisting in urban regeneration rather than setting and special character, given that it is unlikely that alternative urban land would exist to accommodate this type of development.

- 4.7 The view has also been taken that, while all land within the Green Belt falls under the provisions of NPPF (2012), land which serves more than one Green Belt purpose can be held to carry additional weight and, when determining defensible boundaries, offer additional strength.
- 4.8 Given the importance of preserving the setting and special character of York, it is addressed first, followed by a review of the other four NPPF purposes, which are relevant, albeit not considered to be of the same importance as the primary purpose.
- 4.9 With the Exception of purpose 5, a series of maps (Figures 3-6) demonstrate the parcels of land associated with each purpose, building up to an overall composite map (Figure 7).

Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 4.10 As explained above it has been established that the need to preserve the setting and special character of the historic city of York forms the primary purpose of the York Green Belt.
- 4.11 The NPPF (2012) and NPPG provide advice on how heritage assets and the historic environment should be conserved regarding significance, character and setting. All heritage assets have a setting³, and elements of this, such as environmental factors and land uses in the vicinity, influence our understanding of the historic relationship between places⁴.
- 4.12 Historic England advice tells us that specialist character of a place may include *“its relationships with people, materials and spaces associated with its history, including its original configuration and subsequent losses and changes.”* It also indicates that extensive heritage assets, such as landscapes and townscapes (as in the case of York), can include nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own and this is explicitly recognised in Green Belt designations⁵
- 4.13 Previous strategic plans⁶ have established the general extent of the York green belt for the purpose of preserving the setting and special character of the city, as being approximately 6 miles from the city centre incorporating the city's historic core, its extended suburbs, the pattern of villages and their agricultural hinterland around it as well as the countryside setting in which it sits.
- 4.14 The Approach to the Green Belt Appraisal (2003) and its subsequent historic character and setting updates (2011 and 2013) ('Green Belt Appraisal') identify

³ NPPF Glossary (2012)

⁴ NPPG (2014) Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20140306

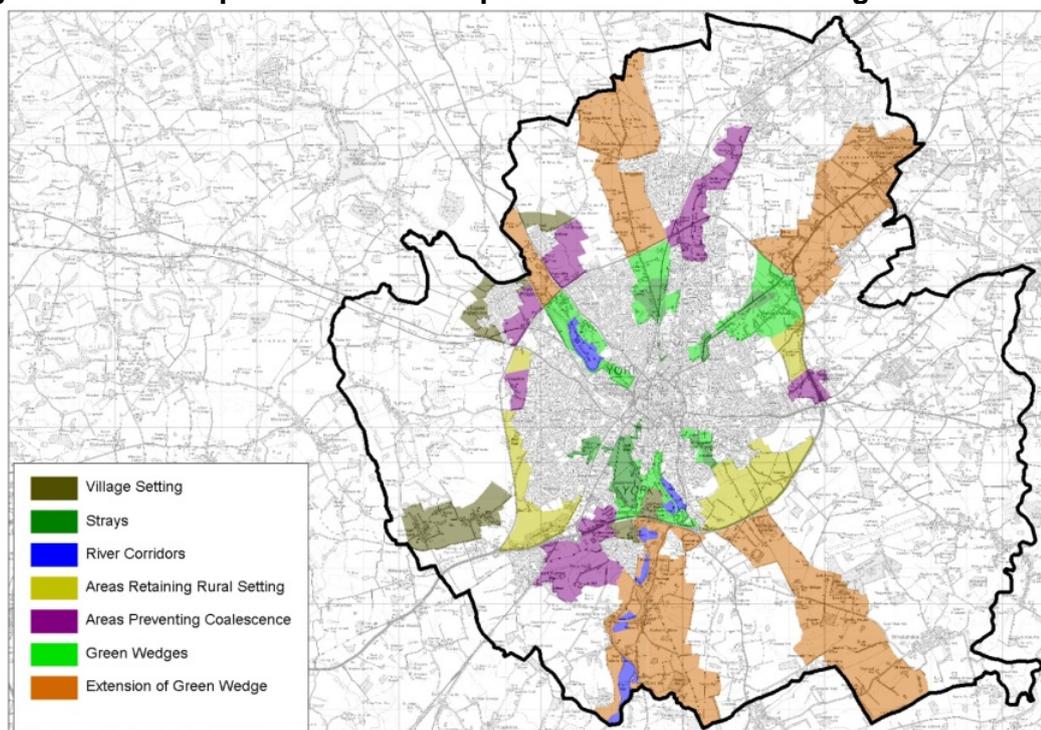
⁵ Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 – Historic England (2015)

⁶ North Yorkshire County Council Structure Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy – Yorkshire and the Humber

and summarise key components which are important to York's setting and special character, and these underpin the approach of the City of York Local Plan.

- 4.15 TP1 (2018) explains that the areas of land established within the Green Belt Appraisal are those which are of primary importance to the setting and special character of the city and therefore need to be kept permanently open within the general extent of the Green Belt.
- 4.16 As shown at Figure 3 below the Green Belt Appraisal identifies land under the following categories – village setting, “strays”, river corridors, areas retaining rural setting, areas preventing coalescence, green wedges and extension of green wedges. By keeping this land permanently open, development is channelled towards less sensitive locations and minimising harm to the setting and special character of York.

Figure 3: Areas important to York's special character and setting



- 4.17 The Green Belt Appraisal does not identify everything which is special about York. Areas not identified on the appraisal map may still be important to the historic character and setting but the map only identifies the most important areas.
- 4.18 In areas not identified on the appraisal map, potential harm should still be investigated when assessing sites or potential development. It should also be noted that areas identified by the appraisal may also serve more than one historic character function and more than one Green Belt purpose.
- 4.19 The Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103] was prepared in response to issues identified by Historic England in response to the York Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal. The document now forms part of the Local Plan

evidence base and identifies six principle characteristics which describe the factors that set York apart from other similar cities in England - *strong urban form, compactness, landmark monuments, architectural character, archaeological complexity and landscape and setting*. This work reinforces the Green Belt Appraisal and its key components.

- 4.20 The Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103] does not identify parcels of land to keep permanently open but has been used to inform Heritage Impact Appraisals (HIA) [SD101 and SD102, 2017] for Local Plan policies and proposed sites for development within the authority. As set out later in this report (Section 8), the application of HIAs, in combination with Sustainability Appraisal, has also ensured that the sites selected for allocation are those which cause the least harm to the special character and setting of York.
- 4.21 This approach is supported by Historic England and contributes towards a positive strategy for the city (including the Green Belt), which seeks to have any new development make a positive contribution to heritage assets.

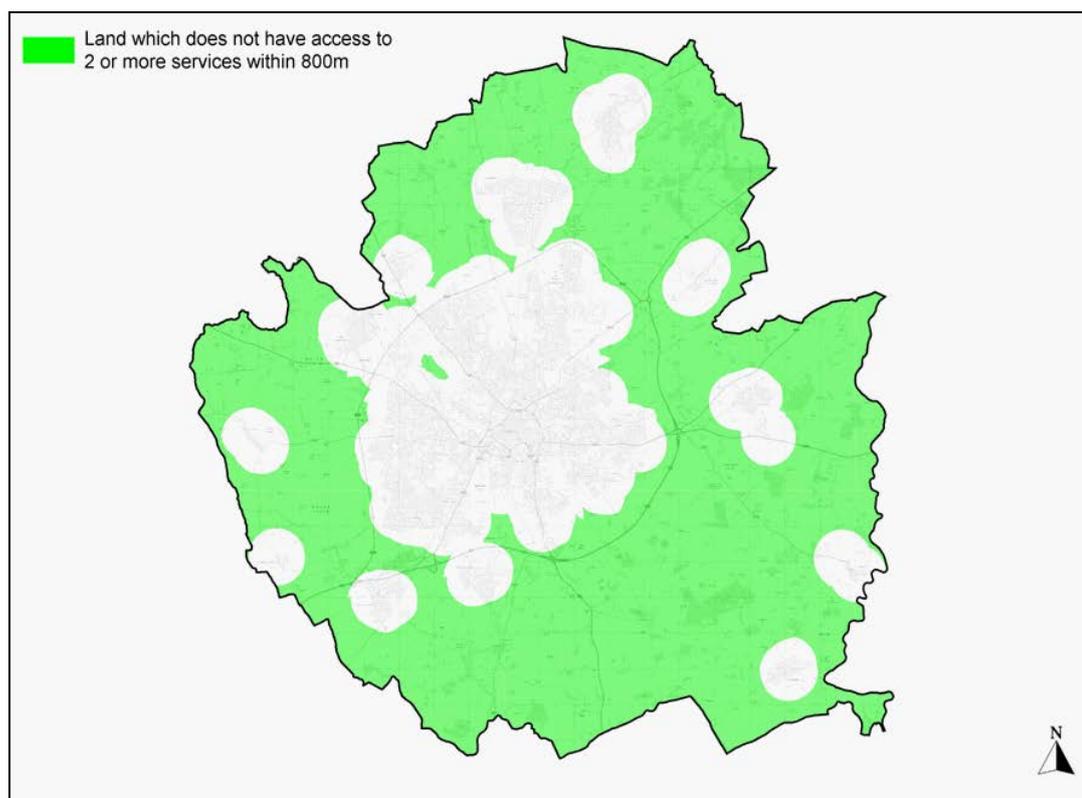
Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

- 4.22 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF (2012) identifies the prevention of urban sprawl as the fundamental aim of all Green Belt. The NPPF and NPPG do not give a definition of the term "sprawl" and the Royal Town Planning Institute Research Briefing No. 9 (2015) on Urban Form and Sustainability is also not specific in that it states this type of development can take the form of "*contiguous suburban growth, linear patterns of strip development, leapfrog and scattered development*". The Oxford English dictionary identifies sprawl as "the spreading out of built form over a large area in an untidy or irregular way".
- 4.23 The NPPF (2012) makes it clear at paragraph 84 that the promotion of sustainable development patterns should be taken into account, channelling development towards urban areas, towns or villages inset within the green belt, or beyond the outer boundary – an indication that planned development does not constitute sprawl.
- 4.24 The main built up areas of York are defined on the key diagram within the City of York Local Plan and broadly relate to the densest areas of built development. The Local Plan spatial strategy has sought to ensure that new development is well related to the main built up areas to ensure sustainability with accessibility to sustainable modes of transport and a range of services. Any planned new development should have access to these services or be large enough to provide new ones to meet the needs of the new population.
- 4.25 The Local Plan site selection evidence base shows that most services (such as primary schools, secondary schools, nurseries, doctors, supermarkets, grocery stores and shopping parades) are within the urban/main built up area. By identifying all the land in York which does not currently have access to two or more of these services and designating this land to be kept permanently open

as Green Belt (as indicated in TP1(2018) and in Figure 4 below), development is channelled towards sustainable locations and sprawl is restricted.

- 4.26 TP1 (2018) sets out the evidence used in ensuring access to sustainable modes of transport and services and checking urban sprawl. As also shown overleaf, TP1 includes a 'reverse access to services map', which illustrates areas which have access to less than two separate services. TP1 identifies that incremental development in such remote locations would exacerbate urban sprawl. The identification of areas with limited services as among those to keep permanently open supports NPPF Green Belt purpose 1.

Figure 4: Access to services



Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

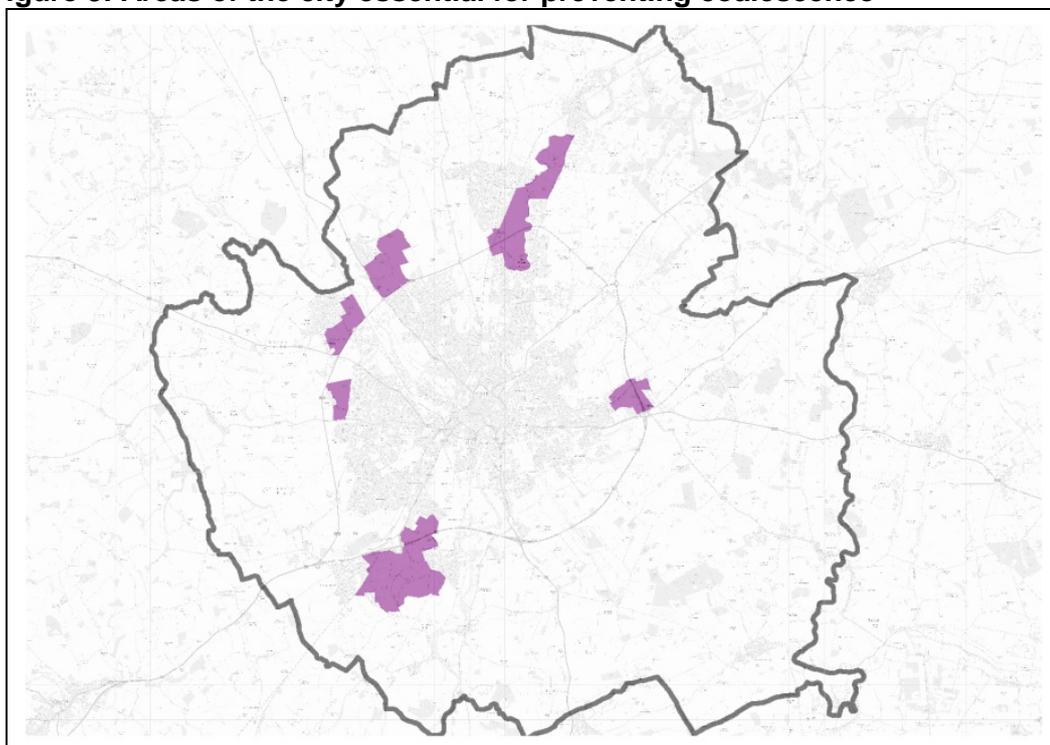
- 4.27 York does not have any major towns close to the general extent of the Green Belt, so the potential issue of towns merging does not arise. However, the Planning Advisory Service 'Planning on your Doorstep: The Big Issues Green Belt' guidance supports an approach which analyses the need to prevent the coalescence of smaller settlements and villages.
- 4.28 The individual identity of different villages/urban areas surrounding the main urban area and different areas of York are important to its overall character. The loss of separation between settlements could have potential impacts on:

- views into / out of settlements and of the minster;
- the urban fringe important to preserve York's compact form; and
- showing how the character of the landscape has shaped the current settlement pattern.

4.29 The Green Belt Appraisal identifies six areas of the city that are essential for preventing coalescence (as illustrated in Figure 5 below). The appraisal only identifies the primary reason why an area is considered to be important. However, other categories of land highlighted in this evidence base can also serve to prevent coalescence. These areas of land have been identified under Purpose 4 (see paragraphs 4.10 to 4.20 above). Notably, Strays and Common Land (designated as part of the Green Wedges) have prevented lateral coalescence of different parts of the urban area and have played a role in retaining the distinctive characteristics of earlier individual settlements. Potential impacts on coalescence are also considered as part of more detailed site assessments (see Section 8).

4.30 The Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103], also identifies the need to preserve characteristics of 'compactness' and 'landscape and setting' which relate to the importance of preventing the coalescence of settlements through the need to maintain views and the settlement pattern, as well as the importance of keeping villages within their own planned agricultural hinterland. This reinforces the Green Belt Appraisal and is applied further through site selection work (see Section 8).

Figure 5: Areas of the city essential for preventing coalescence



Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 4.31 This purpose is achieved through the overall effect of the York Green Belt and through the identification of particular parcels of land which should be kept permanently open. PAS guidance⁷ includes the presumption that all green belt performs this function but goes on to propose a useful approach to use in testing this purpose as: *“to look at the difference between urban fringe – land under the influence of the urban area - and open countryside, and to favour the latter in determining which land to try and keep open, taking into account the types of edges and boundaries that can be achieved.”*
- 4.32 Establishing Green Belt boundaries (see Section 5) therefore serves to distinguish the countryside from built-up urban land and protect the countryside from encroachment by development. The effect is strengthened by using recognisable and permanent boundaries.
- 4.33 While the term encroachment is not defined in NPPF and NPPG, it can be considered as *“A gradual advance beyond usual or acceptable limits”*⁸. This definition can be interpreted as relating to new structures but also gradual change or use of structures or land type in a way which changes the context of the area. Understanding the role of open space and its uses on the urban edge is an important element of defining the urban fringe.
- 4.34 Although countryside is not specifically defined by the NPPF, it does reference land uses which are acceptable⁹ (providing they do not impact on openness), and which can be sought to enhance the Green Belt¹⁰. As one of the main purposes of the Green Belt is to protect the countryside, it can be assumed that these uses should not be considered to constitute encroachment and are therefore accepted elements of the countryside. Acceptable uses include: agriculture and forestry, as well as encouraging opportunities to provide outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.
- 4.35 The Local Plan evidence bases recognise that York's natural assets form part of the overarching narrative of factors which has helped to shape the landscape as well as inform the character and setting of York. From identifying the importance of ancient woodland and hedgerows as part of the traditional landscape character¹¹ (now rare within the present countryside due to historical changes in farming practices), to the importance of nature conservation habitats, many of which have evolved as a result of farming and land use methods. Most important of all is the recognition that access to the countryside and its benefits, from the dense urban areas, is intrinsic to understanding the evolution of the city and what has made it special¹².

⁷ PAS – “Planning on your Doorstep: The Big Issues Green Belt (2015)

⁸ Oxford English Dictionary

⁹ NPPF(2012) paragraphs 89 and 90

¹⁰ NPPF (2012) paragraph 81.

¹¹ The York Landscape Character Assessment (1996)

¹² The Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103]

- 4.36 The Local Plan spatial strategy continues to use these factors to shape how development is accommodated within the authority by identifying the elements which form acceptable uses within the Green Belt and are most important to keep permanently open as they illustrate recognisable features of countryside and ensure that a contribution to character and setting is maintained.
- 4.37 As set out in TP1 (2018) there is an ambition in the Plan to retain and promote access to existing open areas and to give recognition to the quality, quantity and importance of the authority's green infrastructure assets. They represent predominantly open swathes of land which also contribute to understanding the context of York – a main urban centre surrounded by a clock-face of villages and rural hinterland – and form part of ecological and recreational networks, important to the successful functioning of urban areas. These assets are considered particularly relevant to the consideration of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. As identified in TP1, specific areas which have an absence of built development form important features of the open countryside, and thereby should remain permanently open are:
- Nature Conservation Sites: European, national and locally designated nature conservation sites comprising Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), wetland habitats (RAMSARs), Nature reserves and Sites of importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)¹³. These represent recorded and verified elements of biodiversity which are acting as potential enhancements to the Green Belt as stipulated by NPPF (2012) paragraph 81 and have been interpreted as illustrating the countryside as many of the more important designations rely on residing within an open context and could be damaged by encroaching development.
 - Existing Open space: Areas have been identified¹⁴ across 11 typologies and cover both open and built up environments. Areas of natural/semi natural habitat which are detached from the built up areas illustrate elements of historic countryside which are accessible to the public, while other similar areas along with amenity green space and some elements of outdoor sports provision on the fringe of the developed area are important features for how the urban population accesses countryside in close proximity, as is historically important to York. Both types of areas are included in the York Green Belt.
 - Green Infrastructure Corridors: Pathways which provide sufficient habitat to support wildlife allowing their movement along it. Without the protection and maintenance of corridors designated nature conservation sites may be affected. Common green corridors include railway embankments, river banks and roadside grass verges. Particular to York are the extensive river corridors and associated land, which run from the rural hinterland into the

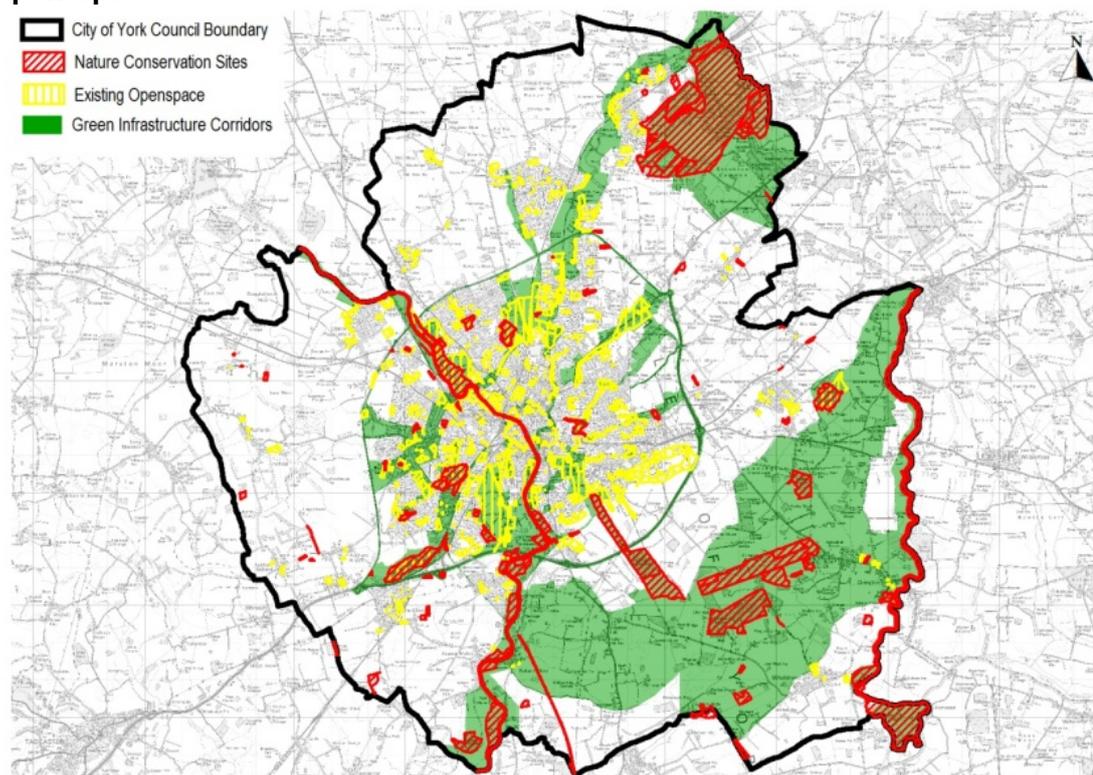
¹³ Biodiversity Action Plan (2017) [SD080]

¹⁴ City of York Council Local Plan Evidence Base: Open Space and Green Infrastructure (2014) [SD086] and Update (2017) [SD085]

urban centre and out again¹⁰. While it is difficult to completely preclude all development from particularly the local and regional corridors (many of these cover areas which have been urbanised but maintain a high degree of open space), it is important to recognise the areas where these corridors connect with the wider countryside adjacent to the urban areas. In the more rural locations around more important nature conservation designations these swathes of land represent land which is generally open and supports the wildlife which make the designations so important, interrupting these corridors can have consequences for the sites are therefore should be covered with adequate levels of consideration and protection.

- **Ancient Woodland:** Areas of woods that have developed naturally where planting predates the 1600s or areas of which have been replanted following felling of trees. Ancient woodlands are recognised to have unique and special qualities leading to rich and diverse habitats, which should be retained and form elements of York's oldest remaining landscape and most important areas of countryside¹⁵.

Figure 6: York's Green Infrastructure, Nature Conservation, Green Corridors and Open Space



4.38 The above uses of land in the countryside also offer particular opportunities to achieve the requirement of the NPPF (Para 81) to “plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and

¹⁵ Natural England Datasets

enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land”.

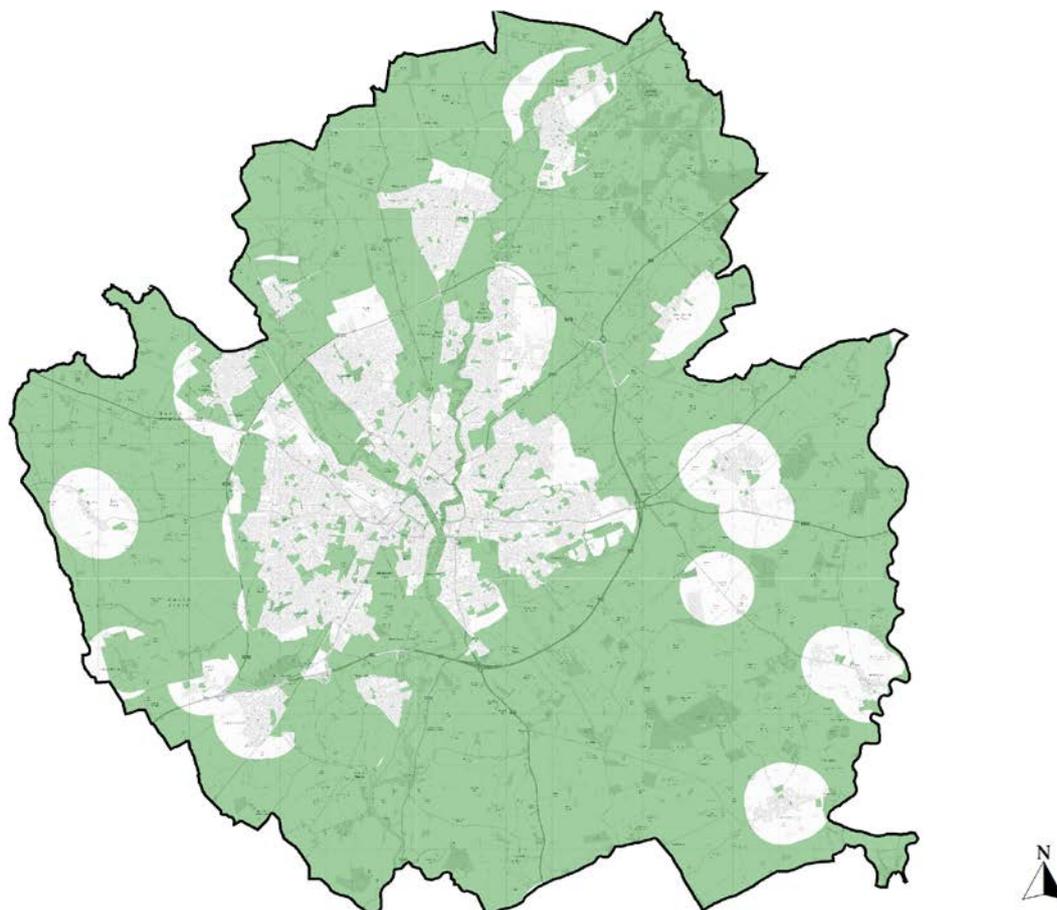
Purpose 5: To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 4.39 This purpose is achieved through the overall effect of the York Green Belt rather than through the identification of particular parcels of land which must be kept permanently open. For example PAS guidance⁶ presumes that *“If Green Belt achieves this purpose, then all Green Belt does so to the same extent”*.
- 4.40 Although not explicit in the NPPF and NPPG, the recycling of derelict and other urban land implies a restriction on the availability of Greenfield sites to consequently encourage the re-use of previously developed land. This should also be considered in conjunction with achieving sustainable development objectives and sustainable patterns of development through Green Belt policy.
- 4.41 Compatible with this approach is the Local Plan spatial strategy, which includes a ‘Brownfield first’ spatial principle stating: *“where viable and deliverable, the re-use of previously developed land will be phased first”* (Policy SS1). This principle has been translated into the site selection process and sustainability appraisal, which have prioritised Brownfield land and have provided an overall framework for identifying the most sustainable locations for development, in line with paragraph 84 of the NPPF. As a result, a variety of potential allocations, both close to the urban area and separate to it, have been identified so as to balance the need for growth and the ability of the Green Belt to promote regeneration in existing built up areas.

Overall Strategic Areas to Keep Permanently Open

- 4.42 Figure 7 is a combination of Figures 3-6 and shows land which, when assessed against the five purposes of Green Belt, has been identified as strategically important to keep permanently open. This serves to explain the general extent of the York Green Belt, and informs the analysis for determining the detailed inner and outer boundaries as outlined in Section 5.
- 4.43 Although Table 1 of TP1(2018) identified Greenfield land within flood zone as being a constraint relevant to Green Belt Purpose 3, for the purposes of this further assessment this constraint has not been relied upon and is therefore excluded from the above map.

Figure 7: Strategic areas to keep permanently open

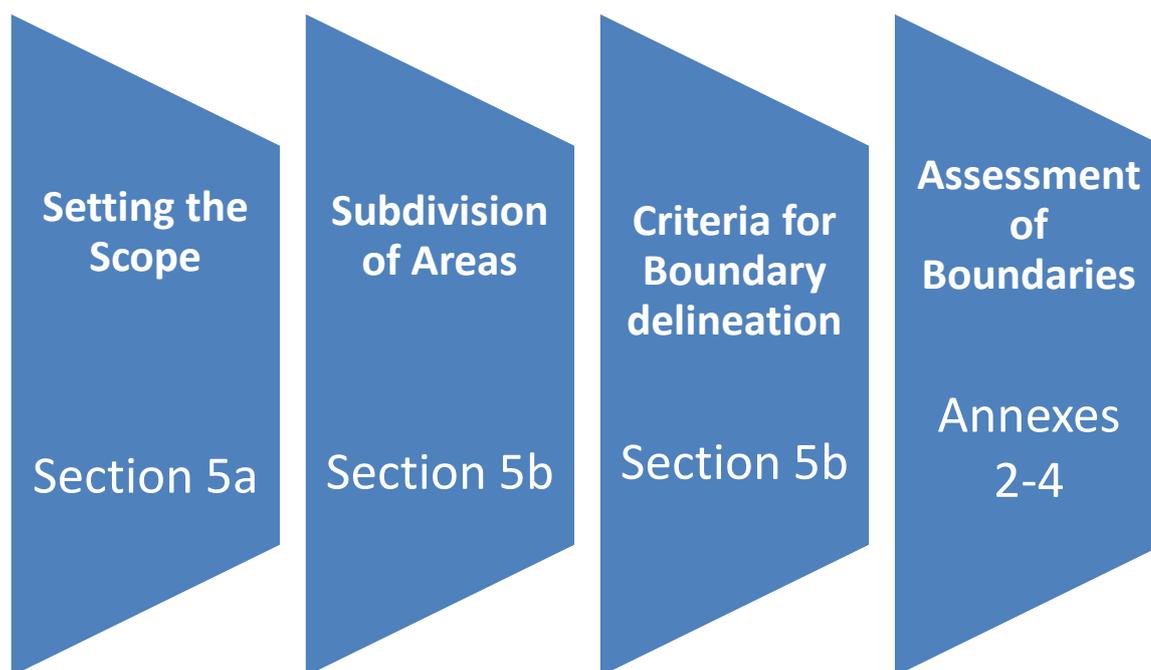


Summary

This section describes York's Strategic Approach to the Green Belt, setting out how the Local Plan has defined land which needs to be kept permanently open in the context of the 5 purposes of Green Belt. Figure 7 shows those areas which have been identified as being strategically important to keep permanently open. This sets the context for defining detailed Green Belt boundaries.

Section 5: Methodology for Defining Green Belt Boundaries

- 5.1 The NPPF (2012) sets out how Local Authorities should approach the task of setting Green Belt boundaries, (summarised in Section 2). Key considerations are:
- the need to promote sustainable development;
 - include land that it is necessary to keep permanently open;
 - set boundaries that do not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and,
 - to use physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.
- 5.2 In order to determine detailed boundaries, an exercise has been undertaken to determine the scope of which boundaries have already been set, which require definition and a methodology to establish the most appropriate boundary in line with NPPF requirements. An overview of the 4 stage process is illustrated by the following diagram:



5a. Setting the scope

- 5.3 This section explores the scope of both the detailed inner main urban area and the outer limit of the York Green Belt. The detailed methodology in relation to other existing urban areas within the general extent is set out in section 6.

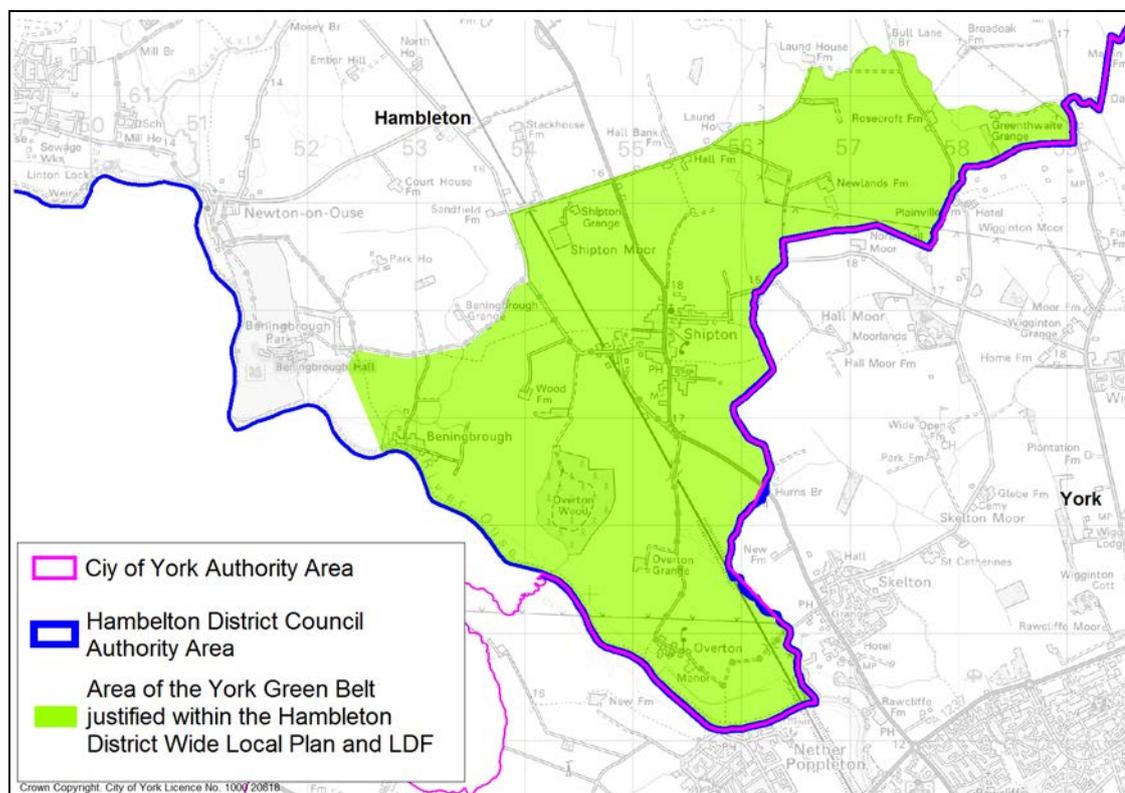
Outer Boundary Scope

- 5.4 Saved RSS Policy Y1C, defines the York Green Belt as “a belt whose outer edge is about 6 miles from York City Centre”. As a result the general extent of the York Green Belt covers the York local authority administrative area and in some cases extends beyond it. The basis of the York Green Belt in neighbouring authorities is reviewed below.

Hambleton District Council

- 5.5 Hambleton District contains a small area of the York Green Belt at its southern fringe, which borders York. The area of Green Belt was formally established through the Hambleton District Wide Local Plan (DWLP) which has been replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF) (fully adopted in 2010). The LDF Core Strategy identifies the York Green Belt in its glossary as an area of open land “in the south of the District, designed to check the growth of York and protect its historic form”. Policy DP9 (Development outside Settlement Limits) and paragraph 3.8.8 of the ‘Development Policies DPD’ (Adopted 26 February 2008) states that the designation from Hambleton DWLP remains valid, and is consistent with RSS Policy YH9. Hambleton District Council however, is currently reviewing its Local Plan – at this stage a Green Belt review has not commenced or been indicated.

Figure 8: York Green Belt within Hambleton District Council Area



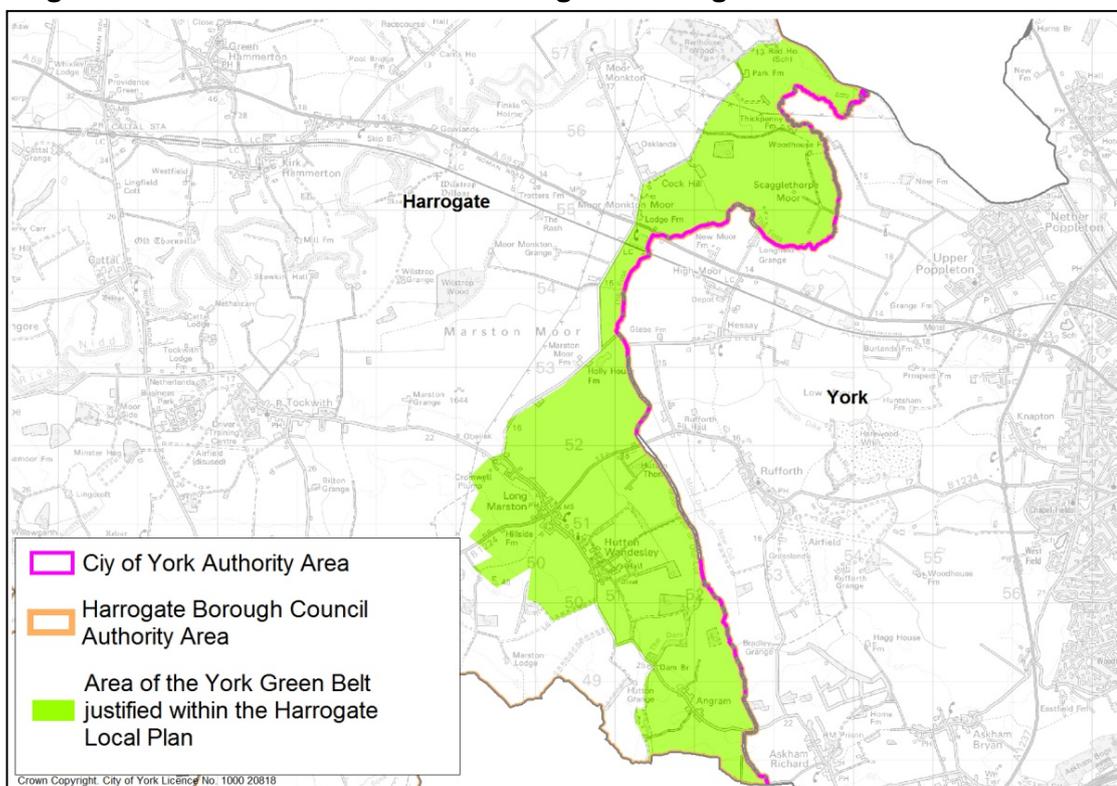
Harrogate Borough Council

- 5.6 Harrogate Local Plan - Adopted 2001 (Augmented Composite – July 2009) formally establishes part of the York Green Belt in the south eastern part of its

district and identifies this on the proposals map. The justification for Policy GB1 States that “The Green Belt around the City of York was approved in principle in 1980 as part of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan. The detailed boundary of this Green Belt has been defined through the York Green Belt Local Plan, approved by the County Council in March 1995 as interim policy for development control purposes and is expected to be formally established through the preparation of individual district-wide local plans. While the 1995 County Council York Green Belt Local Plan was never adopted, the Harrogate plan maintained the same boundaries and established these through the 2001 plan.

- 5.7 Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) is preparing a new Local Plan which is at the examination stage (as at March 2019). In August 2018, HBC published a supporting document - Harrogate District Local Plan: Green Belt Background Paper Submission Update, which looked specifically at the Council’s approach to the Green Belts in its area and whether exceptional circumstances are considered to exist to warrant alteration to the Green Belt boundaries. The document considers that as the Green Belt areas of the district are part of wider sub-regional Green Belts, it is important to be aware of the approach being taken by neighbouring local authorities to reviewing the Green Belt. The Background Paper concluded that there is no necessity to undertake a review of the Green Belt at the current time as there is sufficient available, suitable and sustainable land in settlements outwith the Green Belt to deliver the level of growth planned in the district during the period to 2035.

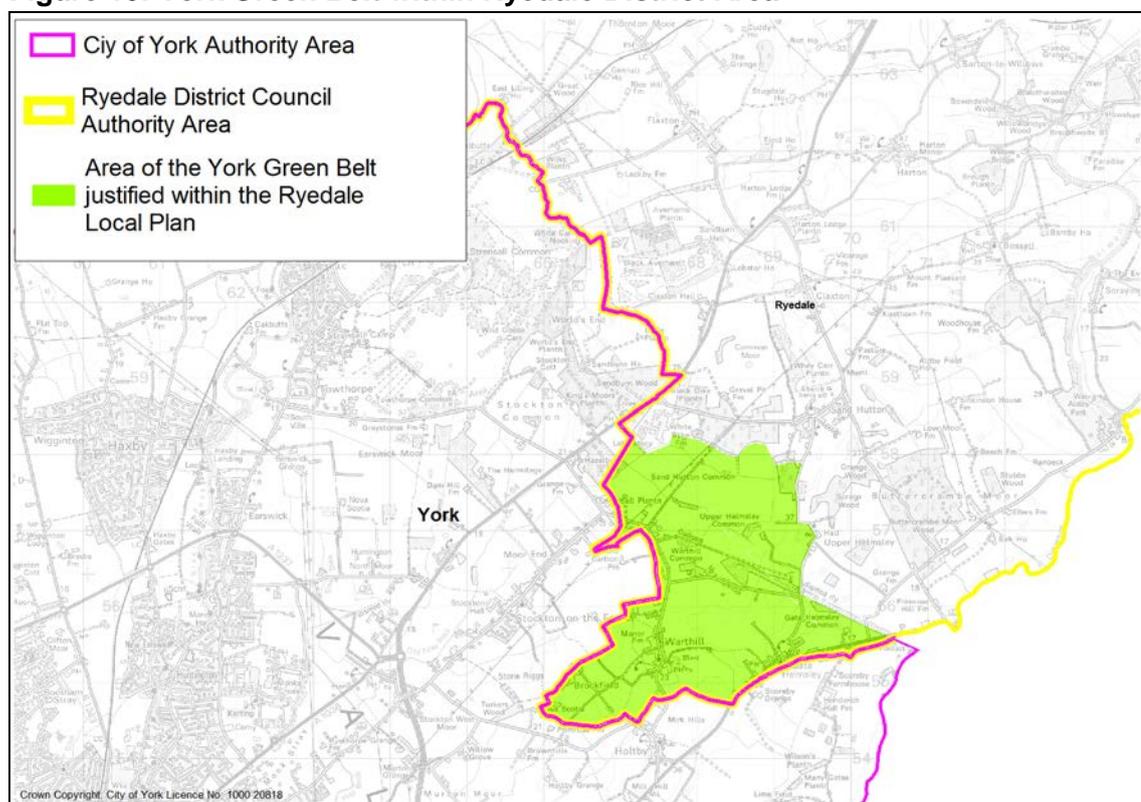
Figure 9: York Green Belt within Harrogate Borough Council Area



Ryedale District Council

- 5.8 Ryedale District Council area includes a small area of the York Green Belt at its southern extreme, bordering York. The Ryedale Local Plan (Adopted March 2002), includes a section on the Green Belt (Chapter 4), which states in paragraph 4.3.2 that the Green Belt boundary is in accordance with the Joint York Green Belt Local Plan / Southern Ryedale Local Plan Inquiry's Inspector's recommendations and takes account of the criteria in the Structure Plan Policy E8a.
- 5.9 The Ryedale Local Plan Strategy (September 2013) in Section 3 (paragraph 3.9) did not require a strategic review of the outer boundary of the York Green Belt. The outer boundary is currently defined on the adopted Proposals Map of the 2002 Ryedale Local Plan.

Figure 10: York Green Belt within Ryedale District Area

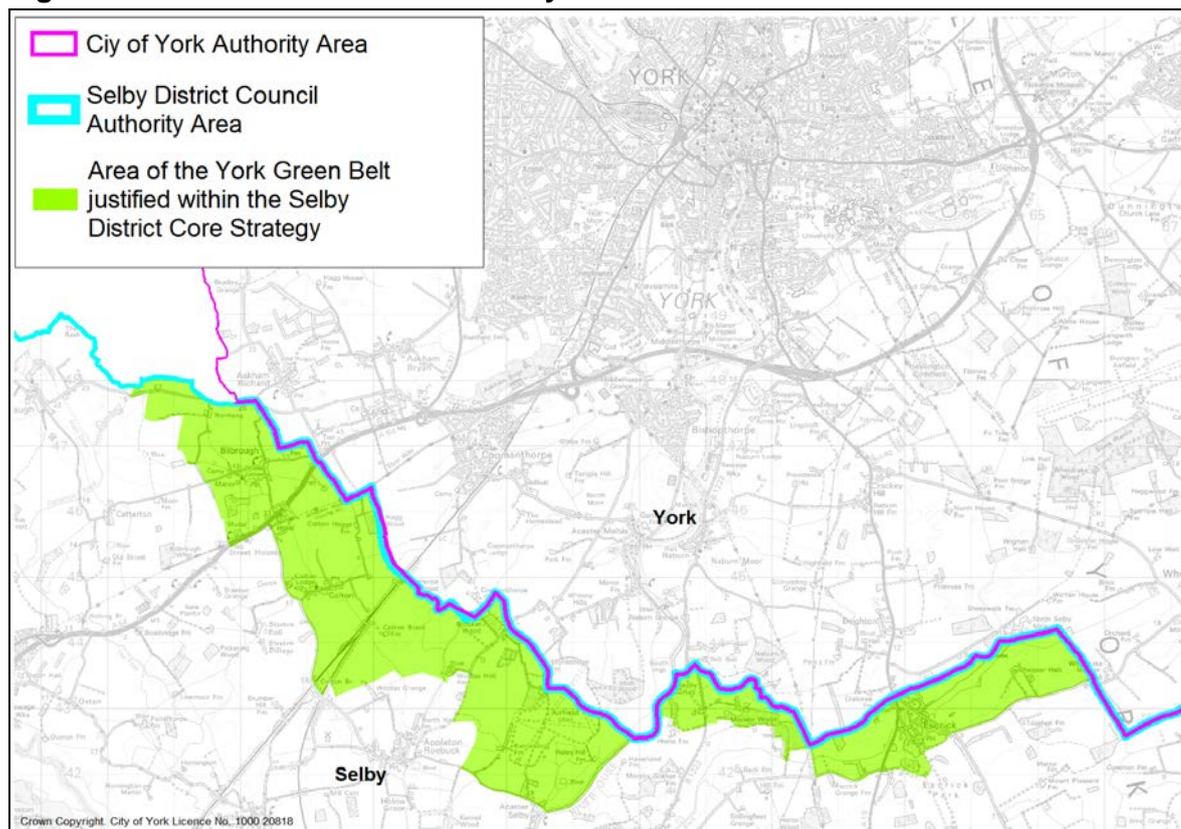


- Selby District Council*
- 5.10 Selby District Council contains parts of both the York Green Belt and the West Yorkshire Green Belt within its boundaries. Paragraphs 4.46 – 4.52 of the 'Selby District Core Strategy (Adopted October 2013)' considers the potential for a review of the Green Belt boundary, if sufficient deliverable / developable land outside the Green Belt cannot be found in those settlements to which development is directed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and if development in alternative, non Green Belt settlements / locations is a significantly less sustainable option (because the needs of the particular settlement to which the development is directed outweigh both the loss of Green Belt and any opportunity for that development to take place on non-Green Belt land elsewhere). A Green Belt review will also consider identifying area of Safeguarded Land to facilitate future growth beyond the Plan period.

The Council considers that this constitutes the exceptional circumstances that justify a need to strategically assess the District's growth options across the Green Belt.

- 5.11 In spring 2015, Ove Arup and Partners were appointed by Selby District Council to prepare 'A Study of Green Belt, Strategic Countryside Gaps, Safeguarded Land and Development Limits' as part of the evidence base for the Selby plan.
- 5.12 Selby District Council is currently preparing a Site Allocations Local Plan. It will identify enough land for the homes and jobs and other development needs in the district over the next ten years. A Pool of Sites Public Consultation document was issued October-November 2017. This document sets out that *"given the amount of development that has already taken place and the availability of suitable sites for development within Development Limits outside Green Belt areas, it is not considered necessary or appropriate to carry out a District-wide Green Belt review in this plan period"*. It is not considered that an exceptional circumstance exists to justify a District-wide review of the Green Belt boundary.

Figure 11: York Green Belt within Selby District Area



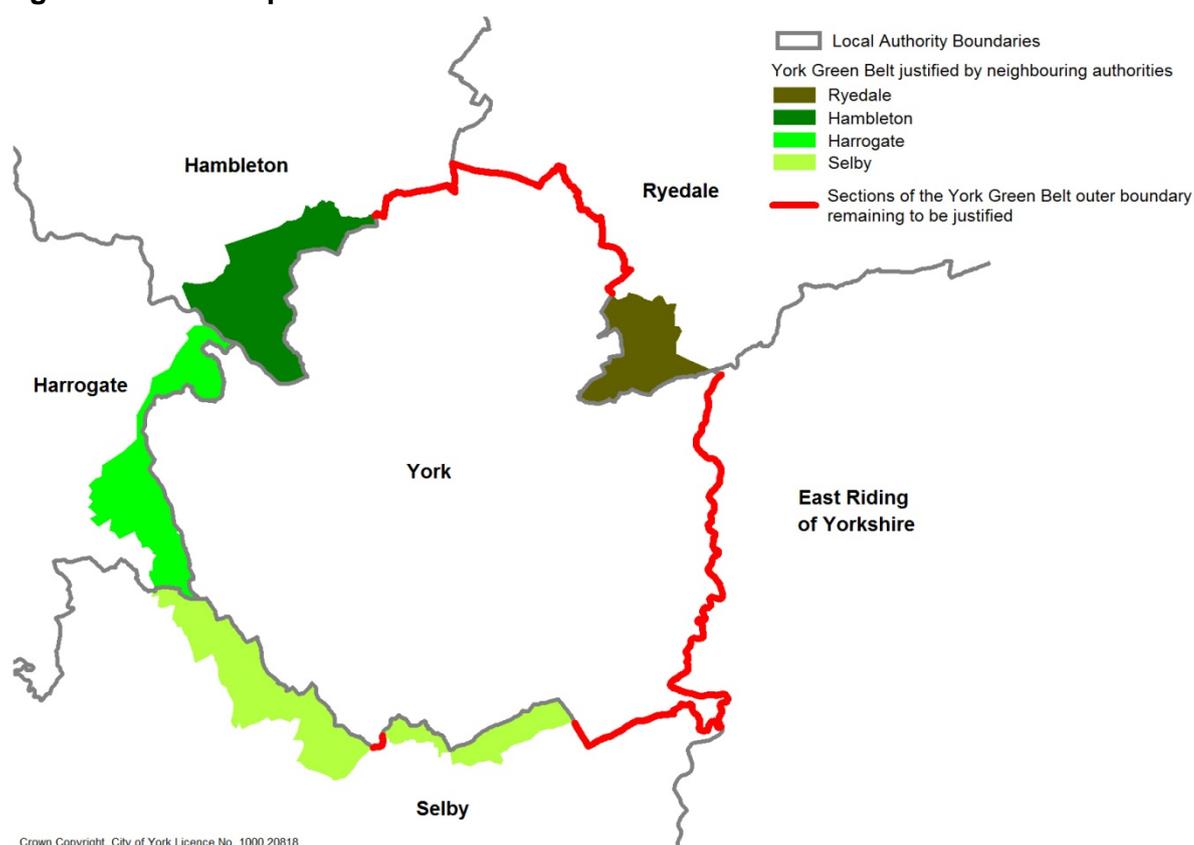
Remaining Areas

- 5.13 It is accepted that where neighbouring authorities have set a boundary, these areas are established and therefore they have not formed the basis of any analysis through the York Local Plan. The Green Belt therefore runs continuously to the boundary to join up with the defined sections and the

remaining sections have been evaluated so that they can connect up to these adopted limits. Land beyond York's administrative boundary in these remaining areas has not been identified by Hambleton, Ryedale or Selby Councils as serving a green belt function.

- 5.14 Given the size of York as approximately 6 miles across, the similar characteristics of land across the authority and the strategic outcomes of TP1 (2018) assessing the land within the York administrative boundary as serving Green Belt purposes, the authority boundaries provide the starting point for evaluation of the outer limits of the York Green Belt in the remaining areas, as illustrated in Figure 12.

Figure 12: The Scope of the Outer Limits of the Green Belt in York



- 5.15 The administrative boundary also correlates with Parish Boundaries which have a longstanding historical basis. This joined up approach contributes to establishing an understandable, permanent and defensible boundary.

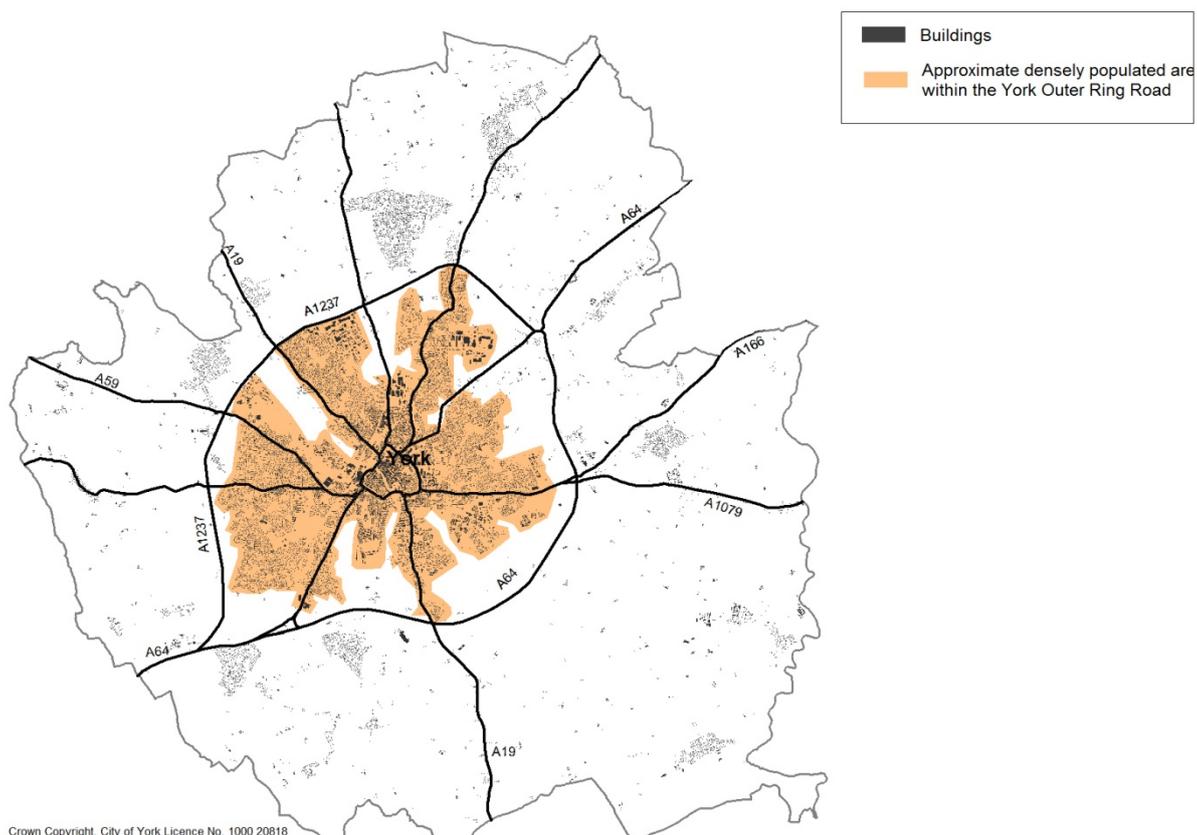
Inner Boundary Scope

- 5.16 The key role of the inner Green Belt boundary is to establish long term development limits to the built up area, and distinguish land that needs to be kept permanently open to meet the purposes of Green Belt including safeguarding the special character and setting of the historic city. This

includes describing the detailed boundary where it defines the extent of urban areas excluded from the Green Belt.

- 5.17 The inner boundary of York itself is taken to be that which adjoins the main built up areas which radiates out from the historic core of the city. All of this dense urban development which constitutes the main built up area is currently constrained within the York Outer Ring Road as illustrated below at Figure 13. The inner green belt boundary delineates the boundary of the dense built up area and the York Green Belt.

Figure 13: The Scope of the Main Urban Area Limits of the Green Belt in York



- 5.18 There are also other clusters of densely developed areas within the general extent of the York Green Belt which form villages, settlements and industrialised areas. The approach to defining the inner boundary in the context of these settlements is discussed in more detail in section 6.

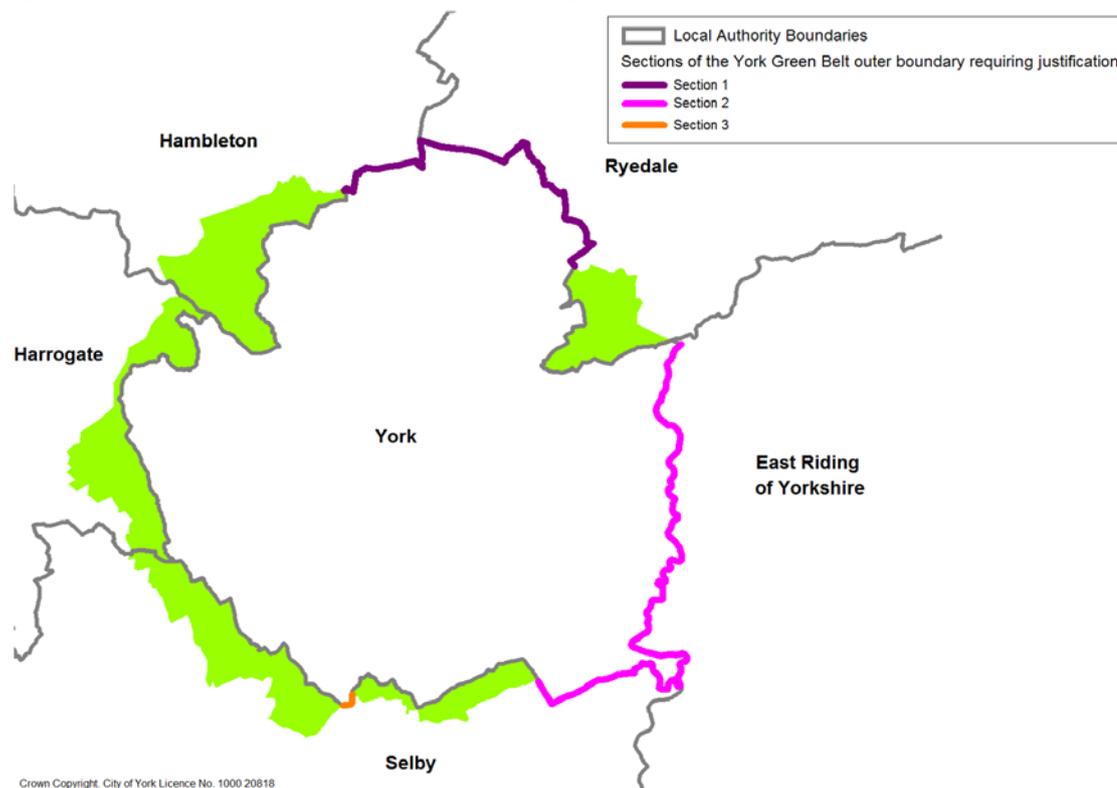
5b. Subdivision of areas

- 5.19 Both the inner and outstanding outer boundaries of the York Green Belt are considered as a series of broad sections (as presented in Figures 10 and 11 below). The approach to these broad sections is described in the following paragraphs. Each broad section has been further sub divided for the purposes of analysis.

Outer Boundary Subdivision

5.20 The areas of the York Green Belt outer boundary that remain to be defined form three broad sections as outlined in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Outer boundary limits requiring definition

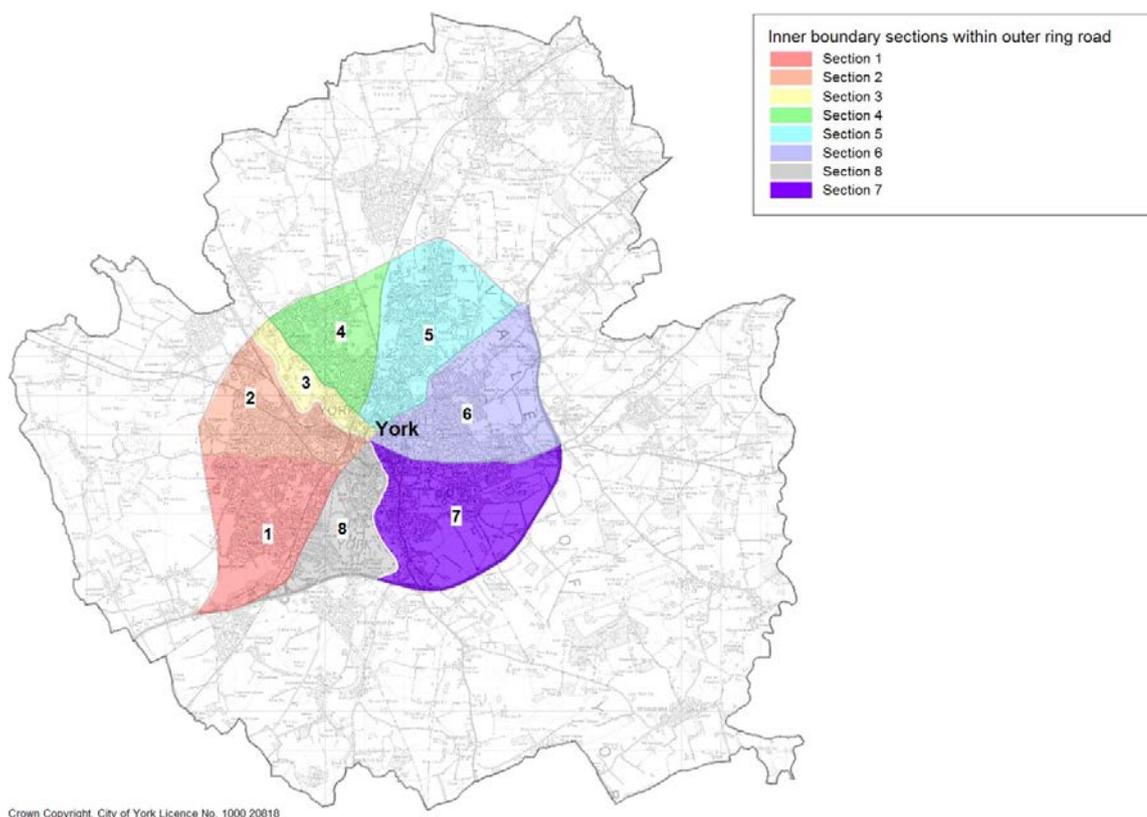


- 5.21 Section 1 includes the edge of the York Green Belt where it approaches the local authority boundaries of Hambleton and Ryedale. It stretches from the B1363 (Plowmans Yard) clockwise to Central Science Laboratory (A64). This section follows the administrative boundary of York and provides an outer Green Belt boundary that is contiguous with the outer Green Belt boundaries established in Hambleton and Ryedale.
- 5.22 Section 2 considers the York Green Belt boundary where it meets with the East Riding of Yorkshire authority area as well as part of the shared boundary with Selby District Council. Here the administrative boundaries follow the alignment of the River Derwent to the East of York and it is proposed that the York Green Belt should do the same.
- 5.23 Section 3 covers a short section of the River Ouse on the edge of the York Green Belt where it meets the local authority boundary of Selby.
- 5.24 These sections have been further subdivided in to more manageable stretches or boundaries for the purposes of analysis. The subsections are divided up by recognisable points or infrastructure where possible and are presented along with their descriptions and analysis in Annex 2.

Inner Boundary Subdivision

5.25 The eight main sections of the York Green Belt inner boundary (where it adjoins the main built up area of York within the outer ring road) were identified based on major infrastructure features such as rivers, rail and major roads as illustrated in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Main Urban Area Inner boundary limits requiring definition



5.26 These eight sections have been further subdivided in to more manageable stretches or boundaries for the purposes of analysis. The subsections are divided up on the basis of similar features and are described in Annex 3 along with maps and justifications.

Summary

The preceding sub-sections describe the context and approach taken to determining the scope of detailed boundary considerations, which includes:

- the outer boundary, where this is not defined through an adjoining authority's plan;
- the inner boundary, where it defines the 'built-up' edge of York;
- the inner boundary, where it defines the extent of existing urban areas to be inset from the green belt.

5c. Developing criteria for boundary de-lineation

5.27 Desktop evidence was collated as the first stage of analysis, and site visits carried out where necessary to confirm data and verify features and context on the ground. Where possible boundaries of 'regular' or 'consistent' edges have been followed as opposed to 'Irregular', 'inconsistent' or 'intermediate' 'softer' boundaries. In a small number of cases, a boundary has been proposed which links two identifiable elements as the preferred option for maintaining openness, permanence or providing the most consistent boundary. The criteria used to identify the detailed Green Belt boundaries for York are as follows:

Openness Criteria

1. Strategic Assessment - Does the boundary mark the edge of broad areas of land identified to be kept permanently open -

| Evidence for Desktop Assessment and Site Visits | |
|---|--|
| Purposes 4 and 2 | Designated Green Wedges (Incorporating Strays and lngs and extensions) |
| | Area preventing coalescence |
| | Area protecting village setting |
| | Area protecting the rural setting of York |
| Purpose 1 | Access to Services |
| Purpose 3 | International Nature Conservation: RAMSAR, SAC, SPA |
| | National nature conservation: SSSIs |
| | Local Nature Conservation : SINCs, Candidate SINC, LNRs |
| | Green Corridors |
| | Ancient Woodland |
| | Openspace |

2. Local Assessment - does the boundary mark the edge of land locally identified to be kept permanently open as

a. Protecting local historic assets

| Evidence for Desktop Assessment and Site Visits |
|---|
| Conservation Areas |
| Listed Buildings |
| Scheduled Monuments |
| Historic Parks and Gardens |
| Views - City Wide panoramas, views of important monuments |
| Historic Landscape Character |
| Heritage Topic paper |

- b. *Protecting land which is open and serves a countryside function on the urban fringe through:*

| Evidence for Desktop Assessment and Site Visits | |
|---|-------------------------|
| OS Maps | Buildings/Figure Ground |
| Aerial photography | |
| Urban Characterisation Study | |
| Landscape Character | |
| Open Space Typology | |
| Access pathways: Roads, Cycle Lane, Bridleways, Footpaths | |
| Views | |

Considering the function and relationship of the land, and delineating the boundary between urban and rural environments using the following criteria:

Built up area - land which is predominantly characterised by urban land and semi-urban land uses (which contain a mix of urban and rural land uses before giving way to the wider countryside) as *represented by*:

- Dense network of buildings built over various time periods that have a built up nature and lack openness or relationships with the landscape (such as farms)
- The boundary should follow the whole curtilage of properties except where such properties include large open areas that extend up to existing countryside and are not encompassed by built form.
- Some semi open areas which have a strong relationship to the urban areas such as primary school playing fields may be included in the urban area.
- Areas of hard standing being used for associated urban functions.
- Metalled surface of roads being determined as urban only when they are in proximity to other urban uses. Connectivity to the urban area of the land is also an important consideration.

Open Areas - land with an absence of built development and characterised by rural land uses and landscape or with some other sporadic developments and low density man-made structures, as *represented by*:

- Isolated buildings or small clusters separated from the urban edge
- Development that is close to but physically separate from the built-up area should not be included within the built-up area boundary (including ribbon and fragmented development). This is to maintain a strongly defined boundary and to avoid areas of countryside from being unnecessarily included within the built up area.

- Small villages which have a strong relationship with the surrounding landscape or a high level of openness.
- Development within important green wedges to the city
- Isolated rural business parks
- Agricultural/forestry or open space buildings
- Some playing pitches associated with Secondary Schools
- Large open areas that extend up to existing countryside and are not encompassed by built form. This is to prevent inappropriate development in what is considered part of the open countryside.

Permanence Criteria

1. Does the boundary offer recognisability?

- I. Are there recognisable features which can be associated with the boundary?

2. Does the boundary offer Permanence?

- I. How long has the boundary already existed?
- II. Are there any consented and not yet built planning applications in the area?

3. Does the boundary offer Strength?

- I. Are there multiple layered boundaries which can offer greater resilience?

5.28 The NPPF (2012) at paragraph 79 establishes that openness and permanence are the defining features of the greenbelt.

Openness

5.29 As the fundamental purpose of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open (NPPF Para 79), openness is a defining feature and essential characteristic of Green Belt, and is therefore a consideration in setting a boundary.

Strategic Openness - Sustainable patterns of development and urban sprawl

- 5.30 In setting the detailed boundaries of the Green Belt, authorities must also take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, 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 boundary¹⁶, as well as ensuring consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development¹⁷
- 5.31 On a strategic level openness has been addressed in relation to these directives through the Local Plan spatial strategy which sets out the drivers for growth and the shapers which direct its location. Policy SS1 sets a principle to “where viable and deliverable”, re use previously developed land first. This approach aims to retain as much existing open land as possible and focus development within the existing urban areas.
- 5.32 The council approached maximising the capacity of existing urban land by; identifying a lower site size threshold (0.2ha) for available urban land than that stipulated by guidance, re examined extant housing and employment permissions as well as former allocations and vacant industrial land, applied an allowance for windfall delivery (development on sites below 0.2ha) in line with assessed historic trends, applying a policy of higher housing densities across all urban zones especially where there was access to public transport routes. The deliverability of these ambitions has been prioritised through the establishment of willing landowners as part of the selection process. This however did not identify enough capacity to meet all of York's development needs.
- 5.33 The RSS 6 mile radius which designates the general extent of the York Green Belt largely encompasses the City of York authority boundary. Therefore, in order to maximise openness within the general extent, options to channel development to locations beyond the Authority boundaries were explored through discussions with Members and officers of neighbouring authorities to see whether some of York's identified development needs could be accommodated. However, the conclusions of these discussions (as explained in Section 7) were that this is not possible at this time.
- 5.34 It was therefore incumbent on the local authority to identify a mechanism for how the remainder of York's development needs might best be accommodated within the authority boundary while still maintaining land which it is necessary to keep permanently open.
- 5.35 The approach to the spatial distribution of growth and how to best meet the identified need for development within the plan is determined by the spatial strategy and the outcomes of the Preferred Options Local Plan (2013)

¹⁶ NPPF (2012) Paragraph 84

¹⁷ NPPF (2012) Paragraph 85

[SD005] and Sustainability Appraisal (2013) [SD007]. The spatial strategy identifies 'spatial shapers' which were established through the core strategy and include; historic character and setting, flood risk and green infrastructure as factors which shape growth by land which should be retained as open land.

- 5.36 In addition to this, the preferred approach to spatial distribution of growth within the city evolved through consultation and the sustainability appraisals to be one which prioritised development within and/or as an extension to the urban area and through the provision of new settlements. This option was chosen in order to minimise harm to York's historic character and setting by maintaining a compact city within a clock face of villages. Heritage impact assessments carried out in line with the principles of the Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103] made it clear that while new free standing settlements may have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt, greater harm could be caused to the historic character and setting of York when building extensively on the periphery of the main urban area. Historic England supported the decision and agreed, in that building new free standing settlements would fit with the existing settlement pattern and 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, with key views towards York from the ring road, and the relationship of the main built-up area of York to its surrounding settlements.
- 5.37 The preferred options and sustainability appraisal also determined that a balanced approach to social, economic, environmental and deliverability principles should be taken when meeting the identified need for development within the city. This was in order to deliver new development that is well served, accessible and supports the use of sustainable transport.
- 5.38 All of these factors have formed the basis of where development should go within the City of York authority boundary. Firstly through the site selection methodology (as set out in Section 8) - which identifies sites which have access to existing services (thereby channelling development towards the main towns and villages and also by identifying potential new settlements compatible with York's clock face of villages which are able to provide essential services to support themselves. Secondly through the strategic approach to openness in the Green Belt (as set out in Section 4) which has informed the detailed boundaries and determines that areas which do not have access to two or more services should be kept permanently open in order to channel development to sustainable urban locations whilst also limiting sprawl.

Strategic Openness Assessment - Criteria 1-Land to keep permanently open

- 5.39 In setting the detailed boundaries of the Green Belt authorities must not include land which is **necessary to keep permanently open**¹⁸, as well as ensuring consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for **sustainable development**¹⁹.
- 5.40 As set out in Section 2 and the paragraphs above, the Local Plan's 'spatial shapers' underpin Policy SS1. The aim of the spatial strategy is that these **Spatial Shapers should be kept permanently open** as far as possible to reflect the unique characteristics that shape the way the city has been developed and rich countryside environment in which it sits.
- 5.41 In determining the detailed boundaries of the York Green Belt these 'shapers' and site selection suitability processes have been carried forward by identifying land that fulfils a strategic function in meeting the purposes of Green Belt (as set out Section 4). This strategic assessment has considered the evidence and associated qualities of broad parcels of land and how they perform a Green Belt purpose. It summarises that the land which needs to be kept permanently open is firstly that which contributes to the special character and setting of the historic city and its clock face of settlements (including by preventing the coalescence of settlements or areas), as well as those which act to prevent sprawl, and those areas which we can identify as performing a countryside function and therefore requiring defence from encroachment.
- 5.42 As outlined in Sections 7 and 8, spatial shapers have also been taken into account through the approach to site selection and sustainability appraisals. The site selection methodology behind the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Employment Land Review uses the shapers as the first three sieves in the first stage of the **suitability process** to establish the best sites for development by avoiding areas which it is necessary to keep permanently open. The fourth sieve of assessment recognises the importance of York's compact form and provision of facilities by scoring sites which maximise access to these or where development is large enough to create a hub of new facilities and thereby select the most **sustainable locations** for development.

¹⁸ NPPF (2012) paragraphs 79 and 85

¹⁹ NPPF (2012) paragraphs 85

Local Openness Assessment - Criteria 2 - Land to keep permanently open

- 5.43 The detailed examination of openness, in setting permanent detailed boundaries for the inner and outer limits of the York Green Belt, is undertaken through consideration of strategic issues alongside a local assessment using specific and granular information about the area and the land in question (including its use and function) and its connections to adjoining land uses.
- 5.44 While some of these local considerations relate to the 5 purposes as set out below they have been assessed broadly in relation to their contribution to overall openness:

Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and specialist character of historic towns: Openness is an important feature to the special character and setting of York. The form of spatial landscape features such as strays, ings and wedges, as well as the overall context of the city and its villages within a wider countryside setting, require protection. But also important to protect are the views, perceptions and connectivity of the countryside to the city as well as its unique features such as its compactness and strong urban form. Other aspects of openness can influence the setting of historic architectural character or important historical landmarks and assets.

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas: – The open areas in this sense are seen as the opposite of built up areas and can relate to the proximity, type, scale and densities of development and fulfil a role in preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another: keeping open areas between settlements maintains separate communities and distinct identities and prevents settlements from coalescing

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment: boundaries distinguish between what is built up and open, this can provide limits for where development is acceptable. Land uses which are more open can be protected while connections between populations with the countryside can be maximised by selecting the correct boundary.

Purpose 5: To assist in urban regeneration, encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land: keeping land permanently open and identifying tight boundaries to the urban areas, supports urban regeneration in areas outside the Green Belt in the face of development pressure.

- 5.45 The analysis of the 5 purposes at a local level as set out above leads to a natural subdivision in the features being investigated at a local level between those needing to be kept permanently open to protect the local historic setting of the city and those which are open and serve a countryside function or delineate between the urban and rural environments.

Local Openness Assessment - Criteria 2a - Protecting local historic assets and character

- 5.46 The most important aspects of openness for the York Green Belt are those which can have a bearing on the historical setting of the city. At a local scale consideration must be given to the contribution openness makes to the context and setting of the city. This can include the characteristics which are of strategic importance to the significance of York²⁰ such as its compactness, and landscape and setting. As well as the setting of landmark monuments and local assets such as conservation areas, listed buildings, locally important views and panoramas.
- 5.47 The local assessment draws in a wider evidence base in considering openness. For example, there are 35 designated conservation areas in York, each with their own individual character. While conservation areas offer their own form of protection to the land under their designation, the setting of the area is often important and can directly contribute to what makes them special. Where this abuts areas of open land it is therefore important that this openness is maintained as part of the historic character and setting of the city at a local level. The most important conservation area of all is that of the central historic core of York, while the boundary to this area is limited in its proximity to open land– views of the features protected within this area, and of the context of the city are designated as being of city wide importance.
- 5.48 York also has many other designated and non-designated heritage assets including seven historic parks and gardens, numerous designed landscapes, over 20 scheduled monuments and over 1,500 listed buildings, the settings of which also need to be considered.
- 5.49 Further to individual identified features, the characterisation of rural landscapes and urban townscapes also brings together historic and contemporary aspects of a place to help understand and appreciate it better. By understanding how landscapes have evolved, we can help to manage change and conserve features that give places their unique character. Two such studies which cover the York authority have been undertaken in conjunction with English Heritage's (as was) Characterisation programme.
- 5.50 A regional study of the 'North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Character' was carried out between 2005 and 2010 and involved identifying and describing historic components in the rural and urban landscape including evidence of the human forces which formed it. The results identified 14 broad character types such as settlement, military, industrial, unenclosed land, designed landscape etc. These were then subdivided into 185 more specific landscape character types.
- 5.51 A York Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2012 to 2013) [SD105] created a detailed study of the historic core and suburbs of York, up to the

²⁰ As set out in the Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103] and Section 8 of the Local Plan

outer ring roads (the A1237 and A64). The results outlined 76 Character Areas with associated statements.

- 5.52 The city also holds data within its Historic Environment Record database, a valuable resource which holds information on the city's archaeological finds, historic buildings and monuments, from a variety of sources.

Local Openness Assessment - Criteria 2b - Land serving a countryside function or the boundary between urban and rural environments

- 5.53 The countryside can be defined as land not in towns, cities, or industrial areas that is either used for farming or left in its natural condition. It can be argued that some open areas relate better as countryside than others. Some open land contains features of landscape character which warrant conservation or protection due to how they define the areas as countryside or how they relate to the character of the specific area.
- 5.54 While the landscape surrounding York does not at first glance appear to have significant variation in its character, it is only by studying it in detail those subtle variations become apparent and links are found to how the landscape has been formed by the city or helped shape the setting of the city today. A number of different landscape studies have been carried out at different levels of detail within the authority boundary:
- 5.55 The highest level landscape study was completed in 2011 and covered the County of North Yorkshire. The North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project broadly characterised land within the City of York Authority Boundary as Farmed Lowland and Valley Landscapes with 3 relevant subdivisions within the authority area covering, urban landscapes, vale farmland with plantation Woodland and heathland and River Floodplain each with various vulnerabilities and aspects that are important or require preservation.
- 5.56 In 1996 the Environmental Consultancy University of Sheffield were commissioned to analyse the landscape characteristics within the City of York authority boundary. The resulting York Landscape Appraisal identified 12 broad landscape character types within the authority along with the forces for change which might threaten them and recommendations for where the landscape should be protected or enhanced.
- 5.57 Between 2005 and 2010, North Yorkshire County Council, with extensive partnership support from English Heritage and all of the adjoining authorities (including York) undertook the North Yorkshire, York and the Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Character Study (HLC). This identified different categories of land such as 'Enclosed Land', 'Settlement' or 'Military' and within these identified HLC typologies to understand the specific historic character, time depth and legibility of the area.
- 5.58 Areas of open character can contribute to informing the detailed boundaries of the Green Belt by identifying the valuable areas close to the urban fringe that

need to be kept permanently open to protect the countryside from encroachment.

- 5.59 Areas which are open in nature can be identified using figure ground ordnance survey data and aerial photography prior to site visits. However, it is the use of land and its relationship with adjacent areas which can help to understand its role and function and if it needs to be kept permanently open as part of the countryside. Many of the open areas close to the urban area may be designated through the 2017 update to the open space study. Understanding the type of openspace and how it connects to the urban areas visually and through its context as well as through ease of accessibility and public rights of way can help inform a decision as to if the land is of an urban or rural nature. Land associated with a primary school such as playing fields or containing children's play equipment, with a strong boundary, may be considered to be part of the urban environment but more extensive secondary school pitches especially when separate from the School itself, or an area of semi natural space might be considered to form part of the wider countryside landscape depending on how it is enclosed or connects to the surrounding areas.
- 5.60 Features of openness and countryside, in contrast to urbanising influences, can be used to identify areas which are no longer open and define a boundary to limit urban sprawl and safeguard the countryside from encroachment by offering clarity to what is meant by the urban area and countryside to be kept open. Understanding where this boundary robustly lies facilitates the channelling of development within the built-up area. The York Historic Environment Characterisation Project completed in 2013 explores York's History and townscape in terms of its urban areas and their character in contrast to the wider countryside.

Permanence

- 5.61 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF sets out that one of the essential characteristics of Green belts is their permanence, and this is therefore a consideration in setting detailed boundaries.

Strategic Permanence –To endure beyond the Plan period

- 5.62 In setting the detailed boundaries of the Green Belt, authorities must be satisfied that they will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period²¹ and therefore establish their permanence by being capable of **enduring beyond the plan period**²².
- 5.63 NPPF (2019) at paragraph 39 (e) confirms that, when defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries

²¹ NPPF (2012) Paragraph 85

²² NPPF (2012) Paragraph 83

will not need to be altered at the end of the Plan period. The permanence of the Green Belt in this context is considered in part through the identification of development needs (see Section 7) and examining how the needs can be met (see Sections 7 and 8). The submitted York Local Plan proposes a 16 year plan period from 2017/18 to 2032/33 and proposes a Green Belt that will endure for a minimum of 20 years to 2037/38 and will not need to be altered at the end of the Plan period.

- 5.64 Several of the strategic sites identified in the submitted Local Plan have anticipated build out times beyond the fifteen year trajectory included within the plan; this coupled with a small windfall allowance and an approach to Green Belt predicated on boundaries enduring for a minimum of 20 years (5 years beyond the Plan period) mean that it is no longer necessary to designate safeguarded land, although some of the site boundaries may include land which was previously identified in his way.
- 5.65 This is considered by the Council to provide the required permanence for the Green Belt in the longer term. The approach reflects previous advice given to the Council. In January 2000 the Council received an interim view from its Local Plan Inspector on the plans proposed green belt boundary. The Inspector advised that the Council's position at that time – to establish a 'non-permanent' or 'interim' green belt and to undertake a formal green belt review immediately after the plans adoption, ran contrary to government guidance, which states that green belts should be 'permanent' - importantly advocating that they **should remain unchanged for at least 20 years..**
- 5.66 The submitted Local Plan allocates specific sites through policies EC1: Provision of Employment Land and H1: Housing Allocations to meet both housing and employment needs from 2017/18 to 2037/38 (5 years beyond the plan period). The approach is considered to accord with the objectives of policy. It also provides greater certainty than safeguarded land to both the local communities who have previously expressed concerns about the need for and concept of 'safeguarded land' and to developers/landowners in respect of the provision of sustainable sites which are suitable and deliverable in the context of the policy requirements as set out in the Plan. This timeframe for the Plan period and post plan period was tested through the Regulation 18 and 19 Consultations.

Local Permanence – Clear, recognisable boundary which is likely to be permanent

- 5.67 In setting the detailed boundaries of the Green Belt authorities must define boundaries clearly, using features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent²³. Setting a recognisable boundary which is likely to endure is important not only on the basis of NPPF, but also across all of the 5 purposes of the greenbelt to ensure that the land fulfilling these purposes is kept permanently open.

²³ NPPF (2012) Paragraph 85

- 5.68 In order to make boundaries recognisable it is important that they link to existing features. Ideally these should be ones which are identifiable both on a map and on the ground. Having 'rules' about the types of boundary the Green Belt will follow can also make it more consistent and therefore clearer.
- 5.69 Hard landscaping and major infrastructure can be argued to provide more permanent features, due to their expense and resistance to natural erosion and processes. However, features which are more natural but have long been established and therefore have already stood the test of time, also offer a type of permanence. Therefore the permanence of a boundary can be judged on its history and performance. However, given that Green Belt boundaries must endure over a period of many years into the future and enable the planned and measured growth of an area, any recent planning application should be given consideration and evaluated when determining the detailed boundaries in order to identify the most permanent boundary long term that won't need to be changed and offers the greatest strength.
- 5.70 The strongest Green Belt boundaries are those which take all of the above into consideration and can offer the greatest resilience to change or erosion thereby playing a greater role in supporting the purposes of Green Belt. One feature of resilience are those boundaries which layer more than one feature or attribute in the same location as they create a greater likelihood of enduring through change. Another is, where possible, for boundaries to follow the most continuous 'regular' or 'consistent' line, as irregular or softer boundaries can be more vulnerable to misinterpretation and erosion and therefore, would be less likely to restrict growth within the Green Belt.
- 5.71 As previously highlighted, the distinction between the urban and rural environments through clear defensible Green Belt boundaries has a role in preventing sprawl and coalescence as well as protecting the countryside from encroachment and encouraging urban regeneration. The Heritage Topic Paper Update (2014) [SD103] tells us that the city's compactness (accentuated by its containment within the York Outer Ring Road) as well as its landscape and setting (particularly the close proximity of the historic core and perimeter countryside and views of landmarks as well as the rural edge setting of the city viewed from the surrounding ring road) are features which need to be preserved. Where there is a clearly identifiable existing urban edge which can also form an acceptable Green Belt boundary, linking these two features can help to support all of the Green Belt purposes and importantly maintain the compact city and its important rural edge.

Summary

This section sets out the methodology used to define the detailed Green Belt boundary, based on a local definition of openness and permanence and evidence which describes the purpose of land within the Green Belt.

Section 6: Urban Areas in the General Extent of the Green Belts

- 6.1 In setting the detailed boundaries of the York Green Belt, as stipulated by the saved policies of the RSS, it is important to consider the full scope of which boundaries this should entail. NPPF (2012) Paragraph's 83 and 84 state that:

Para 83 - 'Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy.'

Para 84 - 'Authorities should consider 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'

Para85 – "When defining boundaries, Local authorities should: Not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open"

- 6.2 Analysis has already established that there is a main contiguous built up area of the City of York (Section 5 and Annex 3). It has also indicated that there are other concentrations of urban development in addition to this within the general extent of the Green Belt.
- 6.3 This section gives consideration to the additional urban areas in the general extent of the Green Belt to determine if a detailed Green Belt boundaries need to be established. The analysis has sought to determine:
- The location of Urban Areas within the General Extent
 - If those areas need to be kept permanently open as part of the Green Belt or inset within it
 - The proposed boundaries of those areas

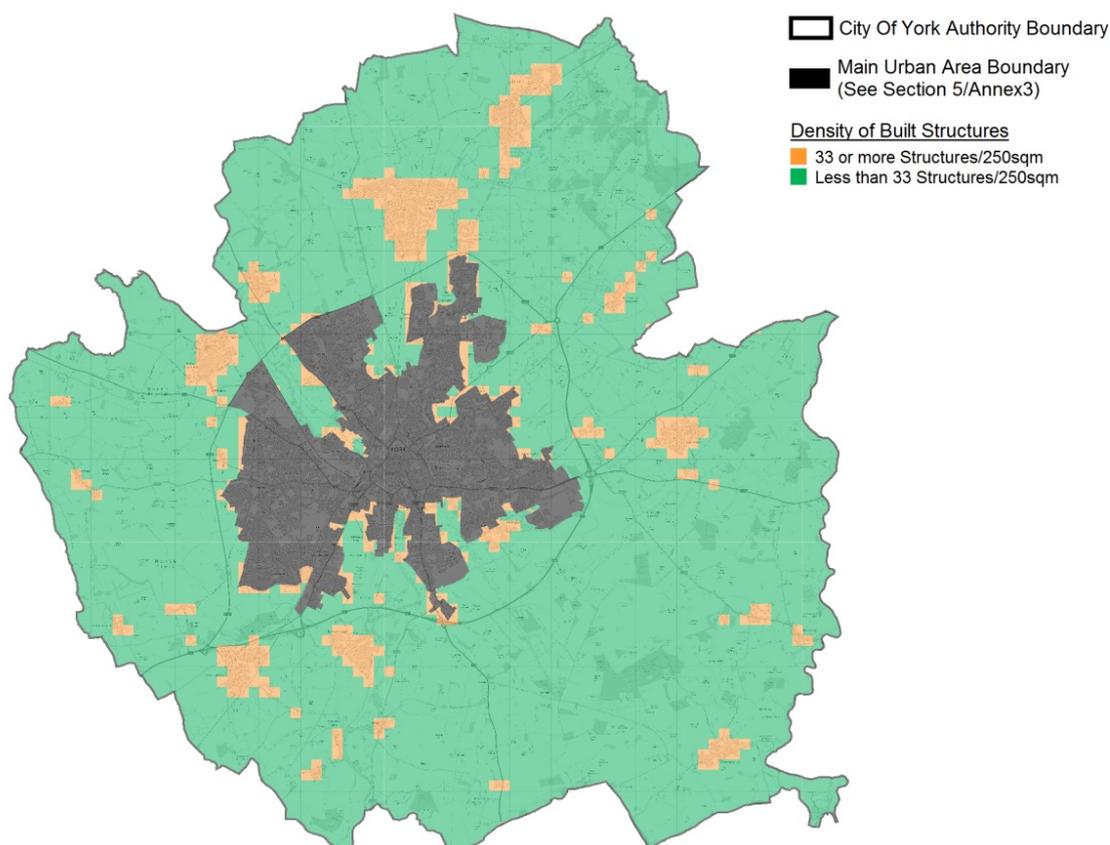
Identifying Urban Areas for assessment in the General Extent of the York Green Belt

- 6.4 The general extent of the York Green Belt includes a range of urban areas including the main York urban area, villages, industrial estates, hamlets, farmsteads, rural business parks, small groups of dwellings and isolated businesses/dwellings. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) rural-urban classification, published in August 2013, discusses how different settlement forms can be shown to have different historical geography definitions as well as typical density 'profiles'.

6.5 In order to establish a consistent approach to identifying the areas of the York Green Belt which are currently least open, a Geographic Information System (GIS) approach has been taken.

6.6 This approach divides the York Green Belt general extent within the authority boundary into a grid of equal 250m squares and analyses which squares contain more built structures than surrounding areas

Figure 16: Identifying density of Built Structures



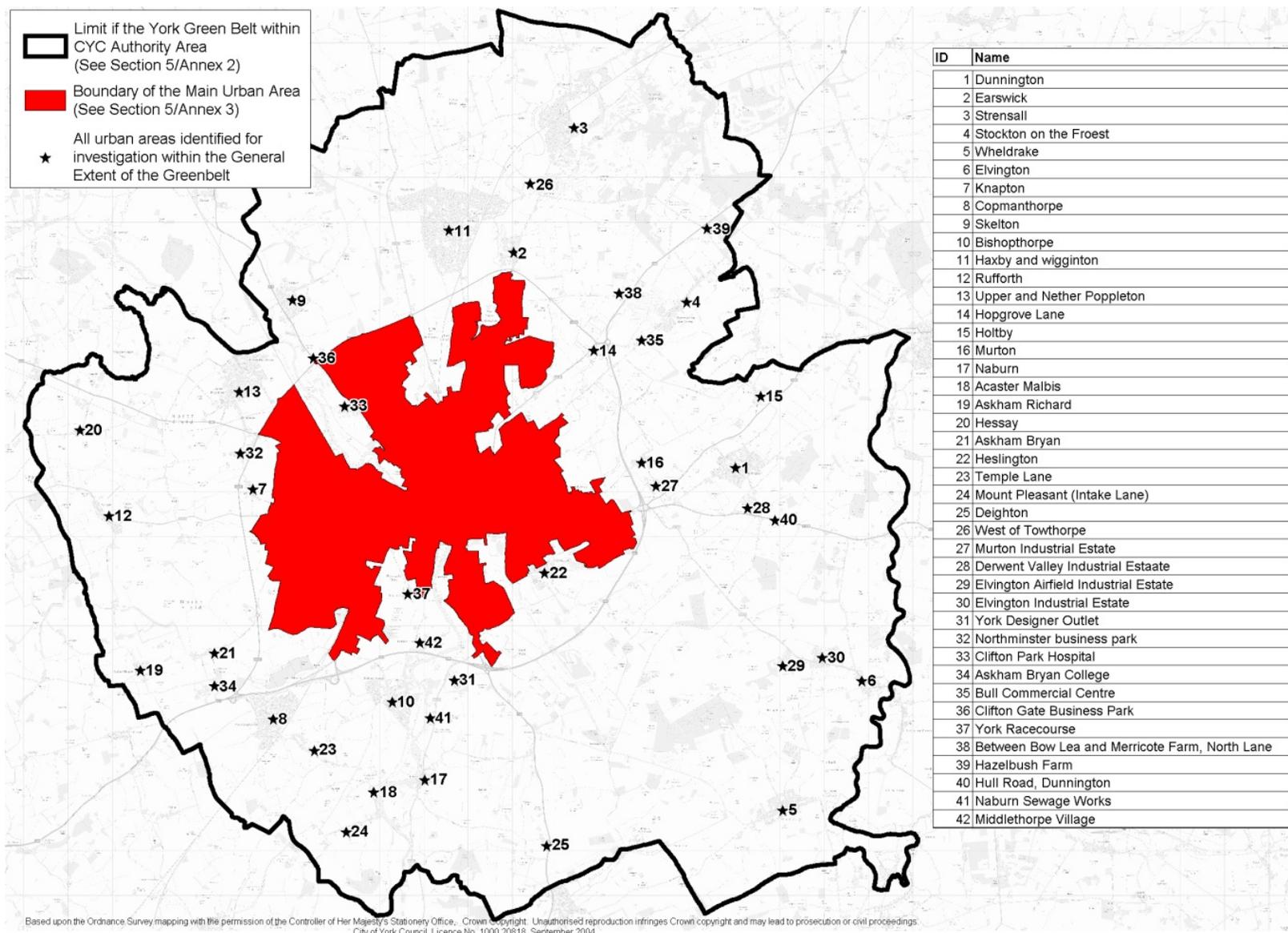
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6.7 In addition analysis of responses received through the Local Plan consultations identified two further areas not identified through GIS which required further analysis. These additional areas were:

- Designer Outlet
- Clifton Gate Business Park

6.8 In total 42 structure clusters were identified for investigation (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Urban areas identified for investigation within the General Extent of the Greenbelt



Assessing Open Character and the Contribution to the Openness of the Green Belt

6.9 NPPF (2012) paragraph 86 states

*'if it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the **important contribution** which the **open character of the village** makes to the **openness of the Green Belt**, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.'*

6.10 While the above test set out by NPPF specifically refers to villages, if major developed sites are of sufficient scale and do not possess an open character, it is not considered necessary for them to remain within the Green Belt. The test set out in Paragraph 86 has therefore been used to underpin the methodology for assessing all urban areas within the general extent of the Green Belt.

6.11 There are two aspects of paragraph 86 to consider. Firstly, whether the urban area has an open character, and secondly, whether this open character makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. Fulfilling the first part of the paragraph and exhibiting a somewhat open character, does not necessarily justify a village being included within the Green Belt and being governed by its policies.

6.12 Within the analysis, the description of the character of an area approaches the first part of paragraph 86 by considering the degree of openness, taking the following factors in to account:

- density of built/residential development as a whole and how this differs (or not) across the village area;
- extent of developed land;
- scale and form of development and how this changes (or not) across the village area taking into account types of dwellings, plot sizes and building heights;
- extent of open space or gaps in frontages;
- distinction between the built-up character of the village and surrounding open land; and
- topography and the presence of trees and hedgerows.

6.13 The analysis then considers the second part of paragraph 86 within its description of the character of an area by assessing whether an open character contributes to the openness of the Green Belt, by taking these extra considerations into account:

- the relationship between open or private amenity areas on the edge of or within the village and the surrounding Green Belt – for example whether

open countryside comes in to the village and whether open areas within the village are continuous with surrounding open agricultural or recreational land;

- the open/rural aspect of dwellings/buildings within the village; and
- views into and out of the village along its periphery and whether views in/out are restricted and/or obscured.

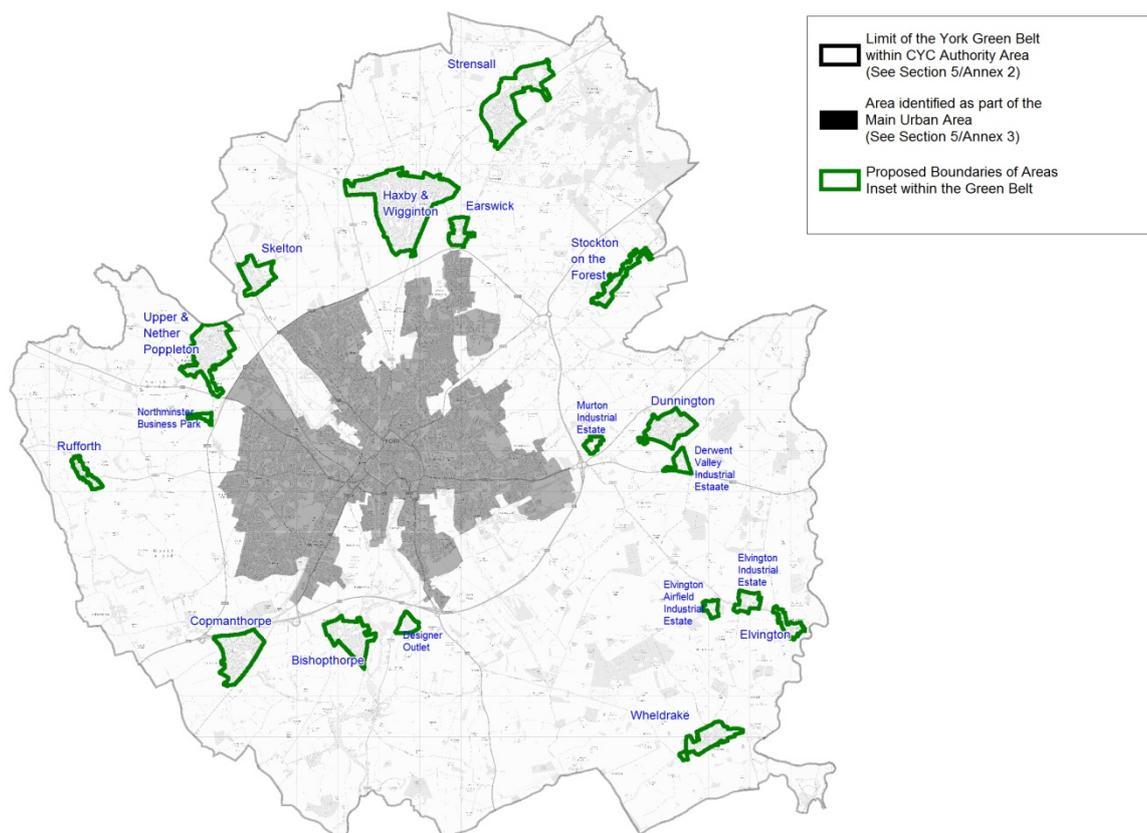
6.14 The detailed assessment of all 42 areas is included at Annex 4. In some cases the degree of openness or the contribution openness makes to the Green Belt is not uniform. In these cases planning judgement has been applied to make a judgement based on the context of available evidence and site visits where necessary. A conclusion has been drawn in each case as to whether an area should be included or inset from the general extent of the Green Belt and is summarised in the table below.

| Urban Areas | |
|---|--|
| Excluded from GB | Included in GB |
| Bishopthorpe | Acaster Malbis |
| Copmanthorpe | Askham Bryan |
| Derwent Valley Industrial Estate | Askham Bryan College |
| Dunnington | Askham Richard |
| Earswick | Bull Commercial Centre |
| Elvington | Clifton Gate Business Park |
| Elvington Airfield Industrial Estate | Clifton Park Hospital |
| Elvington Industrial Estate | Deighton |
| Haxby/Wigginton | Drome Road/Temple Lane |
| McArthur Glen Designer Outlet | Hazlebush Farm |
| Murton Industrial Estate/ York Auction Centre | Heslington |
| Northminster Business Park | Hessay |
| Rufforth | Hull Road - East of Derwent Valley Industrial Estate |
| Skelton | Knapton |
| Stockton on the Forest | Middlethorpe |
| Strensall | Holtby |
| Upper/Nether Poppleton | Hopgrove Lane |
| Wheldrake | Mount Pleasant |
| | Murton |
| | Naburn |
| | Naburn Sewage Works |
| | North Lane |
| | Towthorpe |
| | York Racecourse |

Defining Green Belt Boundaries around Urban Areas

- 6.15 As detailed in Section 3, the York Green Belt is setting detailed boundaries for the first time. This includes defining the inner edge of the Green Belt boundary where this abuts urban areas which are not of an open character and do not contribute to the essential openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.16 Where analysis determines that an urban area needs to be inset, the proposed boundary is based on the methodology set out in Section 5 and relates to features of openness and permanence.
- 6.17 The proposed boundaries presented in Annex 4 (and summarised overleaf) are based on current built development and do not account for the need to release land/sites in accordance with accommodating identified needs for growth and setting a permanent Green Belt. Issues on exceptional circumstances and the sites these can be applied to are set out in sections 7 and 8.

Figure 18: Proposed Boundaries of Urban Areas Inset within the Greenbelt



Summary

In defining the inner and outer boundaries of York's Green Belt, consideration has been given to existing urban areas within the Green Belt's general extent. This section describes the approach to identifying and assessing these areas and defining the detailed boundary of those to be inset.

Exceptional circumstances do not apply to the urban areas to be inset - assessments are made in the context of NPPF paragraph 86, in terms of open character and contribution to the openness of Green Belt and are not based on the potential for future expansion of the area.

The proposed detailed boundary around urban areas follows a consistent methodology to defining the inner boundary of the main urban area of York (section 5). The proposed boundaries of the urban areas, as presented in annex 4, are based on current built development and do not account for the need to release land/sites for the long term permanence of the Green Belt - issues and boundaries related to exceptional circumstances and the need to release land are presented in sections 7 and 8.

Section 7: Exceptional Circumstances

7a. National Policy Context

- 7.1 Under transitional arrangements, the York Local Plan is being examined against the requirements of the 2012 NPPF, paragraph 83 of which states that:

“Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.”

- 7.2 Neither the NPPF (2012) nor the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provide a definition or requirements for establishing ‘exceptional circumstances’. However, paragraph 84 of the NPPF does state that:

“When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider 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.”

- 7.3 In February 2017 the Government published its White Paper, ‘Fixing our Broken Housing Market’ which sought to retain a ‘high bar’ to the protection of Green Belt and to amend national policy so that it is transparent about what this means in practice and make it clear that Green Belt boundaries should only be amended when it can be demonstrated that all other reasonable options for meeting identified requirements have been examined fully.
- 7.4 The NPPF (2019) re-affirms at paragraph 136 that exceptional circumstances need to be fully evidenced and justified to alter established Green Belt boundaries.
- 7.5 Retained policies YH9 and YH1 of the RSS have established the general extent of the York Green Belt, a key task for the Local Plan is to define inner and outer boundaries of the Green Belt. Allocations for strategic sites are proposed in the Local Plan within the general extent of the Green Belt (see section 8). Removal of the site allocations from the general extent of the Green Belt is distinct from the separate process of defining boundaries. In the absence of specific guidance in the NPPF (2012) on this issue and to ensure

a robust approach site allocations have only been made in the general extent of the Green Belt where exceptional circumstances justify it.

- 7.6 The Local Plan's Green Belt approach has to demonstrate that NPPF (2012) paragraphs 83 and 84 have been properly taken in to account. The content of the following paragraphs 137 and 138 of the 2019 NPPF provides further explanation and guidance as to the testing of exceptional circumstances:

“Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, 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. (Paragraph 137)*

When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider 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. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also 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 138)

7b. Establishing the need for development

- 7.7 Housing growth and employment growth are key drivers for growth and change in York. In order to establish how much growth is required over the plan period, the Council commissioned evidence to determine the city's housing and employment needs.

Establishing Housing Needs

- 7.8 The City of York Housing Needs Update (2019) updates the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Addendum (SHMA) (2017) [SD050] and the original SHMA report (2016) [SD051/SD052] to consider a demographic starting point using the 2016 sub national population projections as a more robust data set. In translating the baseline demographic starting point of 484 dwellings per annum (dpa) into household growth and a dwelling requirement, GL Hearn developed an alternative household representation rate to account for constraints which were apparent in the 25-34yr olds households. Assumptions on this age group and 35-44yrs were altered to part return to the household formation rates seen in the 2008 based (pre-recession) projections. This gives an adjusted demographic requirement of 679 dpa.
- 7.9 In accordance with PPG applied under transitional arrangements GL Hearn have then considered whether it would be appropriate to consider any uplifts to account for economic growth or to improve housing affordability (market signals). They have calculated the housing need required to meet an economic growth of 650 jobs per annum (based on the Local Plan target underpinned by the Employment Land Review Update (2017) [SD063]). Using a series of assumptions including economic activity rates from the Office of Budget Responsibility, this results in an economic led need for housing of up to 790 dpa.
- 7.10 GL Hearn have also provided an updated analysis of housing market signals which show that house prices are relatively high in York and that housing affordability has been a significantly worsening issue over the last five years. York's affordable housing needs remains at 573 dpa. In accordance with NPPG an uplift to improve affordability is required. Considering the evidence GL Hearn proposes a 15% uplift. When applied to the demographic starting point (484 dpa) this 15% uplift would result in an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) of 557 dpa which is some way short of the economic led need of 790 dpa.
- 7.11 The Housing Needs Update report therefore concludes that the OAN in York is 790 dpa which would be sufficient to respond to market signals, including affordability adjustments as well as making a significant contribution to affordable housing needs. Only by providing this level of housing growth would the population be sufficient to meet the economic growth potential whilst ensuring that there will be improvements to household representative rates among younger persons.
- 7.12 Due to the forecast demographic change within the city without providing an upwards adjustment for economic growth, employment growth in the city could not be supported by the working age population. The only other alternative to support the economic growth would be too reliant on in-commuting of workers who reside in other neighbouring areas. This is not considered to be a sustainable option.

- 7.13 Members of the Council's Executive at the meeting on 7 March 2019 resolved that the recommended objectively assessed housing figure of 790 dpa be accepted.
- 7.14 The housing need update recommends an OAN of 790 dpa indicating the needs for the Plan to deliver a minimum of 790 dpa or 12,640 dwellings to the end of the plan period (2033).
- 7.15 The submitted Local Plan proposes a Green Belt that will endure for a minimum of 20 years to 2037/38 through allocating specific sites to meet both housing and employment needs from 2017/18 to 2037/38. This is achieved through allocating sufficient land through policies EC1: Provision of Employment Land and H1: Housing Allocations to meet these needs in the longer term, rather than through the use of safeguarded land. This approach is considered to provide more certainty both to the local communities who have previously expressed concerns about the need for and concept of 'safeguarded land' and to developers/landowners in respect of the provision of sustainable sites which are suitable and deliverable in the context of the policy requirements as set out in the Plan. This timeframe for the Plan period and post plan period was tested through the Regulation 18 and 19 Consultations.
- 7.16 Translated over the extended plan period to 2038 the updated OAN of 790 dpa indicates the need to deliver a minimum of 16,590 dwellings. It is considered that this numerical target should be treated as a minimum rather than a cap on housing land supply as the NPPF identifies the need for plans to be responsive to market signals and states that Local Authorities should identify sufficient housing land to 'provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land'.

Establishing a housing requirement

- 7.17 Having established the OAN it is necessary to translate this figure into a growth target for the purposes of plan-making this is referred to as the 'housing requirement'. The housing requirement should under normal circumstances reflect the OAN but can be adjusted upwards or downwards to support economic or other growth ambitions or downwards due to development constraints. Sufficient flexibility needs to be included within the housing requirement and site allocations to ensure that, as a minimum, the OAN can be met, even if individual sites fail to deliver against current expectations.
- 7.18 In translating the OAN into a 'housing requirement' we have also considered the level of un-met housing need in York in the five-year period 2012 to 2017. PPG is clear that 'the household projection estimate of need may require adjustment to reflect factors affecting local demography and household formation rates that are not captured in past trends'. It advises that this includes formation rates that have been suppressed historically by undersupply and worsening affordability.

- 7.19 The PPG also advises that assessments of housing need will need to reflect the consequences of past delivery rates and under supply as the household projections on which the demographic starting point is based does not reflect unmet housing need. It advises that Local Planning Authorities should take a view based on the available evidence of the extent to which household growth has been constrained by supply. Using supply indicators including the rate of new permissions relative to the planned number and the number of housing completions relative to the planned number authorities should assess the historic rate of development and if it indicates that actual supply has fallen below planned supply then future supply should be increased to reflect the likelihood of under delivery across the plan period.
- 7.20 The 2019 Housing Needs Update produced for the Council by GL Hearn has considered housing need across the period 2012 to 2037 using the latest demographic projections - the 2016 based national household projections. Given that household projections do not reflect unmet housing need the Council, in line with PPG, has also assessed net housing completions over the period 2012 to 2017 and calculated any under-supply against the OAN of 790 dwellings per annum. This analysis shows that over the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2017 there were 3,432 net housing completions (see table below). The OAN over this period was 3,950 dwellings (790 x 5) leaving a shortfall in actual supply of 518 dwellings.

| Year | Completions | New Build | Net Conversions | Net Change of Use | Demolitions | Net Dwelling Gain |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 2012-2013 | 540 | 441 | 9 | 61 | 29 | 482 |
| 2013-2014 | 374 | 302 | 3 | 54 | 14 | 345 |
| 2014-2015 | 523 | 378 | 7 | 132 | 10 | 507 |
| 2015-2016 | 1171 | 908 | 1 | 218 | 6 | 1121 |
| 2016-2017 | 996 | 420 | 21 | 543 | 7 | 977 |
| 2012-2017 | 3604 | 2449 | 41 | 1008 | 66 | 3432 |

- 7.21 The housing requirement has therefore been increased by 518 dwellings over the first 16 years of the plan period (2017/18 to 2032/33) by 32 dwellings to 822 dpa in order to ensure that the plan accurately reflects unmet historic housing need over the plan period. We do not consider that this historic unmet need is included in the household projections used to calculate the OAN and therefore have not double-counted this need.
- 7.22 Over the full Plan period to 2038 this means that there is a requirement to find sufficient land to provide for 17,102 dwellings (822 * 16 years plus 790 * 5 years).
- 7.23 NPPF urges Local Planning Authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing. Paragraph 47 states that 'Local Planning authorities should use the evidence base to ensure that the Local Plan meets the full OAN for market and affordable housing in the housing market area as far as is consistent with the policies in the framework including the identification of key sites which are critical to the delivery of the spatial strategy over the plan period. The Council

considers that the housing requirement put forward in the Local Plan is ambitious but realistic and necessary to ensure the retention of a sufficiently sized workforce to support the equally ambitious economic growth aspirations of the city. The housing requirement has been set at a level that supports the economic growth aspirations as set out in the economic strategy and Employment Land Review Update (2017) [SD063] whilst remaining realistic in the context of past delivery rates achieved over recent years.

Establishing needs for 'culturally suitable' accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people

- 7.24 In addition to meeting general housing needs the Council has a duty to provide specialist 'culturally suitable' accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (2017) [SD059] (GTAA) has provided a robust assessment of current and future need for accommodation for these communities in York reflecting revised policy requirements set out by the Government in 2015.
- 7.25 The findings show that three permanent pitches for Gypsy and Travellers that meet the planning definition (including 10% of the unknown need) and 3 permanent plots for Travelling Showpeople (as defined by Planning Policy for Traveller Sites) are required within City of York between 2017 and 2033.
- 7.26 The GTTA (2017) (Appendix D) also provides an assessment of need for households that do not meet the planning definition. This identifies the need for 33 pitches to meet the current need arising from concealed households, overcrowding or movement from bricks and mortar, future need arising from the older teenage children and new household formation over the plan period. In addition a further 11 pitches are identified to meet the remaining unknown need (assumed 90% of the total unknown need will not meet the planning definition). This brings the total need identified over the plan period to 44 pitches. These remaining households that do not meet the planning definition are required to be addressed through other means.
- 7.27 Households who do not travel for work purposes now fall outside the planning definition of a traveller. However Romany gypsies and Irish and Scottish travellers can demonstrate a right to culturally appropriate accommodation under the Equality Act 2010. In addition the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (section 124) repealed sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004, so that local housing authorities are no longer under a duty to carry out a separate assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district. Rather the requirements of the Housing Act 1985 were updated so that in fulfilling their duty to carry out periodical reviews of housing needs in their districts, local housing authorities must consider the needs of all people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs, Caravans and

Houseboats, was published in March 2016 and follows a similar process to traveller accommodation assessments.

- 7.28 The implication is therefore that the housing needs of any gypsy and traveller household who does not meet the planning definition of a traveller will still need to be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of the area and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans. Whilst it is no longer a requirement to include this assessment of need in the GTTA this work was undertaken by ORS in York's GTTA to assist the Council in identifying and meeting the needs from these households and provides a specific subset of the wider housing need identified in the SHMA.
- 7.29 The implications of these changes show a move towards assessing settled households who do not meet the planning definition of 'traveller' through a strategic housing market assessment or through the assessment of all householders in caravan and houseboat accommodation during the periodic housing review. This sits alongside the duty (in the Equalities Act 2010) to have due regard to the needs of ethnic groups including Gypsies and Travellers. Our SHMA 2016, SHMA Update 2017 and Housing Need Update (2019) have not specifically addressed the need for accommodation that is culturally suitable for ethnic Gypsies and Travellers or the accommodation needs of settled Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (not meeting the planning definition) who live on sites, as this has been undertaken as part of the GTTA 2017 undertaken by ORS.
- 7.30 The draft guidance applies to all those who have a need to live in a caravan or houseboat whatever race or origin including Romany gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, New Age travellers and travelling showpeople. Romany gypsies and Irish and Scottish travellers are recognised ethnic groups who have needs relevant to their ethnicity and culture and all the duties on public bodies under the Equalities Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998 and relevant case law apply. The guidance recognises that the housing needs of these groups may differ from the rest of the population due to their nomadic or semi-nomadic pattern of life, their preference for a caravan or houseboat dwelling, the movement between bricks and mortar and caravan/houseboat accommodation and their presence on unauthorised encampments. The guidance requires engagement with the community including the conduct of a specialist survey – as that carried for the council as part of the GTTA by ORS.
- 7.31 The guidance makes it clear that the assessment should include current and future needs including the number of households likely to have a specific need to be addressed, an indication of the demand for additional pitches and the level and types of accommodation for this need to be suitably addressed through, for example socially rented/private site provision, transit sites or stopping places and bricks and mortar housing.
- 7.32 We know from the findings of the GTAA (2017) that there is a need for 33 permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of traveller. There is also a likely need for 11 permanent pitches to meet the potential additional need of households of unknown planning status.

- 7.33 Taking this approach recognises the need for culturally suitable accommodation for settled Gypsy and Traveller households who no longer meet the planning definition of travellers. The Equalities Act 2010 requires Councils to take steps to meet the needs of people who have protected characteristics such as Romany Gypsies, and Irish and Scottish Travellers, some of whom will fall outside the planning definition of a traveller as they have permanently stopped travelling. Acknowledging their need and taking steps to provide pitches is considered to be a fair and pragmatic approach.
- 7.34 Although the Government has changed the definition of travellers, we know from the findings of the GTAA and our experience and knowledge of travellers in the area that there is still a need for traditional pitches and plots whether or not a person is actively travelling. Many travellers will travel annually for a few weeks but have a settled base for most of the year; they may have ceased travelling only temporarily or they may meet the definition of a person having a nomadic habit of life. We recognise the impact of not providing traveller pitches and plots results in unauthorised encampments and developments and the associated enforcement action and appeals, or travellers resorting to living on the roadside and we want to take a responsible approach to address this. Identifying travellers accommodation needs (both for those households that meet the planning definition and those that do not) and identifying sites to help meet their accommodation needs is considered to be a sensible and sound way forward to be tested through the Plan examination.
- 7.35 The Council has examined options for meeting the assessed need for gypsy and travellers and travelling showpeople who do and do not meet the planning definition. Assessment work has identified two suitable sites within the urban area at the existing gypsy and traveller sites at James Street, Layerthorpe and Water Lane, Clifton. In order to fully meet the need for the three additional pitches for those gypsy and travellers that meet the planning definition the Plan seeks to provide three additional pitches within the existing gypsy and traveller sites which includes the two sites in the York main urban area and the site at Outgang Lane, Osbaldwick.
- 7.36 For travelling showpeople there is a total need for 3 additional plots over the plan period which includes the plot with temporary planning permission at the Stables, Elvington. This is split into two plots needed in the years 2016 to 2021 and one plot in the remainder of the plan period. Assessment work has identified no capacity within the York main urban area or villages (outside of the green belt) to meet this need.
- 7.37 As a specific sub set to the wider housing need of 790 homes per annum established through the SHMA there is an additional need for 44 pitches or caravan accommodation to be provided to meet the needs of those gypsy and travellers who do not currently meet the planning definition. The Council has established this need through a specialist survey as specified in the Draft Guidance on the periodical review of housing needs, Caravans and Houseboats published in March 2016. The Equalities Act 2010 requires Councils to take steps to meet the needs of people who have protected

characteristics such as Romany Gypsies, and Irish and Scottish Travellers, some of whom will fall outside the planning definition of a traveller as they have permanently stopped travelling in culturally suitable accommodation. Assessment work has identified no capacity within the York main urban area or villages (outside of the Green Belt) to meet this need.

- 7.38 It is not be possible to meet these identified needs for gypsy and travellers and travelling showpeople in York within land outside of the Green Belt and there will therefore be a shortfall in the provision of suitable accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and travelling show people.

Employment Needs

- 7.39 It is important that the Plan helps to deliver the city's economic ambitions by providing sufficient land to meet the level of growth set out in the Plan's spatial strategy (Policy SS1: Delivering Sustainable Growth for York). The spatial strategy sets out that the Local Plan will seek to provide sufficient land to accommodate around 650 new jobs per annum that will support sustainable economic growth, improve prosperity and ensure that York fulfils its role as a key economic driver within both the Leeds City Region and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas. Technical work on economic growth has been carried out by Oxford Economic Forecasting and has been sensitivity tested using the Regional Econometric Model (REM) produced by Experian. This work suggests that over the period 2017 to 2038 around 650 additional jobs could be created in the city per annum. The projection shows particularly strong growth in the professional and technical services, accommodation and food services and wholesale and retail sectors. This is consistent with the ambitions of the York Economic Strategy (2016) YES [SD070], as encapsulated in the Local Plan vision.
- 7.40 The Employment Land Review Update (2017) [SD063] updates the objectively assessed employment needs, the demand for employment and the land supply to accommodate the identified need. City of York Council commissioned econometric forecasting by Oxford Econometric (OE) to establish York's future employment needs upon which the Council has based its land supply / site allocations in the Local Plan. This work has also been sensitivity tested using the REM produced by Experian. Demand has been calculated using a well established method of converting econometric forecasts into floorspace/employment land requirements. The starting point for this work was job growth forecasts by OE which included a baseline scenario and two further scenarios – scenario 1 which was based on higher migration and faster UK recovery and Scenario 2 which was based on re-profiled local sector growth. Scenario 2 was chosen as the appropriate economic growth target for York as it reflects the economic policy priorities of the Council as set out in the YES to drive up the skills of the workforce and to encourage growth in businesses which will utilise higher skilled staff.
- 7.41 The OE forecasts indicate job growth to be around 650 jobs per annum over the plan period. To sensitivity test the 2015 OE projections, the latest Experian economic forecasts used within the REM have been analysed. In

summary, the Experian model broadly supports the original growth projections included in the OE 2015 model. The overall forecasts for growth in jobs that is set out in Policy SS1 has been disaggregated into the different economic sectors and converted into floorspace requirements using widely recognised job density and plot ratio assumptions. These calculations include an allowance for existing commitments arising from unimplemented planning permissions.

- 7.42 It is also recognised that it is important for the Plan to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility within the land supply to provide flexibility in the choice of premises and the loss of existing and now outdated buildings. The detailed analysis that underpins this work can be found in the Employment Land Review (ELR) (2016) [SD064]. The ELR Update (2017) has adjusted floorspace requirements to take account of development between 2012 and 2017 and to reflect the plan period of 2017 to 2038. A 5% vacancy factor and an additional two year land supply to allow for time for developments to complete has also been added to calculations.
- 7.43 This leads to an overall requirement in 2017-2038 for 231,239 sqm of employment floorspace, of which the largest demand is created by B1a (office) floorspace at 107,081 sqm to 2038. The second largest demand is created through B8 uses, at 84,740 sqm.

Educational Needs

- 7.44 To contribute to making York a world class centre for education it is vital to provide the quality and choice of learning and training opportunities to meet the needs of children, young people, adults, families, communities and employers. The Local Plan has a role to help meet this vision by providing sufficient land to enable the Council to support parents and families through promoting a good supply of strong educational facilities to reflect the aspiration and needs of local communities. It is important to ensure that facilities at the city's further education establishments at York College and Askham Bryan College and the two universities at University of York and York St John University meet the requirements of modern education establishments over the Plan period.

Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education

- 7.45 The Plan seeks to provide sufficient land to provide for the delivery of pre-school, primary and secondary education to meet the identified needs and to address deficiencies in existing facilities. This will include the provision of extensions to existing schools or the provision of new schools to support the identified housing needs over the plan period. With regard to the provision of educational infrastructure, and in particular the need for additional land for new schools, work undertaken by the Council has established that much of the demand for additional school places in the early part of the plan period between 2017 and 2023 is localised and can be addressed by adding places in to existing provision rather than generating the need to build new schools.

7.46 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2018) [SD12] shows a new primary school to be provided in site ST1 (British Sugar/Manor School) which is within the York main urban area. However, as set out above, there is not sufficient land within the main urban area and villages (outside of the green belt) to fully meet the identified housing needs over the Plan period. The educational needs arising from this housing demand will need to be considered and strategic housing sites identified within the green belt will need to provide for the associated educational needs within any future site allocations to build the required education facilities or for appropriate contributions to existing schools where this has been identified as appropriate.

7.47 Assessment of future needs for secondary school provision based on the forecast demographic change has shown that there may be a requirement for a new secondary facility in the longer term (post 2023) in the east of the city. However, as a result of significant uncertainties arising from demographic changes and the parental choice factor it is not considered that there is sufficient evidence of need at this point in time to justify a specific site allocation to meet this potential need. The Plan has identified a broad location to the east of the city and it is considered that this land will be provided either through the reconfiguration of existing school sites and/or through the land required through strategic site allocations to meet the identified housing need.

York College and Askham Bryan College

7.48 The continued success of York College and Askham Bryan College is supported through the Plan including the future expansion of their teaching, administration and research opportunities and student accommodation at their existing sites and campuses.

York College

7.49 As the largest educational provider for 16-19 yr olds in the region, the continued success of York College will need to be supported over the plan period. The anticipated growth at York College and the need for the continued delivery of its facilities on the existing site, in a sustainable location on the edge of the main York urban area, will require additional land that is currently within the green belt to allow the expansion of the existing built development beyond the existing site boundary. Sufficient land will need to be identified to facilitate the future growth of the college and the continued delivery of facilities at one location.

Askham Bryan College

7.50 Askham Bryan College specialises in a wide range of subject areas offering entry level courses, apprenticeships, diplomas and BSc degrees. The site is located within the Green Belt. It is considered important to maintain the current Green Belt status of the land and any future development must not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.

York St John University

7.51 The main York St John campus at Lord Mayors Walk is within York's main urban area. The development and re-development of the campus

will be suitable, provided that it is limited to higher education and related uses, and its design takes account of the sensitive location of the campus and its setting. There is a recognised need to support the provision of additional student housing in locations that are well related to the main campus. This need is proposed to be met through site SH1 (Land at Heworth Croft) which is within the main urban area. In addition the need for additional land for sports uses to support the universities development of a centre for sporting excellence is identified in the Plan and this will be provided at Northfield, Haxby Road which is within the main urban area.

York University

- 7.52 The University of York retains a high profile in both the UK and the rest of the world. Its status is reflected in the high demand for student places and it is projected that growth in student numbers will continue over the plan period. Whilst the continuing development of the University of York's West and East campuses is supported it is considered that the University will not be able to continue to grow beyond 2023 without an expansion of the existing Campus East. As one of the leading higher education institutions, the University needs to continue to facilitate growth within the context of its landscaped setting which gives it its special character and quality. This is required in order to guarantee its future contribution to the need for higher education and research and to the local, regional and national economy. It is considered that further expansion land to Campus East will be required to enable the key LEP priorities to be realised, to support the York Economic Strategy and the city's ambitions to be a competitive city and to contribute to the Local Plan's vision to support sustainable economic growth.

7c. Assessment of other reasonable options for meeting the established need for development

Consideration of spatial principles

- 7.53 As set out in Section 2 of this Addendum, the Local Plan's spatial strategy uses location 'shapers' to ensure development is focussed in the most suitable and sustainable locations in York. The key shapers for York reflect unique characteristics that shape the way the city has been developed, and should be respected in locating future development. In order to determine the most suitable and sustainable approach, the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) at the Preferred Options stage (2013) considered options for which factors should be included. The options considered were:

- Option 1 Prioritise social and economic spatial principles
- Option 2 Prioritise environmental spatial principles
- Option 3 Take a balanced approach to the identified spatial principles
- Option 4 Prioritise viability and deliverability of development

- 7.54 The preferred approach was Option 3, which it was anticipated would help to protect and enhance the city's built and natural environmental assets, avoiding significant negative effects although it acknowledged that, in order to meet community needs and deliver economic growth, new development may place some pressure on these existing assets. This balanced approach would be expected to deliver new development that is well served, accessible and supports the use of sustainable public transport.
- 7.55 The preferred approach was transposed into the Spatial Strategy in the emerging Local Plan. The SA (2013) [SD007] identified that the strategy broadly reflects York's sub-regional role in the Leeds City Region and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP and seeks to ensure that the city is a key economic driver and retail, service and transport hub; and that its housing needs are met within the local authority area whilst conserving and enhancing the city's historic and natural environment.
- 7.56 Whilst the plan has evolved, Policy SS1: Delivering Sustainable Development continues to promote a balanced approach and sets the overarching growth and location principles for any development. This policy also sets out one of the Local Plan's spatial principles as that *"where viable and deliverable, the re-use of previously developed land will be phased first"*.

Spatial Distribution

- 7.57 City of York Council has identified and examined fully all reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development through the preparation of the Local Plan, taking into consideration drivers to growth and the outcomes of public consultation. Four options for the spatial distribution of growth were considered at the Local Plan Preferred Option Stage, consistent with the Spatial Strategy principles set through the preceding Core Strategy process. The SA of the Preferred Options Local Plan was undertaken jointly by City of York Council and consultants, AMEC. This was published alongside the Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document in summer 2013. Key to the options development for spatial distribution were the established 'spatial shapers' set through the Core Strategy; including Historic character and setting, flood risk and green infrastructure. The four options considered for the spatial distribution of growth at the Preferred Option Stage, consistent with the Core Strategy principles and emerging spatial strategy were:
- Option 1: Prioritise development within and/or as an extension to the urban area and through the provision of a single new settlement;
 - Option 2: Prioritise development within and/or as an extension to the urban area and through provision in the villages subject to levels of services;
 - Option 3: Prioritise development within and/or as an extension to the urban area and through the provision of new settlements;
 - Option 4: Prioritise development within and/or as an extension to the urban area along key sustainable transport corridors.

- 7.58 At this stage, it was considered that the preferred option (Option 1) would help to define the role and economic priorities of the York Sub Area, and the spatial distribution of development was expected to meet overall housing and employment land requirements for the City. When assessed as part of the SA none of the reasonable alternatives were considered to perform better overall in sustainability terms, than the preferred option that comprise the proposed spatial strategy.
- 7.59 As part of refining the approach, further consideration was given to changes in the drivers of growth and the outcomes of public consultation and the impact on the spatial distribution/ boundaries of potential land use allocations. Notably, concerns were raised in relation to the boundaries of draft allocations by statutory bodies. Relevant to spatial distribution was Historic England's response that the portfolio of potential allocations identified, specifically some of the large urban extensions, were harmful to York's historic character and setting as they did not reflect the historic settlement pattern of a compact urban form surrounded by a clock face of smaller settlements.
- 7.60 City of York Council worked with Historic England to understand its concerns relating to the draft allocations through workshops and the Heritage Impact Assessment process. As a result of this, several of the allocations became free standing settlements as opposed to urban extensions to ensure that York's urban area remained compact and new settlements fit with the existing settlement pattern. As a result, the spatial distribution was refined and the option taken forward in the Local Plan was option 3 above, to prioritise development within and/or as an extension to the urban area and through the provision of new settlements.
- 7.61 The approach to prioritise development in this way has been endorsed by Historic England, most recently in its response to Local Plan Publication consultation (2018), which states: *"We welcome the intention to limit the amount of growth which is proposed around the periphery of the built-up area of the City. Such a strategy will help to safeguard a number of key elements which have been identified in the Heritage Topic Paper as contributing to the special character and setting of the historic city. These include its compact nature, the views towards the City from the ring road and the relationship of the City to its surrounding settlements...(whilst acknowledging impact on the openness of the Green Belt in those locations) a strategy in which part of York's development needs are met in new free-standing 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."*

Making as much use as possible of suitable Brownfield sites and underutilised land

Site threshold

- 7.62 The Council has sought to ensure that a wide range of sites have been identified and assessed for their potential for housing and employment use, including Brownfield and underutilised land. As part of the approach the Council took a proactive approach to identifying potential sites for development. Although the national threshold for site identification is 0.25ha, the Council lowered this threshold for identifying sites to 0.2 ha and above in order to consider as many as possible opportunities for development and to recognise the contribution that small sites can make to the overall supply of sites. In addition, the Council also prioritised the NPPF's requirement to ensure deliverability and therefore, only considered sites which had a willing land owner or had previously been considered for this development use.

Identification of sites

- 7.63 All identified sites of 0.2ha or above were taken through a site selection process and are included in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2018) [SD 049A] and ELR (2016) [SD064], where applicable. The following sources of supply are reflected in the reports:
- Site submitted through the "Call for Sites" consultation and subsequent Local Plan consultations.
 - Extant housing and employment planning permissions.
 - Former allocations which have not been developed out.
 - For employment only- infill on existing business parks and industrial estates.
- 7.64 The site selection methodology underpinning the SHLAA and ELR sets out a two-stage **suitability process** that was undertaken in order to establish the potential sites most suitable for development, this comprised of Stage 1: Sustainable Location Assessment and Stage 2: Technical Officer Group. Key to this method for identifying suitable sites was recognition for character and form of York provide an overarching narrative for the factors which shape growth and the choices we make in how we accommodate the growth. It was therefore important that the spatial strategy shapers and environmental characteristics of York formed the primary sieve criteria. In addition, it was important to reflect York's compact form with a relatively extensive public transport system in relation to its size and good provision of community facilities. Opportunities to maximise access to existing facilities with close proximity were also therefore included. Stage 1 was a desktop assessment using GIS based data to accurately determine the site's location relative to the spatial principle criteria including:
- Criteria 1: Conserving environmental assets (Historic character and setting, floodplain, ancient woodland and nature conservation designations).

- Criteria 2: Retaining existing openspace.
- Criteria 3: Minimising Greenfield development in areas of high flood risk (floodzone 3a).
- Criteria 4: Access to transport and services.

- 7.65 Sites which were assessed as being outside of criteria 1-3 areas were taken forward to criteria 4, which comprised of detailed map-based analysis using 400m and 800m walking distance (straight line distance) to transport routes and existing services. A scoring system was also applied to criteria 4 to ensure only those sites with good access were taken forward for consideration as site allocations. Where sites passed criteria 1-4, specialist Technical Officers from around the Council provided site specific comments which further sieved out the most suitable sites.
- 7.66 It should be noted that the approach to sites over 30ha included additional consideration for whether community facilities and transport access could be included in the scheme in order to create sustainable settlements.

Assessment of Windfalls

- 7.67 Windfall sites, as defined in the NPPF (2012) are: "Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process – they normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available." These unidentified sites are typically not allocated for development or highlighted within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. In taking a proportionate approach to identifying land for development in the Local Plan only sites above the site threshold 0.2ha have been identified as draft allocations.
- 7.68 The Council has assessed the trends in the historic rate of windfall delivery along with changes of use and conversions across the entirety of City of York Council area. This assessment aimed to understand the potential for development on very small sites below the 0.2ha allocation threshold. The analysis is set out in the Windfall Allowance Technical Paper produced in July 2016 [SD055] as part of the evidence base to support the City of York Local Plan Preferred Sites Consultation. This paper has subsequently been updated to 1st April 2017 and is included at Annex4 to the SHLAA [SD049A].
- 7.69 The Windfall Assessment identifies increasing trends over both the longer and shorter term for conversions and changes of use completions. In light of relaxed permitted development rights relating to office conversions being made permanent and evidence of substantial numbers of unimplemented consents from this source of housing supply there is a qualified anticipation that this upward trend could well continue.
- 7.70 Analysis of housing completion figures indicates that, historically, a considerable element of York's housing supply (more than half of all completions during the last 10 years - 2007-2017) has been provided through un-identified windfall sites. The figure for windfalls proposed to be projected

forward is 169 dwellings per annum from year 3 of the housing trajectory to ensure that there is no double counting with extant permissions. This supply from projected windfalls provides a supply of 3,042 dwellings over the full plan period to 2038 The inclusion of a qualified allowance for windfall within the Local Plan's housing supply trajectory serves to minimise the need for new Local Plan allocations within the general extent of York's green belt.

7d. Identifying the shortfall

- 7.71 In section 7b we have established a need to deliver a minimum housing requirement of 17,102 new homes over the lifetime of the plan (21 years) and 231,239 sqm of employment land in the ELR. In section 7c we have set out the thorough assessment of other reasonable needs for meeting the established need through consideration of the spatial distribution of sites, maximising the use of Brownfield land and underutilised land and including a qualified windfall allowance based on analysis of historic trends.
- 7.72 In identifying suitable, available and deliverable sites for development through the SHLAA and ELR, **we have identified the capacity for 6502 dwellings (108 ha) and 108,900 sqm employment land to be accommodated on sites within urban area outside of the Green Belt over the next 20 years.** These sites are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Identified sites within urban areas outside of the green belt

| Location | ALLOCATION | SITE NAME | Site size (ha) | Potential Residential Units | Potential Employment SQM |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Urban | H1 | Former Gas Works, 24 Heworth Green | 3.54 | 336 | |
| Urban | H3 | Burnholme School | 1.90 | 72 | |
| Urban | H5 | Lowfield School | 3.64 | 162 | |
| Urban | H7 | Bootham Crescent | 1.72 | 86 | |
| Urban | H8 | Askham Bar Park & Ride | 1.57 | 60 | |
| Urban | H10 | The Barbican | 0.96 | 187 | |
| Urban | H20 | Former Oakhaven EPH | 0.33 | 56 | |
| Urban | H22 | Former Heworth Lighthouse | 0.29 | 15 | |
| Urban | H23 | Former Grove House EPH | 0.25 | 11 | |
| Urban | H46 | Land to North of Willow Bank and East of Haxby Road, New Earswick | 2.74 | 104 | |
| Urban | H52 | Willow House EPH, Long Close Lane | 0.20 | 15 | |
| Urban | H55 | Land at | 0.20 | 20 | |

| Location | ALLOCATION | SITE NAME | Site size (ha) | Potential Residential Units | Potential Employment SQM |
|---|------------|--|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Layorthorpe | | | |
| Urban | H56 | Land at Hull Road | 4.00 | 70 | |
| Urban | H58 | Clifton Without Primary School | 0.70 | 25 | |
| Urban | ST1 | British Sugar/Manor School | 46.3 | 1,200 | |
| Urban | ST2 | Civil Service Sports Ground Millfield Lane | 10.40 | 266 | |
| Urban | ST4 | Land Adjacent to Hull Road | 7.54 | 211 | |
| Urban | ST5 | York Central | 35.0 | 1,700 | 100,000 sqm |
| Urban | ST16 | Terry's Extension Site – Terry's Clock Tower (Phase 1) | 2.18 | 22 | |
| Urban | ST16 | Terry's Extension Site – Terry's Car Park (Phase 2) | | 33 | |
| Urban | ST16 | Terry's Extension Site – Land to rear of Terry's Factory (Phase 3) | | 56 | |
| Urban | ST17 | Nestle South (Phase 1) | 2.35 | 263 | |
| Urban | ST17 | Nestle South (Phase 2) | 4.70 | 600 | |
| Urban | ST32 | Hungate (Phases 5+) | 2.17 | 328 | |
| Urban | ST36 | Imphal Barracks, Fulford Road | 18.0 | 600* | |
| Urban | E8 | Wheldrake Industrial Estate | 0.45 | | 1485 sqm |
| Urban | E9 | Elvington Industrial Estate | 1 | | 3,300 sqm |
| Urban | E10 | Chessingham Park, Dunnington | 0.24 | | 792 sqm |
| Urban | E11 | Annamine Nurseries, Jockey Lane | 1 | | 3,300 sqm |
| <p>* Imphal Barracks has the capacity to deliver 769 dwellings overall. However, within the extended plan period to 2037/38 it will deliver 600 homes as set out in the CYC Housing Trajectory (Figure 6 - SHLAA, 2018). The remaining 169 dwellings will be delivered post 2038.</p> | | | | | |

Housing shortfall

- 7.73 As set out in the SHLAA (2018) [SD049] the detailed housing trajectory incorporates a non-implementation rate to ensure that the Plan provides a realistic and deliverable housing supply against the assessed needs. The

detailed trajectory has been updated to take account of the update to the OAN and the housing requirement as detailed in section 7b above.

- 7.74 The trajectory details that there are 3,578 dwellings with extant planning applications (at 1st April 2017). As set out in the SHLAA it is considered reasonable to assume that a proportion of these permissions will not go on to be developed for a variety of reasons. When considering the use of a non-implementation rate a balance is required to ensure that the most appropriate figure is applied using a reasoned judgement and that the supply is neither over or under estimated. The local evidence base (SHLAA Annex 5, 2018) demonstrates that it is considered reasonable to apply a non-implementation rate in York. Analysis of historic planning consents identified a lapse rate of 7% but this historic rate does not include many large sites for which there is limited evidence of historic delivery in York. Furthermore responses received through the Housing Implementation Survey suggested that a rate of 10% was considered reasonable. A figure of 10% also aligns with similar rates found 'sound' in a number of Inspectors decisions at examination.
- 7.75 The SHLAA applies a 10% non-implementation rate to both extant planning permissions and site allocations identified for housing development. This means that the total identified housing supply through these sources is as follows:

| |
|--|
| Total housing requirement (2017-2038) inclusive of inherited shortfall – 17,102 |
| Extant planning permission @ 1st April 2017 – 3,578 |
| Less 10% non-implementation rate – 3,220 |
| Windfall allowance (2017-2038) – 3,042 |
| Sites identified within urban areas (outside green belt) – 6,502 |
| Less 10% non-implementation rate – 5,852 |
| <u>Total remaining shortfall – 4,988 dwellings</u> |

- 7.76 It is clear that in order to accommodate the established needs for housing as identified through the evidence base other options for meeting this need will need to be considered.

Employment shortfall

- 7.77 The ELR has established a need for 231,239 sqm of employment land over the next 20 years to 2038. The ELR has also identified capacity for the provision of 108,877 sqm employment land on sites within the urban area outside of the greenbelt.

Total employment requirement (2017-2018) – 231,239 sqm

Sites identified within urban areas (outside of green belt) – 108,877 sqm

Total remaining shortfall – 122,362 sqm

- 7.78 It is clear that in order to accommodate the established needs for employment as identified through the evidence base other options for meeting this need will need to be considered.

7e. Analysis of other options to meet identified shortfall without using green belt land

Optimising the density of development - Housing Density

- 7.79 The optimisation of densities has been inherent in both the assessment of sites and the policy approach in the Publication Draft Local Plan.
- 7.80 Densities reflecting different locations and public transport accessibility have been used in the viability assessment of potential sites. The Local Plan Viability Study (draft 2014 [SD125] updated 2018 [CD018]) set out an archetype approach to determining housing numbers on sites less than 5ha (non-strategic sites). These assumptions reflected different locations of sites (city centre/city centre extension, urban, suburban and village/rural) and the size of site (large, medium and small). For strategic sites (over 5ha) a predominantly bespoke approach is taken to reflect the site characteristics and detailed work undertaken, such as masterplanning.
- 7.81 The Publication Draft Local Plan Policy H2, Density of Residential Development, sets out differential net densities to ensure the efficient use of land and help maintain local services and public transport provision. The density requirements in Policy H2 reflect different density zones and distances from high frequency public transport corridors.
- 7.82 Local Plan policy is guided by ongoing monitoring of housing delivery, to identify trends and inform strategy. Monitoring of housing density delivered over the preceding 10 year period shows²⁴ that development density in the City Centre and Urban zones has remained consistently high (City Centre: 119 dwellings per hectare (dph) / Urban zone: 50 dph).
- 7.83 To optimise development density citywide, Local Plan Policy H2 sets challenging targets across all housing zones; in the sub-urban zone (including Haxby and Wigginton) this sets a plan target of 40 units/ha against a 10 year average of 31 dph. Similarly, in York's rural area and villages the Plan proposes a target of 35 units/ha against 10 year trends showing around 12 dph.

²⁴ CYC Monitoring 2008/9 to 2017/18. Data relates to sites of 0.2ha or greater (the threshold for allocations), excludes conversion/change of use, and includes all purpose built, privately managed student accommodation (cluster units).

Optimising the density of development - Employment Density

- 7.84 Different types of business activity require different building types and site layouts, both of which affect the way a site is used and how much development can be accommodated on a specific site. Most business uses in new buildings, except office type activity, tend to occupy single storey premises. In order to determine the floorspace quantum for each employment allocation, the site size (in hectares) has been translated using an average of 3,300 sqm of floorspace per hectare.

Discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development

- 7.85 The City of York Local Plan Submission Draft, Statement to demonstrate compliance with the Duty to co-operate (April 2018) [CD020] sets out that City of York Council has a long history of joint working and co-operation with its neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders to achieve better spatial planning outcomes.
- 7.86 Evidence demonstrates that York's housing market extends beyond the authority boundary. Officers have explored with neighbouring authorities the potential to accommodate part of York's housing need outside the City of York Council area, given the wider housing market area. This has included reports to the North Yorkshire and York Spatial Planning and Transport (YNYSPT) Board, which is a Member decision-making group as well as discussions and a workshop with the York and North Yorkshire Technical Officer Group (TOG) hosted by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP.
- 7.87 At its meeting on 4 September 2015, the YYSPT Board considered a paper, prepared by City of York Council, entitled 'The distribution of the provision of housing in the York Housing Market Area.' This paper stated:
- There is evidence which shows that the housing market area extends into adjoining local authority areas.
 - The City of York administration has concerns about the impact of meeting York's objectively assessed housing need (OAHN) on other policies including protecting the green belt.
 - If the above impact is such that it significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of meeting the OAHN then reasonable alternatives will need to be pursued, including meeting some of the OANH outside the York Local Plan area
 - Referred to Governments expectations of local authorities under the Duty set out in NPPF that authorities should work collaboratively to ensure proper coordination between authorities on strategic priorities and that in York's case the shared housing market could be regarded as such a strategic priority.

- 7.88 Three possible approaches were presented to and considered by the Board, which were based on experience elsewhere: preparing a joint Plan; aligning neighbouring Plans in both strategy and plan making timetable; or agreeing an informal joint strategy which would then be incorporated into individual Plans.
- 7.89 The General view among Board Members was that at this point in time the respective authorities' local development plans were too far advanced to adopt a sub-regional approach to housing delivery, but there is the potential for future plans to be more sub-regional in approach, if sufficiently evidenced. On this basis, the City of York Local Plan sought to meet its objectively assessed needs for development wholly within its unitary authority area.
- 7.90 Following the Board meeting, this matter was considered further by the North Yorkshire and York Technical Officer Group (TOG) at its meeting on 27 November 2015, with regard to the Board's 'agreement in principle' for future plans to be more sub-regional in approach. The TOG considered a report that
- outlined City of York Council's (CYC's) considerations for allocating sufficient land within its emerging Local Plan to meet its housing need over the plan period and set an enduring green belt in the context of a more sub regional approach for delivering housing in the York Housing Market Area being considered in the longer term (i.e. in the next plan-making round). and
 - sought TOG's advice on pursuing a more sub regional approach for delivering housing in the York Housing Market Area in the longer term with particular regard to:
 - The approach being taken by City of York Council in its considerations for allocating sufficient land within its emerging Local Plan, and
 - setting an enduring Green Belt beyond the Local Plan period.
- 7.91 The outcomes of these discussions together with updated OAHN evidence base were presented to Members at Local Plan Working Group (27 June 2016) and Executive (30 June 2016) wherein Members were also asked to agree to progress to public consultation on sites to meet the identified need. Members resolved to progress the plan to the Preferred Sites Consultation as presented based upon City of York meeting its OAHN within the authority boundary.
- 7.92 In response to the preferred sites consultation, we received the following comments from neighbouring authorities specifically supporting this approach:
- Ryedale District Council - "*The District Council currently supports the position whereby the City is committed to meeting its own housing requirements*".
 - East Riding of Yorkshire – "*Whilst the preferred sites consultation document does not specifically seek comments on this evidence, it has sought to identify sufficient land that would meet the full need for future housing and employment development within the City Council's administrative area. This approach is strongly supported by East Riding*

of Yorkshire Council. It will help to promote a sustainable pattern of development by directing growth towards locations that would reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of sustainable transport modes."

- Hambleton District Council – *"The consultation document identifies sufficient land to accommodate the development needs of the City and establishes a Green Belt boundary enduring 20 years. The consultation document no longer safeguards land for development and recognises that the build out time of the strategic sites will extend beyond the plan period. Officers support this approach as it ensures that the longer term development needs of the City of York can be met, without placing pressure on areas in neighbouring authorities."*

7.93 A further paper was presented at a subsequent Board on 17 January 2018. This paper provided an update on the preparation of the City of York Local Plan including the Pre-Publication Draft (Regulation 18) Consultation and set out the work that City of York Council has undertaken to discharge its responsibilities under the Duty to Co-operate (the Duty). The Board endorsed the approach taken by City of York Council in meeting the requirements of the Duty to co-operate in the plan making process.

7.94 It is therefore considered that the Green Belt within the City of York administrative area is the only available source of land that could realistically address the shortfall whilst still supporting a sustainable pattern of development.

Offsetting through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining green belt land

7.95 The plan sets out site specific policies for each strategic site (above 5ha) which included criteria to ensure that the sites are designed to achieve significantly enhanced public access to high quality open space. This enhanced access may be to areas of open space both within and adjacent to the allocations but will also allow enhanced access to the areas of green belt beyond the site boundaries. Policy GI6 (New Open Space provision) establishes that the Council has mechanisms in place to secure green infrastructure provision in the city and allocates significant new areas of open space in conjunction with a number of the proposed strategic site allocations. This new open space will be complemented by further on-site provision of local green and open space. The Council through the implementation and delivery of the Plan is committed to supporting and implementing projects that will seek to offset a proportion of the impact on the Green Belt. Further details on sites is provided in Section 8 and Annex 5.

7f. Justifying exceptional circumstances and the effect of the change in the OAN

Exceptional circumstances: Housing

- 7.96 It has been demonstrated through sections 7b to 7e that there remains a shortfall in the supply of land to meet the established needs for both housing and employment growth over the plan period to 2038. This shortfall has been established after undertaking an assessment of other options for meeting this need such as ensuring land use efficiency and maximising Brownfield land and also assessing options to meet the remaining shortfall without using green belt land such as maximising density and establishing whether neighbouring authorities could meet some of the identified shortfall.
- 7.97 There is a need to provide sufficient land to achieve the housing requirement of 17,102 dwellings. The SHLAA has assessed those sites that are suitable, available and deliverable and has identified a supply of 5,852 dwellings on land within the urban area (after the 10% non-implementation rate is applied). This supply meets 34% of the identified need. In addition the assessment of supply has also identified current extant permissions of 3,220 dwellings (after the 10% non-implementation rate is applied) and a qualified windfall allowance of 3,042 dwellings. In total this identified supply will provide sufficient supply for 12,114 dwellings over the plan period to 2038. This identified supply equates to 71% of the total identified housing requirement.
- 7.98 Since commencement of the Local Plan process the Council has engaged with neighbouring authorities on a range of cross boundary issues including housing. The outcome of the discussions is that no neighbouring authority has shown a willingness or ability to meet any of the City of York's housing need. As such there are considered to be exceptional reasons to amend the green belt boundaries to ensure that York can meet its housing needs. If York does not meet the identified needs established through the SHMA fully the Duty to Co-operate evidence supports that it is unlikely that identified needs will be met in adjoining authority areas.
- 7.99 If the City of York does not fully meet its identified housing needs it is considered that this would result in a worsening in the affordability of housing in York and/or the exacerbation of in-commuting from adjoining areas leading to unsustainable travel patterns. The SHMA evidence and the Housing Needs Update conclude that housing affordability is a worsening issue in York. House prices have increased in the past year and the affordability ratio between house prices and earnings has worsened. At the median level York has the highest affordability ratio and has the least affordable housing relative to surrounding North Yorkshire, Yorkshire and the Humber and England. The affordability statistics and the market signals reveal that as a whole York is becoming increasingly unaffordable.
- 7.99 The identified yields of sites have been assessed as achievable within the plan period through the SHLAA. However, we know from experience that, despite the robust assessment in the SHLAA that not all the sites will come

forward in practice. For instance, some landowners will ultimately decide not to release their land for a number of reasons and some sites that at present appear to be suitable for housing might be brought forward for mixed use or not at all. Even for sites that do come forward for development, previously unforeseen circumstances may hinder their progress and they might not deliver units at the rates envisaged in the SHLAA which is necessarily a high level study that cannot foresee all scenarios and possible issues.

- 7.100 If insufficient land is released from the green belt and some of the sites fail to come forward as expected this could jeopardise the fulfilment of the Council's objectives to deliver sufficient quality housing and to create a green belt that will 'endure' and meet longer term development needs beyond the end of the plan period.
- 7.101 There is a shortfall of sufficient land outside of general extent of Green Belt to provide for 4,988 dwellings. The Plan seeks to allocate sites within the general extent of York's green belt to provide for 6,992 dwellings (inclusive of the 10% non-implementation rate). These sites are discussed in Section 8 of this report. This means that at 2038 there is a cumulative oversupply of +2004 dwellings which equates to approximately 2.5 years of additional supply ($2004/790 = 2.5$ yrs). This is detailed in the updated housing trajectory. This figure includes the deletion of 545 dwellings at Sites ST35 and H59 adjacent to Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Strensall as a result of the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 7.102 The originally submitted Plans' housing supply provided an oversupply of +494 dwellings at 2038 against the OAN of 867 dwellings per annum and the total housing requirement of 19,103 dwellings ($867 +$ identified shortfall 2012 to 2017 of $56 = 923$ dpa). This oversupply equated to 0.6 years of additional supply ($494/867 = 0.6$ yrs) or flexibility against the total housing requirement of 2.6% ($494/19,103 = 2.6\%$). It was considered by the Council that this provided sufficient flexibility in the supply of potential housing sites to deal with unforeseen circumstances throughout the plan period such as a strategic site not delivering at the rates predicted in the trajectory. This identified supply also ensured that the submitted Plan could provide a Green Belt that would endure for a minimum of 20 years.
- 7.103 The reduction in the OAN to 790 dwellings per annum and the consequential reduction in the housing requirement to 822 dwellings per annum once the inherited shortfall in the period 2012 to 2017 has been accounted for means that the cumulative over supply at 2038 is now increased to +2004 dwellings. This equates to approximately 2.5 years of supply at the end of the plan period compared to the 0.6 years in the originally submitted Plan agreed by Council. This provides flexibility against the total housing requirement of approximately 12% ($2004/17,102 = 11.7\%$). It is considered that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant this additional flexibility in the specific context of York's Local Plan. The Plan was submitted in May 2018 and is therefore being examined against NPPF 2012, applying transitional arrangements. However, it is clear that there is currently a period of national planning policy flux, including the introduction of the new standard method for calculating housing needs.

- 7.104 NPPF (2019) is clear that plans should seek to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and that the determination of the minimum number of homes needed should be informed by a local housing needs assessment conducted using the standard method set out in national planning guidance. Whilst this method is not applicable under transitional arrangements, the indicative housing need figure for York using this more up to date method is considerably higher.
- 7.105 In this policy context it is important that York has a plan that once adopted will not be rendered immediately out of date and it is therefore considered that the provision of this additional flexibility based on retaining the submitted Plan's housing supply will help to 'future-proof' the Plan and ensure that York can continue to meet identified housing needs.

Exceptional circumstances: Employment

- 7.106 The ELR has demonstrated a need for 231,239 sqm of employment land over the period to 2038. Section 7b to 7d establishes that land within the urban area can provide 108,877 sqm of suitable employment land. This equates to 47% of the identified need. There is therefore a shortfall in the supply of suitable and available employment land within the urban area.
- 7.107 The Plan seeks to allocate sufficient employment sites within the general extent of York's Green Belt to provide 151,850 sqm of employment floorspace providing for 260,727 sqm in total. The analysis of these sites is provided at Section 8 of this report. This provision creates an oversupply at the end of the plan period of 29,488 sq m. This equates to flexibility against the total requirement of approximately 13%. Whilst this is above the requirement of 231,239 sqm identified in the Employment Land Review (2017), it is considered that this supply of sites is need to provide sufficient flexibility to deal with any changes to site delivery rates over the plan period and to provide sufficient choice to the market with a range of sites sizes and locations across the City of York area catering for the needs identified in the ELR.
- 7.108 The Plan seeks to increase the attractiveness of the city to inward investment through ensuring the supply of employment land is flexible enough to cope with changes in the market over the plan period. It is also important for the plan to recognise the possibility of sites not coming forward and to offer prospective businesses a range and choice of locations and size of buildings. The location and distribution of sites proposed in the plan will ensure sufficient flexibility to allow future business needs to be met taking account of the varied criteria businesses have for site deletion in relation to cost, character of site/premises and transport links. As part of the consultation responses received through the drafting of the Plan, including from the York and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, it was suggested that the future employment supply needed to offer a sufficient range of choices of location for potential occupiers, otherwise there will be a risk that York would lose out on investment opportunities. It was also considered important that the Plan allocated a broad range/portfolio of sites to cater for York's diverse high value added business. In addition, it was considered important for the Plan to have

sufficient flexibility in its employment land supply to be able to monitor and respond to changes throughout the plan period.

- 7.109 It is considered that without removing land from the general extent of the Green Belt, York's employment land needs would not be provided for. Consequently, objectively assessed needs for jobs would not be met and the objectives of the City Vision, Council Plan and Economic Strategy would not be achieved.

7g. Conclusions

- 7.110 In the case of Calverton Parish Council v Nottingham City Council, Broxtowe Borough Council and Gedling Borough Council [2015] EWHC 1078 (Admin) the judgment set out a number of matters that may assist in ascertaining whether exceptional circumstances exist to justify altering the Green Belt boundary. These matters are set out in italics below.

i. The acuteness/intensity of the objectively assessed need;

- 7.111 The evidence reviewed in this section demonstrates that there is insufficient capacity on sites assessed as suitable for development within the urban areas surrounding the city to meet York's development needs. An evidence-based approach has established how much growth is required over the plan period based on a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Employment Land Review and a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment. Potential development sites have been assessed through a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Employment Land Review.

ii. The inherent constraints on supply/availability of land prima facie suitable for sustainable development;

- 7.112 The Council has identified and examined fully all reasonable options for meeting development needs, which cannot be met without the allocation of land within the general extent of York's Green Belt.
- 7.113 The plan's approach has sought to make as much use as possible of suitable Brownfield land and underutilised land. This is a key spatial principle of the strategy which has been reflected in the approach to site selection, including the use of lower site size thresholds. Historic rates of windfall delivery, changes of use and conversions have been reviewed and an allowance made for windfall within the Local Plan housing supply trajectory.
- 7.114 Through the Local Plan's site selection methodology and policy approach the density of development has been optimised, reflecting the location of sites and their relationship to public transport. Density targets in the Local Plan are higher than what has been achieved over the past ten years.

iii. The consequent difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt;

7.115 Discussions with Members and officers of neighbouring authorities have explored whether some of York's identified development needs could be accommodated beyond the general extent of the York Green Belt in neighbouring areas. This did not result in any of York's development needs being 'exported' to be met by another local planning authority. Adjoining authorities have supported City of York in meeting its OAHN within its own boundary. As highlighted above there is insufficient capacity on suitable sites within the built-up area of York to meet development needs.

iv. The nature and extent of the harm to the Green Belt (or those parts of it which would be lost if the boundaries were reviewed)

7.116 The sites allocated within the general extent of the York Green Belt have been done so without damage to its primary purpose – to preserve the setting and special character of York. Green Belt boundaries are based on strong, defensible and recognisable features that help to keep land permanently open and fulfil the purposes of Green Belt. In this case, boundaries are being set for the first time.

v. The extent to which the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt may be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent.

7.117 This section explains that it is clear that land to meet housing and employment needs is required to be released within the general extent of York's green belt. Section 8 and Annex 5 explain that the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt have been ameliorated and reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent. The Council is committed to ensuring a sustainable approach to development is adhered to, within the plan period, and beyond. The release of sites within the general extent of the York Green Belt will not damage the overall purposes of the Green Belt as a whole. Further appropriate mitigation measures that can help to reduce any impact further are set out in Annex 5.

7.118 The circumstances of the York Green Belt have been assessed against criteria that relate to both the 2012 and 2019 NPPF and the *Calverton Parish Council v Greater Nottingham Council's High Court decision*. The Council has concluded that exceptional circumstances exist, based on the evidence reviewed, all reasonable alternatives and key policy approaches. Changes to the general extent of the York Green Belt are required to meet development needs for housing and employment and thereby contribute to achieving sustainable development. In particular, an undersupply of homes would exacerbate housing affordability issues, increase unsustainable commuting patterns and adversely impact on building a strong, competitive economy. The release of strategic sites within the general extent of the York Green Belt is the most sustainable approach to meeting development needs.

Summary

Section 7 of this Addendum examines how the Council has considered York's development needs and fully examined all reasonable options for meeting development needs, taking into account the use of Brownfield and underutilised land, the application of different densities and discussions with neighbouring authorities. This section explores the Council's approach and concludes that it would not be possible to meet the housing needs, employment land requirements, gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople housing needs and educational needs in York across the Plan period without releasing land from the Green Belt.

In the absence of specific guidance in the NPPF (2012) on removing land from the general extent of the green belt in circumstances where the inner and outer boundaries are yet to be defined, the Council has taken a robust approach. Sites have been allocated within the general extent of Green Belt where exceptional circumstances justify this.

Section 8: Development Sites in the Green Belt

- 8.1 This section considers the potential to accommodate need in accordance with the Plan's sustainable development strategy and appraises the potential impact on Green Belt purposes of developing land within the general extent of the Green Belt. **Annex 5** provides the assessment of the proposed boundary of each site in terms of the openness/permanence methodology to ensure we are establishing a defensible boundary delivering a permanent Green Belt. The NPPF does not provide explicit guidance on how such sites are to be treated under green belt policy but the Council has assumed that exceptional circumstances should be shown and seeks to demonstrate how this is applied in this section.
- 8.2 As set out in Section 7, in seeking to address development needs over the Plan period, the Council has sought to ensure that best use is made of previously developed land and underutilised land before considering other Greenfield and Green Belt alternatives. The Council has fully examined all reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development and concludes that it would not be possible to meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN), Employment Land requirement, Education and Gypsy and Traveller Housing Need in York without releasing land from the Green Belt. Section 7 concludes that there is an identified shortfall in housing and employment land within the urban area to meet the requirements as set out in the Local Plan evidence base.
- 8.3 The Council has undertaken a site selection process to identify potentially suitable sites (as set out in section 7) and reviewed this against greenbelt purposes to identify sites to come forward for housing, employment and gypsy and travellers and travelling showpeople that are all in sustainable locations offering least harm to the green belt when considered against the purpose set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF (2012). Other sites have been rejected which impact on environmental sensitivity and lack of sustainable development, which all inform greenbelt purposes (as set out in Section 5c).
- 8.4 Having determined a need for land within the general extent of green belt, the process of site appraisal involved the following:
1. Appraising the impact of potential sites against the spatial strategy (through the site selection process and sustainability appraisal).
 2. Appraising the impact of a potential sites against evidence defining the 5 purposes of green belt (presented in various stages of Local Plan consultation)
 3. Determining a clear, defensible boundary, applying the boundary methodology set out in Section 5a above.

- 8.5 It is the wider purpose of this paper to describe the process of defining York's detailed Green Belt boundary for the first time. However, for the purpose of assessing the impact of land removed from the Green Belt to accommodate identified development needs (and justify exceptional circumstances); impacts have been described in the context of the draft 2005 Local Plan. Whilst the draft 2005 Plan does not form part of a statutory development plan, at this time it is the only accepted and evidenced delineated boundary from which we can work. This was the position taken most recently by the Inspector²⁵, in their report on the approved Rufforth and Knapton Neighbourhood Plan as follows:

“...Amongst other things this draft (2005) Local Plan provides a spatial context for the Green Belt. What is now the draft Local Plan was placed on deposit in May 1998. A very tight Green Belt was put forward on the basis that there would be a need for an early review in the light of new information at that time on development requirements after 2006...I recommend that the neighbourhood Plan continues to apply the approach to the identification of the Green Belt as set out currently in the RSS and the Fourth Set of Changes Development Control Local Plan (2005) on an interim basis until such time as the emerging Local Plan is adopted...The particular effect of this recommended modification is that the proposed interim village envelope boundaries would need to revert to those identified in the 2005 Plan.”

- 8.6 Table 2 identifies those sites which are considered to be the most suitable and sustainable as identified through the Local Plan site selection process and identified as causing the least harm to the green belt. Overall, the table includes 21 sites identified in the Local Plan (2018) that sit within the general extent of the York Green Belt, as described above and are all therefore considered to have some impact on the openness of Green Belt and on the 5 purposes set out in the NPPF. The sites identified provide sufficient land for 7,769 dwellings and 151,850 sqm of employment floorspace.
- 8.7 The Local Plan takes the strategic view, endorsed by Historic England, to deliver a development strategy which looks to accommodate growth through maximising the use of Brownfield land and limiting peripheral growth, to safeguard key elements of the City's special character and setting. Historic England note that the proposed strategic approach, accommodating some of York's development needs as new freestanding settlements and in the site allocations as identified, will result in far less harm to the special character and setting of the historic city than would be caused by development on the edge of the existing built up area.

²⁵ Rufforth and Knapton Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's report (July 2018)
https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/16753/rufforth_with_knapton_np_examiners_report

Table 2: Sites identified in the general extent of York's Greenbelt

| Location | ALLOCATION | SITE NAME | Site size (ha) | Potential Residential Units | Potential Employment SQM |
|-------------------------|------------|--|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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 | 35.00 | 735 | |
| Freestanding settlement | ST14 | Land to the West of Wigginton Road | 55.00 | 1,348 | |
| Freestanding settlement | ST15 | Land to the West of Elvington Lane | 159.00 | 3,339 | |
| Village extension | ST31 | Land to The South of Tadcaster Road Copmanthorpe | 8.10 | 158 | |
| Village extension | ST33 | Station Yard Wheldrake | 6.00 | 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 | |
| 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 |

Housing

- 8.8 Of the 21 sites identified within the general extent of the Greenbelt, there are seven strategic sites (over 5 ha) and six general housing allocations (between 0.2ha – 5ha) identified to meet the established housing need. Together these are anticipated to deliver 7,769 dwellings with 7,540 dwellings to be delivered on Strategic Sites and 229 dwellings to be delivered on general site allocations.

Employment land

- 8.9 Four Strategic Employment Sites (over 5 ha) and two general employment allocations have been identified to fulfil the established employment requirements in the Employment Land Review (2017). In total, the strategic sites will deliver 129,410 sqm and the general sites will deliver 22,440 sqm of employment floorspace.

Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 8.10 The decision to inset Gypsy and Traveller sites is on the basis of ensuring consistency with our strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development. This is different to the justification used for inseting some of our villages and major previously developed sites, which was on the basis that they do not contribute towards the openness of the Green Belt and are therefore unnecessary to remain in the Green Belt.
- 8.11 As section 7 sets out, the Council has fully examined all reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development and concludes that it would not be possible to meet Traveller Housing Need in York without releasing land from the Green Belt. The approach necessitates alterations to be made to the Green Belt boundary under exceptional circumstances. The accompanying Annex 8 includes a proforma for the proposed allocation and an accompanying detailed description of the proposed Green Belt boundary around the site:

SP1 The Stables, Elvington (3 plots for Travelling Showpeople)

- 8.12 The existing Traveller site at Outgang Lane, Osbaldwick has also been removed from the Green Belt, in line with emerging Local Plan Policy H5, in order to accommodate additional pitches over the Plan period. See Annex 8 for a detailed description of this.

Education

- 8.13 As set out in Section 7, the Local Plan supports the provision of educational facilities across the authority in line with development. Where educational facilities are within the Greenbelt, these are being dealt with as follows.

York College

- 8.14 York College is located on the edge of the main York urban area and will require additional land that is currently within the Green Belt to allow the expansion of the existing built development beyond the existing site boundary. Sufficient land will need to be identified to facilitate the future growth of the college and the continued delivery of facilities at one location. See Annex 5 for a detailed proforma.

Askham Bryan College

- 8.15 The site is located within the Green Belt. It is considered important to maintain the current green belt status of the land and any future development must not have a greater impact on the openness of the green belt than the existing development. This is dealt with through Section 6 and Annex 4.

York University

- 8.16 Site allocation ST27 allows an expansion to the University of York to accommodate growth of Campus East in conjunction with land for employment use. The expansion of the University Campus is recognised to support the overall ambitions of the University over the plan period. See Annex 5 for a detailed proforma.

Primary and Secondary education

- 8.17 Primary and secondary provision will be accommodated through Strategic Sites or on land to be identified at a future date when need is established. Where provision is to be on sites within the Green Belt, this is detailed within the respective proformas in Annex 5.

Summary

Having determined a need for land within the general extent of Green Belt, Section 8 describes the means of identifying potential sites, reviewing the Site Selection process, Sustainability Appraisal and Heritage Impact Appraisal. It is intended that the identified sites set out in Table 2 are excluded from Green Belt. The accompanying Annex 5 includes a full appraisal of the impact of proposed sites on Greenbelt purposes and the wider implications for sustainable development.

Section 9: Conclusions

9.1 This addendum:

- explores the current status of York's Green Belt and its general extent;
- establishes the Local Plan's strategic approach to Green Belt, within the context of the 5 purposes of Green Belt;
- uses the strategic approach to set the scope for which boundaries need formal definition and a methodology for how to do this;
- identifies the detailed boundary around York's Main Urban Area;
- identifies developed areas within the general extent of York's Green Belt, and assesses the impact of their open character on the openness of Green Belt. In so doing, it also identifies the detailed boundary around excluded villages;
- describes the exceptional circumstances which exist in order to justify releasing land from the Green Belt. This includes the acknowledgement that all other options for meeting identified need have been examined;
- appraises the impact of proposed sites on the purpose of including land within the Green Belt, and the wider implications for sustainable development;

with the aim of producing a policies map with a permanent Green Belt boundary capable of accommodating growth and enduring beyond 20 years.²⁶

²⁶ Following the submission of the Local Plan, and in bringing together this document, the detail around pending planning applications has been checked as well as a check for consistency. This has resulted in the proposed minor modifications to the submitted policies map as set out in detail in Annex 6.