

North Mymms Parish Council

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18th September 2018

For the attention of Inspector M. Middleton

Dear Mr Middleton,

Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan EiP/Green Belt Review

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the methodology used for the recently issued Green Belt Review.

You will appreciate that North Mymms Parish Council (NMPC) does not consist of Developers or promoters of any sites and because of the holiday season have not had the occasion to meet as a Council to consider the Review using Councillors' local experience.

NMPC has a vested interest in maintaining and sustaining this Parish and its Green Belt surroundings whilst trying to be pragmatic about the need for housing both in the Borough and locally.

North Mymms is under threat from those whose only motive is profit and this Parish Council wants any development to bring benefits to the community and its environs.

It is of great concern therefore that the authors of the Review appear to pay lip service to their references in points 2.17 & 2.18 - NPPF 134 ...Green Belt to prevent unrestricted sprawl...to safeguard the countryside from encroachment....and NPPF 138 ...when reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account... therefore ...land ...well served by public transport to be given first consideration.... and NPPF 139 ...new boundaries should be defined clearly, by using readily recognisable, permanent physical features...

Point 2.26 of the Review document, states "Current guidance, therefore makes it clear that the Green Belt is a strategic planning tool designed primarily to prevent the spread of development and coalescence of urban areas."

With all due respect it is difficult to see how the above, and particularly the recognition that urban spread and coalescence is undesirable, has been applied to the coloured areas on the Maps, page 13, when North/South sites between the villages are indicated as less likely to do harm to the Green Belt if developed than some West/East sites.

Sites P58+59+64 if developed with P66, would, to all intents and purposes, join the villages of Welham Green and Brookmans Park.

Site P66 like a number of sites on the map is only partially a promoted site being mainly a Golf Course, and does not have good, defensible boundaries particularly to the North. Development of this site would cause major traffic issues through the middle of Brookmans Park Village along narrow streets around the existing school. Bedlam would be a good name for housing should it proceed on P66.

It is interesting to note that site P65 which has woodland to the West of the main access road through the villages and the trainline adjacent, and admittedly is an attractive agricultural field is considered to be 'brown' and therefore likely to do high or very high damage to the Green Belt if developed.

Site P78 is shown part red and part brown but the line dividing the colours appears arbitrary because the topography of the site does not lend itself to a defensible boundary at that point.

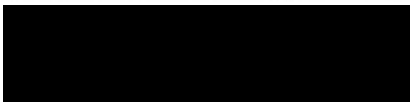
Site P78 is not in the Green Belt. It is Swanley Bar which is mainly developed.

NMPC understands that the Review is about the likely harm development would cause to the Green Belt if certain areas are taken out of the protection this classification gives but to some extent this is arbitrary and subjective when taken as a desk study, without consideration for the impacts on existing locations and the inhabitants it would have.

In conclusion, NMPC recognises the work undertaken to produce the Review but has doubts about its veracity and practical use when taken in isolation.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss the Review at the next Hearing dates.

Yours sincerely,



Sue Chudleigh
Clerk