

## Home Builders Federation

### Matter 5

## NEW FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

### Matter 5: Green Belt

#### **Issue Whether the approach to the alteration of the Green Belt and development within it is justified and consistent with national policy**

Relevant Policies: Policy 12

N.B. This matter concerns the principal and overall approach to the Green Belt. Detailed matters relating to individual site allocations and the specific implications for the Green Belt are dealt with under Matter 11

#### 5.8 Are there exceptional circumstances to alter the Green Belt in the District in principle? If so, what are they?

We would support the Council's decision to amend Green Belt boundaries. This recognises that the scale of the development needs of the Borough and increasing cost of accommodation was not a sustainable position and one that could only be addressed through the amendment of Green Belt boundaries. In particular the poor affordability and rapidly increasing accommodation costs within NFDC attests to the acuteness of the issue with regard to housing supply in the Borough and the limited opportunities for further development within its urban areas. We would also suggest that the circumstances faced by NFDC would support further amendments should the inspector consider the assessment of housing needs to be under estimated or that the Council must improve delivery earlier in the plan period as we have suggested in our representations and statement to matter 4.

#### 5.9 Has consideration been given to the potential to identify safeguarded land? Should it be identified?

Given the level of housing needs that are likely in future it is inevitable that boundaries will need to be reviewed within five years of this plan being adopted let alone at the end of the plan period. It will also be important for the Council to work with neighbouring authorities to consider the longer-term future of the Green Belt in this area and its strategic value given that the coalescence between Southampton and Bournemouth is no longer a risk following the establishment of the National Park. Set alongside this the fact that the need for housing and poor affordability of the area suggests a long-term joint strategic assessment of the Green Belt is required.



Therefore, the primary concern of NFDC should be to ensure that its assessment of housing need is realistic and that its sets in place allocations to meet these needs. So, whilst it is important that the Council can deliver beyond the plan period and we would not be opposed to safeguarding land, we would suggest that there is a more pressing need to identify land to deliver the development needs of this area within this plan period and to address existing backlog within 5 years.

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