



## **Examination in Public of the London Plan**

January 2019

### **Joint Statement of the Buckinghamshire District Councils and Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (Ref ID: 2890)**

#### **Matter 11(b)**

Is the strategic approach to accommodating development needs within London justified and consistent with national policy?

(b) Should some of London's development needs be met through reviewing Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land in London?

1. This Statement is submitted on behalf of the Buckinghamshire District Councils (Aylesbury Vale District Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council), and the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership.
2. Our Statement relating to Matter 1 (Sustainability Appraisal) explains that the London Plan Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) indicates that selective release of Green Belt in London has the potential to deliver sustainable growth. On this basis it would constitute 'a reasonable alternative'. It should therefore have given further consideration through the plan-making process as part of the London Plan's preferred 'Sustainable Intensification' option.
3. The Green Belt is fundamentally important. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) has clarified how Green Belt may affect the ability of an area to meet housing need. However, this does not and should not rule out a comprehensive Green Belt assessment as part of the evidence base to underpin the London Plan. Crucially such an assessment would have allowed consideration of how areas of the Green Belt within London perform in terms of the five purposes for the Green Belt set out in the NPPF and whether exceptional circumstances exist that would justify the alteration of Green Belt boundaries.
4. Given the gap between the number of homes required to meet London's needs and the supply of land to accommodate them within the Capital, the London Plan should consider Green Belt review as part of the overall spatial strategy and in order to provide a longer-term view of London's development to inform decision-making.