

Historic Green Belt Reviews within the Borough of Epsom & Ewell

- 1.1 During the Hearings on Matter 4, the Inspector has requested the council provides information in relation to previous Green Belt reviews. The note sets out the Council's findings.
- 1.2 The Metropolitan Green Belt was embodied in the Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act 1938 and the Greater London Plan of 1944 (later established nationwide in the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947). This original Green Belt was six to ten miles wide and subsequently deemed as insufficient to restrict development in the widening commuter belt.
- 1.3 The government Circular 42/55, released in 1955, encouraged local authorities to establish their own Green Belts. Following this, the Surrey Development Plan of 1958 was the first plan to formally designate Metropolitan Green Belt in Surrey.
- 1.4 The Surrey Structure Plan 1978 considered a Green Belt distance of approximately 19-24 km (12-15 miles) sufficient to contain the outward sprawl of London.
- 1.5 The Green Belt boundaries within the Borough of Epsom & Ewell were first reviewed and defined at the borough level during the preparation of the 1995 Local Plan. This resulted in "minor alterations, which provided for a more logical and defensible boundary and for a more consistent approach to areas of relatively low-density residential development which project into open countryside" as set out in the extract from the Local Plan 2000 (para 3.4.2) detailed below:

3.4.2 The boundaries of the Green Belt within the Borough were defined in the Epsom and Ewell Borough Local Plan which was adopted in 1995 and the Central Government advises that, once defined, the Green Belt boundary should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. The review of the Green Belt boundary, which was carried out as part of the preparatory work for the Borough Local Plan therefore resulted in proposals, which were confined to securing minor alterations which provided for a more logical and defensible boundary and for a more consistent approach to areas of relatively low density residential development which project into open countryside.

- 1.6 Green Belt boundaries in the borough have not been altered since 1995 despite their being opportunity to do so though the following planning policy documents:
 - Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2000)
 - Epsom and Ewell Core Strategy (2007)
- 1.7 It is important to note that the South East Plan (2009) did not recommend reviews of the Metropolitan Green Belt in Epsom and Ewell (or surrounding boroughs).