

Appendix 2 Green Belt Review Methodology

Once the general extent of a Green Belt has been approved, boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. It is therefore necessary to assess which land within the Green Belt can make a significant contribution to meeting long term development land supply needs which would be least damaging to the purposes and integrity of the overall Green Belt in the Leeds district.

When assessing a site that is only partially in the Green Belt, only assess the part that is Green Belt.

GB purposes, criteria for assessing sites:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 79 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belt are their openness and permanence. Para 80, sets out the 5 purposes of Green Belt:

Purpose	Criteria and definitions	Assessment
1. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas	<p>This is not the same as urban development per se. It is a judgement as to whether a development would result in inefficient use of land considering the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Would development of the site lead to/ constitute ribbon development YES/NO ii. Would development result in an isolated development site not connected to existing boundaries YES/NO iii. Is the site well connected to the built up area? – Does it have 2 or more boundaries with the existing built up area? YES/NO iv. Would development of the site effectively 'round off' the settlement pattern YES/NO/PARTIAL v. Do natural features and infrastructure (major road, river etc) provide a good existing barrier between the existing urban area and undeveloped land, which if breached may set a precedent for unrestricted sprawl? YES/NO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. If response yes, high potential for unrestricted sprawl ii. If response yes, result would be isolated development, high potential for urban sprawl iii. If a site is well connected ie has several boundaries with the adjacent urban area, lower potential for urban sprawl. If only one boundary with existing urban area, development would 'jut out' or not be as well related and has more potential to result in urban sprawl. iv. If response yes, development would 'round off', low potential for unrestricted sprawl v. if yes, higher potential for urban sprawl. <p>Overall conclusion: Development of the site would result in:</p> <p>High potential to lead to unrestricted sprawl OR</p> <p>Low potential to lead to unrestricted sprawl (Delete response which does not apply)</p>
2. Prevent neighbouring towns from merging	<p>It is impossible to define a minimum distance that there should be between settlements.* (see bottom of 3rd column). The important consideration is whether development would appear to result in the merger of built up areas. Topography and features such as rivers and major roads can act as barriers preventing merging. The assessment therefore looks at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Do natural features and infrastructure provide a good physical barrier or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. If yes, a good physical boundary is more likely to perform a role in preventing neighbouring towns from merging. ii. If development would lead to the merging/physical connection of settlements the site would not prevent towns from merging. <p>Overall conclusion: Development of the site would lead</p>

	<p>boundary to the site that would ensure that development was contained? YES/NO</p> <p>ii. Would development of the site lead to physical connection of 2 or more settlements? YES/NO</p>	<p>to coalescence/merging of settlements OR</p> <p>Development of the site would not result in the merging of settlements OR</p> <p>Development of the site would not result in actual merging of settlements but does not:</p> <p>i) make good use of any physical barriers/there is no defensible boundary and/or</p> <p>ii) development of the site would significantly reduce the Green Belt gap between settlements. (see * 2nd column, explanation)</p> <p>(Delete response which does not apply)</p>
<p>3. Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p>	<p>This is an assessment as to the extent to which the Green Belt constitutes 'open countryside' from assessing countryside characteristics. If the site has any such characteristics it can be said to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The characteristics are:</p> <p>i. Is there a strong, defensible boundary between the existing urban area and the site – wall, river, main road etc (as opposed to garden boundaries) YES/NO</p> <p>ii. Does the site provide access to the countryside – footpaths, bridleways across the land, or is it a designated park/greenspace? YES/NO</p> <p>iii. Does the site include national or local nature conservation designated areas (SSSIs etc) YES/NO</p> <p>iv. Does the site include areas of woodland, trees or hedgerows that are protected (protected ancient woodland) or significant unprotected tree/hedge cover. YES/NO</p> <p>v. Does the site include any grade 1 (high quality) agricultural land? YES/NO</p> <p>vi. Does the site contain buildings? YES/NO If yes, are these in agricultural use? YES/NO</p>	<p>i. If response yes, there is an existing defensible boundary between the existing settlement/urban area and the site, the site will perform a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p> <p>ii. If yes, the site performs a role in providing access to the countryside for the urban population, the site will perform a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>iii. If yes, the site performs a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>iv. If yes, the site performs a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>v. If yes, the site performs a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>vi. If the site contains buildings that are not in agricultural use, development (on that part of the site) would be classed as brownfield rather than Greenfield development, so the site would not perform a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>Overall conclusion: The site performs an important role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment OR</p>

		<p>The site does not perform an important role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p> <p>(Delete response which does not apply)</p>
<p>4. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</p>	<p>Most towns have a historic core, so this assessment focuses on whether a site is adjacent to a conservation area, listed building, historic park or garden or other features of historic significance.</p> <p>Where a site is adjacent* to such a feature, development may still be able to preserve the setting and special character if done sensitively through appropriate design. This is a matter of judgement at initial site selection stage.</p> <p>* adjacent is either abutting the current boundary or only separated by a road that isn't included in the boundary.</p> <p>For the assessment:</p> <p>i. Is the site adjacent a conservation area, listed building or other historical features? YES/NO</p> <p>ii. If 'yes' could development preserve this character? YES/NO/PERHAPS</p>	<p>Overall conclusion:</p> <p>Development of the site would have no effect on the setting and special character of historic features OR</p> <p>Development of the site would have an effect on the setting and special character of historic features, which could be mitigated against through appropriate detailed design OR</p> <p>Development of the site would have a significant effect on the setting and special character of historic features</p> <p>(Delete response which does not apply)</p>
<p>5. Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</p>	<p>Not to be included within GB assessment because the Core Strategy policies encourage regeneration within the urban area</p>	<p>N/A</p>
		<p>NB. The conclusion under each purpose is an overall assessment from the conclusions from all the criteria in that category/Green Belt purpose.</p>
<p>OVERALL CONCLUSION FROM ASSESSMENT AGAINST ALL 4 PURPOSES OF GREEN BELT AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPENNESS AND PERMANENCE:</p>		

We have not applied a scoring or weighting system as a site may have only one applicable criteria as opposed to many, but this one factor may be so significant as to mean that overall, the effect on Green Belt purposes is still very significant – for example the site may be isolated and so not satisfy the purpose of preventing urban sprawl, but satisfy all other Green Belt purposes, but this alone may be considered to have a more significant effect on the purposes of Green Belt than for example a site which it is considered would round off a settlement but has various 'countryside characteristics' which means that the site performs a role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The end comments box is for the overall conclusion from looking at all the purposes to be outlined. We may have to assess this further once site visits have taken place to establish sites which have a significant effect on the purposes of Green Belt and those that do not, but this is an iterative process and will be determined once more site visits have been undertaken.