

East Herts District Council Response to Examiner's Questions

21 July 2025

Is the District Council satisfied that the Plan's proposed allocation of land at Netherfield Lane for housing purposes (Policy H3) properly relates to the contents of paragraph 145 of the December 2023 version of the NPPF?

Paragraph 145 of the December 2023 version of the NPPF outlines that authorities may choose to alter their Green Belt boundaries through the plan-making process, where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified. If the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries is established in strategic policies, detailed amendments can be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

Policy VILL1 of the adopted District Plan (2018) justifies the exceptional circumstances for amending the Green Belt boundary at Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets to accommodate the district's housing strategy. Policy criterion Policy VILL1 III. details that where proposals in neighbourhood plans involve changes to Green Belt boundaries, the District Council will consider making these amendments either through the next Review of the District Plan or a Site Allocations Development Plan Document. However, following the adoption of the District Plan in 2018, national policy has been amended to enable Neighbourhood Plans to amend Green Belt boundaries, as demonstrated in paragraph 145 of the NPPF (December 2023). As such, East Herts Council is satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan's proposed allocation at Netherfield Lane (H3), properly relates to the requirements in paragraph 145 of the NPPF (December 2023).

Is the District Council continuing to work to the timetable for the District Plan Review as set out in the Local Development Scheme (August 2024)?

The District Council is currently continuing to work to the timetable in the published Local Development Scheme (August 2024). This timetable may be reviewed, as required, in response to any updates from Government.