

## **Broxbourne Local Plan 2016-2031**

### **Exceptional Circumstances and Sustainable Places**

Paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that

*“Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.”*

However neither the NPPF nor the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) defines ‘exceptional circumstances’, and therefore each Local Planning Authority must decide for itself whether these circumstances exist in relation to designated Green Belt within their administrative area.

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that

*“When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.”*

In the draft Local Plan the Council sets out a number of proposed Green Belt releases for which it believes that a good case for ‘exceptional circumstances’ can be made. The case is guided by the principle of creating ‘sustainable patterns of development’ as set out in paragraph 84 above. The Council has approached other authorities with land beyond the Green Belt (East Herts, Uttlesford, and North Herts) and none of these authorities is able to assist in meeting Broxbourne’s growth needs.

A list of draft criteria which have informed the case is set out under the headings below. Confirmation that ‘exceptional circumstances’ exist cannot be justified by a tick-box approach. Therefore the Council will prepare a site-by-site justification for any Green Belt release, drawing on the relevant criteria on the next page. This further information will support the Submission Draft Local Plan.

### **Planning Policy Team**

**Summer 2016**

## **Draft Criteria**

### Local Plan Strategy

1. Consistency with the Local Plan strategy and objectives
2. Meeting identified requirements for sustainable development
3. Housing provision to meet objectively assessed needs
4. Inclusion of jobs and access to employment opportunities
5. Supporting town centres and the retail hierarchy
6. Restoration of derelict or underused land/buildings
7. Minimising the impact on roads
8. Sustainable transport solutions

### The Green Belt

9. Minimising the impact on and maintaining the aim and purposes of the Green Belt
10. Establishing the permanence of the Green Belt
11. Improving the Green Belt and the countryside

### Sustainable Place Making

12. Place creation – unique, beautiful and safe with a sense of place, community and belonging
13. Strong connection to existing place and/or creation of new place
14. Strong mix of uses and facilities
15. Inclusion of and/or accessibility to shops
16. Inclusion of and/or accessibility to school(s)
17. Inclusion of and accessibility to sports, recreation, open space and countryside
18. Inclusion of other services and/or accessibility to other services

### Design, landscape and biodiversity

19. Respecting heritage and landscape assets
20. Exceptional design
21. Sustainable design and construction
22. Exceptional landscaping and biodiversity

### Transport

23. Minimising the need to travel by car
24. Inclusion of and/or accessibility to a public transport to a variety of destinations
25. Walking and cycling connections
26. Accessibility to countryside