



# **Woking Core Strategy EiP**

## **Statement on Matter 2 – Natural Environment**

**Prepared on behalf of:**

**The Burhill Group Ltd (Respondent No. 009)**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Burhill Group Ltd in amplification of their objections made to the Submission Draft Core Strategy. This Statement relates specifically to Matter 2 and the issue of Green Belt Review referred to in policy CS6 of the Core Strategy and its supporting text.
- 1.2 This Statement should be read alongside those made by the Burhill Group Ltd on Matters 1 (Managing Growth) and 7 (Housing).
- 1.3 Burhill Group Ltd is the owner of the Pyrford Estate, which consists of circa 1,000 acres of land located between Old Woking to the west, Pyrford to the north east, and the River Wey to the south. There are varying types and quality of arable land, woodland and open land within the Estate. There are also a large number of existing buildings located throughout the Estate, including the Hoebridge Golf Centre, a pay and play course open to the public.
- 1.4 The Burhill Group Ltd understand that this Examination is not concerned with evaluating the suitability or otherwise of land within the Green Belt, which is for consideration through the Green Belt review in 2016/2017.

## 2. Matter 2 – Natural Environment

### Policy CS6 – Green Belt

- 2.1 As we comment in our Statement on Matter 1, the Core Strategy would be more effective if it had been prepared on the basis of a Green Belt Review, and was thus able to set out a complete spatial strategy for the Plan period to 2027.
- 2.2 As currently drafted, the Core Strategy is reliant on a review of the Green Belt in four or five years time to define the location(s) for a significant amount of the Borough's family housing requirement (around 11%), to be delivered in the last five years of the Plan period.
- 2.3 This means that the Core Strategy is not coherent on how and where development will be delivered over the Plan period and therefore does not fully meet the requirements of national guidance set out in PPS3: Housing (paragraph 55) which requires the Core Strategy to identify sufficient sites to meet fifteen years housing land supply (contrary to paragraph 5.9 of the Core Strategy).
- 2.4 As we submit in our Statement on Matter 7, we consider that the quantity of housing that can be delivered in Woking town centre is likely to be substantially less than the 2,300 units indicated in Policy CS10. The corollary of this is that the requirement for new homes to be delivered on land currently within the Green Belt will be greater than the 550 units currently included in Policy CS10.
- 2.5 The Burhill Group Ltd own land on the southern side of Woking, part of which could make a valuable contribution towards provision of new market and affordable family homes as well as meeting the identified need for accommodation for the elderly within a care village (as set out in our Statement on Matter 7). We look forward to contributing to the review of the Green Belt in due course.
- 2.6 **With regard to the soundness of the Core Strategy, this adds weight to our submission that in order to be effective, the review of the Green Belt is critical to the effective delivery of the Core Strategy and must be undertaken in a timely manner, no later than 2016. It is essential that the Borough Council gives a binding commitment to undertaking the review of the Green Belt by 2016 and not later. Without this commitment, the spatial strategy is at risk because the supply of family homes will be limited and this will undermine the Council's overall housing strategy.**