

KIRKLEES DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

GREEN BELT REVIEW AND OUTCOMES

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Areas in Kirklees to which green belt policies apply were first defined in the 1960s. The West Yorkshire Structure Plan, approved in 1980, confirmed the general area of the green belt in the District and subsequent local plans identified detailed boundaries. These boundaries were largely carried through into the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 1999.
- 1.2 National policy guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) attaches great importance to green belts and states that 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.
- 1.3 The green belt boundary in Kirklees has been reviewed as part of the preparation of the Kirklees Local Plan. This exercise has involved three areas of work;
 1. The establishment of the position of the existing statutory boundary in electronic form based on the OS master map, updated following the procedure set out in part 2 of this document. This also includes scrutiny of requests to re-draw the position of the boundary involving small sites of less than 0.4ha;
 2. Scrutiny of options (sites of 0.4ha and above) to add land to the green belt or to remove land from the green belt (that are not development options). Where there is a case for reviewing the boundary following these requests the existing boundary will not be changed until such time as the Local Plan is adopted. The methodology for this exercise is set out in part 3 of this document; and
 3. A review of the green belt edge and the land immediately beyond it to determine the degree of constraint to development and the degree to which land performs a green belt role, following the procedure set out in part 4 of this document.

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Text to be inserted

2. Digitising the green belt boundary

The purpose of the exercise:

- 2.1 To *interpret* the existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP) green belt boundary to create a digitised green belt boundary for the purposes of the Kirklees Local Plan. Exceptionally, where there has been a material change in circumstances, or where there appears to be sufficient evidence to justify a change, the boundary will be *updated* to create a strong and defensible boundary in line with guidance in paragraph 85 of NPPF. This states that local authorities should define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

Methodology

- 2.2 The captured line will be based on the current OS master map. The boundary will conform to the Kirklees District administrative boundary and where relevant the planning boundary with the Peak District National Park.
- 2.3 The position of the boundary will in all instances be guided by paragraph 85 of NPPF. However, it will not always be possible to follow a feature on the ground, for example where the boundary crosses a field between two other boundaries, crosses a linear feature such as a railway line, road or watercourse or follows the back of a row of houses leaving the gardens in the green belt. Moving the boundary in these instances could create a significant change to the extent of the green belt for which there is no justification.

Interpretation

- 2.4 The vast majority of the existing green belt boundary will remain unchanged from the Unitary Development Plan as there has been no change in circumstances since the adoption of the UDP and there are no exceptional circumstances that would warrant a change to the position of the boundary.
- 2.5 In a small number of instances, simply because of the scale at which the UDP boundary was captured, the exact position of the boundary on the OS master map is not clear. In these instances a 'best-fit' approach will be adopted, following a ground feature where possible. These are interpretations of the correct position of the boundary and will not be recorded.

Updating

- 2.6 Over the passage of time the Ordnance Survey landline that depicts features on the ground has changed, while the position of the green belt boundary has remained fixed. This means that there will be instances where the landline and the green belt line no longer match. Where this occurs, it will be a matter of judgement whether:

- There are exceptional circumstances or other evidence that justifies a change to the position of the boundary for the purposes of reviewing the development plan; or
- To retain the existing position, even though the feature it followed is no longer there or is otherwise different, if it is considered that the resultant change would harm the purposes of including land in the green belt.

Assessment of small sites

- 2.7 A number of the changes proposed have come about as a result of requests to reconsider the position of the green belt boundary. Any such request where the area of land concerned is 0.4ha or larger has been created as a site option and considered through the Local Plan site options procedure. These sites are considered in part 3 of this document. Requests concerning an area of land of less than 0.4ha have been considered as part of the exercise to digitise the green belt boundary and advertised as a change where one is deemed warranted.
- 2.8 As a general rule, small sites remote from settlements cannot result in a change to the green belt boundary as this would require significant additional land to be released to avoid creating very small isolated pockets of non-green belt land. One exception to this would be where the small site is a natural or important extension to an accepted development option. Small sites that adjoin a settlement edge have been scrutinised to determine whether making the change proposed would harm the purposes of including land in the green belt. In some cases this could involve scrutiny of the planning history of the site.
- 2.9 The outcomes of the assessment of small sites are shown in Table 1.

Recording

- 2.10 All the proposed changes to the existing statutory green belt boundary resulting from the digitising exercise are shown in Appendix 1. Each change has been given a unique reference number based on the 1km grid square, or cell, within which the change occurs and a sequential number of changes in that cell. Amendments resulting from requests to consider a change to the boundary also include the 'site for consideration' (SFC) reference number.
- 2.11 THE POSITION OF THE GREEN BELT BOUNDARY SHOWN AS A RESULT OF THE DIGITISING EXERCISE CARRIES NO WEIGHT IN THE CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND WILL NOT DO SO UNTIL THE CURRENT STATUTORY BOUNDARY SHOWN ON THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN IS REPLACED BY THE ADOPTED KIRKLEES LOCAL PLAN.

Consequential changes of accepting development options

- 2.12 It should be noted that a new green belt boundary around accepted development options and around accepted requests to remove land from or add land to the green

belt, will not be created until a final decision is made on which sites will be included in the Kirklees Local Plan.

- 2.13 As a result of accepting some development options in the green belt there will also be a necessity to consider whether land additional to the extent of the accepted development option is required to be released from the green belt in order to create the most sensible and defensible green belt boundary. Consequential changes that are not directly as a result of requests to reconsider the position of the green belt boundary will not be made until such time as there is a final decision on which options will become new allocations in the Local Plan.

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Table 1: Outcomes of the assessment of small sites (less than 0.4ha)				
Green belt sites for consideration of less than 0.4ha detached from the settlement edge				
Site for Consideration reference	Area	Address	Outcome	Reason/comments
11	0.25	Dewsbury Road Gomersal	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option MX1908
47	0.37	Off Piper Wells Lane Shepley	Reject	Isolated site
121	0.19	Waters Road Marsden	Reject	Isolated site
153	0.20	Haigh Lane Six Lane Ends Flockton	Reject	Isolated site
161	0.28	Penistone Road Birds Edge	Reject	Isolated site
164	0.07	Penistone Road Birds Edge	Reject	Isolated site
182	0.28	Lumb Lane Almondbury	Reject	Isolated site
200	0.14	Marsh Lane Shepley	Reject	Isolated site.
358	0.14	Liphill Bank Road Wooldale	Reject	Isolated site
422	0.20	Lower Denby Lane Lower Denby	Reject	Isolated site
423	0.31	Lower Denby Lane Lower Denby	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H472
434	0.12	Brook House Lane Shelley	Reject	Isolated site
459	0.04	Mytholmbridge Farm Thongsbridge	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H655
475	0.08	Hopton Lane Mirfield	Reject	Isolated site
535	0.21	Hill Top Linthwaite	Reject	Isolated site. Overlaps with rejected option RGB2078
545	0.25	The Royds Whitechapel Road Scholes	Reject	Rejected as an isolated site but is contained within accepted option E1831.
549	0.11	Upper Hagg Road Honley	Reject	Isolated site
553	0.04	Haigh House Outlane	Reject	Isolated site
554	0.06	Haigh House Outlane	Reject	Isolated site
561	0.16	Lamb Hall Road Longwood	Reject	Isolated site
621	0.39	Meltham Road Honley	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H588
680	0.09	Fleminghouse Lane Almondbury	Reject	Abuts accepted option H1679 but has no relationship with it
747	0.21	Penistone Road Birds Edge	Reject	Isolated site
750	0.15	220 Raikes Lane East Bierley	Reject	Isolated site

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754	0.18	Meltham Road Lockwood.	Reject	Isolated site
780	0.35	Hartshead Lane Hartshead	Reject	Isolated site
783	0.09	Dry Hill Lane Denby Dale	Reject	Isolated site. Contained within rejected option H184
807	0.10	Edge Road Dewsbury	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H1752
811	0.05	Lower Quarry Road Bradley	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option GTTS1960
854	0.17	Gate Foot Lane Snowgate Head	Reject	Isolated site
866	0.29	Arkenley Lane Almondbury	Reject	Isolated site
867	0.12	Arkenley Lane/Birks Lane Almondbury	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H267
874	0.08	Waters Road Marsden	Reject	Isolated site
878	0.01	Ridings Lane Golcar	Reject	Isolated site
880	0.01	Bank Lane Butterlee Holmfirth	Reject	Isolated site
881	0.06	Church Lane Linthwaite	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H483
920	0.10	Huddersfield Road New Mill	Reject	Isolated site
921	0.15	Upper Bank End Road Holmfirth	Reject	Isolated site
922	0.15	Shillbank Lane Mirfield	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H328
925	0.36	Mouse Hole Lane Whitley Lower	Reject	Isolated site
934	0.31	Between Huddersfield Road and Crosland Spring Road South Crosland	Reject	Isolated site
939	0.24	New Hey Road Mount	Reject	Isolated site. Overlaps rejected option H582
960	0.15	Stocks Lane Stocksmoor	Reject	Isolated site
994	0.25	Eastfield garage Stoney Lane Mirfield	Reject	Isolated site. Abuts rejected option H469
1035	0.37	Hall Bower Lane Hall Bower	Reject	Isolated site
1059	0.34	Gawthorpe Lane Lepton	Reject	Isolated site
1081	0.10	Stringer House Lane Emley	Reject	Isolated site
1082	0.14	Drummer Lane/Bolstermoor Road Bolstermoor	Reject	Isolated site
1083	0.08	South View Scapegoat Hill	Reject	Isolated site
1099	0.31	South of Tinker Lane Lepton.	Reject	Isolated site

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Green belt sites for consideration of less than 0.4ha that abut the settlement edge				
17	0.16	Wakefield Road Lepton	Reject	Unrelated to the settlement. Located in wider expanse of green belt north of Wakefield Road.
22	0.04	61 Barnsley Road Upper Cumberworth	Accept	Existing boundary unclear on the ground. There is a very obvious distinction between this site and the open agricultural land it abuts. Would represent an opportunity to create a strong new defensible boundary. Advertised change ref: 2008/03/SFC22.
31	0.29	Plains Lane Marsden	Reject	Existing strong boundary formed by roads and railway. Site boundary on the ground to east and north is unclear.
36	0.25	Marsden Lane Marsden	Reject	No new defensible boundary as the site does not follow any feature on the ground. Area of environmental sensitivity.
37	0.36	Marsh Lane Shepley	Reject	The site could not be released in isolation. Would require additional land release to create a strong boundary to the west for which there is no justification
54	0.09	Church Lane Birstall	Reject	There is an existing reasonably defensible boundary running along the track off Church Lane. The green belt to the west is part of the narrow strategic gap separating Gomersal from Birstall. Although it is accepted that the removal of SFC 54 would not significantly reduce the gap, the new boundary it presents would not be easily defensible and would be subject to pressure for encroachment.
59	0.38	Hassocks Road Meltham	Reject	Abuts rejected option H598. On its own it presents an unrelated extension into open countryside. It also appears that further green belt release would be required to achieve access.
67	0.17	Hill Holmfirth	Reject	The boundary presented does not follow a defensible feature on the ground.
70 and 516	0.11	Bracken Hill Mirfield	Reject	Abuts rejected option H476. This area of land could not be released from the green belt in isolation and would require additional land to the north west to be removed for which there is no justification.
71	0.06	Church Lane Gomersal	Accept	This site constitutes a consequential green belt release as a result of accepting housing option H489. If the development option remains in the Local Plan this site would become an isolated area separate from the wider green belt. It must be noted that should H489 not remain as a development option in the Local Plan SFC71 will be reconsidered. Advertised change ref: 2125/03/SFC71.
110	0.10	Under Bank End Road Holmfirth	Reject	The site as presented does not have a clear southern boundary despite permission being granted for one detached dwelling.
133	0.30	Hepworth Road Jackson Bridge	Reject	Release would re-inforce ribbon development pattern along Hepworth Road and reduce the open nature of the gap that separates Hepworth from Jackson Bridge

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150	0.24	Liphill Bank Road Holmfirth	Reject	This site is a former chemical works and is subject to an undetermined application for residential development (2014/90189). Difficult to create new defensible boundary around the site in its current state. Strong boundary formed by Liphill Bank Road represents the best location for the green belt boundary.
183	0.19	Rear of Spring Grove Clayton West	Reject	There is no feature on the ground to the south east to create a strong new defensible boundary which would leave adjacent land vulnerable to encroachment.
194	0.38	Between Westfield Avenue and Highfield Lane Meltham	Reject	Removing this site from the green belt would result in an isolated projection of development into the countryside.
230	0.32	Broadacres Honley	Reject	Southern boundary does not follow any feature on the ground and release from the green belt would result in a poorly related projection of development into open countryside.
231	0.30	Cockley Hill Lane Kirkheaton	Reject	Site as presented does not follow any physical feature on the ground on its eastern boundary and is poorly related to the settlement.
272	0.10	Adjacent 170 Denby Lane Upper Denby	Reject	Would extend settlement into open countryside and does not follow any feature on the ground.
273	0.10	Near Bank Shelley	Reject	Breaches strong existing boundary and these houses are isolated on the south side of Near Bank.
276	0.13	Scholes Moor Road Scholes Holmfirth	Reject	Development would extend settlement limit and paddock appears integral with open countryside.
278	0.06	Overthorpe Road Thornhill	Accept	Within rejected option H64. This area of land received planning permission in 2009 for 2 detached dwellings and has a certificate of lawfulness for use in connection with a private day nursery. It is distinctly different in character from the wider countryside and does not perform a green belt role. Removal from the green belt provides the opportunity to create a strong new defensible green belt boundary. Advertised change ref: 2419/02/SFC278
293	0.23	Roslyn Avenue Netherton	Reject	Within accepted option H94. Would not be an acceptable release from the green belt on its own merits as it is poorly related to the settlement and would leave an isolated pocket of green belt land to the east vulnerable to development pressure.
312	0.39	Sude Hill New Mill	Reject	Unrelated to the settlement. Significant impact on area of protected trees to the south and on open watercourse.
319	0.10	Ingham Road Thornhill Dewsbury	Reject	This is an area of open land that would extend the settlement. The site as presented does not follow a feature on the ground.

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329	0.14	Hartshead Lane Hartshead Liversedge	Reject	Existing strong green belt boundary along Hartshead Lane defines the settlement edge. If this site was removed from the green belt consideration would need to be given to also removing the properties to the north for which there is no justification. The site does not present a strong new boundary.
386	0.03	Overthorpe Road Thornhill	Accept	Narrow strip of former railway line which now forms part of the curtilage of Premier Autos. Clearly distinct and separate from open land and does not perform a green belt role. Advertised change ref: 2419/03/SFC386.
414	0.32	Barnsley Road Flockton	Reject	The frontage part to Barnsley Road is unallocated and has planning permission for residential development. The remainder of the site would project development into open countryside and does not follow a feature on the ground.
438	0.33	Taylor Lane Scapegoat Hill	Reject	Planning permission refused for residential development and appeal dismissed 1/7/2015. Detrimental impact on openness.
444	0.17	Paddock at 55 Bank Lane Upper Denby	Reject	Different in character to more open agricultural land around it, but release could impact detrimentally on Upper Denby conservation area and the open setting of the nearby listed buildings.
520	0.36	Junction of North Road and Shill Bank Ravensthorpe	Reject	The eastern part of the site is the line of the Spen Valley greenway and the openness of this pedestrian/cycle route is best protected through its green belt designation.
544	0.29	Lea Road Batley	Reject	Site is contiguous with adjoining cricket ground and agricultural land which is all in the green belt. The site is bounded by protected trees and does not appear as part of the urban area. Site does not have a defensible boundary for the green belt to follow.
558	0.11	Off Spring Place Court Mirfield	Reject	Within rejected option H594. This plot is contiguous with the wider green belt of which it forms a part and does not present a strong defensible boundary.
565	0.10	New Popplewell Lane Scholes Cleckheaton	Reject	The existing boundary appears to run along New Popplewell Lane. It could not be released in isolation as consideration would need to be given to releasing land between the site and the settlement edge to the east and the built development immediately to the west. The area is a known area of extreme environmental sensitivity and its best protection is through the green belt designation.
624	0.09	Horn Lane New Mill	Reject	The existing boundary is unclear on the ground but permission has been granted for a new house in the plot west of Inglestones and once this is built the boundary with the green belt should be clearly delineated. The footpath to the north proposed as the new boundary would necessitate removing a large area of land from the green belt which is not warranted in order to create a firm boundary.
632	0.28	Halifax Road Hightown Liversedge	Reject	The green belt in this location overwashes properties on Halifax Road in order to connect wider green belt areas to the north and south. The green belt here plays a strategic role in preventing the reinforcement of the ribbon development along Halifax Road.

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645	0.14	Upper Wellhouse Road Golcar	Reject	Majority of the site is covered by protected trees. There is an existing strong boundary along Upper Wellhouse Road. Inclusion of this undeveloped site within the settlement would impact on openness of the green belt and reinforce the join with other developed form along Upper Wellhouse Road.
650	0.08	Far Rough Lee Marsden	Reject	The site could not be released in isolation and would not present a strong defensible green belt boundary north of Reddisher Road/Dirker Drive.
658	0.04	123 Huddersfield Road Holmfirth	Reject	The existing boundary running across the garden along the gable end of the house actually presents a more logical and easily defensible green belt boundary than would be the case if the garden were removed. The boundary proposed does not appear to follow a clear feature on the ground.
724	0.16	Cliff Road Holmfirth	Reject	The land could not be released from the green belt in isolation and would represent an unrelated settlement extension east of Cliff Road.
727	0.18	Tinker Lane Lepton	Reject	Part within rejected option H570. The adjacent new housing development and associated advertised change will create a defensible new boundary without the need to release land up to Lower House Lane. Release of land up to Lower House lane would reinforce the development pattern with properties to the east.
752	0.30	23 Upper Batley Low Lane Batley	Accept	The house and its garden are the last developed plot along the line of the former railway in this location and appear more closely related to the settlement than to the wider green belt, which will be reinforced if accepted option H662 remains in the Local Plan. It must be noted that should H662 not remain as a development option in the Local Plan SFC752 will be reconsidered. Advertised change ref: 2424/01/SFC752.
770	0.18	Between Woodhead Road and Far Banks Honley	Reject	This would represent an unrelated projection of development west of the strong boundary formed by Woodhead Road.
778	0.33	St Helens Gate Almondbury	Reject	These gardens represent the undeveloped gap that strategically separates the edge of the settlement of Almondbury from the more open and sporadic nature of the properties to the south of the main settlement. The area is also within Almondbury conservation area and the green belt designation maintains the low density nature of the built form.
782	0.23	Station Road Shepley	Reject	The use of this land as a horse exercise area is entirely consistent with its green belt designation and is an appropriate use which contributes to the character of its wider setting.
795	0.09	1089 Bradford Road Birstall	Reject	Abuts rejected option H263. Site as presented does not follow a ground feature in places. Falls within a narrow strategic green belt gap and while it is acknowledged that this small site would not significantly compromise the gap its green belt designation still helps to maintain openness.

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829	0.05	Brook Lane Golcar	Reject	The green belt in this location maintains the open nature of land south of Brook Lane. This group of buildings is poorly related to the settlement and would leave land between the buildings and the existing settlement edge vulnerable to encroachment.
841	0.12	Adjacent 54 Fall Lane Hartshead	Reject	Although bounded by stone walls this plot appears as part of the wider countryside and there is no justification to extend the settlement in this location.
842	0.35	Latham Lane Gomersal	Reject	This site represents an open area that clearly delineates the settlement edge. Its removal from the green belt would necessitate consideration of the removal of the adjoining cluster of properties for which there is no justification.
855	0.33	725 New Hey Road Outlane	Reject	This plot of land could not be released from the green belt in isolation as it would sever the field to the east from the wider green belt (although it is accepted that the motorway is itself in the green belt the field is physically separated by the motorway embankment).
870	0.13	711 New Hey Road Outlane	Reject	The existing green belt boundary does not follow a feature on the ground. However, there is no justification for the removal of this parcel of land from the green belt which would leave the recreation ground relatively isolated from the wider green belt.
873	0.14	Rear of 96 Long Lane Honley	Reject	This would represent an unrelated projection of development into the open land at the rear of Long Lane.
875	0.11	10 Dob Royd Shepley	Reject	The existing boundary forms a more defensible boundary than would be the case should the garden be removed from the green belt.
980	0.21	Rear of 1212 Manchester Road Linthwaite	Reject	Site could not be released on its own and would require consideration of the release of additional built form. The northern half of the site is located within an inner hazard zone where residential development would not normally be permitted. It is unclear where the northern boundary would fall and a boundary with trees is undesirable. Most logical position for the green belt boundary is the line of Manchester Road.
982	0.36	Chapel Gate/Dean Bridge Road Scholes Holmfirth	Reject	Former quarry, now revegetated. Appears as open land on the approach to the village and the existing boundary is clearly defined on the edge of the built form. Release of this site would leave a small field between the site and Dean Bridge Road vulnerable to encroachment.
988	0.03	Mountain Way Kirkheaton	Reject	On its own merits this site represents a poorly related extension of development north of Mountain Way which is more closely related to the wider countryside it abuts. However, should accepted safeguarded land option SL2289 remain in the Local Plan, this site will be reconsidered as it may represent a consequential green belt release.
1049	0.25	Hollin Brig House Hollin Brigg Lane Holmfirth	Reject	The site forms one of a small number of properties south of the strong green belt boundary of Hollin Hall Lane. The green belt in this location maintains the open character of the area and prevents sprawl of Holmbridge to the south.

3. Options to add land to and remove land from the green belt

Adding land to the green belt

- 3.1 Sites have been received proposing that land should be added to the green belt. All involve sites of 0.4ha and above and have been assessed as options through the Local Plan process. These sites are identified by the 'AGB' prefix in the reference number.
- 3.2 As with the consideration of the removal of land from the green belt, exceptional circumstances need to exist that would warrant a change. This could involve the consideration that the green belt was incorrectly drawn when the Unitary Development plan was adopted, or that there has been a change specific to the land itself which would now merit its inclusion within the green belt.

Removing land from the green belt

- 3.3 Sites have been received proposing that land should be removed from the green belt. Where these involve sites of 0.4ha and above they have been assessed as options through the Local Plan process and are identified by the 'RGB' prefix in the reference number. See section 2 of this report for the assessment of sites of less than 0.4ha.
- 3.4 The different categories of request include:
- Options that represent the removal of a village from the green belt or the extension of a settlement;
 - Options that abut a settlement edge and could be considered as settlement extensions; and
 - Sites detached from any settlement.

Outcomes

- 3.5 A map of each site and the outcome of their assessment are shown in Appendix 2.
- 3.6 The existing UDP boundary will not be changed around any of these sites until options are accepted through the Local Plan process. There may however be changes to the position of the existing green belt boundary if a change is proposed through the digitisation exercise.

4. Green belt edge review

- 4.1 This section sets out in detail the methodology that was followed in undertaking a comprehensive review of the green belt edge and the land immediately adjacent to it, for the purposes of the preparation of the Kirklees Local Plan.
- 4.2 The green belt boundary was scrutinized to determine the degree of constraint along the edge and its immediate relationship to the green belt land it adjoins. Each length of edge was then subject to a number of tests to determine both the physical ability of the land immediately beyond it to accommodate development, as well as the degree to which that land performed a green belt role. The chosen boundary lengths are defined by reference to points where the nature of the boundary changes significantly. The extent of adjoining land taken into consideration depends on the features it contains and whether and how such features could form a new boundary. The tests do not attempt to establish specifically where new boundaries could be established.

Test 1

- 4.3 The first stage of the process ("test 1") identifies those lengths of green belt boundary which are constrained to the extent that there is no reasonable prospect of development taking place in the green belt adjoining the current boundary, or where there are features or land uses which are clearly best preserved or protected by their green belt designation. Test 1 consists of three assessments; topographical, physical and environmental.

Test 1a - Topography constraint – slope analysis

- 4.4 The topographical assessment is based on the degree of slope¹ and the occurrence of differences in slope along a boundary and within the adjoining land. Slopes <15% are considered to be no more than a minor constraint on development potential. Slopes of 15-20% are considered to represent a moderate constraint and slopes >20% a severe constraint unless they affect only a small part of the area under consideration.

Topography Constraint	Degree of slope	Assessment
None or Minor	<15%	None or minor topographical constraint
Moderate	<15-20%	Degree, amount and location of slope are not a fundamental constraint to development.
Severe	>20%	Topography is a constraint to development

Test 1b – Physical constraint

¹ Using OS 'Terrain' 5" digital elevation data; slope mapping was conducted using GRASS GIS and the OS Terrain data

4.5 The physical assessment takes account of the following factors:

- Existing built form within and around the area under consideration
- The presence of listed buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments
- Potential barriers such as roads, railways, rivers and canals, high voltage power lines
- Mineral working or waste disposal in the vicinity.

4.6 The extent to which the presence of one or more of these features would inhibit development is judged to be minor, moderate or severe, taking into account the likely scale of development which would be possible in the area.

Physical constraint	Assessment
None/minor	No significant physical constraints to development
Moderate	Some degree of constraint that could be designed around or would otherwise not constitute a fundamental constraint.
Severe	Severe constraint that would be a fundamental constraint to development

Test 1c – Environmental constraint

4.7 The environmental assessment takes account of the following factors:

- The presence of protected trees and ancient woodland
- Areas designated for wildlife protection
- Proximity of the Peak District National Park
- Flood risk
- Buffer zones related to hazardous installations, pipelines, power lines and landfill gas.

4.8 The extent to which the presence of one or more of these features would inhibit development is judged to be minor, moderate or severe, taking into account the likely scale of development which would be possible in the area.

Environmental Constraint	Assessment
None/minor	No significant environmental constraints to development
Moderate	Some degree of constraint that could be designed around or would otherwise not constitute a fundamental constraint
Severe	Severe constraint that would be a fundamental constraint to development

Outcome

- 4.9 ANY LENGTH OF GREEN BELT EDGE CONSIDERED TO BE SEVERELY CONSTRAINED BY EITHER SLOPE, PHYSICAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IS SHOWN MARKED 'BLACK' ON THE OUTCOMES MAP
- 4.10 Where any of the three assessments results in a "severe" constraint it is assumed that development will not be practical and/or acceptable in terms of visual impact and prominence, on wildlife and/or safety. These areas are not subject to further tests as it is likely that these areas would remain as green belt.

Test 2

- 4.11 The second stage of the process ("test 2") evaluates areas in terms of their contribution to the first four of the five purposes of green belt set out in NPPF paragraph 80. The fifth purpose, to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land, is considered separately and the methodology used is set out in test 3.

Test 2a

- 4.12 Test 2a considers an area's importance in preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another. This assessment considers:
- The strategic significance of the wider green belt
 - The width of the current green belt gap and the risk that development would compromise that gap;
 - Whether development would appear to result in the merging of built-up areas.
- 4.13 The relative importance of an area's contribution to this purpose depends on the extent of the current separation of built-up areas and the degree to which an extension of development into green belt could be accommodated without significantly reducing separation from neighbouring built-up areas. The extent to which features such as slopes, tree cover or roads and railways would screen it so that there would be no significant appearance of merging was also considered.

Outcome

- 4.14 ANY LENGTH OF GREEN BELT EDGE CONSIDERED TO PERFORM A STRATEGIC ROLE IN PREVENTING THE MERGER OR THE APPEARANCE OF MERGER OF SETTLEMENTS IS MARKED 'RED' ON THE OUTCOMES MAP
- 4.15 Given the emphasis in NPPF paragraph 79 on green belts preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, it is assumed that if the impact of development on the merging of built-up areas is judged to be severe development of the area in question should not be considered. Consequently tests 2b, c and d are only applied

to areas not considered to be important in preventing the merger of neighbouring towns.

Tests 2b to 2d

- 4.16 Test 2b considers an area's importance in checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas taking into account:
- The degree of containment potentially provided by the length and number of boundaries with the adjoining built-up area
 - The potential to contain development within a new green belt boundary which aligns with the current urban form
 - The presence of strong physical boundaries or landform which would contain an extension of development into the green belt.
- 4.17 The relative importance of an area's contribution to this purpose depends on the degree of containment that could be achieved; the greater the degree of containment that could be achieved the lower the importance of the area to restricting sprawl.
- 4.18 Test 2c considers an area's importance in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. This involves assessment of the character of the land in relation to its surroundings, taking into account:
- Whether the land is part of the open countryside or is separated or screened from the wider countryside by physical features
 - Whether the prominence of adjoining built-up edges gives the impression that the land is part of the urban fringe
- 4.19 The more that an area appears to relate to an urban edge rather than open countryside or is screened from the wider countryside the less will be its importance in achieving this purpose.
- 4.20 The fourth green belt purpose is to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. There are no historic towns in Kirklees but the area has many historic features evidenced by the presence of ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas. Test 2d considers whether an area contains or relates to a historic asset and assesses the degree to which development would be prejudicial to that asset or its setting.

Outcome

- 4.21 The outcomes of tests 2b, c and d are combined in a matrix, shown in Appendix 3, which indicates the relative harm to green belt purposes that would result from development. Greater weight is given to avoiding harm through checking unrestricted sprawl because of the emphasis on this in NPPF paragraph 79. Areas

score from 1, having least importance in achieving green belt purposes to 5, having most importance.

Summary of colours and numbers for tests 1 to 2d:

Black	Test 1 indicates that there may be a significant constraint to development, caused by an absolute barrier to development along the edge (railway line for example) or that the land immediately adjacent to the edge is significantly constrained (severe slope, ancient woodland for example)	
Red	Test 2a indicates that the green belt is performing a strategic role such that development may result in the merging of settlements.	
Importance of green belt role based on combination of tests 2b to 2d where the site 'passes' tests 1 and 2a;		
1	Less important	(dark green)
2		(light green)
3		(light yellow)
4		(dark yellow)
5	More important	(pink)

4.22 THE RESULTS FOR EACH LENGTH OF GREEN BELT EDGE SUBJECT TO TESTS 2b TO 2d ARE SHOWN MARKED FROM GREEN TO PINK ON THE OUTCOMES MAP

Test 3: assessing parcels of brownfield land against the purpose of including land in the green belt

- 4.23 One of the purposes of including land in the green belt is “to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land”. The fundamental aim of green belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, and on a strategic level it does this by channelling development into urban areas. Yet the green belt contains within it parcels of land which can be said to be previously developed under the terms of Annex 2 of the NPPF. For the purposes of this exercise, these parcels of land are assumed to have an *urban land use*. If these parcels of land already contain built development it may be possible to recycle or re-use the land under the terms of existing green belt policy, subject to consideration of the impact on openness. The presence of the green belt in these circumstances is not an impediment to re-use. However, in instances where the previously developed land does not contain built form and new development would impact on openness and therefore be inappropriate, the presence of the green belt may prevent its re-use if there are no other overriding circumstances that would warrant its redevelopment. In these cases, the green belt could be seen to be failing in its purpose to encourage the recycling of land by preventing another use coming forward.
- 4.24 It is possible therefore to interpret purpose 5 in both a strategic and a more local manner. The strategic interpretation of purpose 5 is that by constraining the potential for the expansion of built-up areas the green belt will direct development pressure towards opportunities to recycle land within urban areas and thereby achieve urban regeneration. On the more local level however, there may still be

parcels of derelict land, or parcels of land which currently have an *urban land use*, which are within the green belt but on the edge of the settlement, where the presence of the green belt is preventing their recycling for other uses. If the parcel of land is not performing, or has only a very limited green belt role, and has no relationship to its wider green belt setting, then consideration should be given to removing the parcel of land from the green belt in order to facilitate its re-use.

- 4.25 Parcels of land in isolated locations, i.e. those without an edge with a settlement, are not considered to be sustainably located for the purposes of this exercise and have not been tested. If only part of a development option is brownfield and that part does not adjoin the settlement edge, no assessment has been undertaken as the urban land use is considered to be isolated from the settlement. Sporadic residential development on the edges of settlements is also not included as part of this exercise. Greenfield land on the edge of the settlement will not be tested as it is assumed to be fulfilling a strategic role in terms of purpose 5.
- 4.26 When considering the advice in NPPF as a whole, and for the purpose of reviewing the boundaries of the green belt for the local plan, individual parcels of brownfield land can be tested against purpose 5 in the following manner;
- Scrutiny of development options on the settlement edge to find land that is, appears to be or is claimed to be brownfield. This land is assumed for the purpose of this test to constitute 'urban land'. Consideration is given in each instance to whether the green belt designation is preventing the recycling of the land and is therefore failing against purpose 5;
 - Consider each instance relative to the outcomes of tests 1 to 2d of the green belt review;
 - Conclude whether the parcel of land is located such that it is necessary to keep it permanently open, because of its wider green belt setting or role, or whether it should be removed from the green belt in order to facilitate its re-use.
- 4.27 The first part of the exercise is to determine whether the green belt designation would prevent the recycling of the parcel of land. This will depend on the degree and location of existing built form and whether a redevelopment scheme that did not have a significant impact on existing openness could be achieved. The outcome of the green belt review tests 1 to 2d were then noted, to determine whether the parcel of land is located in an area of land that it is important to keep open.

Test 3a

Could this parcel of land be appropriately recycled while remaining within the green belt?	The site could be redeveloped under current guidance without impacting on openness
	The mass, bulk or form of any existing buildings or surface infrastructure could make a redevelopment scheme difficult to achieve without detrimentally impacting on openness
	The green belt in this location is failing in its purpose to encourage the recycling of urban land

- 4.28 The second part of test 3 was then to determine what role the land parcel plays in its wider green belt setting and whether it should be removed from the green belt in order to facilitate its redevelopment. In this case the benefits of facilitating the re-use of the land and its contribution to housing or employment needs would be deemed to constitute the exceptional circumstances required for the land to be removed from the green belt as part of the preparation of the local plan.

Test 3b

Is the parcel of land correctly included within the green belt?	The site plays an important role within its wider green belt setting or there is no justification for its removal from the green belt
	The site plays a limited role within its wider green belt setting
	The site has little or no relationship to its wider green belt setting and should be removed from the green belt in order to facilitate its re-use.

Outcomes

- 4.29 The outcomes of tests 1 to 2d of the green belt edge review are presented in Appendix 4a which indicates how the 'score' for each part of the green belt edge was derived. Each section of edge has a unique reference number based on the settlement it adjoins and these reference numbers are reproduced on the outcomes maps. The outcomes of test 3 are shown in Appendix 4b.
- 4.30 The outcomes maps can be viewed in Appendix 5:
- Appendix 5a: Batley and Spen
 - Appendix 5b: Dewsbury and Mirfield
 - Appendix 5c: Huddersfield
 - Appendix 5d: Kirklees Rural (East)
 - Appendix 5e: Kirklees Rural (West)

The outcomes maps can also be viewed online at [Text to be inserted](#)

- 4.31 These outcomes are used to assess development options as part of the Local Plan site options testing procedure. How this was applied to the assessment of sites is set out in part 2 of the Local Plan methodology paper.