

Examination of the Tunbridge Wells
Borough Local Plan

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Hearing Statement

Matter 6: Strategic Sites
(Policies STR/SS1, STR/SS2,
STR/SS3, STR/PW1 and
STR/CA1)
Issue 2: Five Oak Green
(Policy STR/CA1)

Document Reference: TWLP/023



Contents

Inspector’s Question 1: [re. role of East Capel].....3
TWBC response to Question 13
Inspector’s Question 2: [re. compensatory improvements to Green Belt]4
TWBC response to Question 2.....4

Matter 6 – Strategic Sites (Policies STR/SS1, STR/SS2, STR/SS3, STR/PW1 and STR/CA1)

Issue 2 – Five Oak Green (Policy STR/CA1)

Inspector’s Question 1: [re. role of East Capel]

Policy STR/CA1 sets out the strategy for the Capel Parish. Criterion 3 states that approximately 2,060 dwellings will be accommodated on land at East Capel as part of the extension to Paddock Wood. Is it clear to users of the Plan which site this relates to?

TWBC response to Question 1

Introduction

1. The Council considers it is clear to readers of the Plan what site East Capel refers to. The policy (STR/CA1 part 3) provides a cross reference to Policy STR/SS1 to which the housing target relates. The supporting text to Policy STR/SS1 (paragraph 5.158) identifies that the land to the west of the allocation is located within Capel parish.
2. However, if the Inspector considers this should be clearer, a map could be inserted below the policy which shows the location of ‘East Capel’ and ‘Tudeley Village’ as a minor/additional modification.

Inspector's Question 2: [re. compensatory improvements to Green Belt]

What are the 'compensatory improvements to the Green Belt, including measures to reduce flooding to particular areas of Five Oak Green'? How will they be delivered?

TWBC response to Question 2

Introduction

3. Policy STR/CA1 requires no specific development or release of Green Belt in or immediately adjacent to Five Oak Green. Policy STR/CA1, which provides the overall strategy for Capel parish, is, however, to be read in junction with Policies STR1/SS1 Paddock Wood and land to the east of Capel and STR/SS3 Tudeley Village. These strategic allocations fall within Capel parish and require land to be released from the Green Belt; and accordingly, both include requirements for compensatory improvements to the Green Belt (in line with paragraph 142 of the NPPF).
4. The requirement for compensatory improvements to the Green Belt is repeated in Policy STR/CA1 for completeness as this is the overarching policy for Capel parish. It is considered important that this is repeated as the majority of Green Belt release proposed through the Plan is within Capel parish. Its inclusion emphasises the weight given by the Council to this requirement.
5. Specific mention of the requirement for measures that reduce flooding to Five Oak Green, as part of the range of compensatory improvement measures, is set out in both this policy (criterion 4) and the policy for Tudeley Village (STR/SS1 Criterion 10). Five Oak Green has suffered from historic flooding incidences and the ability for the strategic development at Tudeley Village to reduce flooding to Five Oak Green through investment in off-site infrastructure has been an important consideration in the soundness of this allocation (i.e. contributing to the exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release). On this basis, it is considered to be justified to repeat this requirement in the strategic policy for Capel parish. Flood mitigation measures such as those proposed for Five Oak Green contribute to the environmental quality of the remaining Green Belt land.

6. In this way it is clear that development in Capel, where the majority of Green Belt to be released through the Plan is located, will be required to provide compensatory improvements to the Green Belt.
7. For the full scope of compensatory improvements refer to the answers on Matter 6 Issue 3 STR/SS1 and Issue 1 STR/SS3. Potential measures specific to Five Oak Green to reduce the incidence of flooding could include:
 - a. Natural Flood Management measures on water courses and agricultural land in the catchment of the Alder Stream and in relation to surface water flows towards western Five Oak Green.
 - b. Flood attenuation associated with highway improvements and new highways infrastructure; and
 - c. Improvements to existing drainage infrastructure and flood defence measures within and adjacent to the village, such as culverts and raised embankments.
8. These will be delivered through the development at Tudeley Village.