

# The North Yorkshire Council

17 January 2025

## Permission to submit Expression of Interest for potential receipt of funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

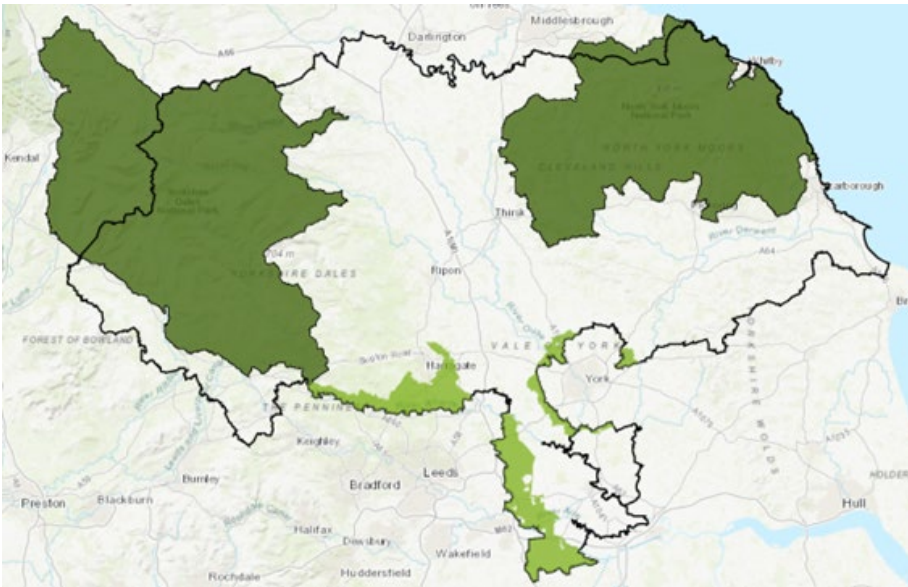
### Report of the Corporate Director – Community Development

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Corporate Director for Community Development, in consultation with the Assistant Director for Resources, to submit an 'Expression of Interest' for the potential receipt of funding of up to £70,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the publication of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2024, the government announced that funding is being made available to provide financial support to local authorities that intend to undertake a Green Belt review. As detailed here "[Funding to support local authorities with the costs of local plan delivery and Green Belt reviews - GOV.UK](#)", authorities are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a share of the available funding (up to a max of £70k per local authority).
- 2.2 Allied to the government's commitment to delivering 1.5 million new homes across the country over the next 5 years, the new NPPF introduced changes to the way in which overall housing needs of an area should be calculated. The changes have resulted in a significant uplift to the number of homes that must be delivered within North Yorkshire on an annual basis, rising from 2315 (combined extant Local Plan targets) to 4077 homes. For context, the average delivery rate across the county over the last 10 years is 2800 homes. Planning to meet these numbers in a coordinated and sustainable manner – through the development of the North Yorkshire Local Plan – will be a challenge.
- 2.3 In recognition of the challenge facing local authorities across the country, the NPPF also introduced changes to Green Belt (GB) policies, now requiring GB reviews to be carried out in areas where development needs cannot be met in non-GB locations. In effect, this process would be used to demonstrate that all possible options for meeting development needs have been assessed, and recognises that some GB locations may be suitable for development purposes (as a last resort for meeting identified needs).
- 2.4 North Yorkshire includes land on the outer edges of two Green Belts, namely, the "South and West Yorkshire Green Belt" and the "York Green Belt". These are shown on figure 1 below.



**Figure 1:** NYC area - black line; National Parks (outside Local Plan area) - dark green; Green Belts - light green

### 3.0 ASSESSMENT OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

- 3.1 The funding guidance states, *“Local authorities will be eligible for funding if they intend to undertake a Green Belt review to accommodate an increase in their local housing need announced in December 2024 alongside the wider changes to the NPPF, including those related to Green Belt release and grey belt.”*
- 3.2 As referenced above, the Council faces a challenge in planning to meet the increased housing numbers established through the new NPPF. While North Yorkshire covers an extensive area, with many potentially suitable areas for development, there are other constraints (in addition to the GB) – *such as the National Landscape areas, protected environmental sites, and areas at the highest risk of flooding* – that also provide strong reasons for restricting development.
- 3.3 At this early stage of plan-production, with evidence gathering ongoing and the first stage of public consultation not yet reached, a definitive position (either way) on whether a GB review will be required cannot be established. The only reasonable conclusion to reach at this stage, is that a Green Belt review *may* be required.
- 3.4 This picture will become clearer as the Local Plan develops, particularly through the completion of further evidence, but it would be incumbent for the Council to prepare for a potential review so as not to result in delays to overall plan-production timescales. To this end, early preparatory work facilitated through this funding could include establishing a clear and consistent methodology for undertaking more detailed assessment work at a later date. In accordance with the funding guidance, the Council would have until the end of this financial year (to the end of March 2025) to have firm proposals in place on how any funds received would be spent.
- 3.5 The guidance also encourages local authorities to work with their neighbouring authorities to undertake joint reviews, to help ensure that reviews are done strategically. Within this context, North Yorkshire Council have been approached by the City of York (CoY) Council to form part of a joint bid – *to be led by CoY* – with the initial intention again being to ensure a single and collective methodology approach to future review work. At this stage, it is expected that this would be in addition to any individual funding bid submitted by North Yorkshire Council.

#### **4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Should the need to undertake a Green Belt review arise, it would do so regardless of the Council's ability to access this potential funding mechanism; the work would be required in order to produce a Local Plan that meets the tests of soundness. Therefore, the alternative option would be to not submit the Expression of Interest, and to fund any requisite GB review work through alternative mechanisms (see financial implications below).

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The application for funding does not create a burden for the GB Review. The Review may be required as part of the Local Plan, so the successful application would only go as to reduce the financial cost that the authority would have to stand. The on-going costs of the review or implementation of findings, would fall under the Local Plan development and could be funded from the established reserve fund. If successful, there is a requirement of the Council to agree to collaborate with MHCLG over monitoring and evaluation - *there is no further information on this and how this will be collected, nor the expectations of Council Staff* - this may have to be reviewed prior to acceptance.
- 5.2 In submitting this form for approval to submit an application for grant/external funding, the requirements of the North Yorkshire Council Grant Application & Acceptance Procedure have been complied with, and consultation with all relevant officers and Members to address and mitigate any potential risk to the Council has taken place.

#### **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from submission of the funding bid. Grant terms are not available at the present time but will be reviewed by Legal Services when released, should the bid be successful. In the event that the bid is successful, any contracts entered into in respect of the grant funding will be in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and, if relevant, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and/or the Procurement Act 2023.

#### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 An equalities impact assessment (EIA) screening has been carried out (Appendix A). Approving and submitting the Expression of Interest will not have an impact on people with protected characteristics, so a full EIA is not required.

#### **8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 A climate change impact assessment (CCIA) screening has been carried out (Appendix B). Approving and submitting the Expression of Interest will not have a climate change impact, so a full CCIA is not required.

#### **9.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no policy implications associated with submitting the Expression of Interest, nor through the development of any resulting Green Belt review / evidence work. Policy implications would only occur through the development of the North Yorkshire Local Plan and would be fully considered within future reports.

## 10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 North Yorkshire Council faces a challenge in planning to meet the increased housing numbers established through the new NPPF. Should the Council be unable to find sufficient available land to meet these needs, the suitability of the Green Belt for development purposes should then be explored through formal review processes. Given that the North Yorkshire Local Plan is at an early stage of production, a definitive position (either way) on whether a GB review will be required cannot be established by the deadline for funding applications (Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025). The only reasonable conclusion to reach at this stage, is that a Green Belt review *may* be required. On this basis, and with no indication of potential future funding opportunities being available, it is recommended that an Expression of Interest is submitted to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, to gain access to funding that would assist the Council in undertaking Green Belt review work in the event that it is required.

### 11.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- i) That the Corporate Director for Community Development, in consultation with the Assistant Director – Resources, approve the submission of an 'Expression of Interest' for the potential receipt of funding of up to £70,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- ii) That the Corporate Director for Community Development, in consultation with the Assistant Director – Resources, approves the joint submission of a further 'Expression of Interest', to be led by the City of York Council.

Nic Harne  
Corporate Director  
Community Development

#### APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment screening  
Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment screening

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** none

Nic Harne  
Corporate Director – Community Development  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
17 January 2025

Report Author – Matthew Lickes, Planning Policy and Place Manager

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

## APPENDIX A

<b>Initial equality impact assessment screening form</b> This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
<b>Directorate</b>	Community Development		
<b>Service area</b>	Planning		
<b>Proposal being screened</b>	Permission to submit Expression of Interest for potential receipt of funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government		
<b>Officer(s) carrying out screening</b>	Matthew Lickes		
<b>What are you proposing to do?</b>	Submit an Expression of Interest for potential receipt of funding		
<b>Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?</b>	To be able to submit the Expression of Interest for funding		
<b>Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources?</b> Please give details.	No		
<b>Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics</b> As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics?</li> <li>Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important?</li> <li>Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to?</li> </ul>			
<b>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your directorate representative for advice if you are in any doubt.</b>			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	
Are from the Armed Forces Community		X	
<b>Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts</b> (for example, disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
<b>Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?</b> (for	No		

APPENDIX A

<p><b>example, partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics?</b> Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.</p>				
<p><b>Decision (Please tick one option)</b></p>	<p>EIA not relevant or proportionate:</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Continue to full EIA:</p>	
<p><b>Reason for decision</b></p>	<p>Submitting the ' Expression of Interest' will not have an impact on people with protected characteristics</p>			
<p><b>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</b></p>	<p>Nic Harne</p>			
<p><b>Date</b></p>	<p>17<sup>th</sup> January 2025</p>			

### Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment (Form created August 2021)

The intention of this document is to help the council to gain an initial understanding of the impact of a project or decision on the environment. This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. Dependent on this initial assessment you may need to go on to complete a full Climate Change Impact Assessment. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process.

If you have any additional queries, which are not covered by the guidance please email [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk)

<b>Title of proposal</b>	<b>Permission to submit Expression of Interest for potential receipt of funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government</b>
<b>Brief description of proposal</b>	<b>To seek approval from the Corporate Director for Community Development, in consultation with the Assistant Director for Resources, to submit an 'Expression of Interest' for the potential receipt of funding of up to £70,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Community Development</b>
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Planning</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Matthew Lickes, Planning Policy &amp; Place Manager</b>
<b>Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment</b>	<b>Hannah Nutsey, Climate Change Business Partner</b>

APPENDIX B

The chart below contains the main environmental factors to consider in your initial assessment – choose the appropriate option from the drop-down list for each one.

Remember to think about the following;

- Travel
- Construction
- Data storage
- Use of buildings
- Change of land use
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse

Environmental factor to consider	For the council	For the county	Overall
Greenhouse gas emissions	No effect on emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

If any of these factors are likely to result in a negative or positive environmental impact then a full climate change impact assessment will be required. It is important that we capture information about both positive and negative impacts to aid the council in calculating its carbon footprint and environmental impact.



APPENDIX B

<b>Decision (Please tick one option)</b>	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full CCIA:	
<b>Reason for decision</b>	Approving and submitting the Expression of Interest (the subject of this report) will not have a climate change impact.			
<b>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</b>	Nic Harne			
<b>Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2025			