

MIQ Reference: 3.4 Policy SC7 Green Belt, A(i), C

As a Councillor in Leeds I am particularly concerned about the impact housing proposals in Bradford's Core Strategy will have on the communities that I represent and those that are represented by my colleagues in other wards that neighbour Bradford.

What are exceptional circumstances? In my view exceptional circumstances would be where there is no, or very little alternative to developing housing on the Greenbelt. The issues that are raised by greenbelt encroachment in communities that are on the border of Bradford and Leeds is that this development totally blurs the border between these two major cities. With this the unique identities of local towns and villages could eventually become a thing of the past leaving one large urban sprawl. This is clearly unacceptable and it is unacceptable to the communities that live in these 'border' areas.

The proposed developments in the Tong Valley, at Apperley Bridge, Esholt and Menston are particularly worrying as in some cases these developments are on the boundary and do begin to blur the boundaries between settlements such as Greengates and Calverley and Apperley Bridge and Nether Yeadon and Rawdon similarly with Esholt and Baildon moving closer to the Leeds Metropolitan area. My Group and I are not opposed to housing developments but they have to be in the right areas with a clear bias towards Brownfield land, Greenbelt should only be used as an absolute last resort, but preferably not at all.

While blurring of the boundary between the two cities is a major concern there is a further byproduct of building on this land. Many of these areas such as the proposals for the Tong/Westgate Hill area and those on the Leeds side of the boundary in Horsforth will actually impact on leisure opportunities enjoyed by communities in both Leeds and Bradford. These green areas offer excellent leisure opportunities and act as 'green lungs' that local residents can enjoy and have enjoyed for generations. It is vital that these areas are protected and are allowed to be used by future generations. Delivering housing in all of these locations will clearly jeopardise that.

If the proposed site allocations in Leeds go ahead there will be many hundreds of new homes going into areas that one might argue do not have the infrastructure in terms of schools, roads and health facilities to cope. If you then add in the housing proposed in Bradford, in my view, it is highly questionable if these proposals are fully sustainable.

I find it hard to accept that strong justification has been provided for development on these sites and worry about the long term impact these developments will have on existing communities in these areas on both sides of the Leeds/Bradford boundary.

MIQ Reference: 4.3 Policy HO3 – Distribution of Housing Development, C

We are already on record as saying that there are a number of already congested roads within both Leeds and Bradford many of these key roads link the two cities and are vital for commuters travelling between the two cities on a daily basis.

Given that some roads are already at breaking point and the likely inadequacy of CIL to meet all infrastructure requirements, how will these roads be able to cope with this new housing? Many families now operate two cars and clearly thousands of new homes will generate many more cars on our roads. It is accepted that the strategy has plans to encourage a 'modal shift' towards use of public transport but will this be sufficient to prevent additional problems on our local road networks? What proposals are there to mitigate an increase in traffic on our roads?