

Green Belt

3.55 In 1992 the Central Oxfordshire Local Plan defined the boundaries of the Green Belt within South Oxfordshire.

3.56 The five purposes of the Green Belt are to:

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

3.57 The Plan has made alterations to the Green Belt to accommodate our strategic allocations at Culham, Berinsfield, Grenoble Road, Northfield, Land North of Bayswater Brook and Wheatley. These alterations are shown at Appendix 4. The individual sections within the Plan which are relevant to each of these strategic allocations, provide specific detail on the approach for its release and mitigation. The policy requires compensatory measures to be delivered to remediate for the removal of land from the Green Belt. This is required by the National Planning Policy Framework at paragraph 138. Each relevant strategic allocation policy where Green Belt has been altered sets out requirements for the site and some of these measures could be considered as compensatory measures. Evidence on landscape, biodiversity or recreational needs with site specific recommendations and opportunities will also provide recommendations for enhancements that would deliver compensatory improvements on remaining Green Belt. The compensatory gain would be expected to be demonstrated through the individual site masterplans and secured through developer contributions if these enhancements are outside of the red line boundary of a planning application.

3.58 The Local Plan gives substantial weight to protecting the Green Belt when considering any planning application. Only appropriate development will be permitted in the Green Belt in accordance with national planning policy; inappropriate development will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

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Policy STRAT6: Green Belt

1. To ensure the Green Belt continues to serve its key functions, it will be protected from harmful development. Within its boundaries, development will be restricted to those limited types of development which are deemed appropriate by the NPPF, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
2. The Green Belt boundary has been altered to accommodate strategic allocations at STRAT8, STRAT9, STRAT10i, STRAT11, STRAT12, STRAT13 and STRAT14, where the development should deliver compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land, with measures supported by evidence of landscape, biodiversity or recreational needs and opportunities. The boundaries of the reviewed Green Belt are identified on the changes to the Green Belt boundary maps (see Appendix 4).
3. Detailed amendments to the Green Belt made by the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in compliance with the requirements of the NPPF and the need identified within the Local Plan.
4. Where land has been removed from the Green Belt, new development should be carefully designed to minimise visual impact.

This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 6 and 7.

Land at Chalgrove Airfield

- 3.59 Chalgrove Airfield is a former Second World War airfield located directly north of the village of Chalgrove, north east of the B480, approximately 11 miles to the east of central Oxford and approximately 5 miles south of junction 7 of the M40 motorway.
- 3.60 The airfield opened in 1943 and was closed in July 1946 when it was leased to the Martin-Baker company for development and testing of aircraft ejection seats. Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Limited ("Martin-Baker") undertake the