

# MATTER 1



**JohnsonMowat**

Planning & Development Consultants

Examination of the City of York Local Plan

Matters, Issues and Questions for the Examination

**Phase 4 Hearings**

**Matter 1 – Green Belt Boundaries**

August 2022

CLIENT: KCS Development Ltd



## **CONTENTS**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR'S QUESTIONS

Appendix 1 Green Belt Evidence Extracts from KCS Response to  
Proposed Modifications and Evidence Base Consultation –  
June 2021



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 This response has been prepared on behalf of KCS Development Limited in relation to their land interests immediately west of Chapelfields on the western edge of York City.
- 1.2 Previous submissions have been made to the various draft Local Plan iterations Phase 1 and Phase 2 Examination Hearing Statements, and a detailed response to the June 2021 Modifications and Evidence Base Consultation, the content of which remains particularly relevant to this Phase 4 Matter 1 statement.
- 1.3 It is maintained that the site at Chapelfields is available for development of circa 90 dwellings and would create a small sustainable urban extension to the existing settlement of Chapelfields, part of metropolitan York.



## 2.0 RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR'S QUESTIONS

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### Matter 1 Green Belt Boundaries

**1.1 Are the inner Green Belt boundaries (Topic Paper 1 Addendum Annex 3 – Sections 1 – 4) reasonably derived?**

2.1 No, KCS Development Limited do not consider the inner Green Belt boundary is reasonably derived. KCS land interests west of Chapelfields relate to Topic Paper 1 ('TP1') Addendum Annex 3 Section 1, Boundary 9 and the southern portion of Boundary 10. The detailed submissions made to the June 2021 Evidence Base Consultation regarding the TP1 Addendum remain relevant in assessing the reasonableness of the inner Green Belt boundary derivation. The TP1 Green Belt Evidence KCS response to the Council's June 2021 Evidence Base Consultation is appended to this statement for ease of reference.

2.2 Concerns remain with the Council's methodology of assessing the Green Belt boundaries, which relate to the 3 Green Belt Purposes that have been established as being of relevance.

2.3 There is a lack of explanation of how the individual boundaries were derived, which is particularly relevant for Boundary 10 of Section 1 west of Chapelfields. It is maintained that the Council should have divided Section 1 Boundary 10 into two as there are different characteristics within this boundary that warrant separate consideration. Assessing Boundary 10 as a single entity is inappropriate and results in an incorrect overall conclusion against the Council's 5 assessment criteria. The two photographs overleaf illustrate the division of the boundary, with the first photograph taken from the B1224 Wetherby Road showing the northern section of Boundary 10, and the second photograph taken from the Outer Ring Road towards the southern section of Boundary 10.



2.4 Alternative boundaries have not been considered. The methodology does not allow the assessment of parcels of land, and instead only assesses boundaries. The methodology does not allow for the assessment of alternatives, for example the extension of part of the suburban edge whilst continuing to retain a gap between the Outer Ring Road and an alternative built edge. The proposed land west of Chapefeilds does just that. It is proposed to extend the built edge with a small extension to the existing built edge and the inclusion of a landscaped buffer and undeveloped area up to the Outer Ring Road. This is considered to align with the key ‘containment’ and ‘compactness’ factors that contribute to York’s historic character and setting, and the continued retention of the feeling of this part of York as an ‘area which provides an impression of a Historic City situated within a rural setting.’

2.5 The detailed analysis (contained in the extracts at Appendix 1) of the Council’s assessment of Boundary 10 against the 5 criterion remains valid and is not repeated in this statement. The



detailed analysis of the Council's TP1 Addendum update has found that there are deficiencies in the approach taken. The boundary's assessed have not been justified. The boundaries chosen have led to flawed analysis and incorrect conclusions as there is an attempt for one Conclusion to cover two very different parcels of land. The fair consideration of alternatives does not appear to have been taken into consideration. The proposed developable area west of Chapelfields is located in a sustainable location, and would align with the growth focus towards the urban area.

- 2.6 The land at Chapelfields which is being promoted for development, including a significant buffer to the Outer Ring Road, is not considered to be necessary to keep permanently open in order to protect the primary purpose of the York Green Belt, which is to protect the historic setting and character of York.
- 2.7 The small extension to Chapelfields, with the inclusion of a significant buffer to the Outer Ring Road, and a retained gap between the urban edge and the Outer Ring Road will not have an impact on the rural setting.
- 2.8 The site is not visible from the Outer Ring Road at this location. There are no long distance views of the City, and certainly no existence of a 'viewing platform of the city.' The Outer Ring Road adjacent to the proposed developable area of the Chapelfields site is set at a lower level to the inner open land. It is considered that the proposed developable area west of Chapelfields that has been put forward, with the retention of open land up to the Outer Ring Road as proposed, would not harm the key compactness contributor to the historic setting and character of York.
- 2.9 The site is screened by existing landscaping along the inside edge of the Outer Ring Road at this location. There are only glimpses of the site available. It is not considered that the development of this site will detract from the openness, given the lack of short and long-distance views of the site, and its relationship to the existing densely populated area within the York Outer Ring Road.
- 2.10 The Council's approach to establishing the inner Green Belt boundary tight against the back gardens of existing properties is unsustainable, in as much as it is not a robust, legible boundary, with the alternative of a landscaped buffer being a more appropriate option. Further, the tight Green Belt boundary and lack of consideration for a small extension to the urban edge removes the option of providing a sustainable development, which is accessible and connected to the urban area, and capable of tapping into existing infrastructure, and services. This is considered to be illogical and unjustified based on the TP1 evidence.



2.11 The site at Chapelfields aligns with the Council's strategic aims of channelling development towards urban areas and promoting sustainable patterns of development. A small urban extension of circa 90 dwellings, forming a natural extension to the existing urban edge would be contained within the Outer Ring Road and the retention of a landscaped buffer and open undeveloped land would maintain separation between the urban edge and the Outer Ring Road. In assessing this land alongside an adjoining field with completely different characteristics the Council have reached an unsound conclusion when setting the inner green belt boundary in this location.



## **APPENDIX ONE**

# **GREEN BELT EVIDENCE EXTRACTS FROM KCS RESPONSE TO PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS AND EVIDENCE BASE CONSULTATION – JUNE 2021**