



**TRAFFORD**  
COUNCIL

**Further Changes to Policy R4  
To Reflect Proposed Amendment Following  
consultation in July 2011 and NPPF  
September 2011**

**14<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

## **Background**

In July 2011 the Council carried out consultation on changes to R4 as a result of the Government's "Plan for Growth" (CD12.95).

In summary the main change is that the Council is proposing that the 36ha of land at Davenport Green, which is currently outside of the Green Belt should remain as such, and should be protected as Countryside with criteria to control the nature and extent of development which may be permitted and the circumstances in which such development could come forward. This represents a change from the Submitted version of the Core Strategy which proposed that this piece of land should be put into the Green Belt.

In September 2011 the Governments published NPPF for consultation (CD100). In order to reflect the change in emphasis in national policy, expressed in the NPPF, the Council submitted, to the Examination, further proposed changes as a result of NPPF Inspectors Note 7 (CD 12.97.14).

As a result of these, the Council considers that it is necessary to propose some consequential changes to Policy R4 together with the amendments in the July consultation as set out below.

The following proposed changes to Policy R4 will be added to the Schedule of Proposed Changes (CD 12.4) at S300.56 and will supersede those submitted to the Examination within CD 6.2.1 Core Strategy Publication and CD 6.1.2 Core Strategy Proposed Minor Changes Document.

## **R4 - GREEN BELT, COUNTRYSIDE AND OTHER PROTECTED OPEN LAND**

24.1 Approximately two fifths of Trafford is countryside, which is under continued pressure from a wide variety of development uses. Green Belt land, Countryside and Protected Open Land serve the important purposes of preventing urban sprawl, controlling development pressures to preserve the open character of the countryside and to assist in urban regeneration.

### **POLICY R4: GREEN BELT, COUNTRYSIDE AND OTHER PROTECTED OPEN LAND**

#### **Green Belt**

R4.1 The Council will continue to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

R4.2 New development, including buildings or uses for a temporary period will only be permitted within these areas where it is for one of the appropriate purposes specified in [PPG2 national guidance](#), where the proposal does not prejudice the primary purposes of the Green Belt set out in [PPG2 national guidance](#) by reason of its scale, siting, materials or design or where very special circumstances can be [demonstrated](#) in support of the proposal.

~~R4.3 It is proposed that the land previously identified for employment development at Davenport Green will be returned to the Green Belt, see detailed map at Appendix 2.~~

#### **Countryside Land outside the Green Belt at Davenport Green**

R4.3 The Council will protect the land at Davenport Green as detailed in Appendix 2 from development unless it can be demonstrated that it is required for an exceptionally high quality, deliverable and sustainable B1 business/office employment related development.

R4.4 Development on this land will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- It is in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan for Trafford;
- There is a need for such development to support the future expansion of Airport City or the MediPark proposals at the University Hospital South Manchester or that a need has been generated by a significant change to the economic context of the region as a result of either the growth of Airport City or the MediPark;
- The opportunity will deliver substantial new investment and employment to the sub-region;
- It is in accordance with national guidance ~~all relevant policies within PPS4 or its successor;~~
- There is a comprehensive scheme for the development of the whole site;
- It would contribute significantly to the Plan's objectives, including the sustainable economic growth of the City Region;
- It will contribute significantly to the achievement of the regeneration priorities set out in Policy L3;
- The site will be accessible by a range of alternative modes other than the private car; and
- The 99ha of land surrounding the development site will be protected, enhanced and managed for ecological interest, recreational access and farming as a rural park.

#### **Agricultural Land**

R4.4 The Council will protect existing agricultural land as an important resource for Trafford's local economy. In particular, the Council will seek to protect the Borough's:

- (a) Richest soils located south of Carrington Moss (Settled Sandlands) for agricultural purposes, and
- (b) Pastural landscape located within the Timperley Wedge for agriculture and recreational purposes.

R4.5 In order to support Trafford’s agricultural community, the Council will consider appropriate farm diversification proposals where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not:

- (a) Replace the existing agricultural use;
- (b) Have a detrimental impact on the existing ecology and landscape of the area; and,
- (c) Be contrary to Government Guidance or other policies within this Plan.

**Other Protected Open Land**

R4.6 The Council will protect the following areas of open land (that are not included within the Green Belt) from development:

- (a) Land in Warburton (immediately to the south of Partington), and,
- (b) Land south of Shell, Carrington.

R4.7 Development on this land will only be permitted where it is:

- (a) Required in connection with agriculture or forestry; or
- (b) Proposed for agricultural diversification in accordance with national guidance and other Policies in the Development Plan for Trafford; and,
- (c) Would not prejudice the future use of the land.

**Implementation**

**Implementation Mechanisms**

Agricultural development and development in the Green Belt will be managed and controlled through the planning application decision making process.

The Green Belt, other protected open land and agricultural land will be maintained through the appropriate allocation of land in the Land Allocations DPD.

**Delivery Agent**

This will be through the public sector.

**Timescales**

This will be ongoing throughout the Plan period.

**Funding**

N/A

**Justification**

24.2 Within the Green Belt, development will be restricted to those uses that are deemed appropriate in the context of [PPG2 national guidance](#) and which maintain openness. For all other types of development it will be necessary for the applicant to

demonstrate very special circumstances to warrant the granting of any planning permission for development.

- 24.3 The main purpose of the Green Belt in Trafford is to keep land open and free from development to maintain the character and identity of individual settlements and to enhance the environmental and recreational value of the countryside.
- 24.4 This Policy will assist the Council in its aim to create sustainable communities by concentrating new development in urban areas particularly the regional centre and inner area and town centres.
- 24.5 National [planning guidance covering](#) Green Belt ~~planning policy guidance PPG2~~ describes the purpose of including land within the Green Belt, the objectives for the use of land in the Green Belt, defines appropriate and inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and advises on defining Green Belt boundaries for the long term and on safeguarding land to meet future development needs.
- 24.6 This Core Strategy Policy sets out strict control of development in the open countryside areas. For the avoidance of any doubt no new building other than that ~~within the first three categories of appropriate development listed in paragraph 3.4 of PPG2~~ [covered by national guidance](#) will be allowed in the “washed over” village settlements of Dunham Town, Dunham Woodhouses and Warburton.
- 24.7 In relation to the “washed over” village settlements of Warburton, Dunham Town and Dunham Woodhouses, parts of all three of which are designated as Conservation Areas, the Council considers that the scope for further in-filling development is effectively exhausted and that further development, other than in the very limited circumstances ~~prescribed in paragraphs 2.11 and 3.4 of PPG2~~, would adversely affect the character of these settlements.
- 24.8 Supplementary Planning Documents will set out specific criteria in relation to new residential development, conversion of buildings and house extensions in the Green Belt. ~~Planning applications on land within the Green Belt will more relevantly to be determined in accordance with PPG2, PPS4, and SPDs.~~

### [Countryside Land outside the Green Belt at Davenport Green](#)

#### ~~Additions to the Green Belt~~

- ~~24.9 Guidance such as PPG2 states that Green Belt boundaries in development plans should be altered only exceptionally. The Regional Planning Body (4NW) has the ability to determine whether a proposed alteration to Green Belt is a local detailed boundary change and can therefore be determined through the LDF process. During the preparation of the Core Strategy 4NW has confirmed that the proposed alteration to the Green Belt at Davenport Green can be considered by way of the Trafford Core Strategy.~~
- 24.9 The land at Davenport Green was removed from the Green Belt by way of the 1996 Trafford Unitary Development Plan (UDP). It was removed to enable a scheme of sub regional significance to deliver a strategic high amenity employment site of 36.4 Ha.
- 24.10 The UDP Inspector was clear that the site fulfilled the first 3 purposes of the Green Belt as set out in PPG2 and that the proposed development of the site would cause significant harm to those purposes. The exceptional circumstances required to be demonstrated under para 2.7 (of PPG2) in order to justify the removal of land from the Green Belt existed only in respect of this very specific development proposal that the

inspector considered met a particular economic need that was not able to be met on alternative sites. Although outline planning approval was granted for half of the site in accordance with the UDP, detailed proposals were never submitted and the outline consent has now lapsed. Since that time it is now clear that there is no realistic prospect of this development going ahead.

~~24.12 Government advice is that Local Development Documents must provide up to date evidence to justify their policies and not merely roll proposals forward from one plan to next without an opportunity to test new evidence. Through responses to earlier Trafford Core Strategy consultation documents the owners of the site have relied on evidence dating back to the 1996 UDP to justify the land's continued exclusion from the Green Belt.~~

~~24.13 No new evidence has been provided by the proponents of the scheme to support its retention for the UDP purposes. However, the site was subject to Sustainability Appraisal, as part of preparation of the June 2009 Preferred Option consultation document. The results of this suggested that development at this location would not be as sustainable as other locations for employment activity such as Trafford Park and the main town centres.~~

~~24.14 Although outline planning approval was granted for half of the site, detailed proposals were never submitted and the outline consent has now lapsed. There does not appear to be any realistic prospect of this development going ahead.~~

~~24.15 Additionally, following NWDA's review of its strategic regional sites, Davenport Green has been removed from the list of designated sites. This reflects a refocusing of NWDA priorities taking account of the changing policy and market context, and consideration of the criteria for ERDF funding under the North West Operational Programme.~~

~~24.16 In the light of the lack of any continuing justification for the retention of the scheme, it is proposed that development proposals for this site should not be included in the strategy and the site should be returned to the Green Belt.~~

~~24.17 The exceptional circumstances which would justify the return of this site to the Green Belt are the important functions which it has continued to serve, and which were recognised by the UDP Inspector. The site, located within the Timperley wedge, is strategically placed to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. Its return to Green Belt status would prevent Newall Green and Well Green/Hale/Hale Barns from merging into one another. The Green Belt protection afforded to this site in the past (and which has effectively continued due to the UDP Inspector's decision to remove the site from the Green Belt, for limited specified purposes) has continued to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and protected its rural character. This would accord with 3 key purposes of including land in Green Belts as set down PPG2. It would also, together with policy W1 support urban regeneration by directing development to other more sustainable and appropriate areas and encourage the recycling of derelict and other urban land.~~

24.11 PPG2 National guidance states that Green Belt boundaries in development plans should be altered only exceptionally and should not normally be needed to be altered at the end of the plan period. Annex B of PPG2 National guidance details that Safeguarded land can be identified in order to meet long term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period. "Safeguarded land comprises areas and sites which may be required to serve development needs in the longer term, i.e. well beyond the plan period. It should be genuinely capable of development when needed" and that

~~“Safeguarded land should be located where future development would be an efficient use of land, well integrated with existing development, and well related to public transport and other existing and planned infrastructure, so promoting sustainable development.”~~

~~24.12 Paragraph 26 of PPS7 recognises that there are areas of countryside around urban areas that are outside of Green Belt designation, that are valued highly locally, are important to those who live [in urban areas] provide the nearest and accessible countryside for urban residents.~~

~~24.13 By protecting the land at Davenport Green as Countryside, outside the Green Belt, the Council is reflecting the existing designation, whilst retaining protection against development unless strict criteria are met.~~

~~24.14 This protection reflects the current uncertainty/fluidity in relation to the future expansion of Airport City and/or the MediPark proposals at the University Hospital South Manchester. In this way the Council is maintaining its approach to delivering a balance of growth and regeneration which is entirely consistent with the thrust of the Government’s “Plan for Growth” document and the duty incumbent upon local planning authorities to work with developers. The Policy requirements set out at R4.4 ensure the Policy’s compliance not only with “Plan for Growth” but also with PPS4 national guidance and will therefore ensure that such a proposal will not undermine sub regional priorities.~~

~~24.15 Given the quality of the environment in this location, any development meeting the strict criteria in economic terms will also be required to deliver concurrently the existing proposal for a 99 ha rural park to protect, enhance and manage the land surrounding the development site for ecological interest, recreational access and farming.~~

## **Agricultural Land**

~~24.16 PPS7~~ National guidance sets out the general guiding principles for sustainable development within rural areas and recognises that the presence of a successful agricultural economy can be essential to the sustainability of these communities. In order to ensure the long term economic viability of agriculture in Trafford, the Council also recognises the role that appropriate agricultural diversification can play within this Policy.

~~24.17~~ However, the sub division of agricultural land into smaller plots can cause problems. It can create an eyesore which detracts from the openness of the countryside, and when plots are sold and no longer in agricultural use this can lead to neglect, with owners being hard to trace. Furthermore, the subdivision of fields gives the impression that development of land is bound to occur, regardless of any Green Belt status. Therefore where agriculture in Trafford takes place within the Green Belt any appropriate agricultural diversification will be determined in line with ~~PPG2~~ national guidance

~~24.18~~ The Trafford Landscape Strategy identifies land to the south of Carrington Moss, known as Settled Sandlands, as the area with the richest soils to support arable farming, and Timperley Wedge in the East with less rich soils to support a mixture of pasture and horticulture together with recreational uses.

~~24.19~~ Applications for agricultural dwellings or buildings and for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will be determined in accordance with ~~national guidance such as PPG2, PPS7~~ and SPDs, where relevant.

## **Other Protected Open Land**

[24.20](#) The areas of protected open land [detailed in R4.6](#) that are excluded from the Green Belt and not allocated for development in the Core Strategy or Land Allocations DPD may be required to meet development needs beyond the Plan period. Therefore, these areas will be protected from all but limited essential development to enable them to make ~~the maximum~~ a contribution to meeting future, [as yet](#), unquantified needs. This will reduce the need for the Council to consider alterations to the Green Belt boundary to accommodate the future allocation of land for development in the Borough.

[24.21](#) The land in Warburton, south of Partington and the land south of Shell, Carrington are the only significant areas of land (not within the Green Belt) which are not identified for development within the Plan Period. Therefore until such time that a strategic review of the Green Belt takes place they are being protected for potential residential use and potential economic development respectively.

<b>Which Objective(s) delivered by this Strategic Location/Policy</b>	<b>Reference Number(s)</b>
Key Objective(s) of the SCS	PE1
Strategic Objective(s)	SO3 & SO5
Place Objective(s)	MVO1 ALO4, ALO17 RCO1, RCO2, RCO4