

**Summary Proof of Evidence for Public Inquiry in
Respect of Landscape & Visual Matters**

RELATED TO

**Outline Planning Application for up to 116no Residential Dwellings with all Matters
Reserved aside from Access on the World of Pets Site, Thorley Lane, Timperley, WA15 7PJ**

Local Authority Ref: 105905/OUT/21

Barnes Walker Ref: M3095-SummaryPoE-22.11-V1

**On behalf of
Harlex (RLP Timperley) LLP**

by

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Summary Proof of Evidence is submitted on behalf of Harlex (RLP Timperley) LLP (the Applicant) in support of a planning appeal following the refusal of an application for a residential development at World of Pets, Thorley Lane, Timperley, WA15 7PJ (LPA ref: 105905/OUT/21), which was refused by Trafford Council on the 10th March 2022.
- 1.2 Within this Summary and Proof I address landscape and visual matters related specifically to a single reason for refusal (RfR) 1, which is associated with alleged harm to the Green Belt.
- 1.3 I consider matters associated with the Openness of the Green Belt and the coalescence of adjacent settlement areas. Specific planning matters within the RfR are addressed within a separate Proof of Evidence by Jonathan Harper of Rapleys LLP.

Qualifications and Experience

- 1.4 I am Nicholas Folland. I am a Director of Barnes Walker Limited, a firm of landscape and urban designers with offices in Manchester. I hold a BA(hons) degree in Landscape Design (1990) and a post graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Manchester Polytechnic (1992) and I qualified as a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute in 1998. Having worked for two local authorities (Manchester City Council and Knowsley Borough Council) over a period of approximately three years early on in my career, I gained a further 10 years of experience at 3 large multi-disciplinary consultancies. For the last 17 years I have worked at Barnes Walker Ltd and became a director in 2009.
- 1.5 Over the past 12 years I have gained considerable experience in the design and landscape and visual assessment of residential development in the North West and in a number of cases, have prepared and presented evidence as an expert witness at Public Inquiries and hearings.
- 1.6 I am instructed by Harlex (RLP Timperley) LLP and having visited the application site on a number of occasions, I am familiar with the site and the surrounding landscape.
- 1.7 The evidence I have prepared is true and has been prepared and given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinion.

Content of my Main Proof of Evidence

- 1.8 Initially I provide a landscape and visual baseline of the application site and the surrounding landscape/townscape, which establishes the visual prominence of the site with reference to seven viewpoints from publicly accessible locations.

- 1.9 Thereafter, I provide a description of the development proposals, then consider the potential visual effects associated with the proposed development, in order to inform the overall consideration of the potential effects upon the openness of the Green Belt. In doing so, I set out why I believe that Trafford Borough Council's concerns associated with harm to the visual aspect of openness of the Green Belt (as raised within the single RfR), are unfounded.
- 1.10 In addition, I set out why I believe that the Appeal Proposals will not generate any physical coalescence of the settlement areas of Timperley to the north and Hale to the south, before confirming my stance in regard of landscape/townscape character and defining what I believe Trafford Council's position is, with regards to this matter.

2. Summary and Conclusion

Summary

Openness of the Green Belt

- 2.1 Having undertaken a visual appraisal, I believe the anticipated visual effects that may be generated by the development proposals are somewhat limited, with lower levels of adverse visual effect occurring in the short term, and reducing in the longer term as the proposed softworks become established.
- 2.2 I consider that these anticipated levels of visual effect would translate into some perceived loss of openness of the Green Belt (in visual terms), that will likely diminish in the longer term due to the establishment of proposed landscape works.
- 2.3 I believe these anticipated visual effects will be very much localised as they will only be experienced by people using and living within the road corridors in close proximity to the Appeal Site and as such, current levels of openness associated with the wider Green Belt in this location will be maintained.

Perceived and Physical Coalescence

- 2.4 The swathe of land between Timperley and Hale (which includes the Appeal Site) incorporates intermittent development and urbanising features which diminish the sense of openness, the perceived gap, the physical gap and the rural character therein.
- 2.5 The effects of these features upon the Green Belt within this location are acknowledged by the Green Belt Assessment 2016, in that there are '*urbanising features*', '*a compromised sense of openness*' and it '*lacks a strong rural character.*'
- 2.6 Similar issues are also identified latterly within the GM Green Belt Study Stage 2 2020, which locates the Appeal Site within Area GM46 and Sub Area GM46-1. These issues include '*The Sub Area contains scattered urbanising uses...*', '*The settlement edge of Timperley and surrounding washed over development create a degree of urbanising containment within the sub-area.*' and '*...residential development has breached these boundaries in both cases and the scale of development within the inset settlement limits any sense of separation.*'
- 2.7 The Appeal Site is also located in a peripheral location within the Green Belt, within a corner of Green Belt parcel TF44 (2016 GB Assessment) and GM46 (2020 GB Study Stage 2) that adjoins the urban area on two of its boundaries (with Wood Lane and Green Lane).
- 2.8 I therefore consider that the proposed development of the Appeal Site will not materially affect the perceived sense of openness associated with the wider Green Belt, the perception of an

undeveloped gap and will not cause any levels of physical coalescence between Timperley and Hale.

Conclusion

- 2.9 I believe that due to the peripheral location of the Appeal Site within a swathe of Green Belt land, where its function in terms of the five purposes of the Green Belt and its openness, is heavily compromised by existing built form and hardstanding, its proposed development will only result in a very much localised, diminished sense of openness (in visual terms) that will only be associated with the Appeal Site and its immediate environs.
- 2.10 As a result, I believe that the development proposals will not materially affect the perceived sense of openness (in visual terms) associated with the wider Green Belt or the perception of an undeveloped gap, and will not cause any levels of physical coalescence between Timperley and Hale.
- 2.11 I therefore believe that Trafford Council's concerns regarding potential harm to the integrity of the Green Belt as a result of the proposed development of the site are in visual terms, unfounded.
- 2.12 I therefore respectfully request that the Inspector considers my findings in deciding the outcome of this Inquiry.