

GREENBELT AND CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Plan area is predominantly rural in character, although pressure for housing and economic development associated with the development of the Selby Coalfield and inward migration from adjoining conurbations has been evident. Once taken for development, the countryside cannot be easily replaced or restored. Sporadic development in the countryside can not only lead to a cumulative change to the character of the countryside but is unsustainable in both economic and environmental terms. The protection of the countryside from inappropriate development is therefore a fundamental objective of the Local Plan.
- 3.2 It is equally important to regulate the growth of towns and villages which may otherwise have a significant impact on their character and setting, particularly where there is a risk of coalescence. New development on the edge of a settlement can put pressure on its environment, infrastructure and facilities. In addition to the normal policies of restraint in the countryside, there are specific areas of the District where development pressures merit further measures to contain urban growth and maintain the open character of the countryside. These comprise the northern and western fringes of the District close to York and Leeds, and the 'wedges' of countryside which extend into and between a number of settlements.
- 3.3 Policies in this chapter deal with the definition and control of development in Green Belts, Safeguarded Land, Strategic Countryside Gaps and Development Limits.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- 3.4 PPG2 (Green Belts, 1995) reaffirms the Government's commitment to the designation and maintenance of areas of Green Belt around towns and cities. The advice describes the purposes of Green Belts, and emphasises the importance of preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Guidance on controlling development and promoting specific land uses and management of land within Green Belts is also provided.
- 3.5 The Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 12, 2001) (now Regional Spatial Strategy) for Yorkshire and the Humber confirms the primacy of Green Belt policy within the Region.
- 3.6 The general extent of Green Belt within the Plan area is defined in the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan (Alteration No 3, 1995), which also sets out the County Council's approach to different forms of development within Green Belts, including the expansion of settlements.

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES WITH REGARD TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND GREEN BELT

- 3.7 The following objectives are the guiding principles behind policies controlling development in the countryside and in areas of Green Belt.

Whilst the last three objectives are specific to the Green Belt, the first two apply to the countryside generally, whether it is Green Belt or not.

- a) To safeguard the open appearance of the countryside and to prevent the uncontrolled expansion of towns and villages.
- b) To maintain the separate identity of settlements and prevent the coalescence of settlements and the erosion of largely undeveloped gaps.
- c) To indicate the precise areas to which Green Belt policies apply within the Plan area, and to restrict development within Green Belts to land uses which are compatible with the objectives of designation.
- d) To improve the environmental amenity and recreational value of the Green Belt.
- e) To allow for the longer-term development needs of towns and villages located in the Green Belt beyond the Plan period.

SECTION ONE: GREEN BELTS

3.8 Green Belts have been a fundamental element of national planning policy for more than four decades. The five purposes of the Green Belt, as defined in PPG2, are as follows:

- a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3.9 Whilst landscape quality is not a material factor in designation, Green Belts do have a positive role to play in safeguarding attractive areas of countryside and providing opportunities for outdoor leisure pursuits and access to the countryside, and securing nature conservation interests.

3.10 The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their permanence and open appearance, and their protection must be maintained as far as can be seen ahead.

3.11 The Plan area incorporates part of the West Yorkshire and York Green Belts. The West Yorkshire Green Belt was originally established in the 1960s with the principal objective of checking the further growth of the West Yorkshire conurbation. The Green Belt around York was approved in principle in 1980 as part of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan. Its

principal objective is to protect the setting and special character of the historic City.

Extent of the Green Belt

- 3.12 The general extent of the West Yorkshire Green Belt was established through the West Riding Development Plan, First Review, (1966). Several settlements were subsequently excluded from the Green Belt through the delineation of detailed Inset boundaries in the adopted Sherburn in Elmet Local Plan (1984) and the adopted Rural Areas Local Plan (1990). A number of extensions to the Green Belt were also formally incorporated into the Rural Areas Local Plan, at Newton Kyme and to the north-west of Tadcaster, to the south of Balne and around Monk Fryston and Birkin. This revised outer boundary had previously been adopted as interim policy guidelines in March 1982.
- 3.13 Interim Green Belt boundaries were approved by the County Council in respect of the York Green Belt in April 1995, following a Public Local Inquiry and after consideration of representations to published Modifications. The Green Belt boundaries are expected to be formally established through the preparation of individual district-wide Local Plans.
- 3.14 The general extent of Green Belt is a strategic planning matter and will be reviewed, if necessary, in conjunction with the preparation of a Replacement Structure Plan, or revised Regional Planning Guidance. The adopted outer boundaries of the West Yorkshire Green Belt and the interim boundaries of the York Green Belt generally follow easily recognisable physical features. No proposals are therefore put forward in this Local Plan to amend the outer boundaries.
- 3.15 Whilst areas of Green Belt are intended to ensure for the long-term, Local Authorities are also required to take the legitimate development needs of an area into account in preparing development plans. In view of the overall scale of the District housing and employment land requirement and in order to provide the necessary degree of permanence associated with Green Belt, which might otherwise be subject to encroachment, a number of Inset boundaries have been reviewed.
- 3.16 In considering future development requirements, account has been taken of Regional Planning Guidance (now Regional Spatial Strategy), which encourages the establishment of future development in sustainable locations and the reduction of past levels of inward migration to North Yorkshire, particularly from West Yorkshire. Within this context, in formulating its development strategy, the Council has attempted to also recognise the existing, strong development pressures in order to produce a balanced solution. The potential of Sherburn in Elmet, as one of the District's three market towns, is recognised, and changes to the Green Belt to cater for development within the Plan Period and beyond have been made. A more limited change at South Milford to cater primarily for development within the Plan period is also included. The District Council is satisfied that some growth at these locations is justified and that other opportunities for development beyond the Green Belt are less sustainable.

- 3.17 In reviewing Inset boundaries, land has also been added to the Green Belt where it is considered to fulfil a Green Belt function, and where future development would be inappropriate. This applies at Brotherton, Monk Fryston and adjacent to Kellingley Colliery. A number of minor boundary changes have also been necessary to correct anomalies at Sherburn in Elmet, Brotherton and Hillam.
- 3.18 Only a small part of the Green Belt around York remains within the Plan area following the recent Local Government Review. The outer edge of the Green Belt identified on the Proposals Map reflects the Interim Boundary approved by the County Council in April 1995.
- 3.19 Escrick is the only settlement in the Plan area which is Inset in the York Green Belt. A number of minor changes have been necessary to rationalise Green Belt Boundaries and Development Limits in order to ensure contiguous boundaries.

GB1 The areas to which Green Belt policies apply are designated on the proposals map

The Control of Development in the Green Belt

- 3.20 PPG2 (Green Belts 1995) confirms that the protection of areas of Green Belt is an overriding planning consideration and that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belts. Approval should not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings, or for other forms of development, other than for the following purposes.

Agriculture and Forestry

- 3.21 Whilst development in connection with agriculture or forestry will normally be appropriate in the Green Belt, proposals will also need to be considered in relation to other Local Plan policies, such as POLICY H10 concerning agricultural and forestry workers' dwellings.

Limited Residential Development in Villages

- 3.22 Within existing Green Belt villages, proposals for small-scale development and infilling are generally considered acceptable. Development Limits have been defined in order to clarify the extent of settlements within which particular policies will apply. Proposals for development inside the Development Limits of settlements that are washed over by Green Belt will be considered in relation to POLICY H7. Hamlets and small clusters of dwellings in the Green Belt for which Development Limits have not been defined will be subject to more restrictive controls.

Limited Affordable Housing for Local Community Needs

- 3.23 Special considerations arise in areas where Local Plan policies permit limited infilling within small settlements that are washed over by Green Belt. Subject to evidence of local need the release, exceptionally, of land for small-scale affordable housing schemes may be equally appropriate. The

District Council considers that the PPG advice is applicable to small villages, such as Womersley and Kirk Smeaton, that are relatively remote and unlikely to derive any benefit from the provision of affordable housing on allocated sites in larger settlements. In addition to complying with the provisions of POLICY H11 (The Rural Housing Exceptions Policy), proposals should be small-scale, and located on sites which minimise the impact on the open character of the Green Belt.

Extension, Alteration or Replacement of Dwellings

- 3.24 Proposals for extensions to dwellings and replacement of existing dwellings are also acceptable in principle within the Green Belt, subject to the provisions of POLICIES H13 and H14. Extensions and alterations must not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Replacement dwellings must not be materially larger than the dwelling to be replaced.

Re-Use of Buildings

- 3.25 The re-use of buildings inside a Green Belt is generally desirable since this may assist rural enterprise and diversification, and avoid problems of vandalism and dereliction. Proposals should not prejudice the openness of the Green Belt. Strict control will be exercised over the extension of re-used buildings and over any associated uses of land surrounding the building which might conflict with the openness of the Green Belt, for example because they involve extensive external storage, or extensive hardstanding, car parking, boundary walling or fencing. Alterations to buildings in terms of form, bulk and general design should be in keeping with the surroundings. Proposals should also comply with the requirements of POLICY EMP8.

Small-Scale Extensions to Existing Business Premises

- 3.26 In order not to unnecessarily restrict rural enterprise, the conversion of buildings to new uses and the limited redevelopment, alteration, and small-scale extension of existing commercial premises may be acceptable, provided they do not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt. Similar considerations as those used to assess proposals for the re-use of buildings will apply, and proposals should also comply with POLICY EMP9.

Limited Infilling or Redevelopment of Major Developed Sites

- 3.27 PPG2 (Green Belts, 1995) acknowledges that areas of Green Belt may contain some major developed sites including factories, collieries, water and sewage treatment works, and research and education establishments, which often pre-date the Green Belt designation, but which are subject to Green Belt controls. These substantial sites may be in continuing use or redundant. The advice indicates that limited infilling or redevelopment will not be regarded as inappropriate development provided such sites are specifically identified in Local Plans. Specific provision for continued development in major developed sites is made in POLICY GB3.

Other Appropriate Forms of Development

- 3.28 Other forms of development which require a rural location and which may not be inappropriate in Green Belts include mineral extraction, engineering and other operations, and open uses of land such as sport and recreation. The provision of essential facilities associated with an appropriate use of land may also be acceptable. Such facilities may include small changing rooms, unobtrusive spectator accommodation, or small stables for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation. In each case the key tests are whether proposals preserve the openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.
- 3.29 Minerals can only be worked where they are found and extraction is a temporary activity. Proposals should however maintain high environmental standards and ensure that the site is well restored.
- 3.30 Engineering and other operations, includes the tipping of waste, and the provision of road and other infrastructure developments such as sewage works and pumping stations.
- 3.31 Proposals for outdoor sport and recreation such as playing fields and golf courses cover extensive areas and may help maintain the open character of the area. The suitable conversion of existing buildings to provide ancillary facilities such as club houses, changing rooms and stables will often be appropriate. However, the construction of new buildings for such purposes will only be acceptable where they are essential to the functioning of the use, and no greater in size that that necessary to fulfil the intended purpose.
- 3.32 Cemeteries, being substantially open in character, are also acceptable in Green Belts, including essential related facilities.
- 3.33 Small-scale proposals for touring caravans and camping sites which do not involve the erection of substantial permanently-sited ancillary buildings are unlikely to breach Green Belt objectives. Proposals considered to be acceptable must comply with the provisions of POLICY RT12. Static caravans, cabin or chalet developments are not considered appropriate development in the Green Belt and will be treated as proposals for new dwellings.

GB2 Within the Green Belt, development will not be permitted except for the purposes listed below. Proposals that are acceptable in principle must also comply with policies intended to control development in the countryside, and with all other relevant policies.

- 1) **New buildings justified in connection with the needs of agriculture or forestry, including agricultural or forestry workers' dwellings;**
- 2) **Small-scale residential development and infilling within the defined development limits of settlements;**

- 3) **Limited affordable housing for local community needs on sites adjoining existing villages which minimise the impact on the open character of the green belt;**
- 4) **The replacement, extension or alteration of existing dwellings;**
- 5) **The conversion of buildings to new uses and the limited redevelopment, alteration and small-scale extension of existing commercial premises which do not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the green belt;**
- 6) **Limited infilling or redevelopment of major developed sites, as defined on the proposals map, subject to the provisions of POLICY GB3; and**
- 7) **Proposals for uses of land, the carrying out of engineering and other operations, and the provision of essential facilities associated with the use of land, including essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it.**

Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

3.34 The Green Belt contains a number of major developed sites including Tadcaster Grammar School, the sewage treatment plant at Byram and a number of factories and commercial enterprises that are important to the local economy. PPG2 (Green Belts, 1995) recognises that the limited infilling or redevelopment of such sites may help to secure jobs and prosperity without prejudicing the Green Belt. Complete or partial redevelopment may also provide opportunities for environmental improvement. Limited infilling or redevelopment of the following sites which are defined on the Proposals Map in accordance with PPG advice, will therefore be treated as appropriate development within the Green Belt.

Major Developed Sites	Inset Map No
Byram cum Sutton Waste Water Treatment Works	12A
Bilbrough Top (roadside services)	8A
Former Bacon Factory Site, Sherburn in Elmet	54
Papyrus Works, Newton Kyme	46A
Tadcaster Grammar School	60A
Triesse Vulcan Works, Church Fenton	20A

3.35 Proposals should not exceed the height of existing buildings and should have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development. The impact of additional traffic generated will be an important consideration in this respect.

- 3.36 For the purposes of this policy, infilling means the filling of small gaps between built development. Such infilling should not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site.
- 3.37 PPG2 (Green Belts, 1995) indicates that redevelopment should have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and where possible have less. It should not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings (unless this would achieve a reduction in height which would benefit visual amenity). For this purpose the relevant area is the aggregate ground floor area (footprint) of the existing buildings, excluding temporary buildings, open spaces with direct external access between wings of a building, and areas of hardstanding. The character and dispersal of proposed development will also need to be taken into account. The location of the new buildings should be decided having regard to the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, the objectives for the use of land in Green Belts, the main features of the landscape, and the need to integrate the new development with its surroundings. For instance it may be more appropriate to site new development closer to existing buildings.
- 3.38 Any proposals for partial redevelopment should be put forward in the context of comprehensive, long-term plans for the site as a whole.
- 3.39 In considering proposals for the redevelopment of major developed sites in the Green Belt, the District Council will discriminate positively in favour of re-use or redevelopment for employment purposes. This accords with the Plan's employment objectives of providing an adequate supply of land and range of sites, whilst minimising the development of greenfield sites and sustaining the rural economy.

GB3 Proposals for limited infilling or redevelopment within major developed sites in the Green Belt, as defined on the proposals map, will be permitted provided:

- 1) **There is no greater impact than the existing or former use on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt;**
- 2) **The proposal would not exceed the height of the existing buildings;**
- 3) **Infilling would not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site;**
- 4) **Redevelopment would achieve environmental improvements and would result in no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt. Any new buildings resulting from a redevelopment scheme should not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings, unless this would achieve a reduction in height which would benefit visual amenity; and**

- 5) **In the case of proposals for non-employment uses on sites of existing or former employment use it can be demonstrated that the premises are unsuited to commercial, industrial or recreational uses or there is no demand for these purposes in the locality.**

The Character and Visual Amenity of the Green Belt

- 3.40 Proposals may be made for types of development which are acceptable in principle in the Green Belt, but whose scale, location or design may impair the open character or visual amenity of the Green Belt. Similarly, proposals located beyond, but conspicuous from, the Green Belt may have an adverse effect on areas of Green Belt. In such circumstances PPG2 (Green Belts, 1995) indicates that it would be appropriate to resist development. These considerations apply equally to the impact of development proposals on the form and character of settlements within the Green Belt.

GB4 Proposals for development in the Green Belt, or which are conspicuous from an area of Green Belt, will only be permitted where the scale, location, materials and design of any building or structure, or the laying out and use of land, would not detract from the open character and visual amenity of the Green Belt, or the form and character of any settlement within it.

SECTION TWO: SAFEGUARDED LAND

- 3.41 If Green Belt designations are to endure beyond the Plan period, there is a need to allow for the realistic and desirable longer-term development needs of towns and villages. National planning advice (PPG2, Green Belts, 1995) indicates that proposals in Local Plans affecting Green Belts should be related to a timescale which is longer than that normally adopted for other aspects of the Plan. It is also necessary to establish boundaries which do not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open.
- 3.42 Whilst the precise scale of long-term land requirements will be established through the Regional Planning Guidance (now Regional Spatial Strategy) and the subsequent review of the County Structure Plan, recent national projections indicate continuing need for housing land in North Yorkshire at a similar level to that catered for in the current Structure Plan. In reviewing Inset boundaries account has been taken of their relevance and value in defining land which fulfils the purposes of the Green Belt and their continued validity as well-defined and permanent boundaries. In the latter case, consideration has had to be given to the possibility of providing for further growth in the most sustainable settlements, particularly the market towns and the larger villages. Safeguarded Land has therefore been designated after balancing the following three factors – a) the need for further growth, b) the potential for settlements to accept further development and c) the value of the Green Belt which surrounds them.
- 3.43 In assessing the opportunities to establish Safeguarded Land in accordance with the requirements of PPG2 (Green Belts, 1995), the Council has been cognisant of the principles for locating new housing

development, as set out in Paragraphs 5.21 – 5.23 of Chapter 5 (Housing) of the Plan. In this context, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet have adjacent Green Belt areas and are therefore the two market towns to which Safeguarded Land could potentially be attached.

- 3.44 In the case of Tadcaster, the quality of the landscape on the western side of the town, where Green Belt designation applies, militates against the creation of Safeguarded Land there. However, Sherburn in Elmet is considered to be the most sustainable location for any further growth which may be considered necessary in the western side of the District. Areas of potential around the town have therefore been identified as Safeguarded Land.
- 3.45 Other settlements lying within the Green Belt, which are considered to have some potential for further growth and have been designated as settlements falling within Policy H6, have also been assessed. However, having regard to the requirements set out in Paragraph 5.23 of Chapter 5 of the Plan, only one other small site (2.7ha) at Hillam has been found to be suitable.

Safeguarded Land has been identified at the following locations:

Site Location	Site Area (Ha)
East of Betteras Hill Road, Hillam	2.7
South-East of SHB/1, Sherburn in Elmet	7.3
East of Prospect Farm, Low Street, Sherburn in Elmet	12.8
West of Hodgsons Lane, Sherburn in Elmet	11.8
East of Hodgsons Lane, Sherburn in Elmet	10.6
West of Garden Lane, Sherburn in Elmet	6.3
Total	51.5

- 3.46 Land safeguarded for development in the Plan amounts to 51.5 hectares, which could accommodate over 1500 dwellings at a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. While, in the light of the plan, monitor and manage approach as advocated in PPG3, it is not appropriate to make precise quantitative predictions regarding longer-term housing requirements, 50 hectares is considered to be a reasonable amount of land to meet future needs for this area, taking into account the scale of future house building rates in North Yorkshire up to 2016, as set out in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG12, published October 2001).
- 3.47 It is emphasised however that this land is specifically not allocated for development. It forms part of a long-term resource which may be required for housing or employment growth after 2006. In the interim proposals for development which do not compromise this objective, such as open recreational uses, and small-scale farm diversification, activities may be acceptable. Proposals for affordable housing as an exception to normal policies controlling development in the countryside may also be appropriate.

- 3.48 The release of Safeguarded Land, if required to meet long-term development needs would only be made in a controlled and phased manner through future Local Plan or land supply reviews, possibly extending over successive review periods. This is to ensure that the release of Safeguarded Land takes place in a controlled and properly phased manner. The justification for releasing Safeguarded Land will be dependant upon a range of factors including the District Housing requirement and the range of environmental considerations and sustainable development objectives described in para. 5.23.

SL1 Within areas of safeguarded land as defined on the proposals map, proposals for development which would prejudice long-term growth beyond 2006 will not be permitted. It is intended that the release of safeguarded land, if required, will be carried out in a controlled and phased manner extending over successive reviews of the Local Plan.

SECTION THREE: CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 3.49 Whilst countryside included within Green Belts is strongly protected by Green Belt POLICIES GB1 to GB4, national planning policy indicates that development in the general countryside should also be strictly controlled and that the countryside should be protected 'for its own sake'. Long-standing strategic and local planning policies are aimed at accommodating the bulk of development in and around urban areas, market towns and service villages.

Non-Green Belt Countryside

- 3.50 In order to strengthen existing policies, and inhibit the encroachment of built form into the countryside, the County Structure Plan Third Alteration introduced a new policy aimed at restricting development in the countryside to small-scale proposals, whilst assisting rural diversification.
- 3.51 POLICY DL1 in this Local Plan provides further elaboration on Selby District Council's approach to controlling development in the countryside outside Green Belts in the light of national guidance, which is aimed at sustaining the rural economy. For example, it acknowledges that the expansion of existing businesses, including the physical extension of buildings, may often be appropriate. Similarly a variety of activities may be accommodated in the countryside without detriment, provided that their location and design are handled sensitively.
- 3.52 Whilst the Plan positively discriminates in favour of business uses rather than residential uses, there may be circumstances where conversion to residential use is appropriate, or exceptionally where infilling within existing groups of dwellings is acceptable. It is also important to maintain the vitality of rural communities by supporting proposals which are required to meet their identified social and economic needs such as those which provide essential local services, local jobs and community facilities; and where suitable alternative sites within Development Limits are not available.

Examples of such proposals may be a new community centre and affordable housing for local people.

3.53 At the same time, a balance must be struck with the need to safeguard the countryside from the adverse effects of development, including associated traffic and operational problems.

3.54 Additional guidance is provided in the Local Plan through the incorporation of 'exceptions' policies, and criteria-based policies which facilitate specific forms of development in the countryside. Development proposals in Green Belts will continue to be assessed against the provisions of Green Belt policy.

DL1 Development in the countryside, outside the Green Belt and development limits, will only be permitted where the proposal complies with all other relevant policies and the proposal:

- 1) Would be appropriate in a rural area; or**
- 2) Involves the re-use, adaptation or extension of an existing building; or**
- 3) Is required to meet the identified social or economic needs of a rural community; or**
- 4) Would be of direct benefit to the rural economy including additional small-scale employment development and the expansion of existing firms.**

Where development is considered appropriate, it must be located and designed so as not to have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity or the character and appearance of an area and must not harm acknowledged nature conservation interests.

Definition of Development Limits

3.55 Development Limits have been defined around most settlements within the District. The purpose of these Limits is to define the boundary between open countryside and the settlements themselves in a consistent manner throughout the Plan. Outside Development Limits, POLICY DL1 or, in Green Belt areas, POLICY GB2 will apply, whereas, within the settlements, POLICIES H6 and H7 will be the operational policies. In those small settlements washed over by Green Belt, Development Limits have been drawn more stringently to ensure that any development would be strictly limited and be in accordance with Green Belt policies.

3.56 The term Development Limits replaces the term village envelopes, previously used in the First Alteration to the adopted Rural Areas Local Plan. Every settlement in the Plan area has been individually appraised and the Development Limits have been drawn with regard to the particular site characteristics. However, to ensure a consistent approach the following set of criteria for defining boundaries has been applied:

a) Sites of Amenity and Conservation Value

Priority is given to the need to protect sites of nature conservation importance, scheduled monuments, village greens and other pockets of valuable amenity land such as woodlands, many of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

b) Physical Boundaries

Wherever practicable and appropriate, boundaries follow well-defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, roads and streams. Apart from being readily discernible and less open to dispute these boundaries usually represent the transition between village or town and the neighbouring countryside. However, where curtilages are extensive and partially or wholly undeveloped, and where they back onto countryside, it is considered appropriate to define a tighter boundary which more closely conforms to the existing built-up limits than garden curtilages.

c) Buildings on the Edge of Settlements

Similarly, where houses stand on the outer roadside edge of a settlement, the Development Limit is frequently drawn tighter than the curtilage boundary. This indicates that housing which would effectively result in ribbon development by extending the built-up area fronting the roadside would not be considered acceptable.

d) Buildings set in Spacious Grounds

Where buildings such as halls, large houses or hotels are set in spacious grounds on the edge of settlements, their inclusion within Development Limits depends upon the extent to which they appear to relate with the overall physical fabric of the settlement. Usually, their relative isolation, attributable to their spacious setting, justifies their exclusion. Where a particular property is associated with a parkland estate, the importance of retaining this historical association and limiting new development has influenced the defining of boundaries.

e) Farmsteads

Farmsteads and associated outbuildings present their own particular problems because of their diverse forms and often sprawling nature. Commonly a number of farmsteads are located within or on the fringe of settlements, particularly smaller villages. In some instances farmsteads, although contiguous with existing built development, are excluded from Development Limits because their rural characteristics predominate and they appear to relate more strongly with the surrounding countryside. Where it is proposed to include or partially include a farmstead, the principal means of determining boundaries have been, first, to consider the extent of built development on either side of the farm and, second, to differentiate between modern agricultural buildings and their traditional counterparts. Generally, agricultural buildings of modern construction are excluded whereas traditional stone or brick-built farm buildings which normally front the roadside, and which have historically been long

associated with the settlement, are contained within the Development Limits.

f) Institutional Uses

Institutional uses such as hospitals and schools and their grounds are commonly excluded from Development Limits, except where they are deemed to comprise an integral element within the existing built framework. In some instances, the buildings are contained within Development Limits whereas the grounds are excluded.

g) Industrial Uses

Industrial uses operating from premises which extend beyond the otherwise perceived development framework are omitted from Development Limits where it is felt their inclusion could distort the pattern of existing development, should the land be subject to subsequent pressure for housing.

h) Planning History

The planning history of a site is also an important consideration when defining boundaries. Where permission has previously been refused for development on the basis that the site falls outside the established built-up limits, then it is likely, given unchanged circumstances, that such land will be excluded from the defined Development Limits. Conversely, where sites on the edge of settlements have outstanding permission for housing, or are allocated for development, then the site will normally be incorporated within Development Limits. Such a consideration would not generally apply in the case of a dwelling or dwellings to which an agricultural, or some other occupancy condition, is attached which has allowed development in a situation where it would normally be refused. In some instances however, where a long-standing occupancy condition has been in force and the house in question is now clearly well-related to the built form of the village, then the dwelling has been incorporated into the Development Limits.

i) Extent of Existing Settlements

Regard is given to the extent of existing development as seen from both outside a settlement, particularly from approach roads, and from within the settlement.

j) Form and Character of Existing Settlements

Similarly, the form and character of a settlement as defined by dwellings, other buildings and their curtilages, the road network, and open spaces will determine whether a tight boundary designed to safeguard the existing pattern of development is appropriate or not.

- 3.57 In the case of settlements where significant development in excess of minor infilling or small-scale development is not considered appropriate, the Development Limits may correspond with previously adopted village envelopes. Where settlements have been selected for continued

expansion, village envelopes (Development Limits) have been modified to incorporate housing land allocations.

- 3.58 The following settlements have Development Limits defined for the first time: Barlby, Barlby Bridge, Brayton, Lumby, Osgodby, Selby, Sherburn in Elmet, South Milford and Thorpe Willoughby.

Development Limits affecting Green Belt Settlements

- 3.59 The villages of Barkston Ash, Beal, Bilbrough, Birkin, Burton Salmon, Colton, Cridling Stubbs, Kellingley Colliery, Kirk Smeaton, Little Smeaton, Lumby, Newton Kyme, Saxton, Towton and Womersley are washed over by Green Belt. In defining Development Limits, they have been broadly treated in a similar way to those settlements which lie outside the Green Belt although a stricter interpretation has been applied when deciding whether to include or exclude 'marginal' sites on the edge of settlements in order to be consistent with Policies GB1 to GB4.
- 3.60 The definition of Development Limits does not imply any change to the Green Belt status of settlements.
- 3.61 A number of towns and villages are Inset in the Green Belt, namely; Brotherton, Byram, Escrick, Fairburn, Hillam, Monk Fryston, Sherburn in Elmet, South Milford and Whitley. Tadcaster is situated at the outer edge of the West Yorkshire Green Belt. In most instances in these towns and villages Development Limits have common boundaries with Green Belt boundaries, following well-defined physical features as far as possible. The principal exception to this rule comprises land safeguarded for longer-term development.

SECTION FOUR: STRATEGIC COUNTRYSIDE GAPS

- 3.62 Whilst it is generally desirable to preserve the character and separate identity of settlements, a number of neighbouring settlements in the Plan area have developed in very close proximity to each other. Some are separated by narrow, though as yet largely undeveloped, gaps of countryside, where continued expansion would be likely to result in coalescence and threaten the identity of individual settlements.
- 3.63 In some parts of the Plan area, the risk of coalescence is safeguarded through Green Belt designation, for example between the separate built-up parts of Monk Fryston and between Sherburn in Elmet and South Milford. Where this is not the case, important areas of open countryside between settlements, or 'Strategic Countryside Gaps', have been identified where stricter controls are necessary to safeguard the open character of the land. In a number of cases Strategic Countryside Gaps have been identified in order to maintain the individual character of different parts of settlements.
- 3.64 Strategic Countryside Gaps have been defined in respect of the following settlements:

Barlby/Osgodby
Barlby Top/Barlby Crescent
Brayton/Selby

Church Fenton East/West
Cliffe/Hemingbrough
Gateforth
Hensall North/South
Skipwith
Stillingfleet
Thorganby

3.65 Proposals for development in these gaps will only be acceptable where there would be no risk of physical intrusion such as certain types of recreational use, or where the overall open character of the land would be enhanced through the removal of existing structures. In such circumstances, any replacement or ancillary buildings would need to be sensitively sited and landscaped in order to minimise any potential intrusive impact. Proposals for other forms of development, including agricultural dwellings and affordable housing, which may in other circumstances be acceptable outside Development Limits will not normally be permitted.

3.66 Strategic Countryside Gaps may serve other functions, such as affording access to the countryside and recreational opportunities, and may also provide wildlife corridors.

SG1 Proposals for development affecting Strategic Countryside Gaps, as defined on the proposals map, will not be permitted where there would be an adverse effect on the open character of the countryside or where the gap between settlements would be compromised.