

HOUNSLOW LOCAL PLAN: EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

Matter 4 Employment etc including proposed release of Green Belt/MOL (27 January)

Statement of Marie Rabouhans on behalf of the West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society (WCGS) (REP 048)

12th December 2025

Introduction

1 WCGS is commenting on this policy because the protection of London's Green Belt is a matter of principle and of fundamental importance not only for the entire Borough of Hounslow but also for London as a whole. We note that the amount of Green Belt to be released for development has now been reduced. However, we maintain our view, expressed at the Examination in Public in 2021 and in our comments on the Reg 19 consultation in October 2024 that Hounslow Council's arguments for de-designating Green Belt do not constitute "exceptional circumstances".

2 In particular, we consider that the policy to remove a significant part of Hatton Fields from the Green Belt for use as a logistic hub is unsound. It is neither justified nor effective. We commend the work carried out by the Friends of Hatton Fields, including ecological studies and community activities and we fully support the comments submitted by them in October 2024 (Rep 49), by FORCE (Rep 110) and by CPRE (Rep 58) and their submissions to this Examination in Public.

Issue 1

3 The release of part of Hatton Fields from the Green Belt is not justified as there are compelling reasons to retain the whole of Hatton Fields as open green space. Building on part of Hatton Fields will have a negative impact on the visual quality and openness of the remainder and compromise the Council's ability to create a bigger, better and more joined up ecological network.

4 Hatton Fields fully serves the NPPF stated purposes of Green Belt; Heathrow Airport is a very large built-up area and it is essential to prevent its unrestricted sprawl. In addition, this land currently provides important benefits both social (health and well-being, access to nature) and environmental.

- It provides the local community with a much-appreciated open space, a green lung, and a much-needed buffer between residential areas and the airport.
- In terms of environmental benefits, the open green space of Hatton Fields helps to protect against flooding and counteract the heat island impact of the extensive built area of the airport.

5 Maintaining the integrity of Hatton Fields, by retaining the whole area within the Green Belt would allow the realisation of its great potential with respect to biodiversity and nature recovery and other NPPF stated Green Belt opportunities.

Questions 17 and 18 Our response to Questions 17 a and b and 18 is “No”. The Friends of Hatton Fields have identified a significant amount of available brown-field land within the local area. Release of Green Belt to provide for the growth of the logistics and distribution industries in the vicinity of Heathrow Airport is deeply flawed. Siting these industries here would be a very inefficient use of land. The site’s proximity to Heathrow and its location/orientation imposes severe constraints both on the height and position of buildings. The site would therefore only be able to deliver low-rise, low-density development, conflicting with the Council’s objective of intensification.

Question 19 (b) we question whether the council has evaluated the contribution Hatton Fields makes to Green Belt purposes.

(c) we consider that building logistic facilities on part of Hatton Fields would undermine the five Green Belt purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt when considered across the Plan area

Question 20 “Compensatory improvements” elsewhere are no substitute for maintaining the integrity of Hatton Fields. There is no way you could truly compensate the local community for the despoiling of Hatton Fields.

Question 22 We consider that the expectation in Policy GB1 that development proposals maintain the openness, setting and visual amenity where it is near the Green Belt and MOL is justified.

Conclusion In order for the Local Plan to be sound it is essential that Land at Hatton Fields is deleted in its entirety from Policy P2 together with all references to Hatton Fields elsewhere within the Local Plan and the relevant site allocation.

WCGS

12th December 2025