
**Examination of the Submitted Tunbridge
Wells Borough Local Plan**

STATEMENT FOR:

**MATTER 2 – HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT
NEEDS (POLICY STR1)**

WRITTEN STATEMENT

Prepared by:

Woolf Bond Planning LLP

On behalf of:

Castle Hill Developments Ltd

May 2022

WBP Ref: 8092



Woolf Bond Planning
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Executive Summary

Castle Hill Developments Ltd (“CHD”) has a controlling interest in sustainability located and deliverable omission sites that should be allocated for housing in seeking to meet the identified housing need during the plan period.

The Plan fails to plan for sufficient housing growth (in terms of the overall housing target in Policy STR1) and places undue reliance upon the delivery of housing from strategic sites including at Tudeley and Paddock Wood (which will fail to deliver at the rates suggested by the Council) and additional site allocations should therefore be identified.

CHD’s objections may be summarised as follows:

- The Plan is **not positively prepared** in so far as the proposed strategy for growth will fail to deliver the identified housing need for a minimum of 14,535 dwellings during the period 2020 to 2039 (i.e 765dpa).
- The Plan is **not justified** having regard to the approach envisaged to maintain a rolling five year supply of housing land and/or in relation to the approach to the allocation of sites for housing, such that it cannot be said to provide the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.
- The Plan is **not effective** and will fail to provide a five year supply of deliverable housing land on adoption and nor will it deliver the requisite amount of housing during the plan period; when assessed against the objectively assessed housing need.
- The Plan is **not consistent with national policy** having regard to the need to ensure housing site allocations will maintain an adequate supply of deliverable housing land.

The failure to provide sufficient deliverable site allocations will serve to frustrate attempts to address key factors affecting worsening affordability and denying people the opportunity to own their own home, contrary to Government policy which is seeking to boost the supply of housing to address the current housing crisis.

The above changes are necessary to ensure the Local Plan satisfies the tests of soundness at paragraph 35 of the NPPF (2021).

Land at Castle Hill, Royal Tunbridge Wells should be removed from the Green Belt allocated for a mixed use urban extension including around 900 dwellings (SHELAA Site Ref:49).

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1. This Statement has been prepared by Woolf Bond Planning LLP on behalf of Castle Hill Developments Ltd (“CHD”), and addresses several questions posed for Matter 2 of the Hearing Sessions as set out in the Inspector’s Matters and Issues.
- 1.2. In setting out our response, we continue to rely upon the content of the detailed representations submitted on behalf of CHD in response to the Regulation 19 consultation on the Draft Local Plan in June 2021.
- 1.3. Our answers to the questions should be read in the context of our position that insufficient deliverable and developable land has been identified in the submitted Local Plan in order to maintain a rolling 5 year supply of housing land as obligated by paragraph 74 of the NPPF. The Plan would not be sound without an amendment to include additional site allocations within revised settlement boundaries alongside adjustments to Green Belt boundaries.
- 1.5. This Statement amplifies our Regulation 19 representations and details further responses to a number of the specific questions raised by the Inspector in his examination of the Local Plan.

MATTER 2: HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT NEEDS (POLICY STR1)

Issue 1: Housing Needs and the Housing Requirement

General

- 2.1. Our detailed representations prepared and submitted on behalf of CHD in response to the Council's Draft Submission Local Plan provide a detailed justification for the inclusion of additional site allocations in helping to meet identified housing needs.

To determine the minimum number of homes needed, paragraph 61 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') states that strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

Question 1: What is the minimum number of new homes needed over the plan period as calculated using the standard method? Are the calculations accurate and do they reflect the methodology and advice in the national Planning Practice Guidance ('the PPG')?

- 2.2. Our representations (paragraph 5.1) note that the Council calculated their Local Housing Need figure as shown in the appendix to the Housing Topic Paper. This indicates that the capped housing figure is 678dpa. Whilst this is derived from an assessment relying upon 2020 as the "current year" for the purposes of Step 1, this was considered appropriate as the Council did not have detailed information regarding the confirmed sources of supply, especially sites with outstanding planning permission in order to use 2021 as the "current year".
- 2.3. As also detailed in our earlier representations (paragraph 5.2 refers), the PPG (ID ref 2a-007-20190220) is clear that the application of the 40% cap within Step 3 of the Standard Method does not reduce an area's housing need.
- 2.4. As recognised in the Housing Needs Assessment Topic Paper (CD3.73)

(paragraphs 2.25 and 2.26), delivery above the capped figure would ensure Tunbridge Wells Borough contributes towards the Government's wider objectives of boosting the supply of housing.

- 2.5. The Housing Topic Paper (page 35) refers to the 2018 affordability ratio in deriving the uncapped housing requirement. This alongside updates are shown in the table below.

Date released	Year	Median workplace affordability ratio	Affordability adjustment in Step 2 of LHN calculation
28/3/19	2018	12.76	54.75%
19/3/20	2019	12.48	53.00%
25/3/21	2020	13.27	57.94%
23/3/22	2021	15.40	71.25%

- 2.6. As indicated in the above table, the Council's reliance of the 12.76 figure to derive the uncapped requirement is inconsistent with the PPG (step 2), especially as more up to date information was available prior to submission of the Plan.
- 2.7. The PPG is clear that authorities should, through their Local Plan, seek to achieve the uncapped figure at the earliest opportunity, rather than awaiting a plan review. As such, and instead of seeking a minimum of 678dpa¹, the Submitted Local Plan should include a target of at least 765dpa².

Question 2 - Are there any exceptional circumstances which justify an alternative approach to using the standard method? If so, what are they, and what should the housing requirement be?

- 2.8. There are no exceptional circumstances which justify an alternative approach.
- 2.9. The minimum housing requirement for the Borough should be the uncapped

¹ Average household growth 2020-30 of 484.3 with 40% uplift

² Average household growth 2020-30 of 484.3 with 57.94% uplift – the latest available prior to submission. This is notwithstanding the higher subsequent data.

figure of 765dpa.

- 2.10. In addition, an additional contribution should be added towards meeting the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities (including towards the shortfall identified by Sevenoaks District). This could partially be addressed through setting the Borough's requirement as at least 765dpa.

Question 3 - In addition to the local housing need figure for Tunbridge Wells, should the Plan also make provision for housing needs that cannot be met in neighbouring areas? If so, what should that figure be?

- 2.11. Yes. As indicated in the representation, the contribution should be at least 87dpa which results in the increase from 678dpa to 765dpa.

Question 4 - Will the plan period look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, as required by paragraph 22 of the Framework?

- 2.12. No. As indicated in our representations³, a plan period extending to only 31st March 2038 is inconsistent with the requirement in NPPF paragraph 22 that **“Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption”**.

- 2.13. The LDS (CD3.143) indicates that the Plan will be adopted in January 2023. This is seven months later than the June 2022 date envisaged in the LDS (CD3.57) which was current during the consultation on the pre-submission Local Plan.

- 2.14. The information on housing monitoring (as confirmed in paragraph 4.16 and table 3 of the Submitted Plan) relates to periods from 1st April to the subsequent 31st March. Assuming adoption of the Local Plan was feasible in January 2023, the envisaged current Plan period of 2020 to 2038 would provide for 15 years.

- 2.15. Our representations (paragraph 5.29) referred to the Government's analysis of Local Plan progress at 1st March 2021. This has since been updated to 7th April

³ Paragraphs 5.28-36

2022⁴. This indicates that for 28 plans which have been found sound and are awaiting adoption, it has been 546 days from submission⁵ to the issuing of the Inspector's Report.

- 2.16. As Tunbridge Well's Plan was submitted on 1st November 2021, assuming 546 days from submission to their receipt of the Inspectors Report indicates that this would occur on 1st May 2023. Adoption could not occur until after this date. As this is well into a new monitoring year, to ensure the Plan provides at least fifteen years post adoption⁶, the Local Plan should cover the period to 31st March 2039.
- 2.17. Furthermore, the timeframe of the Examination Hearing Sessions has been revised so that it extends from 1st March until 19th July 2022. This is three months longer than the LDS (CD3.143) indicates. With an extended examination alongside an allowance for consultation on Local Plan Main Modifications (including Sustainability Appraisal revisions⁷), this will further delay the issuing of the Inspector's Report and subsequent adoption. This further supports extension of the plan period to 31st March 2039.
- 2.18. The Inspector examining the Watford Local Plan (submitted on 6th August 2021) has issued initial views⁸ advocating an extended plan period to 2038 to ensure it provides for a minimum 15 years post adoption.
- 2.19. Watford Borough Council have accepted this suggestion and outlined refinements of the Main Modifications to extend the Plan period from 2037⁹ to 2038¹⁰. The same approach should be applied to Tunbridge Wells Borough to ensure consistency (and conformity) with the NPPF.

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10). For Plan-making, paragraph 11b) states that strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs

⁴ [Local Plan: monitoring progress - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

⁵ Where this has occurred since 24th January 2019 (referenced in paragraph 220 of NPPF).

⁶ Consistent with the NPPF, paragraph 22

⁷ Reflecting Statement to Matter 1 of Examination

⁸ Appendix 1 of this statement

⁹ Appendix 2 of this statement

¹⁰ Appendix 3 of this statement

for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. The policies referred to in paragraph 11b) relate to, amongst other things, land designated as Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB's).

Question 5: Do policies relating to the Green Belt and/or the High Weald AONB provide a strong reason for restricting the scale of development in Tunbridge Wells?

- 2.20. No. The policies relating to the Green Belt and/or the High Weald AONB do not provide a strong reason for restricting the scale of development in Tunbridge Wells Borough.
- 2.21. With respect of Green Belt, paragraph 141 of the NPPF requires exceptional circumstances to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries. In this regard, it requires the strategic policy making authority to demonstrate that it has examined all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.
- 2.22. Based upon our review of the evidence base, we conclude exceptional circumstances exist in Tunbridge Wells Borough to justify the release of land from the Green Belt to meet identified needs.
- 2.23. The *Calverton Parish Council* judgment¹¹ provides helpful case law in relation to what may be considered to represent exceptional circumstances to justify reviewing Green Belt boundaries.
- 2.24. The considerations include the following, all of which are applicable to Tunbridge Wells Borough:
1. the acuteness/intensity of the objectively assessed need (matters of degree may be important);

¹¹ Included as Appendix 5 to the Original Representation

2. the inherent constraints on supply/availability of land prima facie suitable for sustainable development;
 3. the consequent difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt;
 4. the nature and extent of harm to this Green Belt (or those parts of it which would be lost if the boundaries were reviewed); and,
 5. the extent to which the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt may be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonable practicable extent.
- 2.25. As set out in the supporting evidence base to the Submitted Local Plan, land within existing settlements and or previously developed sites cannot meet the need for housing and other needs identified. This, of itself, justifies the release of land from the Green Belt to help meet identified needs for housing and economic growth.
- 2.26. Planning policy makes provision for changes to the Green Belt, through preparation of a Local Plan. In making changes to the Green Belt boundary there have to be "exceptional circumstances".
- 2.27. Housing and employment need can represent an exceptional circumstance to justify a review of a Green Belt boundary.
- 2.28. This principle has been acknowledged in Hunston¹², in the Court of Appeal where Sir David Keene observed at [21]:

“In principle, a shortage of housing land when compared to the needs of an area is capable of amounting to very special circumstances.”

- 2.29. At paragraph 10 of his judgment, Sir David Keene also said in respect of earlier NPPF (2012) paragraphs 87 and 88 that:

“The framework does not seek to define further what ‘other considerations’ might outweigh the damage to the Green Belt, but in principle there seems no reason why in

¹² Included as Appendix 6 to the Representation

certain circumstances a shortfall in housing land supply might not do so.”

2.30. In the *Calverton*¹³ case Jay J also reinforced these points finding at paragraph 44:

“The issue is whether, in the existence of planning judgement and in the overall context of the positive statutory duty to achieve sustainable development, exceptional circumstances existed to justify the release of Green Belt.”

2.31. In the *Hundal* case¹⁴ paragraph 50 confirmed that the failure to meet needs since a Green Belt boundary had been defined could also amount to exceptional circumstances:

“The overriding policy of PPG2 is that the Green Belt boundaries should remain fixed once they have been validly determined. It is only if a relevant circumstance occurs that requires a change in the future for planning purposes that the circumstance will be an exceptional circumstance. An obvious example would be if, in the present case, the First Defendant had determined that it could not meet the projected housing requirements for its area up to 2031 without using Green Belt land. In that case, for the purposes of the Core Strategy, the exceptional circumstance may have been made out (assuming no other practical alternatives). At that point, a subsidiary question may arise as to which land that was currently within the Green Belt should now be freed for development. In making that latter decision, I accept that the fact that land had recently and erroneously been included within the Green Belt when the local plan was developed might be a relevant consideration in deciding where the boundary had changed but it would be highly unlikely to be the only or the dominant factor.”

2.32. In light of the above analysis, housing/employment development needs can, as a matter of planning judgment, as well as the desire to promote, plan and achieve sustainable patterns of development, amount to exceptional

¹³ Included as Appendix 5 to the Representation

¹⁴ Included as Appendix 7 to the Representation

circumstances through the development plan review process. Such an approach would be consistent with Section 39(2) and national policy (NPPF paragraphs 141 and 142).

- 2.33. The *Calverton* case helpfully sets out the matters to examine in establishing exceptional circumstances in the context of national policy and the positive obligation in Section 39(2) to plan for sustainable development. The judgement at paragraph 51 states:

“In a case such as the present, it seems to me that, having undertaken the first-stage of the Hunston approach (sc. assessing objectively assessed need), the planning judgments involved in the ascertainment of exceptional circumstances in the context of both national policy and the positive obligation located in section 39(2) should, at least ideally, identify and then grapple with the following matters: (i) the acuteness/intensity of the objectively assessed need (matters of degree may be important); (ii) the inherent constraints on supply/availability of land prima facie suitable for sustainable development; (iii) (on the facts of this case) the consequent difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt; (iv) the nature and extent of the harm to this Green Belt (or those parts of it which would be lost if the boundaries were reviewed); and (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.”

- 2.34. Each of these 5 matters are interrelated and apply to Tunbridge Wells Borough:

2.35. Matters (i) and (ii) are confirmed by the Council’s acknowledgement that there are insufficient areas within the parts of the Borough inset from the Green Belt to accommodate the areas’ housing needs. This consequently provides clear justification for removing land from the Green Belt.

2.36. In relation to (iii), the Council’s submitted Local Plan recognised the challenges in meeting housing and employment needs without considering locations in the Green Belt.

2.37. Green Belt can be removed from land around Tunbridge Wells Borough, especially where it is sustainable, including within the context of the approach set out at paragraph 142 of the NPPF where plans should give first

consideration to land that is well served by public transport.

- 2.38. Whilst the Council (consistent with paragraph 11(b)) accepts that the need for employment justifies the allocation of land in both the AONB and Green Belt¹⁵ as the adverse impacts do not come close to significantly and demonstrably outweighing the benefits, the same must also apply when considering housing growth.
- 2.39. The Compton PC v Guildford judgement¹⁶ (paragraph 70) clarifies that the phrase “exceptional circumstances” is a less demanding test than the development control test for permitting inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which requires “very special circumstances”.
- 2.40. Secondly, at paragraph 71, the judgement confirms that the phrase “exceptional circumstances” which in the NPPF is the relevant test for both the Green Belt and major development in the AONB can be a cumulation or combination of circumstances, or varying natures, which the decision maker as a matter of planning judgement can conclude that the circumstances are sufficiently exceptional to warrant altering the Green Belt boundary and allowing major development within AONB.
- 2.41. Finally, the judgement (paragraph 72) confirmed that ordinary housing need can fall within the scope of exceptional circumstances. The existence and magnitude of the Borough’s identified housing needs, irrespective of unmet need from other local authorities.
- 2.42. Taking account of the identified need for development within the Borough, especially for housing, this consequently provides the exceptional circumstances justification for allowing major development in both the Green Belt and AONB.
- 2.43. Therefore, as detailed at the start of the answer, neither the Green Belt nor the AONB provide a strong reason for restricting the scale of development in

¹⁵ Land off Longfield Way, Tunbridge Wells – AL/RTW17

¹⁶ Compton PC v Guildford BC [2019] EWHC 3242 (Admin) (Document TWLP-009 in examination library)

Tunbridge Wells Borough.

Question 6: Is the housing requirement justified, having regard to areas of Green Belt and AONB across Tunbridge Wells?

2.44. No. As detailed in the response to question 3 within this issue, the Borough's annual housing requirement from 2020 onwards must be a minimum of 765dpa.

Examination of the Watford Local Plan

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Examination webpage: [Watford Local Plan | Home](#)

INSPECTOR'S NOTE NO. 7 ACTION POINTS FROM MATTERS 1 TO 6

Introduction

Further to the discussions at the week one hearing sessions, the following actions are required. I consider these to be necessary at this stage of the examination to inform my consideration of whether the Plan is sound and/or how it could be made sound by main modifications. I may decide in due course that other or different main modifications are required, including to the parts of the Plan that I refer to below.

Responses should be submitted to the Programme Officer by **midday on Tuesday 1 February 2022** unless otherwise specified.

M1. Legal and procedural requirements and other general matters

No action points identified at this stage.

M2. Amount of development needed in the Borough

Plan period

AP1. Council to amend its proposed main modification to policy SS1.1 (and other parts of the Plan as necessary) to refer to a plan period of 2021 to 2038.

Housing requirement

AP2. Council to amend the proposed main modification to policy HO3.1 (and other parts of the Plan as necessary) to:

- (a) Clarify that the housing requirement is a minimum of 13,328 net additional homes in the period 2021 to 2038 which represents an annual average of 784 net additional homes per year.
- (b) Delete the sentence "In addition to the identified housing need, a 5% buffer equivalent to 627 new homes during the plan period will contribute towards the overall housing supply".

AP3. Council to amend the proposed main modification to Figure 3.1 so that the title is "Summary of housing supply identified in the Plan" (or similar).

Additional industrial and office floorspace

AP4. Council to amend the proposed main modifications to policies SS1.1 and EM4.1 to delete references to how many new jobs may be created in the Borough. Council to consider whether those policies should instead refer to additional industrial and office floorspace that is (a) identified as being needed in the Borough / wider functional economic area and/or (b) proposed on sites identified in the Plan.

M3. Spatial strategy

Greenfield development

AP5. Council to prepare a main modification to delete the first sentence of paragraph 8 of policy SS1.1 relating to greenfield development, and to consider whether a replacement policy statement relating to the development of unallocated sites (including residential gardens) is required.

Development in the Green Belt

AP6. Council to prepare a main modification to the second sentence of the paragraph 8 of policy SS1.1 so that it reads as follows:
"Inappropriate development, as defined in national planning policy, in the Metropolitan Green Belt will not be approved except in very special circumstances".

M4. Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area

No actions identified at this stage.

M5. Town Centre Strategic Development Area

AP7. Council to ensure that when the next schedule of proposed main modifications is produced (to replace ED36) it includes all of the proposed main modifications set out in the statement of common ground with

Historic England (ED33) relating to policy CDA2.2, the reasoned justification, and site allocations in the Town Centre Strategic Development Area.

AP8. Council to produce a revised version of Appendix 5 to the Housing Supply Statement (ED27A) updating the list of “site allocations to be delivered by 2025/26, less planning permissions within the allocation” so that it is consistent with the information provided in Appendix 2B to the Council’s matter 7 hearing statement. Council to also include an additional column to the list briefly summarising the latest information about pre-application discussions and expected timing of planning applications.

Council response to AP8 to be submitted to the Programme Officer by **midday on Monday 24 January 2022** and made available to participants before the matter 7 hearing session.

M6. Colne Valley Strategic Development Area

Policy CDA2.3 aims to transform 83 hectares of land designated as the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area through co-ordinated change to produce a sustainable and mixed use urban quarter of high quality design and place making, excellent connectivity and a diverse range of uses. A number of sites are allocated for housing or mixed use development which collectively are expected to accommodate around 4,400 new homes in the plan period thereby making a significant contribution to meeting the Plan’s housing requirement. Much of the land in the Area is not specifically allocated for development.

A total of around 2,400 of the new homes would be on a number of allocated sites in the eastern part of the area off Lower High Street. The land and buildings on those allocations, and around them, are in active use for retail and commercial purposes along with extensive areas of surface level parking and access roads. Whilst the owners of the allocations have expressed support for the Plan’s objectives for the Area, the indications are that they may be brought forward for development at different times, and some not until the late 2020s or early 2030s.

Policy CDA2.3 does not include any mechanisms to effectively plan and co-ordinate the delivery of the transformative change aspired for in the Area as a whole or of the allocated sites and other land around Lower High Street. The “development requirements and considerations” for the allocations set out in chapter 13 of the Plan include references to supporting the wider objectives for the Area and, in some cases, engaging with the owners of another site. However, it is not clear how this would be effective if different sites (allocations, but also potentially windfalls) are brought forward at different times, particularly in the absence of a

clearer articulation of when and how the different parts of the Area are expected to change, the overall pattern of development in the long term, and the changes to the road network and public realm that would be required to achieve the transformation.

AP9. Council to consider how policy CDA2.3 (and, if necessary, other parts of the Plan) could be modified to ensure that the Plan is effective in achieving the transformation of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area, in particular the eastern part around Lower High Street, through co-ordinated change over the plan period. The policy should include effective mechanisms to ensure that development on allocated and unallocated sites, along with significant improvements to the built environment, public realm and connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, are delivered in a coordinated and planned manner.

William Fieldhouse

INSPECTOR
24 January 2022

Watford Borough Council

Final Watford Draft Local Plan

Schedule A: Proposed Main Modifications, Second Iteration

October 2021

Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications (Second iteration)

Watford Final Draft Local Plan

This Schedule of the proposed main text modifications includes changes since the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan aimed at resolving any potential soundness and/or legal compliance issues identified during the Regulation 19 Consultation.

Reasons for modification can include:

- Positively prepared
- Justified
- Effective
- Consistent with national policy

The schedule is ordered by chapter and modification number and contains the policy reference/paragraph number and page number for each modification.

Deleted text, maps or other figures are shown with a ~~red-strike-through~~; additions and replacements are underlined in green. Dots denote where the paragraph / policy continues before/after the text shown in the modification.

The proposed modifications will subsequently change the document numbering. The policy, paragraph and bullets referenced in this schedule are those found in the Regulation 19 Publication version of the Local Plan.

Main Modification on Num ber	Page, Local Plan paragraph, policy (in Final Draft Watford Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation document)	Modification (deleted text shown as strike-through and additional text shown <u>underlined</u>)	Reason for modification and Comment ID number
How to use this document (Introduction)	Page, 6, after 'The Local Plan and the Spatial Strategy'	<p><u>The diagrams covering the borough at the beginning of each chapter are included to provide context to the strategic objectives of the Local Plan and opportunities to consider when development comes forward. This also applies to the schematic diagrams for each of the three Strategic Development Areas. The strategic maps are not intended to demonstrate policy requirements and are indicative only. Where specific areas and sites within the borough are covered by particular policies, these are defined on the Policies Map.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with national policy
CHAPTER 1: A SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR WATFORD			
Front cover and then throughout the document (all other instances are shown in the Minor Modifications Schedule)	<p>2018 <u>2021</u> - 2036 <u>2037</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with national policy ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063 & 2064, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation ID 2091, 2092 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd 	
Page 21, Strategic Policy SS1.1 paragraph 1	<p>The Local Plan proposes to deliver for a housing need of makes provision <u>at least 12,544 new for 14,988 additional</u> homes and 9,900 11,500 additional jobs between 2018 <u>2021</u> and 2036 <u>2037</u>, along with other supporting infrastructure. Proposals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positively prepared Consistent with national policy Justified 	


		for new development will be supported, where they demonstrate that they will contribute towards the Local Plan's economic, social and environmental objectives, cumulatively achieving sustainable development.	ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063 & 2064, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation ID 2091, 2092 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd
	Page 21, Strategic Policy SS1.1, after final paragraph	The Core Development Area is defined on the Policies Map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with national policy
CHAPTER 2: CORE DEVELOPMENT AREA			
	Page 23, Paragraph 2.1 and 2.2	The Core Development Area comprises three distinct locations, based on their character and the opportunities that each presents to contribute towards making Watford a place that people want to be and where businesses want to invest. The information set out in Figure 2.1 reflects these areas as defined on the Policies Map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with national policy
	Page 24, Paragraph 2.6, New sentence after final sentence	Figure 2.2 is a schematic diagram to provide context for the area and is not to be interpreted as policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with national policy
	Page 24, Figure 2.2, Diagram title	Figure 2.2 Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area, Illustrative Context Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with national policy
	Page 25, paragraph 2.17, after fifth sentence	When the area comes forward more comprehensive mixed-use development in the second part of the plan period and longer-term, a A route for a second bridge that connects Penn Road with Watford Junction is to be protected so that new development does not compromise potential access to the area in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective
			ID 1972 Canada Life Asset Management

		<p>demonstrates a transition from higher elements in more central parts of the site transitioning to lower lying buildings closer to the boundary of the Strategic Development Area, such as Vicarage Road, will need to be set out.</p> <p>Informed by the Taller Buildings Study, the base future building height in the area is six five storeys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Effective
Page 37, paragraph 2.72, first sentence			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Effective
Page 38, Strategic Policy CDA2.3, first paragraph		<p>The Colne Valley Strategic Development Area is designated to facilitate transformative and co-ordinated change around the River Colne, and Lower High Street and the area of Watford General Hospital area, producing a sustainable and mixed-use urban quarter of high quality design and place making, excellent connectivity and a diverse range of uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Effective
Page 38, Strategic Policy CDA2.3, after a), two new bullets		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Redevelopment of the existing Watford General Hospital will provide modern facilities that are well integrated and co-ordinated with other developments, designed to minimise impacts on nearby residential areas and are well connected to support sustainable transport options including walking, cycling and bus services:</u> • <u>A car multi-storey car park with a capacity of approximately 1,450 car parking spaces located east of the existing Watford General Hospital car park:</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Effective <p>ID 1897 West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust</p>
Page 38, Strategic Policy CDA2.3: Colne Valley Strategic Development Area, Part f)		<p><u>f) A site for a new primary school within Site MU21 'Land at Riverwell', and a site for a new 3 form entry primary school within Site MU16 'Land at Tesco', Lower High Street, New primary school sites to meet demand generated by new development.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Effective <p>ID 2114 Hertfordshire County Council</p>
Page 38, Strategic Policy CDA2.3, after final paragraph		<p><u>The Colne Valley Strategic Development Area is defined on the Policies Map.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with national policy <p>Officer change</p>
CHAPTER 3: HOMES FOR A GROWING COMMUNITY			
Page 40, paragraph 3.1		<p>The Spatial Strategy to 2036-2037 seeks to deliver at least 14,988- 12,544 new homes completed over the plan period. This is equivalent to the delivery of at</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Justified

	<p>least 784 new homes each year and forms the baseline figure to calculate the five year housing supply. This figure includes the amount of housing required to meet local need as determined using the government's standard method (14,274 homes) and an additional 5% allowance (714 homes) To mitigate reduce the risk of sites identified in the pPlan not coming forward as anticipated, an additional 5% buffer equivalent to 627 homes has been added to the housing need calculated using the Government's standard method. This figure of 13,171 homes is the housing supply. The figures that make up this the housing supply in the Local Plan target are set out in Figure 3.1. Figure 3.2 provides an overview of site allocations for residential use and their distribution across the borough. For more detailed information about these sites, refer to Table 13.1 and for site boundaries refer to the Policies Map.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective • Consistent with national policy <p>ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation</p>
<p>Page 40, figure 3.1</p> <p>Revised housing figures in diagram (Commitments revised to reflect removal of completions from 2018 to 2021 and remove duplication of planning consents on sites put forward as site allocations.</p>	<p>Figure 3.1 Housing figures in the Local Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Justified <p>ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation</p> <p>Officer change (error correction)</p>

	<p>Figure 3.1a Housing Need in the Local Plan</p> <p>Figure 3.1b Housing Supply in the Local Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Justified <p>ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd</p>
<p>Page 41, paragraph 3.3</p>	<p>As part of the housing to be provided to 2036 2037, a windfall allowance of 2,132 2,045 units is included. This is based on a combination of three factors including the historical annual average of 70 dwellings per year completed on sites of less than five units; development sites coming forward within the density range identified in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, but higher than projected; and unidentified sites larger than five dwellings gaining planning permission. Combined, it is expected that windfall development will contribute, on average, 146 157 new homes per year <u>over the plan period with the windfall contribution as part of the housing trajectory from 2024/25.</u></p>	

			<p>ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation</p>
Page 41, Strategic Policy HO3.1	<p>To meet housing need, at least 12,544 new homes, equivalent to 784 new homes per year. Provision will be delivered made for 14,988 new homes, inclusive of a 5% buffer of 714 homes; in Watford Borough between 2021 and 2037 for the period 2018 to 2036. In addition to the <u>identified housing need, a 5% buffer equivalent to 627 new homes during the plan period will contribute towards the overall housing supply.</u> Proposals for residential development will be supported where they contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs and achieving sustainable development.</p>	<p>• Positively prepared • Justified</p> <p>ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation</p>	
Page 41, Strategic Policy HO3.1, after last paragraph add new sentence	<p><u>Site allocations for housing and mixed-use, where residential use would be supported, are defined on the Policies Map.</u></p>	<p>• Consistent with national policy Officer change</p>	
Page 43, Policy HO3.2, 1 st paragraph, 1 st sentence	<p>Proposals for new residential development <u>of five dwellings or more</u> will be supported where they make provision for at least 20% of the total number of residential units to be family-sized (at least three+ bedrooms).</p>	<p>• Effective Officer change</p>	
Page 43, new paragraph after paragraph 3.13	<p>Affordable housing can refer to rented or sales properties and is defined by the National Planning Framework. Definitions of affordable housing are set out in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework. To best reflect affordable housing as a proportion of the total number of homes completed on a site, the requirement will be <u>based on measured by</u> habitable rooms <u>with supporting information to be provided by an applicant including the number of units, floorspace and bed spaces as part of the housing schedule.</u></p>	<p>• Effective Officer change</p>	

		<p><u>of it and adjacent to the site</u>. Early engagement with the site operator will be required to ensure that development does not prejudice the <u>existing or future use of the safeguarded site and associated operation due to the introduction of noise receptors</u>.</p>	
Site allocations for residential use where these are the only proposed uses.	Residential allocations have been clarified to state these are classified as C3 use. These proposed amendments will be included in the Schedule of Minor Modifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 	Officer change
<p>Page 191, Table 13.4: Education facilities – Site ED01</p> <p><u>Allocated Sites For Delivery Layer site ED01 boundary amended</u></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective 	ID 2055 Hertfordshire County Council
<p>Page 191, Table 13.4: Education facilities, Site: ED01 Former Meriden School Site, first bullet.</p>	<p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate mitigation for the lapsed <u>detached</u> playing field <u>for Park Gate Junior School</u> in line with the Playing Pitch Strategy (2020); 	Positively prepared	ID 2055 Hertfordshire County Council
<p>Appendix A: Draft Monitoring Framework</p>			
Page 193, Chapter 1 row	<p>13,000 <u>10,700</u> jobs provided 2018 <u>2021</u> - 2036 <u>2037</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justified 	ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited

		<p>ID 2063 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation</p>
<p>Page 193, Chapter 3 row</p>	<p>14,274 <u>13,171</u> dwellings 2018 2021 - 2036 <u>2037, equivalent to with 793</u> <u>784</u> per Year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively prepared • Justified • Consistent with national policy <p>ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd ID 2090 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd ID 1981 St Albans City & District Council ID 1947 WSP ID 2058 Home Builders Federation</p>

Appendix B: Housing Trajectory

Page 198, Appendix B: Housing Trajectory (table), revised to reflect 2021-2037 housing need figure of 12,544 new homes to be completed

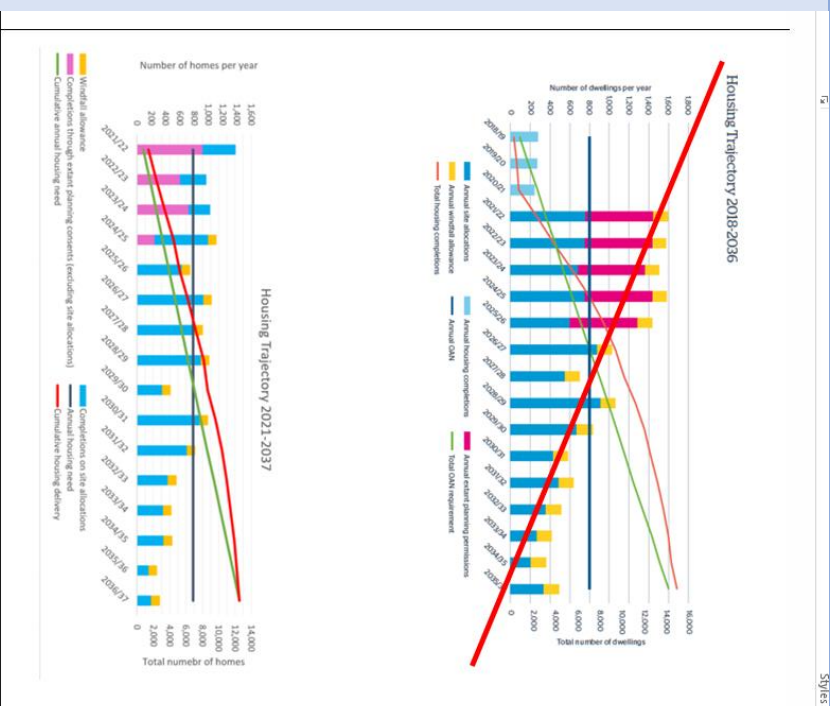
Appendix B: Housing Trajectory

Year	Commitments (Extent planning and other permissions)	Housing Completions from this application	Windfall allowance	Annual housing completions	Cumulative housing completions
2018/19	20	0	0	20	20
2019/20	20	0	0	20	50
2020/21	23	0	0	23	75
2021/22	676	771	139	1,586	2,381
2022/23	676	771	139	1,586	3,967
2023/24	676	684	139	1,499	5,464
2024/25	676	797	139	1,572	6,996
2025/26	676	611	140	1,426	8,422
2026/27	0	881	140	1,021	9,443
2027/28	0	503	140	663	10,106
2028/29	0	916	140	1,056	11,162
2029/30	0	667	140	827	12,019
2030/31	0	444	140	584	12,603
2031/32	0	483	140	633	13,236
2032/33	0	365	140	505	13,741
2033/34	0	275	140	415	14,156
2034/35	0	202	140	352	14,508
2035/36	0	340	140	480	14,988
2036/37	0	345	140	485	15,473
Total	4345	8345	2,095	14,988	14,988

Year	Commitments (Extent planning permissions)	Housing completions from site allocations	Windfall allowance	Annual housing completions	Cumulative housing completions
2021/22	925	453	0	1,378	1,378
2022/23	609	357	0	966	2,344
2023/24	725	292	0	1,017	3,361
2024/25	248	751	109	1,108	4,469
2025/26	0	631	109	740	5,209
2026/27	0	933	109	1,042	6,251
2027/28	0	810	109	919	7,170
2028/29	0	899	109	1,008	8,178
2029/30	0	357	109	466	8,644
2030/31	0	882	109	991	9,635
2031/32	0	703	109	812	10,447
2032/33	0	436	109	545	10,992
2033/34	0	370	109	479	11,471
2034/35	0	377	109	486	11,957
2035/36	0	165	109	274	12,231
2036/37	0	203	110	313	12,544
Total	2,507	8,619	1,418	12,544	12,544

- Positively prepared
 - Justified
 - Consistent with national policy
- ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited
 ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd
 ID 2090, 2093 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd
 ID 1947 WSP
 ID 2058 Home Builders Federation
 ID 1973 Canada Life Asset Management

Page 199, Appendix B: Housing Trajectory (table), revised to reflect 2021-2037 housing need figure of 12,544 new homes to be completed



- Positively prepared
- Justified
- Consistent with national policy

- ID 2002 Drax Investments Limited
- ID 2063, 2068 Glyn Hopkin Holdings Ltd
- ID 2090, 2093 North Western Avenue Watford Ltd
- ID 1947 WSP
- ID 2058 Home Builders Federation
- ID 1973 Canada Life Asset Management

Appendix C: TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Page 202, Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area, second row, second column

Eastern sustainable transport ~~hub~~ hub at Watford Junction station with a new multi storey car park, a new station bridge connecting the two platforms and infrastructure provision for vulnerable road users via an extended link from Clive Way and through to Orphanage Road. Improved access to the sustainable transport ~~hub~~ hub through upgrade works along the existing route of ~~along~~ Imperial Way, Clive Way and Reeds Crescent/Orphanage Road.

- Effective
- ID 1976 Canada Life Asset Management

WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE INSPECTOR'S ACTION POINTS AP1-AP7 and AP9 following the hearing session during the week commencing 17 January 2022

M1. Legal and procedural requirements and other general matters

No action points identified at this stage.

M2. Amount of development needed in the Borough

Plan period

AP1. Council to amend its proposed main modification to policy SS1.1 (and other parts of the Plan as necessary) to refer to a plan period of 2021 to 2038.

The Council propose to amend the Plan to have a plan period date of 2021 to 2038. These will be set out in the next iteration of the Schedule of Main Modifications.

Text affected includes: cover, policies SS1.1, HO3.1, paragraphs 1.2, 1.22, 1.23, 1.26, 2.32, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.35, 3.46, 4.8, 11.7, tables 4.1, 4.2, figure 4.3, text boxes pages 12-15, appendices A, B, H.

Housing requirement

AP2. Council to amend the proposed main modification to policy HO3.1 (and other parts of the Plan as necessary) to:

(a) Clarify that the housing requirement is a minimum of 13,328 net additional homes in the period 2021 to 2038 which represents an annual average of 784 net additional homes per year.

(b) Delete the sentence "In addition to the identified housing need, a 5% buffer equivalent to 627 new homes during the plan period will contribute towards the overall housing supply".

In response to (a), the Council will amend figures in the Plan to clarify that a minimum of 13,328 net additional homes will be delivered during the plan period representing an average of 784 net additional homes per year.

Text affected includes: policies SS1.1, HO3.1, paragraphs 3.1, 13.2, appendices A, B.

In response to (b), the Council will delete the cited sentence and set this out in the next iteration of the Schedule of Main Modifications.

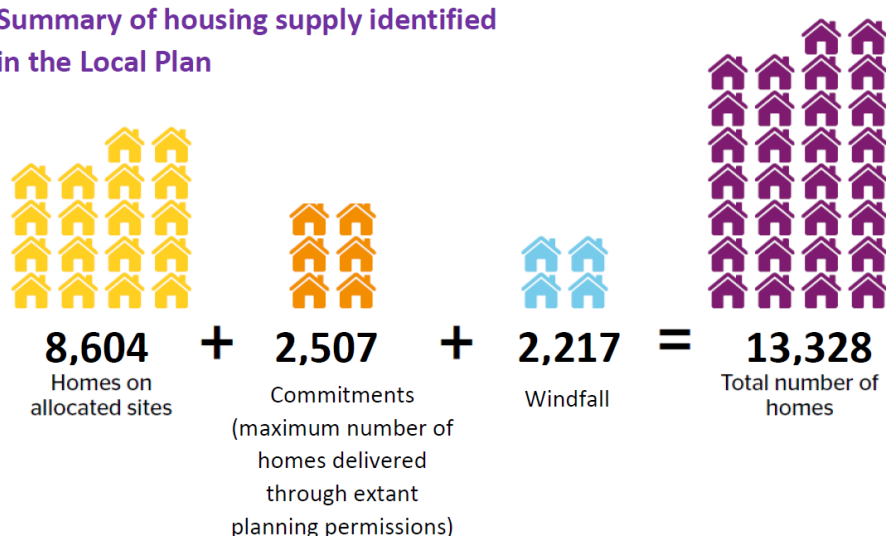
Text affected includes: policy HO3.1, figure 3.1.

Housing requirement

AP3. Council to amend the proposed main modification to Figure 3.1 so that the title is “Summary of housing supply identified in the Plan” (or similar).

Figure HO3.1 proposed to be amended as follows:

Summary of housing supply identified in the Local Plan



Additional industrial and office floorspace

AP4. Council to amend the proposed main modifications to policies SS1.1 and EM4.1 to delete references to how many new jobs may be created in the Borough. Council to consider whether those policies should instead refer to additional industrial and office floorspace that is:

- (a) identified as being needed in the Borough / wider functional economic area and/or
- (b) proposed on sites identified in the Plan.

The Council proposes to remove reference to the number of jobs to be created as this only relates to figures associated with office and industrial floorspace and does not include jobs created through other sectors such as retail which make an important contribution towards the local economy.

The proposed amendments to Policy SS1.1 are as follows:

~~The Local Plan makes provision for 14,988 additional homes and 11,500 additional jobs between 2018 and 2036, along with other supporting infrastructure.~~ From 2021 to 2038, the Local Plan makes provision for 13,328 net additional homes and 110,514 sqm of net employment floorspace consisting of 25,206sqm of industrial uses as classified by the B2, B8, E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii) Use Classes and 85,488sqm of office uses as classified by the E(g)(i) Use Class between 2021 and 2038, along with supporting infrastructure and facilities. Proposals for new development will be supported where they demonstrate that they will contribute towards the Local Plan's economic, social and environmental objectives, ~~cumulatively achieving sustainable development.~~

The proposed amendments to Policy EM4.1 are as follows:

To meet the employment needs in Watford and contribute towards the strategic employment requirements of South West Hertfordshire, the Local Plan makes provision for 25,206sqm net industrial floorspace (B2, B8, E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii) Use Classes) and 85,488sqm net office floorspace (E(g)(i) Use Class. To meet these ~~challenging~~ targets, the Local Plan will seek to prevent the net loss of ~~both~~ office and industrial floorspace across the Borough. New office growth will be prioritised at the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location, while new industrial growth will be prioritised in the five Designated Industrial Areas. ~~Over the plan period, the Council will seek to plan for the creation of 11,500 new jobs.~~

Following on from the amended figures above, and reflecting the figures set out in paragraph 4.4 (page 56, submitted Local Plan) alongside the proposed modification to this paragraph in document ED36, it is considered that amending Table 4.1 (page 58) and Table 4.2 (page 59) would be useful to cross-reference the strategic need in SW Herts and the provision made in the Watford Local Plan that would contribute towards this.

Revised Table 4.1 (below paragraph 4.13, p58)

Industrial potential supply 2018-2036	Floorspace (sqm)
Site allocations	17,035
Sites with planning permission	23,724
Total	40,759

<u>Summary of industrial floorspace provision 2021-2038</u>	<u>Floorspace provision (sqm)</u>
<u>South West Hertfordshire requirement</u>	<u>481,500</u>
<u>Watford requirement</u>	<u>97,400</u>
<u>Provision through site allocations</u>	<u>12,799</u>
<u>Provision on sites with planning permission</u>	<u>12,407</u>
<u>Total industrial floorspace provision in the Local Plan</u>	<u>25,206</u>

Revised Table 4.2 (below paragraph 4.15, p59)

Office potential supply 2018-2036	Floorspace (sqm)
Site allocations	38,672
Sites with planning permission	72,503
Total	111,175

Summary of office floorspace provision 2021-2038	Floorspace provision (sqm)
South West Hertfordshire requirement	188,000
Watford requirement	37,600
Provision through site allocations	19,428
Provision on sites with planning permission	66,060
Total office floorspace provision in the Local Plan	85,488

M3. Spatial strategy

Greenfield development

AP5. Council to prepare a main modification to delete the first sentence of paragraph 8 of policy SS1.1 relating to greenfield development, and to consider whether a replacement policy statement relating to the development of unallocated sites (including residential gardens) is required.

The Council proposes a modification to delete the first sentence of paragraph 8 which reads:

~~“All development will take place on brownfield, or previously developed land and only in exceptional circumstances will development on greenfield land be supported.”~~

The Council does not consider it necessary to include text or a policy requirement to reference residential gardens. These types of sites are classified as unallocated sites and will be considered in accordance with policies set out in the development plan. It is recognised that some development may come forward on residential gardens where this is considered appropriate when taking into account factors such as (but not limited to) access, privacy and amenity. Where proposals are determined to be appropriate, these will contribute towards the housing supply as set out in the Local Plan as windfall.

Development in the Green Belt

AP6. Council to prepare a main modification to the second sentence of the paragraph 8 of policy SS1.1 so that it reads as follows:

“Inappropriate development, as defined in national planning policy, in the Metropolitan Green Belt will not be approved except in very special circumstances”.