

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
MM396 – Site SI1 – Land south of Waterdell Lane, St Ippolyts

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 33 and 34 of the Council's November 2019 'Paper E' on additional land ([ED175](#)). This additional land extends the proposed housing allocation to the highway boundary of the B656 London Road, from where vehicular access is proposed. The strip of additional land is between 9m and 15m in width.

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 additional land is within the 'red line' optioned by Countryside Properties as shown in [Appendix A to their original Matter 11 hearing statement](#).

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

3. Yes. The original hearing session in March 2018 was held on the basis that vehicular access would be taken from the B656 London Road. The small strip of additional land proposed by MM396 corrects a minor mapping error. This was identified by the Inspector at the original Matter 11 hearing session on 28 February 2018 and ensures that the proposed allocation extends to the highway boundary. There is an existing pedestrian footpath on the opposite side of the B656 London Road to the proposed access point.

4. The boundary of this site, as submitted, already allowed for pedestrian access to / from Waterdell Lane. This provides the opportunity, in particular, to connect to the village's existing network of pedestrian footpaths.

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

5. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 4 to 7 of the Council's [Matter 11 St Ippolyts Statement](#). The additional land does not alter the dwelling estimate or any of the infrastructure requirements arising from the site. The additional land does not result in the identification of any additional constraints beyond those already considered. The amendment facilitates delivery by ensuring all of the land required to provide highway access is identified.

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

6. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 8 to 11 and Table A of the Council's Matter 11 (St Ippolyts) statement. As above, the additional land does not result in the identification of any additional constraints beyond those already considered but facilitates delivery of this site.

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

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

7. Yes, for the reasons set out in Paragraphs 12 to 16 of the Council's Matter 11 (St Ippolyts) statement. The additional land ensures the Policies Map will show all of the land to be developed to the highway boundary and which is needed to deliver the site.

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 ([ED161](#)) identifies that this site makes a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes. It would therefore result in limited 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. Paragraph 22 of the Council's Matter 11 (St Ippolyts) statement identifies that the site benefits from defensible boundaries. Proposed Main Modification MM352 includes a further requirement for additional planting to provide a continuous hedgerow boundary around the south-west of the site. Given the use of defensible boundaries and the proposed structural planting it is considered that the impact on the purposes of the Green Belt have been reduced to their lowest practicable extent.

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 additional land would extend the proposed 'inset' boundary around St Ippolyts by between 9m and 15m. The Green Belt Review update shows that the strategic land parcels and sub-parcels adjoining site SI1 already serve Green Belt purposes (ED161, pp.69-72, 162-3 & 178-9). They will continue to do so.

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?*

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

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?*

11. The reasons given at Paragraphs 26 to 33 of the Council's original Matter 11 (St Ippolyts) statement are equally applicable to this small area of additional land.