

A green belt allocation land



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1. 0 Introduction

Green Belt policies are one of the main tools we have for protecting the local environment. Green Belt is a policy which is used within land and used to protect areas of mainly undeveloped, rural land around urban areas. Green Belt policies is also a boundary with the purpose of going around areas to stop people from building on there, therefore rural land and wild life can be saved. However today faces unprecedented threats including, airport runways, new housing, and university expansions.

2. 0 Aims

The main aim for this project is to identify how effectiveness of Green Belts around urban areas. Another aim is to distinguish the benefits & drawbacks of Green Belts for protecting the local environment and the crucial element of green belts but today faces unprecedented threats it has just about become a place for organization to argue their own lack of viability or funds provides the very special circumstances and therefore should be required to prove that they are allowed to build in the green Belt areas. This will be done by analysis of case studies & obtainable projects for comparison.

3. 0 Objectives

- Identify the importance of greenbelt
- Highlight the effect & Implications of Green belt
- Investigate the chance of constructing on a Green Belt location area
- Comparisons through various case studies of Green belt projects

4. 0 Key questions

- Will Green Belt be diluted if they are used by authorities as the main method of restraining channeling development rather than as a special policy against sprawl?
- should Green Belt be overlaid with other policies such as agricultural priority areas and landscape priority areas each their own schedule of permitted uses and if so how should this kind of rural zonation be transferred from structure to local plans?
- Which local needs conditions to planning permission will stand up against an appeal?
- It is becoming almost commonplace for organization to argue that their own lack of viability or funds provides the very special circumstances which are required to prove they should be allowed to build in the Green Belt, should we really be allowed?

5. 0 Methodology

The main references that will be consulted are mostly Quantitative revolving around reference books, websites & Journals that revolve on the relevant questions mentioned above regarding Green Belt areas. There will be a certain level of primary data sources that will be compared. This information will be compared & linked to the Reference material for a certain amount of first hand comparison.

The primary data from Interviews will more easily determine combined processes with Green Belt areas. These may not be as easily discernable through the use of secondary reference material. The main Qualitative data

that will be considered are Interviews to obtain Opinions from professionals of how important are Green Belt areas in the construction industry.

6. 0 Literature Review

Green Belts and affordable housing by martin Elson, Caroline Steenberg and Nicola Mendham – 1996

I found this book acceptable it's mainly focuses on interest to those in central government planning and housing department's local planning authority's housing relations and other voluntary bodies.

Town and country planning in the UK by J. B. Cullingworth -1997

As a student I found this book was always good for a quote despite of your dissertation title because of the pure size of coverage. Every likely planning topic is in here, and it's all easy to read and well set out.

The effectiveness of Green Belts by Martin Elson, Stephen and Roderick Macdonald – 1993

This book was very interesting which focused on Green Belt policy and investigates how this may be better. The study assessed seven different issues, ranging from the effectiveness of Green Belts in relation to their existing purposes, agriculture, wildlife and other land use pressures and changes.

Greenfield, Brownfield and housing development David Adams, Craig Watkins, RICS Research Foundation – 2002

As a student I found this book was always good with a very sound understanding of the way in which house builders, planners and all those with an interest in development are accepting policy change since the mid 1990s and draws on a wealth of investigate experience and provides a very useful mix of material.

The Purpose of Green Belt

“ Green Belts introduced originally around London in the late 1940s now cover about 12% of England” [1](Elson, Steenbag, Mendham 1996 page 5). Green Belt is a policy which is used within land and used to protect areas of mainly undeveloped, rural land around urban areas. Part of a three pronged policy which also involved the use of new and expanded towns the guidance stressed checking the future growth of large built up areas and the prevention of coalescence.” Green Belts are broad areas around major towns and cities where is a firm presumption against inappropriate development” [1](Elson, Steenbag, Mendham 1996 page 5). Therefore Green Belts were not envisaged as stopping development but were seen as guiding belts were not envisaged as stopping but were seen as guiding it to particular locations and shaping it into particular forms.

the three reasons given in circular 42/55 for establishing green belts are to check future growth of a large built up areas to prevent neighboring towns from merging into one another and preserve the special character of a town. Green belt is also a boundary with the purpose of going around areas to stop people from building on there, therefore rural land and wild life can be saved. There are many related concepts which have similar nature and can

run through urban areas instead going around them. Many countries seriously restrict development on.

Photograph showing Underground Green Belt development

“ The policy maintaining an adequate supply of land for housing can be difficult to reconcile with policies relating to green belts and the safeguarding of agricultural” [2](Cullingworth, Nadin, 2002 page 179). In the United Kingdom the Green Belt policy are used for controlling rural growth. The Green Belt plan is meant for countries where development is highly resisted and for maintaining an area where outside leisure can be likely to succeed. Therefore Green Belt policy aims to stop urban sprawl by protecting land permanently.

Green belt policies in modern times were pioneered in the UK, United Kingdom within the 1930s from the CPRE. There are at least fourteen green belt areas in the discovery 16, 716km², or 13% of England, and 164km² of Scotland. The beginning of green belts was culmination of 50 years of environmentalist demands with roots in the gardens city association extensive academic interest in combating urban cover and ribbon development.

“ Green belt policy emerged in 1955 after expression of consideration concern at the implication form urban growth of the expanded house building programme” [2](Cullingworth, Nadin, 2002 page 179). Green Belt was planned around London greater and London local planning committee in 1935. The local authorities were permitted by The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 to control Green belt proposal in their development

campaign. Duncan Sandy in the 1955 minister of housing encouraged the nation and the local authorities to consider protecting land around their area and cities, therefore now recognized as Green Belts.” Through the green belts did focus development interest on sites in urban areas local authorities tended to regard the creation of jobs as more important than and land development objectives” [2](Cullingworth, Nadin, 2002 page 180). Many of town planning association in current years have criticized the plan and performance of Green Belts in the United Kingdom. The Green belt policy have been attacked and criticized as for being to firm in the face of original urban and environmental challenges. Therefore areas of Green Belt can be of ordinary environmental value and may not provide the leisure opportunities or not managed well enough. Green Belt has been evolved in many years to include green space and green structure and green space taking into account urban green space and vital aspect of sustainable construction in the 21st century.

Brown filed and green field

Brownfield lands are abandoned and commercial facilities available for re-use, Greenfield land are described as piece of previously undeveloped land. “ The aim of urban regeneration has been supported by major changes in government policy within the UK to promote the reuse of land known as Brownfield” [3](David Adams, Craig Watkins, 2002 page 38). Therefore urban regeneration at times can be referred gradually more undertaken in all developed countries in urban areas. “ very often Brownfield land has a good location being sited in city centers which is appealing to property developers for example of redevelopment of Brownfield land in dockland locations are to

be found in cities such as Toronto, Montréal ect”[3](David Adams, Craig Watkins, 2002 page 38). Therefore redeveloping on previously used land involves risks for example dealing with contamination and other risks.

Photograph showing a Brownfield land

Photograph showing a Greenfield land

The benefits of green belts

Green Belt policies are one of the main tools we have for protecting the local environment. Green Belt is a policy which is used within land and used to protect areas of mainly undeveloped, rural land around urban areas.

However today faces unprecedented threats including, airport runways, new housing, and university expansions.

“ The proposed Greenbelt is about quality of life for people living and working in the Golden Horseshoe”[4]. There are many benefits like parks to enjoy and trails to bike. Protecting the natural environment means we’ll have fresh produced food to eat and a secure food supply era. Another benefit is protected areas also benefit our air quality.” The Ontario Medical Association estimates that over 1, 900 deaths each year in Ontario are due to poor air quality”[4]. Therefore when cutting down a hectare of trees will have the same effect on the environment as emitting 350 tonnes of carbon dioxide, when normally hectare of corn absorbs about 22 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Green Belts are very important to the quality of life for us all and have made a major contribution by stimulating urban regeneration. Green Belt policy has been very successful in many ways. “ Protection of green belt around Chester encouraged the identification of land with the city which might otherwise have been neglected while countryside sites were developed

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instead”[4]. Therefore the potential of this development is benefiting our city and the surrounding countryside Green Belts in London were mostly a response to the city’s rampant unchecked sprawl through the 1920s and 30s sprawl that would of continued and reached the coast. However green belt has moved more efficient use of existing urban land.

“ A recent poll found that for over 80% of adults visiting the countryside is a vital counterbalance to the stresses of their daily life”[4]. Therefore 50% of those sought peace and quite the natural surrounding and fresh air were also regarded as key benefits. Many investigators found that public sees development in the future as the major threats to countryside.

Approximately 50% of those surveyed said that the government should do a lot more to protect the local countryside.

Green Belt allows people from different parts of the city to be able to cycle or walk to high quality open countryside and many other informal leisure activities in the fresh air. It also offers many different opportunities for ensuring that everybody has easy car free access to the countryside. “ In addition to its well established role of promoting social inclusion by fostering urban regeneration green belt policy there has been potential to meet other social needs”[4]. It is important to recognize the nation’s health access to the countryside for quite outdoor leisure is important. Therefore use of open spaces and that all level of governments can increase opportunities for people to access recreation in countryside.

“ The countryside agency and groundwork have recently acknowledged the potential for their countryside in and around vision to reinforce the open and

largely undeveloped character of green land”[4]. Therefore any future reviews of Green Belt policy should consider how they can improve and do more to deliver this vision. This shows the importance and the potential of Green Belt as well as it is vital that any such review shouldn't in anyway undermine the principles on which green belts are founded.

“ Public affection for the local countryside can be harnessed to nurture the wildlife and natural potential of neglected land around our towns and cities increasing the biodiversity and environmental value of these sites”[4].

Therefore this can be achieved without caring in to demand for damaging built development that may undermine the primary purposes of green belt policy.

The crucial element of green belts

One of the main crucial fundamentals of Green Belts is the durability of their boundaries. If the boundaries are constantly shifted out within the countryside the reason a designated Green Belt would loss developers and land speculators would then only wait for more

Greenfield sites to open for development. “ between 1997 and 2003 there was a net increase in green belt of 19, 300 hectares 74. 5 square miles due mainly to the north Durham green belt set out in the country structure plan approved in 1999 while such increases are welcome any increase in green belt and land needs to be in the right place and not come at the expense of other green belt lost to development”[4].

However there shouldn't be simple change of threatened land in areas of server development demands for new green belt and where the

development pressures are less on Green belt areas. Therefore making an approach serves simply to damage the effectiveness of green belt policy.

The pressure to renew Greenbelt policy or it makes it more flexible which has helped produce a gradual increase of companies' and offering to sale Greenbelt land at greatly inflated prices. Therefore many companies have increased and for huge growth of market housing while the valid need is affordable housing. " And other threats to the countryside trading on the hope that green belt will be released for development in the foreseeable future these companies by farmland at agricultural prices about £2, 500 an acre sub divide it into small plots and markets its as investment reselling it for as much as £60, 000 an acre"[4].

This is causing a serious damage to the quality of the countryside many plots for re sale are mainly market out on site. The present planning law doesn't recommend planning application for permission. These new land owners regularly live outside affected area and normally would be enough to discourage buyers at these inflated prices. The Plots which are market on the internet usually attract overseas buyers.

Many new land owners have neither simple access to the site and not any interest in the future maintenance so as well to being lost to agricultural use and scarred by subdivision this land is extremely in danger to neglect. " Worse still aggrieved purchasers finding that there is no immediate prospect of developing their land have formed pressure groups to push for relaxation of green belt protection"[4]. Many people put caravans on the sites the

planning system is completely slow to remove even open breaches of planning control.

7.0 Definition of Problem

A serious effort needs to be considered to clear out on abuses of planning control in the countryside plus green belt land. “ There is no excuse for allowing fly-tipping which degrades land and encourages future abuses”[4]. Therefore the council has a lot of power that they can use but they don’t have an obligation to take action provided specifically for the purpose. Also the increasing number of threats on green belt land which has many users such as academic institution to football clubs, and councils promoting business parks and car parks in green belt. “ Because the price of land in green belt reflects the notion that it is protected from development it is relatively cheap”[4]. Therefore has become a commonplace for society to argue that their own lack of viability which is obligatory to prove they should be permitted to build in the green belt.

1. “ York University – already sited in green belt – has applied to develop 68 hectares and eventually 104 hectares on agricultural land in the green belt”.[4]
2. “ Bath University has warned that it may relocate if not allowed to expand on to nearly 12 hectares of the city’s green belt. The site at Claverton is not green belt but also part of a world heritage site in an area outstanding natural beauty”.[4]
3. “ Surrey University in Guildford plans a second campus on 60 hectares of the surrey green belt”.[4]

According to office of the deputy prime minister

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- “ Between May 1997 and March 2004 162 planning applications for development in green belts were permitted unchallenged by government”.[4]
- “ In 2002 4% of all housing development in England was on green belt land and 6% land changing to residential use was in green belt”.[4]

Planning policy should be adapted so that Green Belt areas can take on a more significant role in providing an environmental resource for England’s population, a major study is proposing. That prospect is highlighted in an assessment of the environmental state of Green Belt land and its benefits for people and wildlife jointly produced by Natural England and the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

Their report argues that better and more co-ordinated land management would help the Green Belt to deliver vital environmental services from attractive landscapes, wildlife rich habitats, places for recreation, healthy soils, fresh water, woodland and improved air quality. The two organizations say that recreational resources, production of local food, fuel and fibre, environmentally-sensitive land management and renewable energy production can all be increased, while protecting the Green Belt’s open, rural character.

They also propose that more should be done to maintain Green Belts as part of an ecological network between urban areas, the wider countryside, and nationally important landscapes and nature reserves. “ Linking the land designated as Green Belt to areas designated for their environmental importance, to urban green spaces and to the wider countryside can help form ecological networks and green recreation networks,[5]” says the report.

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Natural England's chief executive, Helen Phillips, said: " By containing urban sprawl, the Green Belt has been a great success story of post-war planning. We need to look at ways in which it can expand on its success to date and play a full role in supporting England's wider network of protected areas and open spaces. The Green Belt is an important environmental resource that, managed effectively, can help tackle climate change, support wildlife and provide health and leisure opportunities for millions to enjoy."[5]

The chief executive of CPRE, Shaun Spiers, said: " This report confirms that the countryside around our largest and most historic towns and cities is a vital, but fragile, environmental asset. We must continue to strengthen our Green Belts and make full use of the opportunities they provide to allow people to appreciate their local countryside. Where Green Belt land is underused, or in poor condition, the answer is to improve its quality, not to build on it."[5]

- Green Belts under threats image, website [http://www. green-places. co. uk/](http://www.green-places.co.uk/)

9. 0 Research methodology

The primary method of research that will be carried out for this project will include mainly qualitative research rather than Quantitative research to study a variation of aspects & views relating to Developments on Green Belt areas. Quantitative Research involves techniques such as carrying out surveys & Sampling to provide a more statistical based analysis.

Primary Research -Interviews, Site plans and maps, Developments on Green Belt areas, and the future of Green Belt areas.

Secondary Research – Professional Journals, Textbooks, Websites, views & opinions on subject area.

Qualitative Research – Comparison between Primary & Secondary Research Material to analyse differences between real term processes & literature sources for Green Belt areas.

As the Data Research is to be a Qualitative analysis there will be primary research in the form of comparing plans of recent construction projects involving Green Belt areas on the values, adequacies & success of effective forms. The secondary information (Journals, Books etc.) collected to consider & compare views on development on Green Belt areas.

Former Salvation Army site at Newbury Park

Planning application no. N/A

In the London Borough of Redbrigh

Background

The existing site land is owned by Redbridge Council which currently has no use. The building itself has not been used for some years, and the site is fenced off with the gates bolted. At 0.11 ha (1,142 sqm) the site is not considered to be a large site, and was previously used by the Salvation Army.

Location map of the Salvation Army site at Newbury Park

“ An application for housing dating back to 1955 was refused permission application PL/II0374/55) because the site is located in green belt location and green belt legislation has fundamentally remained unchanged since that
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time, with the green belt boundary in this location also intact since it was first designated in 1954”[6]. In 1999 there was some

consideration of the Salvation Army moving their operations on this site to vacant retail space at Leyswood Drive allowing for the elimination of the existing building on the site from the green belt.

Old Salvation Army site at Oaks Lane Newbury Park

The green region on the map shows the extent of the area of green belt. The red dotted line shows the area of land safeguarded for mineral excavation.

The site lies within the green belt and is subject to green belt planning policy.

Site description

The site is situated on oaks lane to the east of the borough and west of aldborough hatch farm it is on green belt land and is part of the aldborough hatch area of green belt, and as a result is subject to green belt planning policy. Directly to the north of the site are fenced off fields used for grazing horses this is land that has been marked as safeguarded for mineral excavation on the unitary development plan (UDP adopted Nov 2003) proposals map and on the proposals Map for the emerging local development framework (LDF).

“ Apart from green belt land the surrounding area is largely residential consisting almost entirely of two storey terraced family housing, although there is a high rise block of flats around 100 meters to the south of the site called The whiting on oaks lane[6]”. However local roads in residential areas are not busy and naturally have firm speed restrictions this part of Newbury

Park is no exception. There are very few services in the immediate area, but oaks park high school is very near to the site on oaks lane further to the south, with william torbitt primary school around half a mile further to the south-east.

In terms of public transport the Newbury Park underground station and bus terminus is approximately 10 minutes walk to the south-west of the site. Here bus services are numerous and frequent, and there is a good underground service with access to the central line, travelling directly to central London. Public transports Accessibility Levels (PTAL) here are at level three, which is good, but at the site the (PTAL) falls to level one.

Key UDP Policies

The key UDP policies that cover the site include:

- Green Belt policies OA1-9
- Green Corridor policy KR8
- Archaeological Priority Zone policy SC16
- Nature Conservation Importance policies OA15-16

These are the key policies guiding the designations on the UDP Proposals map that covers the location of the site. With regard to Green Belt policy, UDP policies OA1-9 are very much in line with Government guidance on green belt in the form of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 2 Green Belts:

- Policy OA1 outlines a strong presumption against new development, including any material change of use.
- Policy OA2 again states a presumption against development and lists uses that would be considered appropriate in Green Belt.

- Policy OA3 lists criteria that proposals for development in Green Belt would need to comply with in order to be deemed acceptable. These criteria are generally related to the design and scale of the development.
- Policy OA4 lists criteria that replacement dwellings will be judged against if they are to be considered acceptable in Green Belt.
- Policy OA9 is concerned with visual amenity and the Council's commitment to protecting the green belt from development that is visually detrimental.

Policy KR8 green corridors expresses the Council's commitment to preserve or enhance the value for nature conservation, amenity, landscape or access of those areas of the borough designated as green corridors. The justification to this policy recognizes the importance of maintaining a network of green spaces and outlines the function of green corridors.

Policies OA15 and 16 relate to the nature conservation interests of the site and are concerned with adverse impacts and species protection, stating that proposals that may be considered to have an adverse impact on sites of nature conservation importance. The site has been designated as a site of borough wide nature conservation Importance Grade 1.

Design

In terms of design specification, there are a number of policies in the UDP that are applicable. Policies ES1, ES5, ES6, ES7, ES8, ES9, ES10, ES11, ES12, ES13, ES14, ES15, ES17, BF1, BF4, BF7, BF9, BF11, and BF23 in the UDP provide policy guidance on the siting and layout of new development, ensuring best practice without detriment to the amenity of the site and

surrounding area. To reflect the above planning policies, development should:

- Be well integrated into the existing pattern of pedestrian and vehicular movement, and not create dark or secluded areas (Policy ES1).
- Ensure safety for all users of the highway network when providing pedestrian footways and accommodating traffic (Policy ES5).
- Incorporate access arrangements which comply with the Council's highways requirements, (Policy ES6).
- Comply with UDP policy ES8 use class D2, for places of worship 1 space per 6 seats, and for small scale leisure/outdoor recreation facilities applications treated on their own merits.
- Contribute 1% of the capital building expenditure to public art, archaeological heritage or the conservation of the natural and built environment (Policy ES9).
- Take account of ecological factors as well as display a high standard of landscaping (ES10).
- Be accompanied by a full landscaping survey to enable decisions to be made about existing landscaping on site (ES11).
- Incorporate landscaping as an integral part of the design and include an appropriate planting scheme using locally native species (Policy ES12).
- Provide appropriate recycling/reusable and refuse storage facilities (Policies ES15 and ES17).
- Maintain or enhance the character of this part of the borough, and include a layout, scale, mass and design compatible with neighboring

buildings and spaces, using materials appropriate to the locality (Policy BF1).

- Not compromise the privacy of the occupiers of neighboring and proposed dwellings or cause any over dominant impact as a result of scale and position, and ensure that adequate sunlight is obtainable (BF4).
- Consider energy efficiency and green building techniques (Policy BF9).
- Take account of neighborliness and relationships to site and surroundings (BF11).
- Incorporate access for people with disabilities (Policy BF23).
- The Council will use its powers to impose conditions on planning permissions to further the strategic objectives of the Plan, to regulate development, enhance development or to make a development permissible which would not otherwise be acceptable (Policy IP3).

All new buildings will normally be expected to respond to the scale, architectural quality and materials of neighboring buildings and spaces. This does not preclude innovative contemporary design. When considering the selection of materials and architecture to be used in a specific location, respect should be given to the established materials and architectural styles found in the locality. This would require the proposed materials and form to respond to the colour, detail, rhythm and scale of those buildings and spaces.

Further design specifications concern those related to ensuring that any new development is not vulnerable to crime, and to that end as part of the normal planning process, the council's development control section will

consult with the local Crime prevention Officer to seek guidance on secure By design standards, which will be required as part of the conditions of a granted application for planning permission.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

“ There is also supplementary planning guidance produced by the council that will guide developers on the issue of quality design”[6]. This is the urban design framework supplementary planning guidance adopted by the council in September 2004.

“ The urban design framework provides a consistent and comprehensive approach to urban design in the Borough that is clear and simple to use for officers and developers alike”[6]. Therefore will speed up the planning process and will reduce the likelihood of inappropriately designed development proposals being submitted. A multi-disciplinary approach is taken in the framework to ensure that all facets of design are considered, including issues around housing, transport, the economy and the quality of life in the borough. The many areas of design are co-coordinated through a design checklist that makes the framework suitable for use by professionals and non-professionals.

The council’s sustainable design and construction SPG which is a policy-led guidance that has been developed to promote sustainable practices in design and construction in the borough, covering issues such as the use of land and buildings, materials and methods, energy, waste and recycling, sustainable communities and nature, and mobility and transport, is a useful

and informative good practice guide for developers that illustrates the council's objectives for new development.

Nature Conservation

“ The council has also drafted a supplementary planning document (SPD) for nature conservation dealing with the issue of nature conservation in the London borough of Redbridge from the perspective of new development proposals”[6]. Nature conservation activities in the borough concentrate on protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the borough i. e. all species and the habitats that they occupy. The council attaches the highest