

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
MM384 – Site WY1 – Land south of Little Wymondley**

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 15 to 19 of the Council's November 2019 'Paper E' on additional land ([ED175](#)). This additional land extends the proposed housing allocation further to the south into land previously identified on the submission Policies Map as proposed 'urban open land'.
2. The proposed amendment to the allocation boundary was put forward by the Council in response to additional information provided by the (then) site promoter ([ED50](#)) and was considered at the hearing sessions relating to Urban Open Land (29 November 2017) and Little Wymondley (27 February 2018).
3. An 'action' requiring NHDC to amend the policies map in respect of urban open land was identified by the Inspector following the first of these hearing sessions ([ED55](#), p.3). The Council's final response to the Inspector's Actions arising out of the hearing sessions confirms that MM384 is a direct response to this instruction ([ED152](#), p.2).

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?

4. Yes, the entirety of the land comprising proposed allocation WY1 and the urban open land is promoted as a single site. This site is now promoted by Welbeck Strategic Land who responded to the Proposed Main Modifications consultation in broad support of the proposed changes (representor ID 16711).

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

5. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraph 2 of the Council's [Matter 11 \(Little Wymondley\) statement](#).

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

6. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 3 to 5 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) Statement. The additional land does not alter the dwelling estimates or any of the infrastructure requirements. The additional land does not result in the identification of any additional constraints beyond those already considered.

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

7. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 6 to 12 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) statement. The detailed assessment which led to the identification of the localised ridgeline which informs the proposed change to the boundary is contained within ED50.

8. This document was available to all parties at the time of the original Little Wymondley hearing session on Tuesday 27 February 2018. That session was held in the context of the Council having already been instructed to amend the policies map in relation to urban open land following the earlier hearing session on this matter.

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

9. The proposed additional land lies within the current Green Belt.

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

10. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 14 to 18 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) statement. It was already known that the proposed allocation boundary was to be altered at the time these matters were examined in February 2018.

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

11. The Green Belt Review Update ([ED161](#)) identifies that this site makes a moderate contribution to Green Belt purposes. It would therefore result in 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?

12. Measures are identified in Paragraphs 20 and 21 Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) statement.

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?*

13. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 22 to 24 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) Statement.

14. The proposed additional land does not alter the extent of land which has previously been proposed for removal from the Green Belt. In the submission version of the Policies Map, this additional land was shown as proposed Urban Open Land to be removed from the Green Belt and contained within the proposed settlement boundary of Little Wymondley. MM384 does not alter the proposed outward limits of the Urban Open Land and the associated proposed Green Belt boundary along the A602 Wymondley Bypass which have already been subject to examination.

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?*

15. This additional land does not alter the case presented in paragraphs 25 to 29 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) Statement

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

16. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 30 and 31 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) statement.

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?*

17. Yes, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 32 to 38 of the Council's Matter 11 (Little Wymondley) statement. The proposed additional land at Site WY1 does not alter the extent of land which has previously been proposed for removal from the Green Belt. It alters the point at which land already proposed for removal is demarcated as Urban Open Land. The proposed outer limits of the Urban Open Land allocation and the associated proposed Green Belt boundary around Little Wymondley along the A602 dual-carriageway bypass have already been subject to examination.