

Stockport Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation

16 and 18 October 2026

High Lane Village Hall

Richard Jones - Chair

**High Lane Village
Neighbourhood Forum**

<https://www.hlvnf.org/>



Today's discussion

Stockport Local Plan: Regulation 19 consultation

1. Welcome from Forum Chair Richard Jones
2. Background and key facts
3. National planning policy and local choice
4. **High Lane: HOM 2.16, proposed for 1,000 homes**
5. Sandown Road: HOM 2.18, proposed for 250 homes
6. Other proposals: Persimmon, Windelhurst Road, 200 homes
7. The Forum's objections and **three ways to respond**: Portal 4,000-character response, a two-page summary or a full 15-page objection
8. **Your questions? (At least an hour)**



The Neighbourhood Forum's role

- ▶ Stockport Council (SMBC) approved our Designated area on **14-Sep-17.**
- ▶ We are a **statutory consultee** on development in this area.
- ▶ We prepared the **Neighbourhood Plan** with the community.
- ▶ An independent Examiner approved it on 19 March 2021.
- ▶ **Referendum** and formal adoption (“making”): **16 September 2021.**
- ▶ The Council re-designated the Forum on 14-Sep-2022, until **2027.**
- ▶ We represent everyone who lives or works in our area.
- ▶ **We are all volunteers from the community**
- ▶ **We are unfunded so please donate if you can**
- ▶ **Join our committee if you want to help**

Stockport Local Plan 2025: housing numbers

- 2024: brownfield sites only.
- Local Housing Need: **31,790 homes by 2042**
- 1,870 homes a year over 17 years.
- Urban and brownfield supply: 16,406 homes.
- Green Belt now adds a further 8,965 homes.
- **Total: 25,371 homes, 80% of the target.**
- **Forum asks: is higher target needed and is it actually deliverable?**
- **Only need 1% per year**

Source	No. of homes
Permissions	4,047
SHLAA sites	3,748
TC allowance	6,889
Small sites allowance	1,022
DC allowance	700
TOTAL	16,406

Baseline Supply	16,406
Green Belt sites	8,965
TOTAL	25,371
LHN	31,790
Target as % of LHN	80

Green Belt assessment: key figures

- ▶ *Green Belt covers 47% of Stockport's land: 5,861 hectares.*
- ▶ *The LUC assessment identifies 30% of this Green Belt as grey belt.*
- ▶ *The Forum cites a proposed 15% reduction:*
- ▶ *879 hectares, or about 1,230 football pitches.*
- ▶ *Lisa Smart stated:*
- ▶ *I am already on record as being opposed to the massive expansion Of housebuilding imposed by the current Labour Government in our area because it lacks local facilities, necessary infrastructure and services, and fails to listen to local people. The draft Local Plan which the Government has instructed the Council to bring forward includes a number of sites which Stockport Council had previously excluded from housing allocations."*

National policy changes reduce local choice

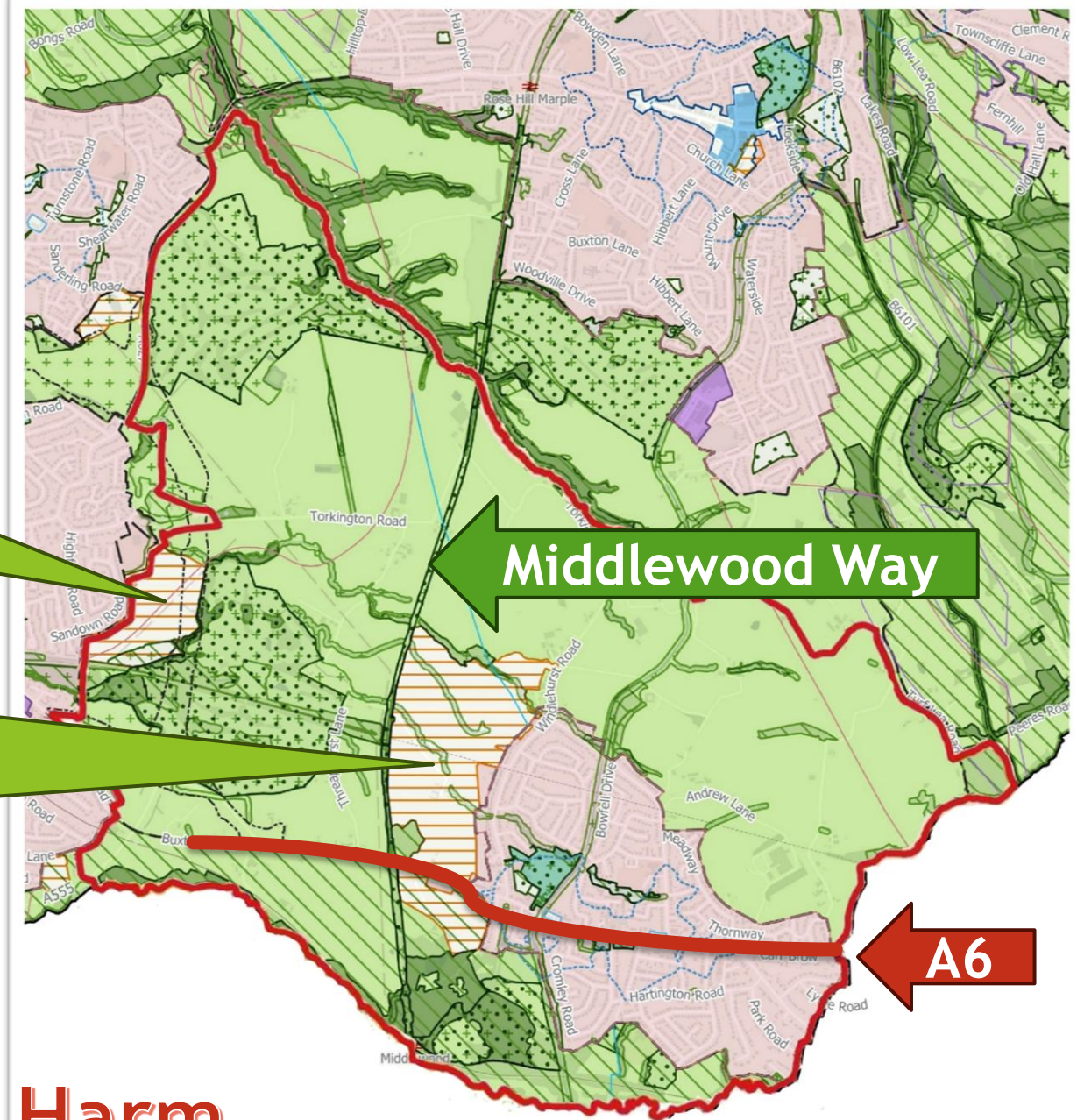
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- A lack of five-year housing land supply can require the “tilted balance” in decisions.
- The Housing Delivery Test can increase pressure to approve housing.
- National housing targets limit local choice over the amount of development.
- Proposals favouring development around transport hubs may support higher densities. (new distance to a rail station)
- Green Belt and grey belt reforms increase pressure to release land.
- Ministerial call-in and recovery powers can move some decisions away from the Council. Stockport intervention risks (100% not 80% of target)

Two proposed sites in
Forums Designated area:
1,250 homes

HOM 2.18
Sandown Road
250 homes (Regulation 19)

HOM 2.16
High Lane
1,000 homes
“At least 30% must be
designed for older people”

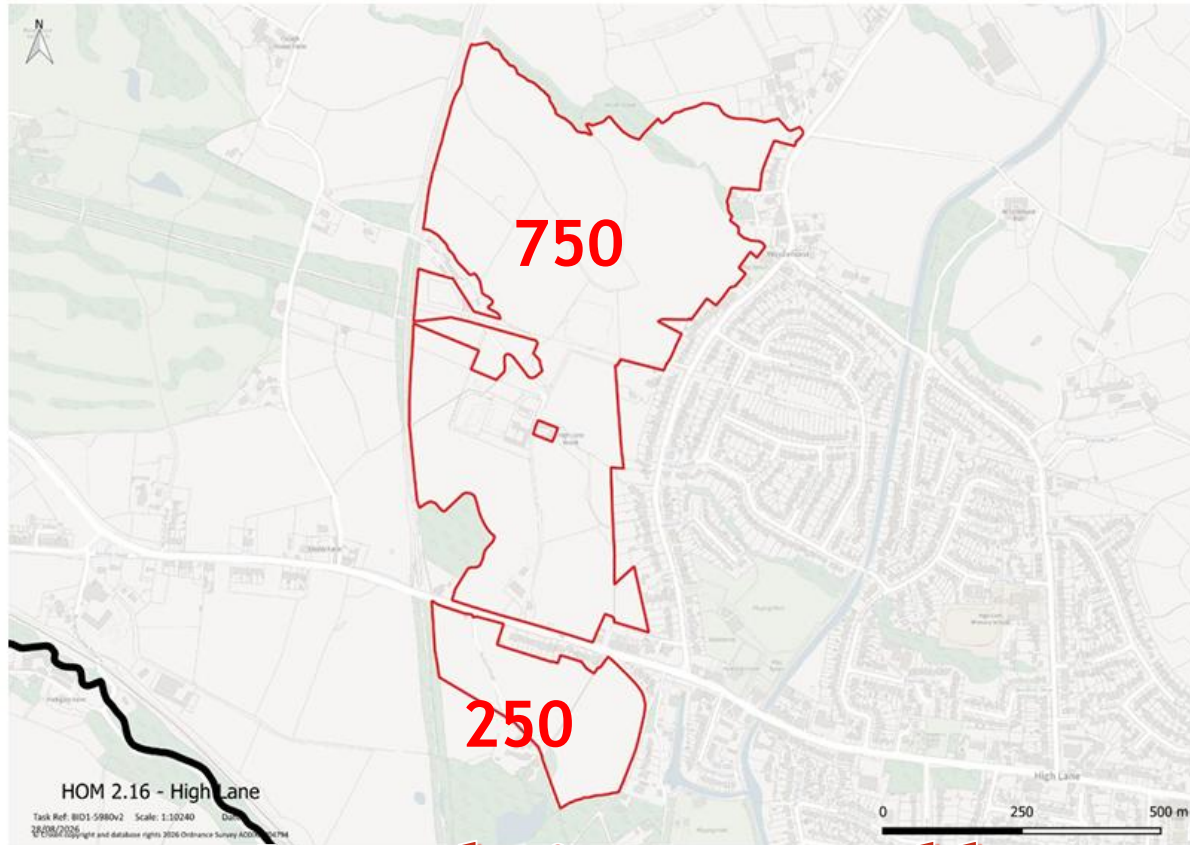
Narrowing Green Belt = Harm



High Lane, HOM 2.16: 1,000 homes

Proposed site allocation: HOM 2.16 High Lane

Map showing allocation boundary



Estimated delivery,
2026-2031: 75 homes
Estimated delivery,
2031-2036: 325
Estimated delivery,
2036-2042: 600

Policy HOM 2a site type:

List 2: outside the built-up
area, category b, grey belt

viability assessment:
Higher Viability Area

Please note that any planning applications have been submitted in accordance with the map above.

Is this really sustainable?

Sandown Road, HOM 2.18: 250 homes

Proposed site allocation: HOM 2.18 Sandown Road

Map showing allocation boundary



Please note that any planning applications may have different boundaries to that shown on the map above.

Regulation 18 proposed 300 homes.

Estimated delivery, 2026-2031: 100

Estimated delivery, 2031-2036: 150

Estimated delivery, 2036-2042: 0

Policy HOM 2a site type:
List 2: outside the built-up area, category b, grey belt

Viability assessment: Higher Viability Area

Persimmon proposal: 200 homes north of High Lane - Speculative development

- ▶ Separate application, outside the Local Plan.
- ▶ The Council has **validated 200 homes** for consultation, reduced from 250.
- ▶ Closing date: 15th October.
- ▶ Responses can raise site risks and sustainability.
- ▶ **Half the site is Green Belt and half as “Very High” grey belt.**
- ▶ **The Forum opposes this development.**



Speculative Development proposals outside plan

- ▶ Developers are promoting sites outside the Local Plan.
- ▶ Some are **speculative proposals**, with no formal planning application yet.
- ▶ The Forum is concerned about proposals coming forward before the new plan is in place.
- ▶ A **five-year housing land supply** can strengthen the Council's position when deciding applications.
- ▶ *"This site is not one of those allocated, but a **speculative development that falls outside the Local Plan**. This means that it would **put additional pressure in local facilities** beyond even those in under Local Plan consideration and deserves consideration as such."*
- ▶ **Lisa Smart to SMBC Chief Exec. 28-Sep-26**

Green Belt - aims & characteristics

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- ▶ NPPF 142: States that
- ▶ “the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is
- ▶ to prevent urban sprawl by
- ▶ keeping land permanently open;
- ▶ the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”.



What does “grey belt” mean?

NPPF Annex 2: an extract from the grey belt definition

Grey belt is a category of land within the Green Belt.

- ▶ “Land in the Green Belt comprising **previously developed land** and/or
- ▶ any other land that, in either case, **does not strongly contribute** to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143.”

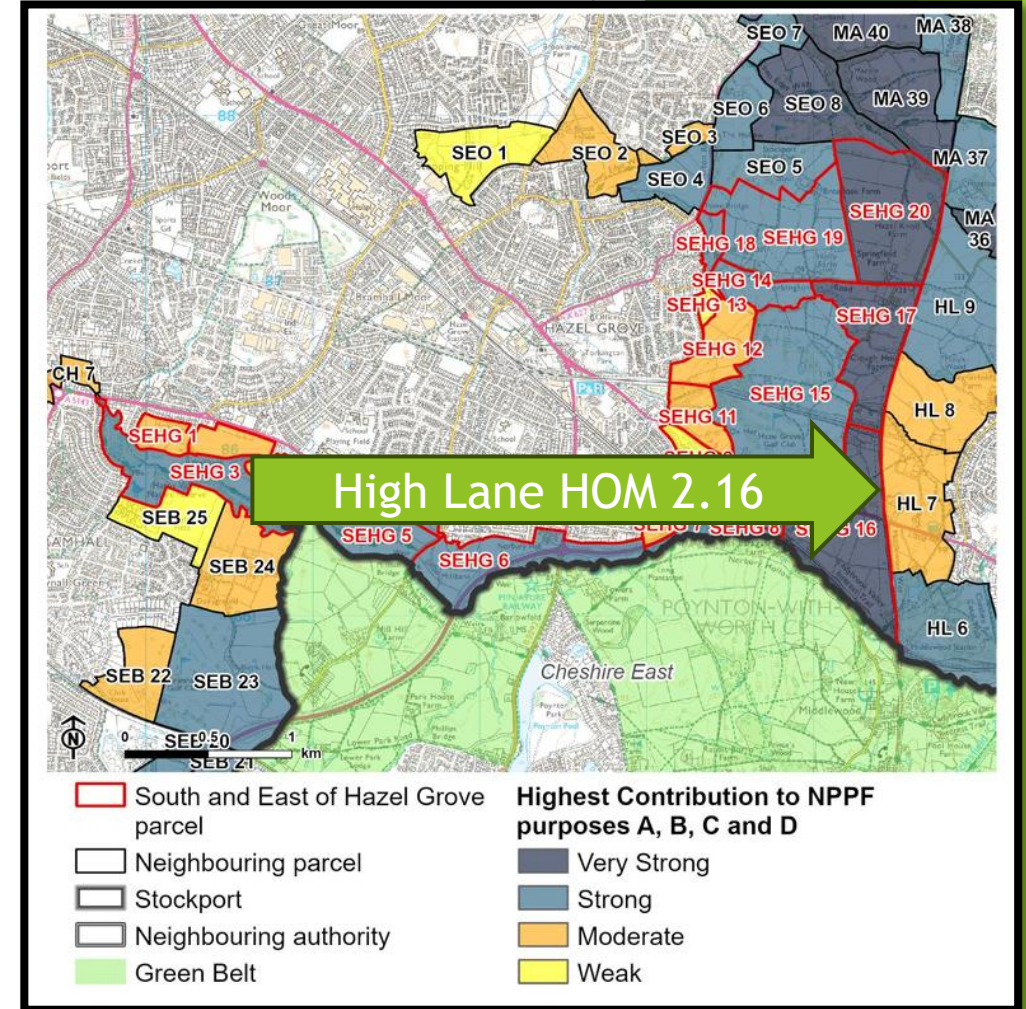
NPPF 143: States that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- A - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- B - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- C - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- D - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- **No longer open or permanent or preventing merger**

High Lane: the proposed allocation

High Lane, HOM 2.16

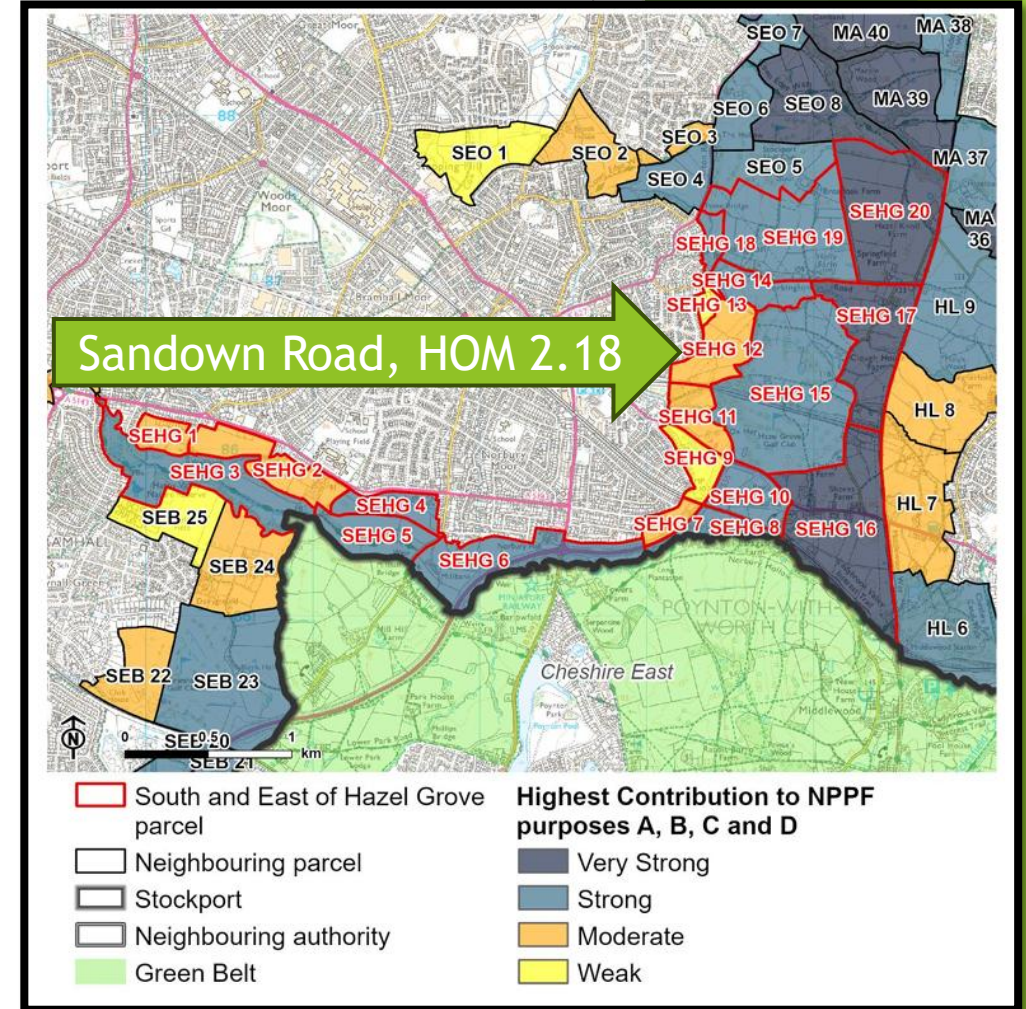
- ▶ LUC identifies the land as grey belt.
- ▶ **Parcels HL 7 and HL 8: Moderate**
- ▶ The plan proposes development here.
- ▶ The Forum asks why sites with weaker ratings were not preferred.
- ▶ **A developer proposal is already in place.**
- ▶ **KCS and Q Developments**
- ▶ **Proposed allocation: 1,000 homes**
- ▶ **The Forum asks how developer proposals influenced the choice.**



Sandown Road: proposed allocation

Sandown Road, HOM 2.18

- ▶ LUC identifies the land as grey belt.
- ▶ **Parcel SEHG 12: Moderate**
- ▶ The plan proposes development here.
- ▶ The Forum asks why sites with weaker ratings were not preferred.
- ▶ **A developer proposal is already in place.**
- ▶ **Story Homes: 250 homes**



The Forum's case for alternatives

Other grey belt areas adjoin urban areas.

The Forum wants these alternatives assessed.

It argues that NPPF priorities favour better-served sites.

Urban areas have better infrastructure.

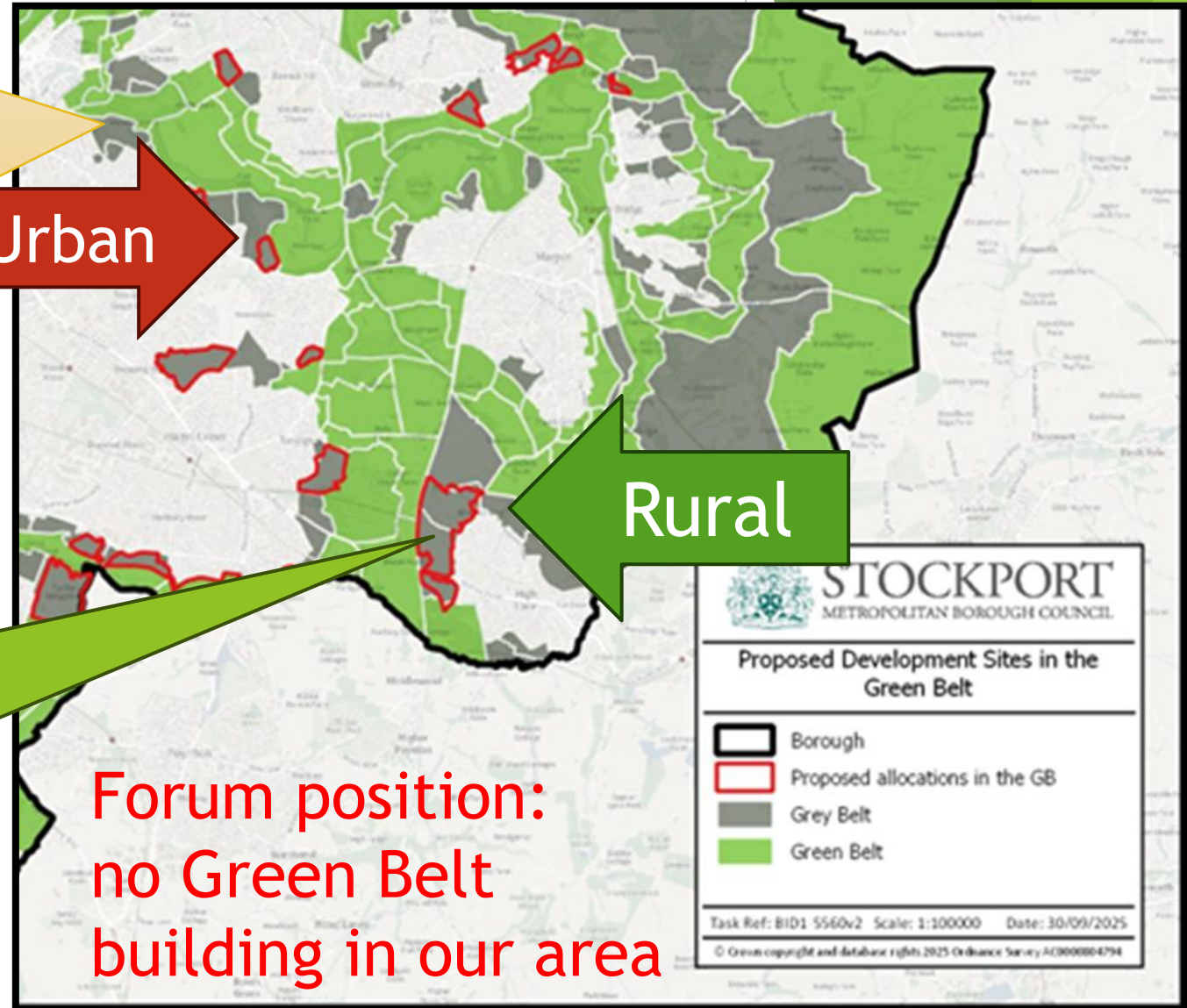
High Lane is not a District Centre.

HOM 2.16: High Lane
Grey belt parcels:
HL 7 and HL 8
HOM 2.18:
Sandown Road

Urban

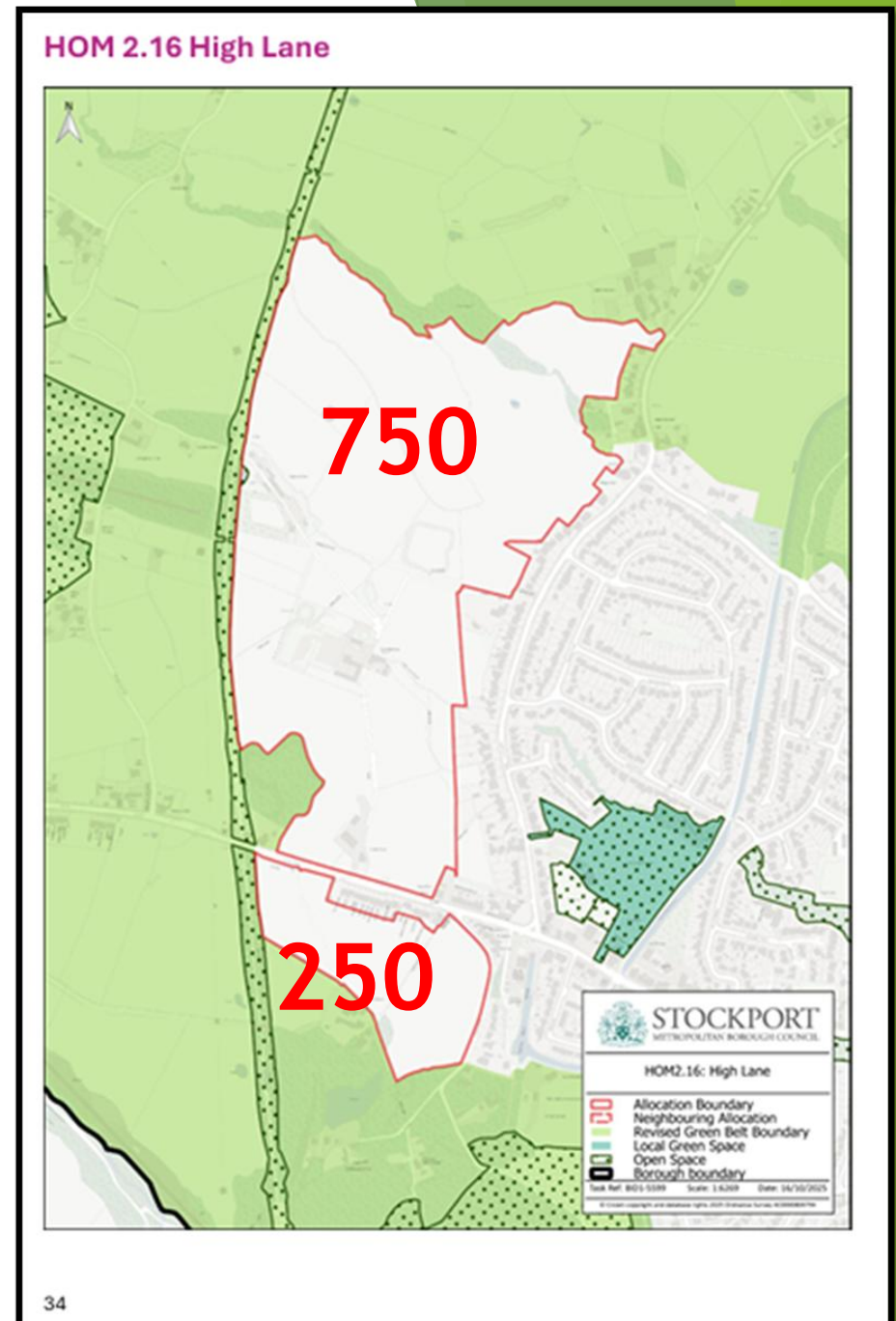
Rural

**Forum position:
no Green Belt
building in our area**



High Lane: scale of growth

- **Proposed allocation: 1,000** more homes
- High Lane has 2,200 homes: about a **45% increase.**
- **The Forum considers this too large for a rural village.**
- **Only needs 1% a year = 22 homes**
- **NPPF paragraph 83:** rural housing should enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
- **NPPF paragraph 110:**
- Significant development should focus on sustainable locations, **limit travel and offer a genuine choice of transport.**
- This can reduce congestion and emissions and **improve air quality and public health.**



What Regulation 19 asks you to consider

- ▶ The Council asks whether the Local Plan is legally compliant and sound.
- ▶ Legal compliance concerns the required processes.
- ▶ Soundness concerns strategy, evidence, delivery and national policy.
- ▶ An independent **Planning Inspector**, appointed by the Secretary of State, will consider comments and
- ▶ hold an **Examination in Public**.
- ▶ **Submission to the Inspector for examination by 30-Dec-26.**
- ▶ **The LPA stated to SMBC Cabinet it is legal and sound.**
- ▶ **We say it is not sound!**

The four tests of soundness

- ▶ **Positively prepared:** The plan seeks to meet assessed needs, including neighbouring areas' unmet needs where **practical and sustainable (with infrastructure)**
- ▶ **Justified:** The plan sets out an appropriate strategy, based on proportionate evidence and **reasonable alternatives.(urban)**
- ▶ **Effective:** The plan can be **delivered within its timeframe** and addresses cross-boundary matters through effective cooperation. **(Mitigations before development not after)**
- ▶ **Consistent with national policy:** The plan enables sustainable development in line with the NPPF. **(Not sustainable - Green belt harm)**

Forum objection 1: positively prepared

- ▶ The Forum argues that the scale of growth must match housing needs and the **infrastructure needed** to support it.
- ▶ It says the evidence **does not show how High Lane could accommodate 1,000 homes** while **maintaining community vitality** and access to services.
- ▶ No rail station and limited bus services.
- ▶ Existing congestion on the A6 corridor. (up 32% 2019-2023)
- ▶ Pressure on GP, dental and school capacity.
- ▶ No complete, funded programme for transport, **water, wastewater, drainage and utilities.**
- ▶ Policy references: Strategic 1 and 2, COM 1, 2, 3 and 7, HOM 1, 2a, 2b and HOM 2.16.

Forum objection 2: justified

- ▶ The Council should explain why **HOM 2.16 is an appropriate option compared with reasonable alternatives.**
- ▶ Evidence does not clearly compare High Lane with brownfield sites, urban capacity and **better-served grey belt sites next to urban areas.**
- ▶ It **seeks** a clear explanation of the scores and grey belt classification for HL 7 and HL 8.
- ▶ It also asks what **exceptional circumstances justify Green Belt release** and how the gap between High Lane and Hazel Grove was assessed.
- ▶ The assessment identifies a smaller **gap** and weaker separation between the settlements.
- ▶ The **Forum asks how the Council balanced that harm** against the benefits of development.
- ▶ Policy references: Strategy 1 and 3, ENV 14, HOM 1, 2a, 2b & HOM 2.16.

Forum objection 3: effective

- ▶ **The Forum asks for a clear, funded delivery plan.**
- ▶ For HOM 2.16, it seeks **details of the essential works,**
- ▶ **who will deliver and pay for them,** when they will be ready, and conditions preventing occupation before essential infrastructure in place.
- ▶ **Transport: assess combined effects on the A6, A555 approaches,** local junctions and residential roads, with funded public transport, walking, cycling and road measures.
- ▶ **Services: confirm** school, health, water, wastewater, drainage and utility capacity before occupation.
- ▶ **Site constraints:** the 67 mine entries cited in earlier Forum evidence, flood zones 2 and 3, drainage, ecology and landscape may affect capacity, viability and phasing.
- ▶ **Policy references:** 1, COM 2, 3 and 7, ENV 7, 9 and 10, CR 1, HOM 2b, HOM 2.16, INV 9 and 10.

Forum objection 4: national policy

- ▶ National policy directs major development to places that are, or can **be made, sustainable**.
- ▶ It also requires **justification for Green Belt boundary changes**, support for rural communities and **action** to avoid or reduce:
- ▶ **unacceptable transport and flood impacts,**
- ▶ land instability, including **mine entries**, and environmental harm.
- ▶ The Forum says the evidence for HOM 2.16 **does not yet resolve:**
- ▶ **limited rail access and bus provision,**
- ▶ **existing A6 congestion and air pollution,**
- ▶ infrastructure and environmental constraints.
- ▶ Policy references: ENV 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13 and 15, CR 1, HOM 2a and HOM 2.16.

HOM 2.16: the Forum's requested changes

- ▶ The proposal: 1,000 homes at High Lane, about a 45% increase on the 2,200 homes cited in this deck.
- ▶ The Forum considers the allocation unsound under all four tests.
- ▶ **The requested change: remove HOM 2.16,**
- ▶ or reduce it to fewer than 100 homes if the evidence supports that capacity. (80% of High Lane survey preference 2025)
- ▶ Compare it again with brownfield and better-served sites next to urban areas.
- ▶ Any remaining allocation should have specific, funded and enforceable infrastructure and environmental safeguards in place before occupation.

The Forum's objections in brief

1. Positively prepared

Show how the proposed growth *would meet needs and provide the infrastructure residents require.*

2. Justified

Explain the choice of High Lane against reasonable alternatives and the evidence for Green Belt release.

3. Effective

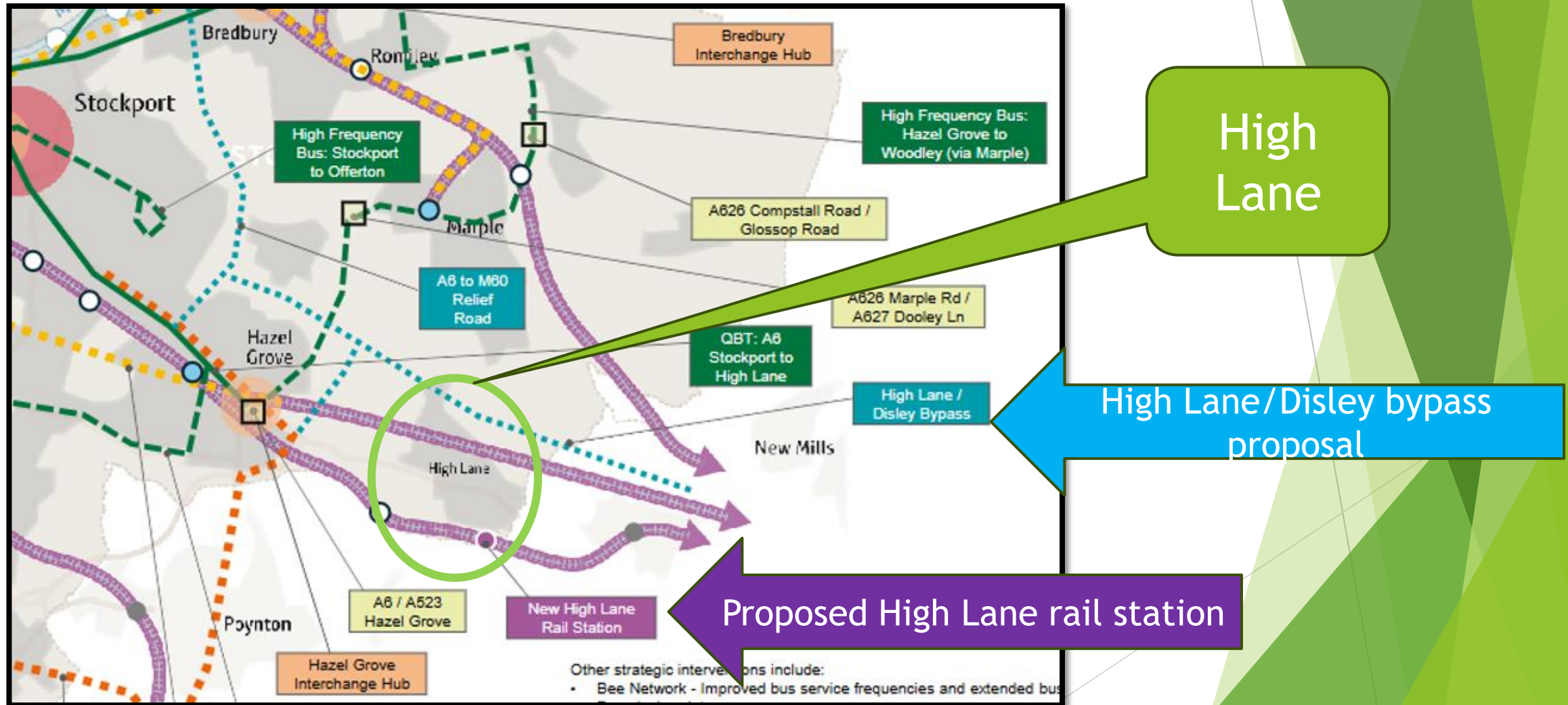
Identify funded works, responsible organisations and enforceable conditions on when homes can be occupied.

4. Consistent with national policy

Demonstrate sustainable development, justified Green Belt release and effective environmental protection.

Transport Strategy 2026-2042

Consultation closes 8 November



How to respond to the Local Plan

Deadline: 8 November

Online **portal**: <https://localplan.stockport.gov.uk/>

You can upload PDF or DOCX files up to 20 MB.

The portal allows 30 minutes per question

and does **not save your progress. Prepare your response first.**

Email: local.plan@stockport.gov.uk

Post: Planning Policy Team, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council,
4th Floor, Stopford House, Piccadilly, Stockport SK1 3XE

- Include your name, address and email.

SMBC portal guide - click by click

1. <https://localplan.stockport.gov.uk/>
2. Have your say
3. I have objections to the plan
4. Soundness
5. Our Homes > HOM 2a Site specific requirements
6. Question 1 Tell us about **your objection** (4,000 characters - 30 mins)
 1. “High Lane site HOM 2.16” - your reference
7. Question 2 Tell us **what needs to change** (4,000 characters - 30 mins)
 1. Options Remove site HOM 2.16 from plan, OR substantially reduce the site allocation (you can state a preference)
8. Upload document(s) (**Our reasons** or yours or both)
9. About you - personal information (Full name & address, email)
10. Submit

The Forum's response templates

► Three formats are available:

1. Portal: up to 4,000 characters
 - Copy, paste and add your own words.
 2. Two-page summary: email or post
 - Add your personal details.
 3. Full technical objection: 15 pages
 - Send as an email attachment.
- Each includes policy references and requested **changes.**
 - **See our website Monday 19th**

What to include in your response

- ▶ Say whether you **support or object** to the Local Plan.
- ▶ **Identify the policies or sites** your comments relate to.
- ▶ Use the **plan's policy numbers** or titles. **(e.g. HOM 2.16)**
- ▶ If you object, explain whether your concern is about
- ▶ legal compliance, **soundness** or another issue, and why.
- ▶ **Describe the changes you would like to see.**
- ▶ Say whether you would like to attend and speak at examination hearings if the Inspector invites you.

HOM 2.16: changes you can request

1. Remove the site: **No homes for High Lane.**
2. Or reduce the number of homes
 - ▶ to match infrastructure and transport and other needs.
 - ▶ **Forum Survey: 80% favoured 100 homes or fewer.**
 - ▶ 8% favoured 250 homes or fewer.
 - ▶ **Explain your own reasons.**
 - ▶ **State your preferred change.**

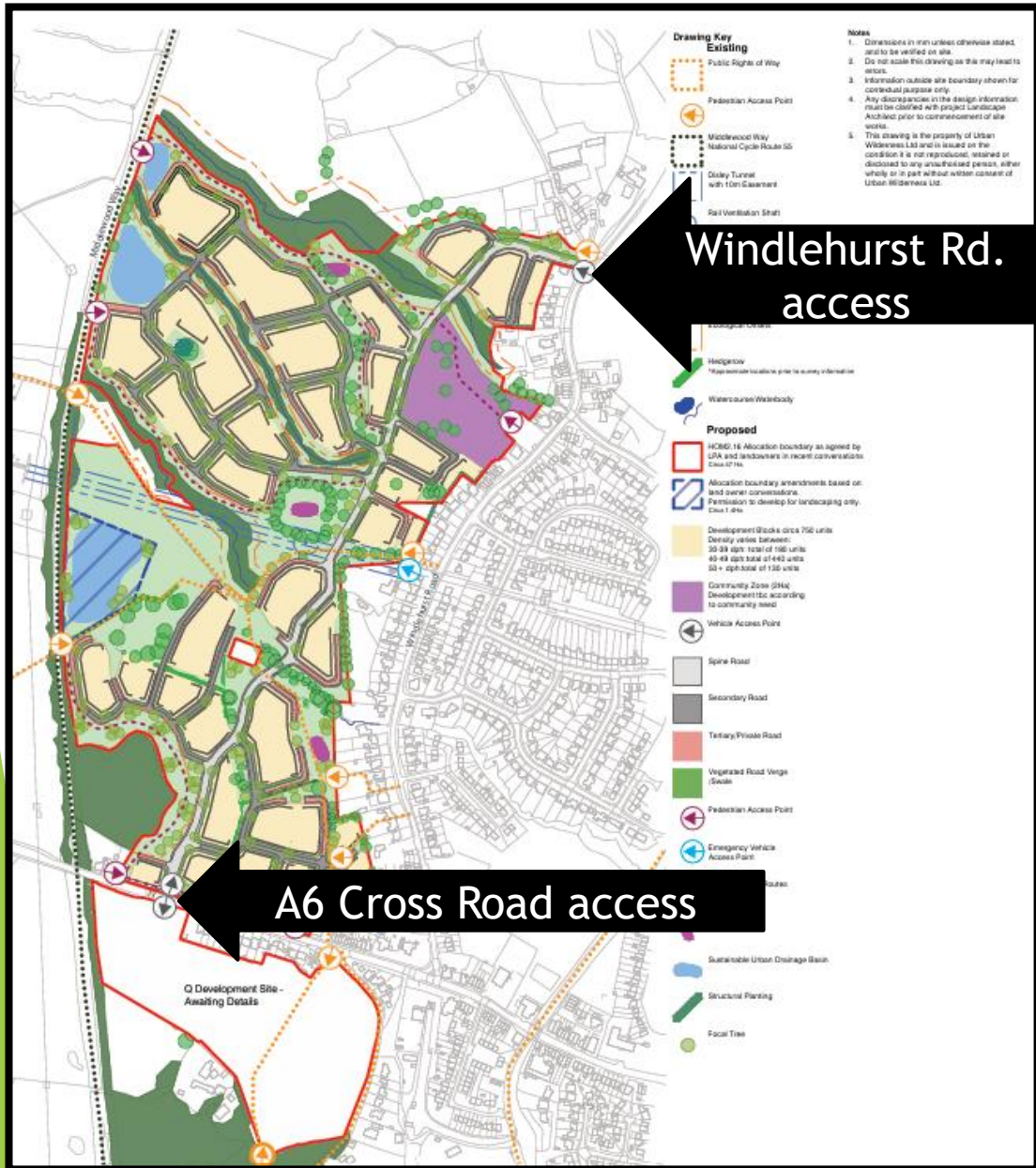
Possible outcomes Council & Inspector

- ▶ If the Council accepts the objection, options include:
 - A. Fewer total homes: 25,371 minus 1,000 (Remove) or
 - B. Reduce e.g. to 250 or 100.
- B. Replacement sites on other grey belt land (**Weak/Moderate**).
 - But consulting on new sites difficult before December 2026.
- ▶ The Inspector may find “strategic” HOM 2.16 unsound.
- ▶ **Changes may be needed for the plan to be found sound.**
- ▶ SMBC sees a **risk of Government intervention.**
- ▶ **SMBC concerned the Government may seek 100%, rather than 80%, of assessed housing need if an intervention.**

Reasons for Planning Inspector deeming a plan Unsound and needing modification

Inspector Issue with plan	Likelihood of change request 2023-2026	Notes
Housing need & supply	Very Common	Still the #1 issue No contingency for stalled sites (5-year supply)
Water/nutrient neutrality	Very Common & Huge increase	Now a top cause of withdrawal Greater Manchester (water resource constraints)
Infrastructure & viability	Increasing	IDPs and viability now heavily scrutinised Transport modelling outdated or incomplete
Spatial strategy	Common	Especially for large strategic sites Spatial strategy inconsistent with infrastructure capacity
Green Belt justification	Common	Still a major risk Weak Green Belt evidence remains a top reason for major modifications

High Lane site HOM 2.16 North KCS Plan



- ▶ KCS Developments Proposal (750 of 1,000)
- ▶ Draft “Master Plan” for site north of A6
- ▶ Drafted July-26
- ▶ Update from SMBC LPA comments August-26
- ▶ **Not submitted for approval**
- ▶ **Still under review with KCS Developments**

Stockport Council Letter to Andy Burnham

3 September 2026: Jake Austin & MP's

Summary of the letter from Liberal Democrat councillors and MPs:

- Stockport's housing requirement has effectively doubled to over 32,000 homes,
- creating pressure on the Green Belt.
- The letter argues that grey belt policy could allow development on land communities value as Green Belt,
- without ensuring sustainable growth.
- It asks the Government to reconsider changes to the NPPF and the housing needs formula.
- Supporters named in the letter: Councillor Jake Austin
- Tom Morrison MP and Lisa Smart MP.

Your response to the Local Plan

Have your say

Explain your concerns

Suggest your changes

By 8th November

Respond - Object - Protect

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, in various shades of green, creating a modern, layered effect on the right side of the slide.

Questions Please?

Wait for the Microphone?

Supporting information

Background and evidence for reference. Select a topic to open its slide.

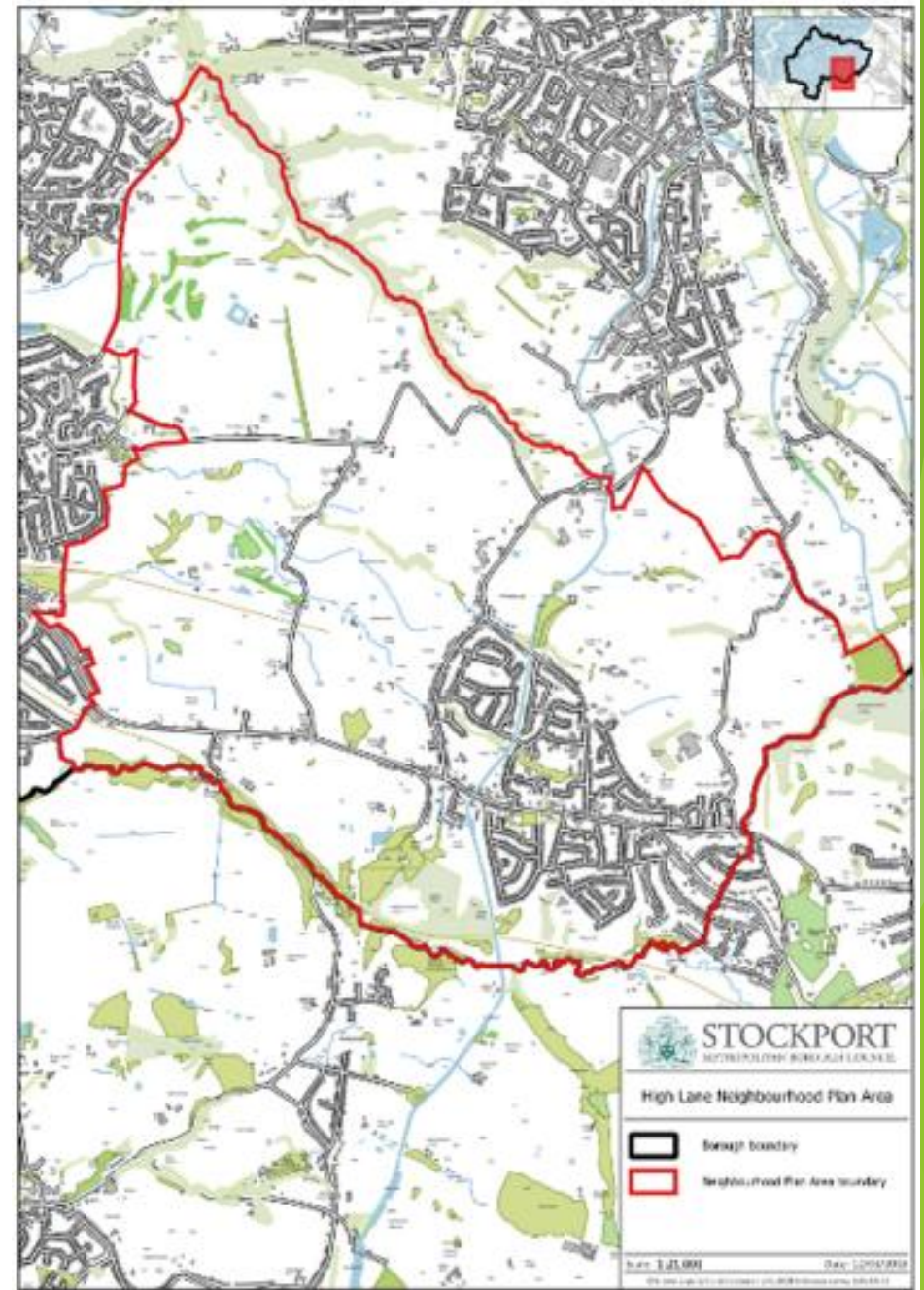
- [31 The Forum's designated area](#)
- [32 Local Plan background: 2023–2024](#)
- [33 Local Plan background: 2024–2025](#)
- [34 The Government's intervention timetable](#)
- [35 Council response to the Minister](#)
- [36 Letter to Andy Burnham](#)
- [37 Regulation 19: documents to read](#)
- [38 Development proposals outside the plan](#)
- [39 How the Green Belt assessment works](#)
- [40 Green Belt assessment: key figures](#)
- [41 Views on national planning changes](#)
- [42 High Lane: developers](#)
- [43 The Forum's objections in brief](#)

The Forum's designated area

The area aligns with the Marple South and High Lane council ward.

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC):

- ▶ Colin McCallister (Liberal Democrat)
- ▶ Shan Alexander (Liberal Democrat)
- ▶ Dominic Warner (Liberal Democrat)
- ▶ Hazel Grove councillors agreed the boundary after consultation in 2017.
- ▶ Hazel Grove does not have a neighbourhood forum.
- ▶ <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/development-plan/adopted-neighbourhood-plans>



Local Plan background: 2023-2024

- ▶ The Council's third Local Plan
- ▶ **2023: the Conservative Government** proposed changes to the
- ▶ National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- ▶ This sets national planning policy.
- ▶ **The Forum links policy uncertainty to delays in local plans.**
- ▶ **2024: the Labour Government** reviewed the NPPF.
- ▶ Regulation 18 consultation published: **19 July 2024.**
- ▶ **The Forum also records election-related delays.**

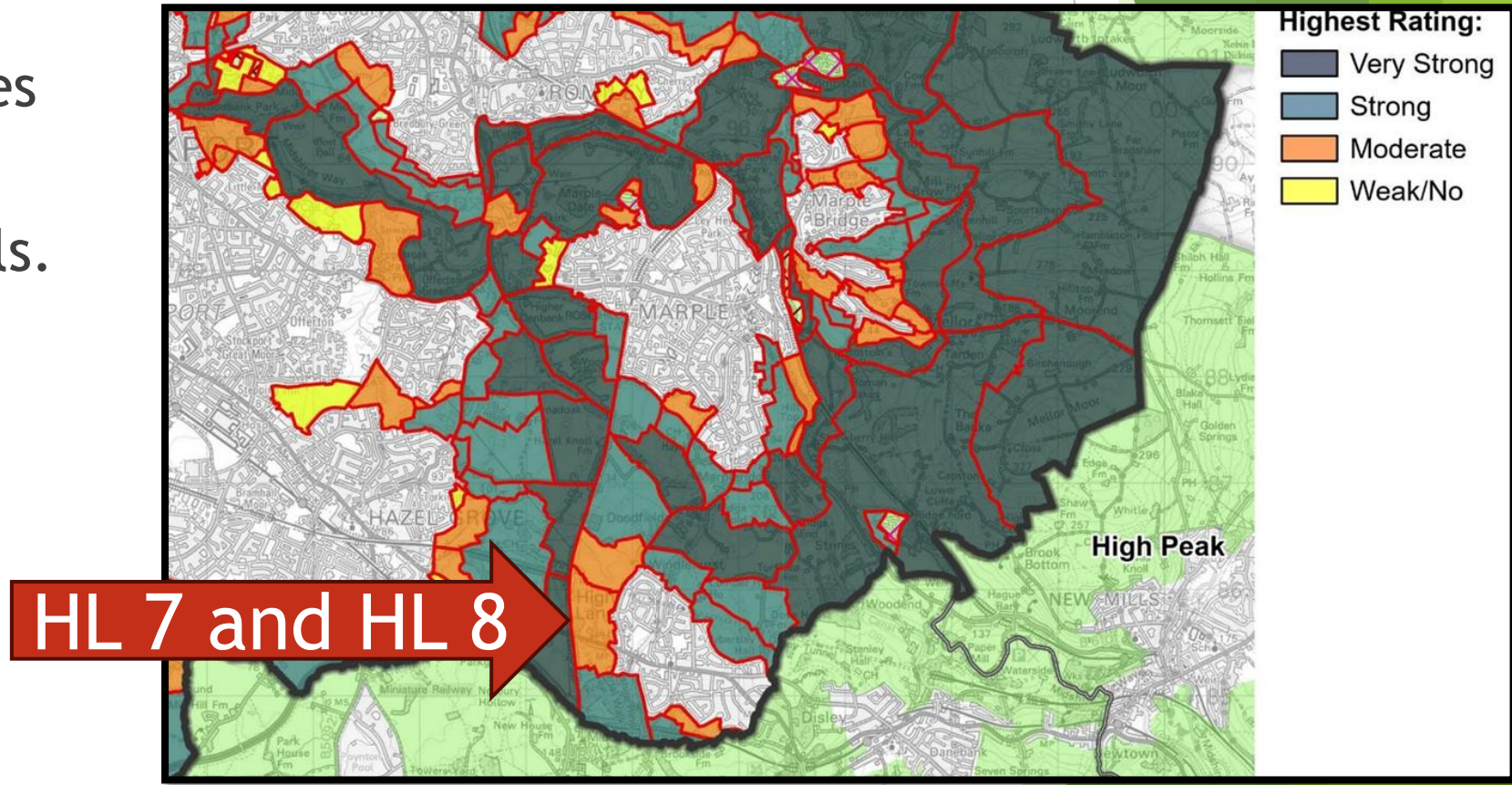
Local Plan background: 2024-2025

- ▶ The 2024 plan proposed brownfield sites, with no Green Belt allocations.
- ▶ It provided for 85% of the housing target.
- ▶ A 500-home Green Belt option at High Lane was considered.
- ▶ The revised NPPF appeared in December 2024.
- ▶ Green Belt and grey belt guidance followed in February 2025.
- ▶ The Council delayed the plan while seeking legal advice on grey belt.

Green Belt assessment: High Lane

- ▶ The assessment informs site allocation.
- ▶ It considers NPPF purposes A-D.
- ▶ Land is assessed in parcels.
- ▶ **Orange: Moderate**
- ▶ **Yellow: Low**
- ▶ HL 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9: Strong
- ▶ **HL 7 and HL 8: Moderate**

Overall ratings in the Green Belt Assessment



The Government's intervention timetable

16 September 2025: Matthew Pennycook MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, wrote to the Council.

- ▶ **The letter set these deadlines:**
- ▶ Regulation 18 consultation: 24 December 2025
- ▶ Regulation 19 consultation: 1 September 2026
- ▶ Submission for examination: 30 November 2026
- ▶ **The updated submission date is 30 December 2026.**
- ▶ The Council can then prepare a five-year housing delivery plan.

Council response to the Minister

24 September 2025: Mark Roberts

- Summary of the letter excerpts:
- The letter says the Government's housing targets almost double the number of homes required in Stockport.
- It argues for developing brownfield sites first and
- raises concerns about Green Belt and
- the loss and the influence of local residents and councillors.
- It also questions the Government's grey belt criteria, which consultants LUC used in the Green Belt review funded by a departmental grant.

Regulation 19: documents to read

- ▶ **Stockport Local Plan: 250 pages**
- ▶ Policies Map
- ▶ **Housing Topic Paper: 26 pages**
- ▶ Green Belt Topic Paper
- ▶ Transport Topic Paper
- ▶ Site Allocations Topic Paper: 118 pages, including the HOM 2.16 map
- ▶ **Addressing Our Development Needs: Appendix 3**
- ▶ These documents explain the housing numbers and site choices under the NPPF.

How the Green Belt assessment works

- 1) Define the land areas, called “parcels”.
- 2) Assess grey belt criteria using NPPF purposes A, B and D.
- 3) Rate purpose C: safeguarding the countryside.
- 4) Check restrictions under NPPF footnote 7.
- 5) Consider the findings for purposes A-D and footnote 7.
- 6) The Council compares these with **potential development sites. (27 of 29 allocations have developer applications)**
- 7) Identify provisional site allocations.
- 8) Local allocations: HOM 2.16 and HOM 2.18.

Method now published for Reg.19 but not transparent!

Source: LUC, Stockport Green Belt Assessment, Chapter 3: methodology

Views on national planning changes

- ▶ House of Lords, November 2024 (summary):
- ▶ Concern about introducing closely linked planning policies together or in quick succession.
- ▶ CPRE, October 2025 (summary):
- ▶ Concern that unclear grey belt definitions put farms and Green Belt at risk. A 41,000-signature petition called for change, which the Government rejected.
- ▶ Petition on the UK Government website, September 2025 (summary):
- ▶ Concern about countryside loss and effects on wellbeing, climate and wildlife.
- ▶ Chancellor, November 2025 (summary):
- ▶ Support for fewer regulations, AI-assisted planning permissions and “backing the builders not the blockers”.
- ▶ The Forum wants local concerns to carry more weight.



High Lane: developers

- ▶ Q Development
- ▶ 17-acre site proposed for 200 homes
- ▶ South of the A6
- ▶ KCS Developments Ltd
- ▶ Proposal for 800 homes
- ▶ North of the A6
- ▶ The Forum reports eight years of talks with planners.
- ▶ It asks how these influenced site selection

KCS - 3rd Floor, Goodbard House, 15 Infirmary Street, Leeds, England, LS1 2JP
01132439037

