

Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy Examination

Statement submitted by Savills on behalf of Barratt David Wilson Homes on Matter 2: Green Belt

Respondent reference: 661008

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Matter 2: Green Belt

Issue 1. Is the proposal to make limited changes to the GB justified?

1. Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that Green Belt boundaries should be established by local planning authorities 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.
2. The current Green Belt boundaries have remained largely unchanged since they were first drawn up in 1982. There is a critical need to deliver new homes to meet both market and affordable housing need. This need cannot be addressed within existing urban areas or in areas beyond the Green Belt in a sustainable manner. The extension of existing urban areas is the most sustainable option to accommodate identified housing needs. The proposal to make limited changes to the Green Belt is therefore fully justified.

Issue 3. Does the CS set out a precise timescale and clear process for the GB boundary changes?

3. The Core Strategy does not appear to set a clear timescale or process for the Green Belt Boundary changes. Policy KS2 states that the revised Green Belt boundaries will follow the edge of the new urban area. This is ambiguous as the Green Belt boundaries will need to be revised in order to allow proposals for the New Neighbourhoods to come forward in line with policy.
4. Discussions with EDDC Officers have indicated that it is not the intention of the Core Strategy to define the precise changes to the Green Belt boundary, and this will be drawn up to follow the edge of the new urban area when the planning applications for the new neighbourhoods are determined.
5. It is clear from the Housing Trajectory (SD27, March 2013) and the Housing Supply, Housing Trajectory and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation (FD1, June 2013) documents that the Council intends that that the New Neighbourhoods / strategic sites will be delivering new homes by 2014/15. Given the typical lead in times for such sites,

this would require the determination of planning applications in early 2014. It is therefore imperative that Core Strategy Policy KS2 would provide greater clarity if they were re-worded to explain that the revised Green Belt boundaries follow the extent of the proposed development sites as indicated by the red line in the illustrative plans in the relevant site chapters, unless the site includes SANGS and strategic open space, which will be incorporated into the revised Green Belt.

6. The following revised Policy wording is suggested as a replacement for the second and third sentences of the second paragraph of Policy KS2:

The revised Green Belt boundaries accommodate the allocated development sites by following the red line indicating the extent of the site as shown in the illustrative plans in the relevant site chapters, unless the site includes significant on site SANG or strategic open space provision, which will be included in the Green Belt.

Issue 4. Are the GB boundaries for every development proposal clearly defined on proposals maps?

7. It is unclear from the submission policies maps whether the Green Belt boundary has been amended to exclude the New Neighbourhood allocations, or if the Green Belt washes over these sites, in which case the Green Belt will therefore have to be subject to revision at a later date.
8. Policy KS2 states that significant open space and SANGs will be within the Green Belt, and will be shown on the Proposals maps for each individual development proposal. The submission policies maps published alongside the submission of the Core Strategy show 'Potential Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) / Other Greenspace'. It is difficult to distinguish these areas from other landscape, recreation, and nature conservation designations on the maps. It is unclear whether these areas are intended to provide an indication of the alignment of the revised Green Belt boundaries, but they do not appear to be linked to Policy KS2 and have not been drawn up with sufficient clarity or accuracy to provide a definitive Green Belt boundary.
9. This is a particular concern in relation to Policy FWP4: Coppins New Neighbourhood. The Core Strategy Options consultation originally identified the site for the provision of about 45 homes, with a small proportion of the site identified for greenspace along the eastern edge of the site. The Pre-Submission Core Strategy allocates the site for about 30 homes, with at least half of the site set out as informal open space. The reason given

for this at paragraph 10.29 of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy is to protect the Green Belt Gap between Longham and Ferndown. There is nothing in the evidence base to justify this change.

10. The Land to the north of Christchurch Road, West Parley – development concept document submitted by Savills on behalf of Barratt David Wilson Homes in support of these representations sets out a proposed layout for the site which can accommodate up to 45 dwellings. This is based on a detailed, site specific evidence base, and is considered to represent the most appropriate design and development response for the Coppins Nursery site, taking account of all relevant considerations.
11. The Barratt David Wilson Homes proposals for the site are supported by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal and a Review of Green Belt Considerations, which are also submitted alongside these representations.
12. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal concludes that with appropriate layout and building design, and landscape spaces and planting, the proposed residential development on this site, which is located adjacent to the existing settlement, would not have negative effects on existing townscape character or the wider landscape setting of West Parley.
13. The Review of Green Belt Considerations considers the site against the five purposes for including land in the Green Belts as set out in the NPPF and against the Green Belt considerations set out in the South East Dorset Green Belt Review. The report demonstrates that the development of the site for 45 houses in the manner proposed in the Core Strategy options consultation would not compromise any of the purposes of the Green Belt in this area.
14. The Review of Green Belt Considerations notes that the Dorset Landscape Character Assessment identifies the site as lying within the ‘urban’ landscape character area. Due to the topography of the site and surrounding area, adjoining residential development to the east and west, and mature vegetation associated with the woodlands to the north and golf course to the south, the development of the site would not affect the openness or any of the functions of the South East Dorset Green Belt.
15. These documents clearly demonstrate that the whole of the site can be developed without adverse impact on the Green Belt or on the townscape character or wider

landscape setting of West Parley and Ferndown, and provide a compelling evidence base for a policy allocating the whole of the site for development of up to 45 dwellings.

16. In summary, the GB boundaries are not adequately defined on the proposals maps. In order to provide a sound basis for decision making, and to ensure the timely delivery of the New Neighbourhoods / strategic sites proposed in the plan, the Core Strategy should clearly identify Green Belt boundaries. For the avoidance of doubt, the Green Belt boundary should be drawn up to exclude the area outlined in red on the map below from the Green Belt.

Map 1: Area to be removed from Green Belt in relation to Coppins Nursey

