

Section 10: Managing Appropriate Development in the Green Belt

- 10.1 The plan creates a Green Belt for York that will provide a lasting framework to shape the future development of the city. In managing development in the Green Belt the primary aim is to preserve and enhance the special character and setting of York and its villages.

Policy GB1: Development in the Green Belt

Within the Green Belt, planning permission for development will only be granted where:

- i. the scale, location and design of development would not detract from the openness of the Green Belt;
- ii. it would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt; and
- iii. it would not prejudice or harm those elements which contribute to the special character and setting of York.

AND it is for one of the following purposes:

- agriculture and forestry; or
- appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation; or
- cemeteries; or
- limited infilling in existing settlements; or
- limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing buildings; or
- limited affordable housing for proven local needs; or
- development of existing developed sites where this would lead to an overall improvement in the character and appearance of the Green Belt without compromising openness; or
- minerals extraction, provided high environmental standards are attainable; or
- essential engineering operations including waste disposal; or
- local transport infrastructure including highways work and Park & Ride facilities; or
- the reuse of buildings; or
- development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order; or
- renewable energy schemes, where it can be proved that the location is necessary for technical reasons and wider environmental benefits can be demonstrated.

All other forms of development within the Green Belt are considered inappropriate. Very special circumstances will be required to justify instances where this presumption against development should not apply.

See also Policy GB2, GB3, GB4, D1, D2, GI1, GI2, GI3, GI4, GI5, GI6, H9, WM1, WM2 and CC1.

Explanation

- 10.2 Detailed boundaries of the Green Belt are shown on the proposals map. In defining these boundaries, care has been taken to follow readily recognisable physical features that are likely to endure.

- 10.3 The protection of the Green Belt is an overriding planning consideration and one, which, in the case of most forms of development, strongly militates against the granting of planning permission.
- 10.4 When granting permission for residential development in the Green Belt, conditions will normally be attached to remove permitted development rights from the application site. This will ensure that the visual openness of the countryside is protected from obtrusive domestic development.
- 10.5 One of the few exceptions where isolated new housing development may be acceptable in the open countryside around York is where accommodation is required to enable an agriculture or forestry worker to live in the immediate vicinity of their workplace. It is intended to judge the instances where this type of residence would be acceptable on the individual circumstances of the farm or forestry business. For instance, it may be that for security purposes it is possible to justify the presence of a dwelling on or near an agricultural holding. All applications for agricultural or forestry dwellings will be expected to be accompanied by a detailed justification as to why that new unit is genuinely required for the stated purpose.
- 10.6 To ensure that any agricultural or forestry dwelling is retained to meet the identified housing need of that holding, occupancy conditions will be attached to permissions to limit potential residents to people directly involved in the operation of that agricultural or forestry holding.
- 10.7 The provision of opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation near urban areas is one of the key aims of Green Belt. Policy GB1 attempts to achieve this aim by offering a degree of flexibility depending on the circumstances of the existing or proposed recreational use and its likely impact on the open character of the area so such proposals reflect the special Green Belt circumstances that currently exist in the city.
- 10.8 The open countryside around York includes a significant number of buildings outside existing settlements. The extension or alteration of these buildings will be considered acceptable, in response to changing circumstances, provided there would be no greater visual impact on the Green Belt or open countryside as a result of the alterations, and where the design of any extension is in keeping with the original buildings. Furthermore, when permission for this type of development is granted, the applicant will be expected to agree to conditions ensuring that no further extensions will be permitted to the same building.
- 10.9 In special circumstances the development of affordable housing may be considered on small 'exception' sites. Further details of these special circumstances are detailed in Policy GB4.
- 10.10 The principle of existing buildings in the Green Belt and open countryside being demolished and replaced by a new building is acceptable provided it is on a one-for-one basis, and the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

- 10.11 In circumstances where the building proposed for replacement is listed, it is preferable to see the building restored and renovated rather than demolished, to safeguard the city's heritage. Similarly, if it can be demonstrated that the building has been abandoned or deliberately neglected, proposals for its replacement will be resisted. The policy also aims to ensure that the replacement of any existing building takes place as close as possible to the site of the original building, and is not materially larger than the one it replaces, thus minimising any additional visual impact on the Green Belt. Proposals for significantly larger replacement buildings will not be acceptable.
- 10.12 There are advantages to permitting limited development and redevelopment of previously developed sites within the Green Belt provided development does not have a greater impact on Green Belt's openness or the purposes of including land within it than the existing development. Where the sites are in existing use, limited infilling may help to provide jobs and secure economic prosperity such as at York Racecourse; Askham Bryan College; Harewood Whin; and Cliftongate Business Park. Similarly, the complete or partial redevelopment of these sites may in some cases, result in environmental improvements. In such cases, the area of the site occupied by existing buildings is the aggregate ground floor area of existing buildings excluding temporary buildings, open spaces with direct external access between wings of a building, and hard standing.
- 10.13 Additionally, the character and the dispersal of any proposed redevelopment will need to be considered to ensure that there is no additional impact on the character of the Green Belt. Where a major development within the Green Belt is demolished, careful records of the extent and nature of the original development must be made and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. These records will facilitate the accurate application of Policy GB1.
- 10.14 The Park & Ride is a key component of the city's transport policies. In order to function effectively, Park & Ride facilities need to be located on or close to the major radial routes and are likely to be close to junctions with the Outer Ring Road (A64/A1237). It is acknowledged that in special circumstances Park and Ride sites may be located within the Green Belt.
- 10.15 Development in the Green Belt brought forward under the Community Right to Build Order will not be seen as inappropriate provided that it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The Community Right to Build allows local communities to undertake small-scale, site-specific, community-led developments. The new powers give communities the freedom to build new homes, shops, businesses or facilities where they want them, without going through the normal planning application process. To get the go-ahead, the proposals must:
- have the agreement of more than 50% of local people that vote through a community referendum; and
 - meet some minimum requirements (for example, they should generally be in line with national planning policies and strategic elements of the Local Plan).

- 10.16 Members of the community will need to set themselves up as a corporate body with the purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental well-being of the local community. The developments would then be managed by this corporate body. Any benefits from any development which come to the body must be retained or used for the benefit of the community.

Delivery

- Key Delivery Partners: City of York Council; developers; and landowners.
- Implementation: Planning applications.

Policy GB2: Development in Settlements within the Green Belt

In settlements within the Green Belt as shown on the proposals map, planning permission for the erection of new buildings or the change of use, redevelopment or extension of existing buildings will only be permitted provided:

- i. the proposed development would be located within the built-up area of the settlement;
- ii. the location, scale and design of the proposed development would be appropriate to the form and character of the settlement and neighbouring property; and
- iii. the proposed development would constitute limited infilling and would not prejudice the openness or the purposes of the Green Belt.

See also Policy GB1, GB3, GB4, D1, D2

Explanation

- 10.17 A village should be included in the Green Belt, if it is necessary to prevent development primarily because of the important contribution the village's open character makes to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 10.18 Whilst infilling (defined as the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage) is often perceived as acceptable in some locations, this ignores the fact that part of the character of many settlements is made up of gardens, paddocks and other breaks between buildings. It is important to protect those infill spaces, which contribute to the character of smaller settlements lying within the Green Belt. Infill development may also not be desirable if it would consolidate groups of houses, which are isolated from the main body of a village, or consolidate a ribbon of development extending into the open countryside. Infilling is location dependent, therefore in some settlements little or no infill development may be appropriate; in others a limited amount of infill on selected sites may be acceptable.

Delivery

- Key Delivery Partners: City of York Council; developers; and landowners.
- Implementation: Planning applications.