

Examination of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)
Examination hearing sessions
Statement of North Hertfordshire District Council

Matter 25 – new land proposed for allocation through the main modifications MM387 – Site BA3 – Land south of Clothall Common, Baldock (Clothall Parish) and amendment to boundaries of sites BA3 and BA4 (Land east of Clothall Common, Baldock (part in Clothall Parish)

Question 25.1 For each of the new areas of land proposed through the main modifications:

a) Is the inclusion of the new area of land for allocation necessary for soundness

1. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 22 to 28 of the Council's November 2019 Paper "E" on additional land ([ED175](#)) and Appendix M10 – 2 of the NHDC Final response to the Inspector's Actions arising out of the Hearing Sessions, [ED146\(A\)](#).

b) Is the new area of land proposed deliverable? In particular, is it

i) confirmed by all of the landowners involved as being available for the use proposed?

2. Yes, the land allocated as site BA3 and BA4 is owned by Hertfordshire County Council. The County Council have confirmed that the sites are "suitable, available and achievable" for development in the Statement of Common Ground between North Hertfordshire District Council and Hertfordshire County Council Property, [ED91](#).

ii) supported by evidence to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles and pedestrians can be provided?

3. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 4 to 9 of the Council's [Matter 10 \(Baldock\) statement](#).

iii) deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services, and any environmental or other constraints?

4. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 10 to 14 of the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement. The additional land does not alter the overall dwelling estimates for sites BA3 and BA4 and brings the (likely) route of the proposed link road within a single allocation (BA3).

c) Is the inclusion of the new area of land justified and appropriate in terms of the likely impacts of the development

5. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 22 to 28 of the Council's November 2019 Paper "E" on additional land (ED175).

Question 25.2 If / where the new area of land proposed for allocation is currently in the Green Belt:

6. Part of the proposed additional land lies within the current Green Belt, as described in the Council's November 2019 Paper "E" on additional land (ED175).

a) Do exceptional circumstances exist to warrant its allocation? If so, what are they?

7. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 59 to 64 of the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement and the Council's November 2019 Paper "E" on additional land (ED175).

b) What is the nature and extent of the harm to the Green Belt of removing the site from it?

8. The Green Belt Review Update ([ED161A](#)) identifies that these sites make a moderate contribution to Green Belt purposes. It would therefore result in a moderate harm to the Green Belt if removed.

c) To what extent would the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent?

9. Measures are identified in paragraph 77 of the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement which will ensure this.

If / where relevant

d) If this site were to be developed as proposed, would the adjacent Green Belt continue to serve at least one of the five purposes of Green Belts, or would the Green Belt function be undermined by the site's allocation?

10. Yes, the land adjacent to the east of the allocated sites would continue to serve the purposes of the Green Belt, as set out in the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement, paragraphs 78 to 80.

e) Will the Green Belt boundary proposed need to be altered at the end of the plan period, or is it capable of enduring beyond then?

11. No, as set out in paragraphs 81 to 85 of the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement, the extent to which existing settlements can be further expanded in the future is finite. The review and proposed release of Green Belt in this location would extend Baldock to its logical maximum.

f) Are the proposed Green Belt boundaries consistent with the Plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development?

12. Yes, the Green Belt boundary has been determined with a view to achieving the most sustainable pattern of development, as set out in the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement, paragraphs 86 and 87.

g) Has the Green Belt boundary around the site been defined clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent? Does it avoid including land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open?

13. Yes, as set out in the Council's November 2019 Paper "E" on additional land (ED175), paragraphs 22 to 28 and Paragraph 95 of the Council's Matter 10 (Baldock) statement.