

# ST HELENS BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2020—2035 EXAMINATION

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**Agenda**  
**Session 5 – 09.30 Wednesday 9 June 2021**  
**Matter 4**  
**Allocations, Safeguarded Land and Green Belt Boundaries**  
**Rainford, Billinge, Garswood and Haydock**

This matter considers the proposed allocations and safeguarded land in Rainford (9EA, 8HA), Garswood (1HA, 1HS) and Haydock (2EA, 3EA, 4EA, 5EA, 6EA, 2HA, 2ES).

**Policies to be covered by Matter 4: LPA04, LPA04.1, LPA05, LPA05.1, LPA06**

### **Main Evidence Base**

SD022 – Employment Land Need and Supply Background Paper  
SD025 - Housing Need and Supply Background Paper  
SD026 - Developing the Strategy Background Paper  
SD020 – Green Belt Review 2018  
GRE001 - St Helens Local Plan Draft Green Belt Review 2016  
SD013 – Infrastructure Delivery Plan  
SD031 – Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) with Highways England May 2021  
SHBC001 & SHBC005 – Council response to Inspector’s preliminary questions  
SHBC010 - St Helens Local Plan Draft Schedule of Modifications  
SHBC012 – Site Selection Paper

### **Examination library link**

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-examination-library/>

### **Participants**

Please refer to the latest Hearings Programme (INSP009C)

### **Statements**

St Helens Borough Council  
Redrow Homes Ltd  
Peel L&P  
Church Commissioners for England  
Bericote Properties Ltd  
Persimmon Homes

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Redrow Homes (NW) & Wallace Land Investments  
Seddon Homes  
English Land Ltd  
Eccleston Homes  
Canmoor Developments Ltd  
CPRE  
Miller Homes  
Wainhomes (NW) Ltd  
Barratt Homes  
Murphy Group  
Paul Hooton

## **Introduction to the hearing session**

**Main Modifications (MMs) relevant to the session** – MM005, MM018, MM038, MM056-MM059 and Annexes 1 and 2 to SHBC010.

## **Issue 1: Land to west of Sandwash Close, Rainford (9EA) and land south of Higher Lane, Rainford (8HA)**

Site 9EA has an extant planning permission for industrial development. Site 8HA is allocated for housing with an indicative site capacity of around 250 dwellings.

- 1. Do the Green Belt assessments support the allocation of Site 8HA and demonstrate exceptional circumstances for the removal of the land from the Green Belt?*
- 2. If exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated have these been clearly articulated in the Plan?*

*The Council acknowledge that the exceptional circumstances could be more clearly articulated in the LP.*

- 3. Is the configuration and scale of allocation 8HA justified taking into account development needs and the Green Belt assessments?*
- 4. Would the adverse impacts of developing Site 8HA (Green Belt impacts, highway safety, proximity to industrial development) outweigh the benefits?*
- 5. Is Site 9EA justified taking into account vacant land/units nearby on Rainford Industrial Estate?*

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6. *Can a safe and suitable access be achieved to Sites 9EA and 8HA?*

*6a. Does the extent of Site 9EA need to be modified to incorporate access via Sandwash Close?*

7. *Are the requirements for Sites 9EA and 8HA within Appendix 5 (Site Profile) positively prepared and effective?*

*SHBC010 (MM005 and Annex 1) propose more specific requirements for sustainable modes of travel, access, landscaping, and drainage.*

8. *Are the indicative site areas, appropriate uses, net developable areas, minimum densities, and indicative site capacities within Tables 4.1 and 4.5 justified and effective?*

*8a. Does the area of Site 9EA need to be modified having regard to the access (See 6a above)?*

9. *Will infrastructure to support the allocations be delivered at the right time and in the right place?*

10. *Are there any barriers to Site 8HA coming forward as anticipated by the housing trajectory?*

## **Issue 2: Land to south of Billinge Road, Garswood (1HA) and land to south of Leyland Green, Garswood (1HS)**

Site 1HA is allocated for housing with an indicative site capacity of around 215 dwellings. The Plan proposes safeguarding Site 1HS.

11. *Do the Green Belt assessments support the allocation of Site 1HA and the safeguarding of Site 1HS and demonstrate exceptional circumstances for the removal of the land from the Green Belt?*

*11a. Should Site 1HS be allocated rather than safeguarded so that it can contribute to meeting needs in the Plan period?*

*11b. If it was found necessary for soundness to allocate Site 1HS to meet housing needs what additional evidence would be required and what would be the implications for the timescale of the examination?*

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12. *If exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated have these been clearly articulated in the Plan?*

*The Council acknowledge that the exceptional circumstances could be more clearly articulated in the LP.*

13. *Is the configuration and scale of allocation 1HA justified taking into account development needs and the Green Belt assessments?*

14. *Would the adverse impacts of developing Site 1HA (Green Belt impacts, highway safety) outweigh the benefits?*

15. *Are the requirements for Sites 1HA and 1HS within Appendices 5 and 7 (Site Profiles) positively prepared and effective?*

*SHBC010 (MM005 and Annexes 1 and 2) propose more specific requirements for sustainable modes of travel.*

*15a. Is the requirement for a financial contribution to Garswood Station justified?*

16. *Are the indicative site areas, net developable areas, minimum densities, and indicative site capacities within Tables 4.5 and 4.8 justified and effective?*

17. *Will infrastructure to support the allocations be delivered at the right time and in the right place?*

18. *Are there any barriers to Site 1HA coming forward as anticipated by the housing trajectory?*

### **Issue 3: Florida Farm North (2EA), land north of Penny Lane (3EA), land south of Penny Lane (4EA), land to west of Haydock Industrial Estate (5EA), land west of Millfield Lane, Haydock (6EA), land at Florida Farm, Haydock (2HA), and land north-east of Junction 23 (M6), Haydock (2ES)**

Site 3EA has been completed and is occupied and therefore should be treated as such rather than as an allocation (MM005, MM056). Table 4.1 and Policy LPA04.1 would also require revision (MMs).

The status of Site 2EA is disputed in that, although the majority of the site is developed, it is suggested that over 2 ha remains available.

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Sites 4EA, 5EA and 6EA are allocated for employment with Site 6EA comprising a strategic site. The Council has indicated that MMs could be put forward relating to access to Sites 5EA and 6EA in response to preliminary questions (MM057-MM058). An MM (MM059) is also suggested to mitigate the development of Site 6EA in terms of ribbon development and separation of settlements.

Land at Florida Farm (2HA) is identified as a strategic site anticipated to deliver around 520 homes most of which would be within the Plan period.

Site 2ES is safeguarded to meet St Helens long term needs. An outline planning application was considered at a public inquiry in January 2021.

*19. Does the Plan reflect the current status of Florida Farm North (2EA) and land north of Penny Lane (3EA)?*

*19a. On the assumption that Site 2EA is not complete how should it be treated within the LP?*

*19b. What further MMs would be required in addition to MM005 and MM056 to reflect the current status of Sites 2EA and 3EA?*

*20. Do the Green Belt assessments support the allocation of Sites 4EA, 5EA and 6EA and Site 2HA and the safeguarding of Site 2ES and demonstrate exceptional circumstances for the removal of the land from the Green Belt?*

*21. If exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated have these been clearly articulated in the Plan?*

*The Council acknowledge that the exceptional circumstances could be more clearly articulated in the LP.*

*22. Should Site 2ES be allocated rather than safeguarded so that it can contribute to meeting needs in the Plan period?*

*22a. Does the Council's stance at the recent public inquiry in any way alter the Council's position in relation to Site 2ES?*

*22b. If it was found necessary for soundness to allocate Site 2ES to meet employment needs what additional evidence would be required and what would be the implications for the timescale of the examination?*

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23. *Is the configuration and scale of the allocations and safeguarded land justified taking into account development needs and the Green Belt assessments?*
24. *Would the adverse impacts of developing Sites 4EA, 5EA and 6EA and Site 2HA (Green Belt impacts, landscape impacts, highway safety, flood risk, agricultural land, air quality) outweigh the benefits?*
25. *Are the requirements for Sites 4EA, 5EA, 6EA, 2HA and 2ES within Policies LPA04.1 and LPA05.1 and Appendices 5 and 7 (Site Profiles) positively prepared and effective?*

*SHBC010 (MM005 and Annexes 1 and 2) proposes more specific requirements for sustainable modes of travel, access, flood risk management, landscape buffers. In its Statement the Council indicates that 'it may also be prudent to modify the requirements in the site profile further .....to pay particular attention to the landscape and visual impact sensitives of the site.'*

- 25a. *In relation to Site 2ES, what further MMs would be Council suggest to the Site Profile in respect of landscape and visual impact sensitives?*
26. *How should the requirements for Sites 5EA and 6EA be modified to provide clarity on access arrangements?*

*MM057 and MM058 and Annex 1 of SHBC010 propose modifications to the Site Profiles relating to access arrangements. The site promoter suggests further changes.*

27. *Are the indicative site areas, appropriate uses, net developable areas, minimum densities, and indicative site capacities within Tables 4.1, 4.5 and 4.8 justified and effective?*
28. *Will infrastructure to support the allocations, including improvements to Junction 23 (M6), be delivered at the right time and in the right place?*

*The Council notes the SOCG with Highways England (SD031).*

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29. *Are there any barriers to Site 2HA coming forward as anticipated by the housing trajectory, for example any limitations imposed by Junction 23 (M6)?*

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## **Issue 4: Other Green Belt boundaries**

*30. Are the Green Belt boundaries elsewhere in Rainford, Garswood, Billinge and Haydock justified?*

*30a. Is there justification for additional Green Belt release around Junction 23 of the M6 to facilitate essential improvements to the strategic highway network?*

*30b. Is the proposed Green Belt boundary around Barrows Farm, Billinge justified (AC06)?*

## **Actions arising from the hearing session**