

Statement Regarding Publication of Green Belt Assessment 2026

As part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, the Council published an updated Green Belt Assessment (GBA) in July 2026.

The Council commissioned [Arup](#) to undertake the work as an independent study that has been prepared in accordance with the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) (December 2024) and the [Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG) (February 2025). The PPG sets out a methodology for undertaking such studies which has been followed as part of this commission.

The amendments to national Green Belt policy introduced in the December 2024 NPPF are perhaps the most profound changes to Green Belt policy since it was introduced in the 1950s. In particular, the concept of grey belt is now part of national policy.

This updated GBA reflects the national policy changes and effectively replaces the study undertaken in 2016 which pre-dated the changes. As the study follows national policy and guidance, it has been necessary to identify areas of potential grey belt. These are areas of Green Belt that do not perform strongly against three of the five purposes for designating land as Green Belt. It does not mean that such areas are necessarily suitable for development, nor is it the case that the whole parcel that has been assessed may be considered as grey belt when it may be sub-divided.

It should be noted that the GBA represents evidence for the emerging plan and is not a document that sets out the Council's policy on Green Belt matters. It will be a policy decision in the emerging local plan which sites may be released from the Green Belt to accommodate development needs across the Borough.

In addition to being used to inform the emerging plan it is also capable of being a material consideration in determining relevant planning applications.

This GBA has been informed by work the Council undertook in 2025 in relation to the rural settlement hierarchy in the Borough. This culminated with the adoption of a [Solihull Rural Settlement Hierarchy Assessment](#) in October 2025.

The GBA is a very detailed document and by publishing it in advance of the next iteration of the emerging plan, it gives stakeholders more opportunity to digest the contents of the document before the next round of consultation on the plan commences.

Comments on the GBA are not being invited at this stage. However, when consultation on the next stage of the plan does commence, that will be the opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the soundness of the evidence prepared to support the plan. In due course this will then be reviewed by the independent Inspector appointed to examine the plan.