Appendix PQ8 - Allocated Green Belt Sites Exceptional Circumstances and Maps.

Summaries of the exceptional circumstances justification for each Green Belt site allocation are provided below. For greater detail on all points, please see DMBC3.

Site 033 & Site 115 (MUA)

Exceptional Circumstances:

- The housing target for the Main Urban Area cannot be met without using Green Belt land. It is the largest and most sustainable location for growth, and additionally as the Main Towns and Service Towns cannot quite meet their collective targets of 40% and 10% respectively, the Main Urban Area is the most sustainable place for the residual amount to be located.

- 19/43 non Green Belt sites have been allocated, totalling 3,291 new houses (15 year) + 3,489 permissions = 6,780 units, -25 short of the bottom of the range. The remaining 24 have been ruled out predominantly due to flood risk and access concerns, which restricts the site options in this location. Furthermore, these sites ensure there is a spread of sites across the Main Urban Area, given there are some notable larger sites in the east of the settlement.

- Of the Green Belt site options assessed in the Green Belt Review, 115 is the only available Main Urban Area site which scores ‘moderately strong’ (more preferable in Green Belt terms for allocation consideration); 033 is one of five which score ‘moderate’, with the rest weaker. Of these sites, 115 (150 units) and 033 (112 units) are the two that can provide more modest numbers required to make up the shortfall on modestly sized sites (as opposed to other options which deliver c. 500+ units). The Green Belt Review finds:

  - Site 033 (Map 1A):
    - Boundary – the site is strongly defined to the north but weakly defined to the west. A strong linear boundary to the west can be defined, however as set out in the developer requirements. (Summary: mixed boundary)
    - Purposes – the site would not lead to merging between the Main Urban Area and Conisbrough, given the size of the site and the large essential land gap. Edlington has already merged with the Main Urban Area to the south of the site. The site has a very limited impact on the historic core of Warmsworth. The site plays a stronger role in checking the unrestricted sprawl, safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and assisting urban regeneration. (Summary: mixed purposes)
    - The site is a modest urban extension which can gently boost the housing supply without being overly harmful on the Green Belt purposes – especially merging. A new linear boundary can be created to the west.
Site 115 (Map 1B):

- Boundary – the Green Belt in this location is indented and angular. Removing this site from the Green Belt will create a strong linear boundary which is clearly defined, recognisable and likely to be permanent, using a densely vegetated disused railway corridor to round off the built form (replacing a weaker one). (Summary: Strong boundary)

- Purposes – the site has a weak role in preventing neighbouring towns from merging, a low – moderate role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, and a relatively weak role in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. It scores more strongly for its role in assisting urban regeneration and checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. (Summary: Moderate role)

- The site is the most preferable available site in the Main Urban Area in Green Belt terms and would result in a rounding off of the Main Urban Area using a site which performs moderately against the purposes.
Map 1A – Site 033

Notes – hatched box represents site 033, with further minor tidying shown to ensure robust boundaries following the allocation
Map 1B – Site 115

Notes – hatched box shows site 115 and further tidying to the south to draw a neat boundary along the dismantled railway line
Site 040 (Conisbrough & Denaby)

Exceptional Circumstances

- The housing target for Conisbrough & Denaby cannot be met without using Green Belt land. This is a large and very sustainable settlement, as established in the settlement audit, with a number of services in the settlement and close links to employment opportunities in the Dearne Valley.

- 1/6 non-Green Belt sites have been allocated, totalling 125 dwellings + 203 units from permissions = 328, -137 from the bottom of the range. The remaining 5 were ruled out for flood risk purposes and access issues.

- Of the Green Belt sites assessed, two (Sites 040 and 826) scored as moderately strong options for removal from the Green Belt, with the remainder moderate or weaker. 040 can deliver 200 units and help Conisbrough meet its housing target, 826 can deliver 80 which would still leave Conisbrough short and needing additional land to meet the bottom of its range. Additionally, site 040 scores slightly better in the Sustainability Appraisal than site 826.

- Site 040 (Map 1C):
  - Boundary – this triangular site is defined to the north and south by roads which converge, and therefore means the Green Belt would have a strong and likely to be permanent resultant boundary (Summary: strong boundary).
  - Purposes – The site would not lead to coalescence, and the strategic land gap to neighbouring Rotherham would be retained. The site has resisted ribbon development and would continue to do so (only the gap to Hill Top being reduced – less essential gap). It also does not check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas, and has a limited impact on preserving the special character and historic setting of towns. The site has a moderate – strong sensitivity to encroachment, however (Summary: moderate purposes).
  - Allocating this site means Conisbrough & Denaby can get within its housing range target on land that is deemed to be performing less strongly in Green Belt terms than other local sites, and better in the Sustainability Appraisal than other better local options (826).
Map 1C – Site 040

Notes – hatched box shows site 040
Exceptional Circumstances

- The housing target for Bawtry cannot be met without using Green Belt land. The settlement is a sustainable small market town with local amenities.
- 1/6 non-Green Belt sites have been allocated totalling 16 dwellings + 54 units from permissions = 70, -30 from the housing target. The remaining 5 have been ruled out mainly for access issues.
- Of the Green Belt site options assessed, 1 (Site 141) scores strong (the joint best option for Green Belt release in Green Belt terms in the Borough). The remaining sites are generally larger than required to meet the housing shortfall and all score moderately weak or weak in the Green Belt Review. They would result in larger urban extensions and greater excursions in to the Green Belt than has been assessed as being necessary to support the local housing needs of Bawtry. Therefore, site 141 can help deliver more housing towards meeting the local target, on a site with very limited Green Belt purpose. It is not felt to be prudent to seek to make up the remaining shortfall in Bawtry by allocating more important Green Belt land for more housing than is required here.
- Site 141 (Map 1D):
  - The site is a small isolated ‘island’ of Green Belt on the Borough boundary, with no Green Belt beyond in Nottinghamshire or Doncaster.
  - Boundary – the site would provide a strongly defined woodland boundary to the west, and a strongly defined boundary to the south (drain / Borough boundary). However, if removed, this would be a boundary to the site as there is no Green Belt beyond (Summary: strong boundary).
  - Purposes – The site scores poorly against all assessed Green Belt purposes. It has low sensitivity to encroachment, does not prevent unrestricted sprawl or merging, and has a limited role in protecting Bawtry’s historic core (Summary: weak purposes).
  - The site does not serve the purposes of the Green Belt given its isolated nature, and is the strongest contender in the whole Borough to be removed from the Green Belt. It can contribute a modest amount of housing towards Bawtry’s targets.
Notes – hatched box to the bottom left shows Site 141; the other red box shows an example of a site that has been incorrectly interpreted when the map was digitised (see UDP map overleaf), and has been subsequently been corrected and amended when redrawing the boundary for the new Local Plan to provide a clearer boundary.
Notes: these maps provide an example of how the UDP was incorrectly digitised to show land as Green Belt that is not on the paper map, and furthermore how the boundaries have been amended to reflect this and tidy the boundary using accurate mapping of landlines. For more information see DMBC 3.
Site 165 (Carcroft & Skellow)

Exceptional Circumstances

- The housing target for Carcroft & Skellow cannot be met without using Green Belt land. This is the largest settlement in the Service Town and Village tier, and has good service provision, as well as being located adjacent to Adwick – Woodlands, which is also a sustainable settlement with excellent service provision. This makes this a highly sustainable location for growth.

- There are no non-Green Belt options in this settlement. 3 sites were assessed, but all fail on flood risk. Additionally, out of all the Green Belt site options, only one site is not at risk of flooding (165/186). This does not mean that it should be allocated indiscriminately, however, the Green Belt Review indicates that the site has a ‘moderately strong case for continuation in the site selection process’:

- Site 165/186 (Map 1E):
  o Boundary – the site would be strongly defined by the A1 in the west and Green Lane in the north. Both are strong and likely to be permanent features, and the site would result in the rounding off of this settlement (Summary: strong boundary).
  o Purposes – the site does not check the unrestricted sprawl of a large built up area or preserving the character of a historic town. It has a moderate role in assisting urban regeneration and a moderate – strong role in safeguarding countryside from encroachment. It helps to maintain a less essential gap to the defined village of Burghwallis, but there is a good perception of separation between the two and merging is unlikely if removed (Summary: moderate purposes).
  o The site is the only available option in this sustainable settlement with good service provision to make up the significant shortfall of houses in the area, and in Green Belt terms it is viewed as having a “moderately strong” case.
Map 1E – Site 165/186

Notes – Site 165 / 186 is shown in the hatched box
Site 777 (Barnburgh – Harlington)

Exceptional Circumstances

- The housing target for Barnburgh – Harlington cannot be met without using Green Belt land. This is one of the smaller settlements in the Service Towns and Villages tier with a modest local housing requirement, however it has been assessed as sustainable in the Settlement Audit and has reasonable provision for its size as well as convenient access by car to the Main Town of Mexborough to the south.

- There are no non-Green Belt options in this settlement. One small site was assessed, but is known to be landfill and there are concerns about gas emissions and ground conditions. Out of the four Green Belt sites assessed, one scored ‘moderately strong’ (777), one ‘moderate’ (but has significant heritage and archaeological concerns), and the remaining sites score ‘moderately weak’ cases for removal. 3 of these sites respectively could approximately deliver the houses required.

- Site 777 (Map 1F):
  - Boundary – The existing boundary is indented due to housing located along the adjacent road. It is considered unlikely to be permanent. The proposed boundary would follow the existing southern limits of these and round off the settlement in this location, creating a linear boundary (the requirement to form this is enshrined in the developer requirements). Whilst the existing features are somewhat weak, the future limit will be strongly defined (Summary: mixed boundary).
  - Purposes – The site has a weak role in checking unrestricted sprawl, a weak role in assisting urban regeneration and a weak role in preserving the setting and special character of a historic town, and a weak role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. It has a moderate role in preventing neighbouring towns from merging, lying 1.5km from Mexborough and maintaining a 'largely essential' land gap. It therefore does not serve the purposes of the Green Belt strongly (Summary: weak purposes).
  - The site can improve the existing Green Belt boundary and make it more permanent, rounding off the settlement. The site performs weakly against the Green Belt purposes.
Notes – hatched box shows site 777; other areas of red land show tidying (including correcting digitising errors)
Site 929 (Sprotbrough)

Exceptional Circumstances

- The housing target for Sprotbrough cannot be met without using Green Belt land. The settlement has a relatively modest housing target of 95 units, and is one of the smaller settlements in the Service Towns and Villages tier, but sustainable with reasonable service provision for its size.
- There are no non-Green Belt options in this settlement, and no supply from permissions. Out of the four Green Belt sites assessed, one (929 – 80 units) scored moderately, and the remaining three larger sites all scored moderately weak in the Green Belt Review and would provide housing in excess of what is required here.
- Site 929 (Map 1G):
  - Boundary – strongly defined to the north and south by roads, but weakly defined to the west by a gappy hedgerow. The developer requirements ask for a strongly defined boundary to be created. This would replace what is considered to be an angular, indented boundary. It is also proposed open space to the east of the site is removed from the Green Belt to prevent an island of Green Belt being created (Summary: Mixed boundary).
  - Purposes – the site has a weak role in checking unrestricted sprawl and in assisting urban regeneration, and a weak role in preserving the setting and special character of a historic town. The site has a moderate role in preventing neighbouring towns merging, but there remains clear gap of 2km to High Melton. The site has helped to resist ribbon development and has a role in assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (Summary: moderate purposes).
  - Not only is the site deemed preferable to the other options in Green Belt terms, it can deliver housing more in line with the local requirement, whereas the other sites are larger than required and would impact more on the Green Belt purposes. On balance, it is felt exceptional circumstances justify the loss and the need for housing here outweighs the moderate Green Belt impact.
Notes – Hatched box shows site 929; remaining red land is open space removed which has been removed as a result of the allocation to prevent an island of Green Belt being created.
Site 1028 (Tickhill)

Exceptional Circumstances

- The housing target for Tickhill cannot be met without using Green Belt land. The settlement is a small market town with good service provision and has a housing target of 165 units.
- There are no non-Green Belt options in this settlement and no supply from permissions. A large amount of Green Belt sites were proposed and assessed in the Green Belt Review, however many of these have access issues. Of those that are accessible, one (1028) scores ‘moderately’ in the Green Belt Review, with the rest moderately weak or weak.
- Site 1028 alone does not have the capacity to meet Tickhill’s housing requirement, however given the other site options available, there are not deemed to be any further suitable options or exceptional circumstances which warrant allocation, given the potential impact of these on the Green Belt.
- Site 1028 (Map 1H):
  - Boundary – very strongly defined to the east by the A1(M), but there is no defined boundary to the south. However, the southern boundary follows the limits of the existing built form to the west and creates a linear boundary which can be strongly defined as per the developer requirements. In doing this, an angular Green Belt limit will be replaced by a defined, linear and likely to be permanent one (Summary – mixed boundary).
  - Purposes – the site has a weak role in preventing unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas and assisting in supporting regeneration. It has a lesser role in preserving the historic core of Tickhill. It plays a moderate role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, and a mixed role in preventing towns merging (to Harworth – Bircotes, Nottinghamshire), being a largely essential gap (Summary – moderate purposes).
  - The site can help deliver almost half of the housing requirement for this sustainable settlement, and can help create a linear and likely to be permanent boundary here, on a site which scores moderately against the Green Belt purposes.
Map 1H – Site 1028

Notes – Hatched box shows site 1028
Small Site Amendments (Map 2)

- A number of sites across the borough have been submitted which are too small to allocate. These have been assessed, and one small Green Belt site (021) has been assessed as being suitable to remove from the Green Belt, along with the adjacent linear tract of land (see Map 2). The exceptional circumstances are that including this land would replace an indented boundary with a very strong and clearly defined one, in the form of a dense and linear hedgerow which provides a better Green Belt boundary, and delineates the housing estate it is within from the open countryside beyond – reflecting the clear differentiation ‘on the ground’.

- Although within the general area (as assessed in the Stage 1 Review) this site falls within is part of an “essential gap” between Highfields and Bentley, this site does not in isolation contribute to the importance of this gap. The other purposes of the Green Belt would not be adversely impacted by this land being removed from the Green Belt. The general area is assessed in the Stage 1 report as having features lacking durability, this amendment will help create a durable boundary and free up a small site.

Amendments due to development (Maps 2 & 3)

- Where development has taken place on land within the Green Belt, and it is completed meaning the existing Green Belt boundary is no longer defensible, this has been removed from the Green Belt, and the boundary logically re-defined to exclude this development. In practice, this applies to a very limited number of cases (3 – one of which is amended as part of the allocation of site 929 and adjacent land). (See Maps 2 & 3).

Sites Being Added in to the Green Belt (Map 3)

- One site (south of Rossington colliery) has been identified as an area to be added into the Green Belt and provide compensatory Green Belt land to help offset the overall loss. This site is currently not Green Belt but has been earmarked to become a country park as part of ongoing improvements as part of the redevelopment of Rossington Colliery. The exceptional circumstances for amending the boundary are to help meet the objectives of NPPF para. 138 and 141. These are:
  - Environmental and biodiversity improvements – improving and greening degraded land, including a number of specific environmental and biodiversity enhancements and habitat interconnectivity.
  - Enhanced accessibility – the land is not currently public and there is no access on to it. A new footpath network will be created and a partial bridleway reinstated to encourage usage and open the site up for new and existing residents of Rossington / Doncaster.
  - Recreation – more public access for recreational purposes.
- Enhancing landscapes / visual amenity / visual enhancements – greening degraded land, providing a softer edge to the colliery redevelopment and bringing the land into a use more akin to the neighbouring countryside uses.

- Boundaries – a new boundary is proposed which will eventually be where the development platform meets the foot of the hill to the south of the colliery site and will be where the eventual development limit meets the countryside.

- Reducing and offsetting the overall loss of Green Belt in the Borough – the site measures 19ha which offsets the total losses of 55ha and reduces them to 36ha net (see appendix 2).
Amendment due to site being developed (former Scawthorpe Reservoir)

Red box shows site 021 and adjacent land (small site Green Belt amendment)
Map 3 – Sites Added into the Green Belt

Red Box – developed land removed from the Green Belt as site developed as part of Rossington colliery redevelopment

Green box – land added into the Green Belt in the form of a country park to the south of Rossington colliery.
Map 4 – Location of main Green Belt amendments