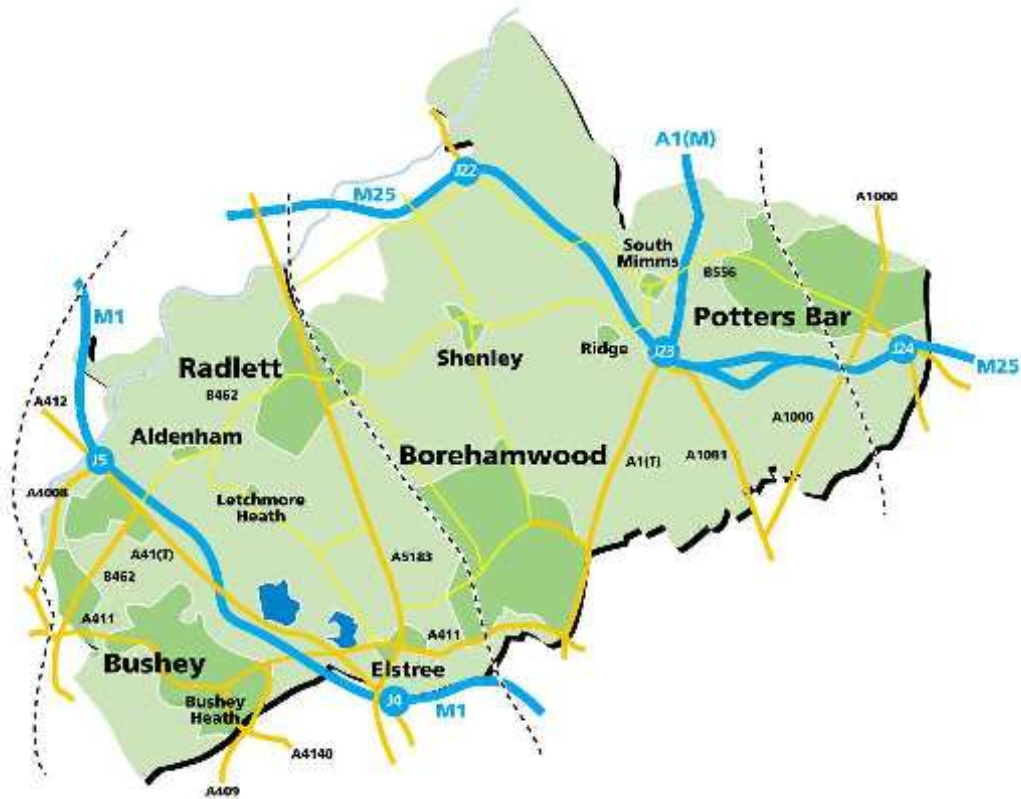


# Hertsmere Borough Council

## Local Plan



## Review of Selected Green Belt Sites and Boundaries

### Assessment for Site Allocations and Development Management Policies

Published March 2014

(edited April 2014)



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## Notes:

This document was initially prepared in March 2013. It was edited following a 'Call for Sites' Consultation in April 2013 and during the drafting phase of the Consultation Draft Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.

It was edited in April 2014 to correct errors to the following maps in Section 7:

- 7.16 Heathbourne Road: show haulage yard and parcel of land to the south east as being removed from safeguard land status
- 7.19 Woodcock Hill: also show the land as being returned to the Green Belt
- 7.20 West Herts College Annexe: align the Green Belt boundary to the north of the (former) safeguarded land
- 7.23 Land between A1 and Rowley Lane; align the Green Belt boundary along the northern and eastern boundaries of the safeguarded land.

It was edited in June 2015 to correct the list of new Key Green Belt Sites recommended for inclusion in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD in section 8.

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Please note: The outline of the site boundaries on the aerial photographs are indicative only; it is intended to indicate the extent of the site in the landscape. It should not be used to identify legal site boundaries.

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The forthcoming Local Plan for Hertsmere will replace the current Local Plan which was adopted in 2003. The Core Strategy is a key statutory Development Plan Document (DPD) which sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the Borough from now until 2027, and a variety of overarching policies to guide future development and land use in the Borough. It also sets the parameters for further policy documents: the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPDs. The Core Strategy has already superseded some policies in the Local Plan 2003.
- 1.2 It is the role of the Local Planning Authority to meet the obligations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order to ensure the Green Belt is protected throughout and beyond the time frame of the plan period. The Core Strategy does not indicate any general review of the Green Belt boundary: development is directed to the main settlements (i.e. urban areas).
- 1.3 While the principles of the Green Belt policy have changed very little, it is inevitable that the scale and use of large scale developments will have changed and will continue to do so. The purpose of this review is therefore to identify:
- whether the existing Key Green Belt Sites (KGBS) (formerly known as Major Developed Sites/MDS) meet the objectives of the NPPF;
  - what the long term likely scenarios for the development of these are;
  - whether there are any other sites within the Borough that should be included as a KGBS; and
  - whether, in the context of the future planning of particular sites or locations, there should be any minor change to the Green Belt boundary.

The underlying purpose for making changes is to ensure the Green Belt is protected throughout and beyond the time frame of the Local Plan, or put another way, the right land is protected in the right way.

- 1.4 Hertsmere is in south-west Hertfordshire and borders North London. Eighty per cent of the Borough is Green Belt. As a result of the proximity to London, there is a profusion of activities occurring within the Green Belt, many of which predate planning policy, including established institutions and reasonably substantial settlements. Land use has changed and developed over time, land has been redeveloped and there is constant pressure on the Green belt boundaries so it is vital to have defensible Green Belt boundaries and identify those uses that are appropriate for KGBS designation.

## **Why are we doing this review?**

- 1.5 The production of the new Local Plan provides the opportunity to provide the spatial means of accommodating the many conflicting needs in terms of development. These documents will contain the policies by which development will be guided for the period of the Plan. It is therefore appropriate that the status of each of the current Site Allocations is justified.
- 1.6 For example, a KGBS within the Green Belt may have had extensive alterations over its life span and is no longer accommodated within its boundaries for appropriate infilling. It may therefore be more fitting that this boundary is changed in a managed way whilst ensuring that the purposes of including land within the Green Belt is maintained, rather

than having a number of developments with no comprehensive strategy. Conversely, a major research site within the Green Belt may wish to close or relocate as the needs of their industry may mean their site no longer meets industry standards. It may therefore be appropriate to remove this designation as a major developed site in order to restore the land back to its open state, or to enable an alternative use to utilise the site.

## 2. Planning Policy Context

### Sustainable Development

- 2.1 'Policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally' (NPPF, paragraph 15)
- 2.2 'Plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas' (NPPF, paragraph 10)
- 2.3 The majority of the formerly known major developed sites in the Green Belt are not in sustainable localities especially in the case of the research institutions that have purposefully located themselves away from urban areas. There are locations that are more suitable for development in terms of sustainability objectives than the existing or potential MDS locations. However the existing and potential MDSs are established uses. Policies governing the management and possible redevelopment of the sites need to promote sustainable alternative uses.

### Green Belt

- 2.4 The NPPF on the Green Belt sets out the Government's intentions of the Green Belt policy, and seeks to guide and manage the types and extent of development that occurs on Green Belt land. The Framework states that 'the fundamental aim of the Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness'. Green Belts can shape patterns of development at sub-regional and regional scale, and help to ensure that development occurs in locations allocated in Development Plan Documents such as the Site Allocations DPD.
- 2.5 The NPPF contains the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt as well as defining the types of uses of this land which contributes to fulfilling a range of objectives for the Green Belt policy. The extent to which the use of land fulfils these objectives is not itself a material factor in the inclusion of land within a Green Belt, or in its continued protection. For example, although Green Belts often contain areas of attractive landscape, the quality of the landscape is not relevant to the inclusion of land within a Green Belt. For the purpose of this review it is important to understand the purposes and objectives of the Green Belt policy in order to most appropriately determine the role of KGBS, to review the status of the existing sites, and find potential for new sites to be designated in the Hertsmere Core Strategy. The purposes of including land within a Green Belt take precedence over the land use objectives.
- 2.6 Purposes of including land in Green Belts (paragraph 80 of the NPPF) are:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 2.7 The use of land in Green Belts (paragraph 81 of the NPPF) should:

- provide opportunities for access;
- provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation;
- retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; and
- improve damaged and derelict land.

2.8 Defining the boundary of the Green Belt is especially important in order for the Green Belt itself to be defensible. Once the Green Belt boundaries have been decided they should only be changed under exceptional circumstances. The NPPF advocates that boundaries should be drawn so that they will endure, and land that is unnecessary to be kept open should not be included in the Green Belt. If the boundaries are nonsensical or too tightly drawn the Green Belt boundaries will be difficult to defend and therefore the Green Belt will be under threat from encroachment.

2.9 Green Belts should have intended permanence to endure beyond the Plan period. The Green belt boundary should be consistent with the need to meet identified requirements for sustainable development. The local authority should be satisfied that the boundary will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period, or include land which is not necessary to keep permanently open. 'Where feasible, recognisable physical and permanent features, such as roads, streams, belts of trees or woodland edges, should be used to define boundaries' (paragraph 85 of the NPPF).

### **Hertsmere Local Plan History**

2.10 The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act allowed authorities to include Green Belts in their development plans, with amendments in 1968 strengthening this policy stance. In mid-1971 the Government decided to extend the Metropolitan Green Belt northwards to include almost all of Hertfordshire. Hertsmere was not formed until 1 April 1974, under the Local Government Act 1972, by a merger of the former area of Bushey Urban District, and the Potters Bar Urban District with Elstree Rural District and part of Watford Rural District (the parish of Aldenham). Hertsmere inherited the Metropolitan Green Belt boundaries from the districts, and although adjustments have occurred over time, currently 80% of Hertsmere is covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt.

### **Topic Papers**

2.11 During the Hertsmere Local Plan Inquiry of May to July 1999, the Council produced a topic paper on the Green Belt of Hertsmere. The purpose of this topic paper was to set out the Council's approach in proposing certain changes to detailed Green Belt boundaries, while rejecting other changes that had been proposed by objectors. It also detailed the Council's reasons for its proposals. The topic paper recognised the remit of the (then) Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts, and set out the Council's approach to identifying 'Key Green Belt Sites' and specifying an area within which limited infilling/redevelopment may take place if it accorded with specified criteria.

### **Inspector's Reports**

2.12 The Inspectors Report of 2000 in response to the 1999 Local Plan Inquiry approved the inclusion of the 'Major Developed Sites' in the Local Plan. A number of changes were made prior to the Local Plan being adopted in 2003. These related to the inclusion of utility infrastructure sites in the Green Belt, and also the relationship with other policies in the plan, such as that for safeguarded land and Urban Open Land.

2.13 The Inspector noted (in paragraph 107.2 Countryside) that there is potential for conflict between the traffic generated by MDSs and sustainability objectives but the existence of major sites in the Green Belt are a fact of life and their presence and potential for future

development have to be acknowledged even though their location is far from ideal in terms of sustainability. Taking the views of the Inspector into account, this does not mean to say that site owners should be permitted to do what they want, regardless of sustainability issues, but that it was reasonable to expect that these sites would evolve over time. Where occupiers of major sites have approached the Council with proposals to change the existing development boundaries, future plans have been taken into account. However, as the Inspector noted (in paragraph 115.10 and 115.15 Countryside), it is very important that the area of a major site and envelope for appropriate infilling should reflect the layout and extent of existing buildings on the site. This is not dependent upon the extent of future buildings for which planning permission may be granted but upon the physical presence of structures on the ground and their layout.

### **Current Local Plan 2003 Policy**

- 2.14 Green Belt policies in the current HLP 2003 are very similar to those of PPG2 in their wording and intent. Of particular importance for this review are Policies C1 and C4:

#### **Policy C1: Green Belt**

Within the Green Belt, as defined on the Proposals Map, there is a general presumption against inappropriate development and such development will not be permitted unless very special circumstances exist. Development proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed in relation to the guidance set out in section 3 of PPG2 'Control Over Development'.

Note: Even appropriate development as defined in PPG2 will not be permitted if it would prejudice the fundamental aims of Green Belt policy or the purposes of including land in Green Belts and would conflict with other policies of this Plan. Very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In any event, in accordance with paragraph 3.3 of PPG2, exceptional cases will be treated as a departure from the development plan.

#### **Policy C4 : Development Criteria in the Green Belt**

In addition to Policy C1 and any other specific policies set out in this Plan particular regard will be paid to the following criteria when considering proposals for development in the Green Belt:

- i. developments should be located as unobtrusively as possible and advantage should be taken of site contours, landscape features, etc. to minimise the visual impact. Buildings should be grouped together and isolated buildings in the countryside should be avoided;
- ii. wherever possible, developments should use materials which are in keeping with those of the locality. Where modern materials are acceptable they should be unobtrusive in the landscape;
- iii. proposals must comply with the County Council's policy for traffic on rural roads;
- iv. the scale, height and bulk of the development should be sympathetic to, and compatible with, its landscape setting and not be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt;
- v. existing trees, hedgerows and other features of landscape and ecological interest should be retained and be reinforced by additional planting of native species or other appropriate habitat enhancement in order to enhance the character and extent of

woodland in the Community Forest;

- vi account will be taken of any lost contribution to farm economics and management, with a strong presumption against development which would fragment farm holdings.

2.15 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt are covered in the Countryside chapter of the Local Plan 2003 under Policy C18:

**Policy C18: Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt**

The Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt are identified on the Proposals Map and proposals will be assessed in relation to the advice set out in Annex C of PPG2. Infilling may be appropriate within the defined areas subject to the following considerations:-

- i. the proposal should have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development;
- ii. the proposal should not exceed the height of the existing buildings;
- iii. the proposal should not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site;
- iv. the proposal should be ancillary to, or support, an existing or approved use on the site;
- v. proposals should respect the design of existing buildings and should not detract from the appearance of the site;
- vi. proposals should not lead to any significant increase in motorised traffic generation.

Complete or partial redevelopment on these sites should:

- a. have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and where possible less;
- b. contribute to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in the Green Belts set out in PPG2;
- c. not exceed the height of the existing buildings;
- d. not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings (unless this would achieve a reduction in height which would benefit visual amenity); and
- e. should not lead to any significant increase in motorised traffic generation or undue impact on the amenities of adjacent properties.

If a Listed Building is on the site consideration will need to be given to the impact of any proposed development upon it and if it would detract from the appearance or setting of the Listed Building the proposal will not be allowed. If a proposal results in the relocation or introduction of a hard surfaced area such as a car park or playground, and this is considered to have an adverse impact on the Green Belt, the proposal will not be allowed.

The submission of long term plans for these major developed sites to help guide their successful development will be encouraged. Where redevelopment is proposed a planning brief may be prepared. The development and implementation of Green Transport Plans for Major Developed Sites will be encouraged.

2.16 The South Mimms (Bignell's Corner) Special Policy Area is covered in the Movement chapter of the Local Plan 2003, under Policy M14:

**Policy M14: South Mimms (Bignell's Corner) Special Policy Area**

This Special Policy Area is defined on the Proposals Maps and remains washed over by the



Green Belt. Within the defined SPA planning permission will only be granted for development for facilities for the movement of people and goods on the motorway network, including those supporting the immediate needs of drivers, passengers and their vehicles in accordance with the principles set out below. The Council will prepare a detailed development brief to guide the improvement and rationalisation of the land uses within the SPA, in liaison with the relevant organisations, following a Transportation Study of the area.

Development proposals which might exacerbate existing traffic or environmental conditions, or prejudice the rationalisation and improvement of the area, will be refused. The site of Charleston Paddocks will be held in reserve for motorway related uses to assist the rationalisation of the area. The general principles to guide the brief and the determination of planning applications are:

- i. in the interest of users' amenity, uses primarily for sleeping, rest and refreshment purposes shall be located at least 250metres from elevated and ground level primary road carriageways and 100metres from such carriageways in cuttings;
- ii. motorway maintenance uses, where the primary element of the usage is the storage of materials, equipment, fuel and/or vehicles, together with any alterations to the road network to improve circulation, shall be located in the parts of the defined area less than 250 metres from elevated and ground level primary road carriageways and 100 metres from such carriageways in cuttings. Development in the flood plain of the Mimms Hall Brook will not be permitted; and
- iii. Proposals should, where feasible, incorporate tree planting around their perimeter to screen the site.

### **The New Hertsmere Local Plan**

- 2.17 The Core Strategy has been the first statutory DPD to be found sound, and adopted by the Council. It sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the next 15 years and contains a variety of overarching policies to guide the future development and land use within the Borough. This DPD forms the first part of the Council's new Local Plan. The Site Allocations and Development Management DPD will complete the replacement of the Local Plan adopted in 2003.
- 2.18 The Site Allocations require a review of current planning designations, including the former major developed sites in the Green Belt, which will be termed Key Green Belt Sites. The sites designated for specific use in the current HLP need to meet the expectations of the Core Strategy. The sites identified in the Site Allocations DPD will therefore be subject to the strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy DPD, and any more site specific policies outlined in the Site Allocations DPD.
- 2.19 The Core Strategy does not go into much detail about the requirements and management of KGBSs. Paragraph 5.6 of the section on Open Land and Environment in the Core Strategy explains they are currently developed land within the Green Belt, where there are a number of established businesses that pre-date Green Belt designation. The premise for including a Site Allocation/Development Management policy in the future is recognised in Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy. It states:

'Key Green Belt Sites (previously known as Major Developed Sites) contain established educational, research and other institutions within the Green Belt and are suitable locations for appropriate infilling: development within defined boundaries for infilling will be considered acceptable and these boundaries will be reviewed through the Site Allocations DPD...'

## **Site Allocations and Development Management Policies**

- 2.20 The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD will define the boundaries for the Borough's Key Green Belt Sites and for other sites and areas. The process of preparing the replacement Local Plan provides the opportunity to review boundaries. This document therefore contributes to the review. It does not formally determine or designate key sites in the Green Belt or new boundaries, but it does reach conclusions and make recommendations.
- 2.21 A significant part of this study is to review the extent of the site boundaries and the envelopes for appropriate infilling. The site boundaries should reflect the use of the land, and the envelopes should reflect past changes on the ground and take into account accepted proposals for the future. The 1999 Local Plan Inquiry Inspector stated that the area of a major developed site and its envelope of appropriate infilling (EAI) should be defined by the buildings physically present and not on the basis of future plans for redevelopment.
- 2.22 Buildings on existing Key Green Belt Sites are clustered in a generally small area, compared with the site curtilage. Often the site curtilage coincides with the extent of an ownership.
- 2.23 The NPPF indicates what appropriate development is. This includes infilling in villages and on brownfield land in the Green Belt. It is logical for the Local Plan to explain what infilling should constitute in order to protect the openness and character of the Green Belt. The approach to previously developed sites in the Green Belt has altered slightly, as follows:
- '...the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are: ...limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within in than the existing development.'
- 2.24 The NPPF gives a more encouraging approach to accommodating new or extended school facilities.

### **3. Background Issues influencing the Review**

#### **Importance of Green Belt within planning policy**

- 3.1 In September 2005 the Council sent a questionnaire to every household in the Borough to gauge opinion on a number of key issues. The protection of the Green Belt was noted as being one of the top priorities for residents within the Borough. Whilst the protection of the Green Belt remains a successful and popular planning policy, its restriction on the supply and availability of housing land does have important repercussions. Almost 80% of the 98 sq.km of land in the Borough is Green Belt, meaning there is a limited amount of easily developable land despite the pressure for new housing and employment land.
- 3.2 Open land within the Green Belt does not have a single character or use. Agricultural and recreational uses account for a large proportion of Green Belt land but within these locations, the diversity of landscape and wildlife is considerable. There are various Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest together with historic parks such as Wrotham Park and Wall Hall and the battlefield site at Kitts End. The borough is also located almost entirely within the Watling Chase Community Forest, one of twelve community forests across the country. It contains wildlife habitats, providing an attractive location for the public to enjoy, and also contributes to rural employment and reduces atmospheric pollution by absorbing pollutant gases. There are also some large employers located in the Green Belt, such as the Bio-Products laboratories in Aldenham and the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control site in South Mimms. These two areas alone provide 27 hectares of employment land.
- 3.3 There are conflicting needs for development for housing, employment land, and social infrastructure within the Borough, all leading to a substantial pressure to build on Green Belt land. These needs are likely to intensify over time because the amount of previously developed land available will diminish as a result of new development. The needs of the existing Key Sites in the Green Belt are also likely to change in response to similar pressures.

## **4. Methodology of Research and Proposed Methods of Management for Sites**

### **General Methodology**

- 4.1 Much of this document was prepared as a desktop study, using a variety of historical and up-to-date secondary (existing) documentation from which background information on each site was obtained. In some cases, owners/occupiers had asked the Council to consider possible changes. We visited each of the sites.

### **Key Green Belt Sites**

- 4.2 We also sent a letter and questionnaire to owners/occupiers of each of the existing key sites seeking information
- 4.3 For potential key sites, a desktop sieving of the Borough's maps was undertaken to create a list of additional sites within the Green Belt. This information was added to sites that had been put forward to the Council as part of the Issues and Options Consultation for the former 'Local Development Framework' in 2005/6, and sites from the Urban Capacity Sites list. The majority of these sites were not suitable, either because of their size, use or location. Some were more relevant to a general review of the Green Belt boundary.
- 4.4 Each existing or likely prospective site was assessed taking account of the criteria set out in paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF (they closely reflect the requirements of Annex C in the former PPG2). Recommendations for change of the established boundary should provide exceptional circumstances to support the change. Particular regard was given to ensuring the boundary would be equally or more defensible, and that there was a sound reason for change. Changes were only recommended where exceptional circumstances, an equal or more defensible boundary and a logical reason for change could be demonstrated.

### **Methods of Management for Sites**

- 4.5 The assessments examined the relevance of the 'envelopes of appropriate infill' and their extent. Envelopes have been successfully utilised as a method of defining the boundary of the present extent of development on the individual sites. Envelope is not a term used in national policy but a Hertsmere specific term that enables the Council to consistently adhere to the definition of 'limited infilling' in paragraph 89 of the NPPF. The definition of the envelope boundary is the present extent of development.
- 4.6 It is the intent of the Key Sites review to provide an envelope for each site. The Council considers that it provides greater certainty to those managing the sites and gives a clear indication of purpose to the Planning Inspectorate. Proposed Key Sites will include an envelope as part of the recommendation. Existing key sites have had their envelopes reassessed as part of the investigations.

### **Correcting or Adjusting Envelopes**

- 4.7 This would apply if in the course of investigating the site and during the site visit it is found that the envelope does not accurately depict the current extent of development on the site; for example if the line of the envelope is drawn through or narrowly excludes a

building that is obviously part of the main building footprint on the site then the envelope should be adjusted to include the entire building within the envelope.

- 4.8 Several of the sites have had additional envelopes drawn on the site over time, following consideration of different development proposals. In some cases it will be deemed more efficient to rationalise multiple envelopes so that the building form is better recognised and the objectives of the NPPF more readily met.
- 4.9 However in other cases, there may be good reason for additional envelopes – i.e. where a significant building or tight cluster of buildings occurs within the site boundary but at such a distance from the existing envelope as to make it unreasonable to include it within the current envelope. In this situation any infilling between the two building footprints would compromise the openness of the Green Belt and/or any of the other objectives of the NPPF.
- 4.10 It is acknowledged that many of the current Key Sites have master plans showing how they may develop in the future. The majority of these have gained outline planning permission for their master plans, or have the benefit of full planning permission for new or replacement buildings. However the NPPF argues that an envelope of appropriate infill should only reflect the buildings that exist on the site at the time of designation. It is clear that it is the physical presence of structures on the ground and their layout that should govern the extent of the envelope and not the extent of the future buildings.

#### **Policy for Key Sites in the Green Belt**

- 4.11 The existing policy and supporting text for the former 'Major Developed Sites' in the Borough is contained in the Countryside chapter of the Hertsmere Local Plan (pages 46-48). To date this policy has functioned well and has generally been able to achieve its purpose. The NPPF purpose, principles and approach to the Green Belt also has not changed compared to the former PPG2, meaning that a similar stance towards these Key Sites can continue. The Core Strategy 2013 sets the scene for Key Sites, and recognises the established nature of these sites in the Green Belt. There is a presumption to protect the Green Belt, and be consistent with the purposes of including land within it.
- 4.12 Key Sites can assist in this by keeping their built footprint as compact and as unobtrusive as possible. It is anticipated that any future development will be compliant with the expectations of the Core Strategy in terms of the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including sustainable construction and high quality design that promotes the local character and results in a building that is energy efficient. Other aspects of the Core Strategy, which are relevant for Key Sites, are the employment and transport policies. Hertsmere has a policy of retaining employment land, while these sites are not generally designated key employment sites these sites do employ significant numbers of people some of whom are very specialised in their fields.
- 4.13 The Core Strategy acknowledges the need to recognise the car will continue to be the dominant mode of transport in the Borough. Most Key Green Belt Sites are not close to public transport links and are most easily accessed by car. Several existing Key Sites have either completed or are in the process of writing a Green Travel Plan for their site. These look at the options of carpooling and offering facilities for people who cycle. The schools have a different approach – e.g. in arranging school buses. The reality is that these sites in the Green Belt will remain their dependency on private transport, whether that is the car or a contract with transport providers (i.e. school buses). This contrasts with the general approach to planning whereby new trip generating development is

encouraged to be located in the already well-established town centres and away from areas of Green Belt.

- 4.14 The current policy for existing Key Sites is observed to be working well. The envelopes achieve their purpose in that they clearly demarcate the areas of the sites where building will be deemed appropriate and where the case for very special circumstances must be put forward. Some changes to the policy are appropriate; for example, reference to green travel plans.

#### **Schools in the Green Belt**

- 4.15 The Green Belt contains a large number of schools. Some are Key Green Belt Sites. Others are not.
- 4.16 All are important for the future sustainability of the communities they serve and to the future of young people in general. Several schools are also either part of the Government Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative, or are finding that they need to update their facilities in order to meet new legislative requirements. The Council is supportive of schools which need to renew, rebuild or expand.
- 4.17 Schools in the Green Belt are required to demonstrate very special circumstances in support of development. For some schools that have limited budgets, this can be a difficult task that may hamper their ability to achieve their education development goals. The NPPF places 'great importance' on the provision of new schools and the extension of existing schools, and expects councils to take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement'.
- 4.18 It is not considered appropriate to designate all school sites in the Green Belt (as Key Green Belt Sites which allow a certain amount of infilling and change). Some do not comply with the requirements to become a Key Green Belt Site, invariably because they are too small.
- 4.19 While the maintenance of the integrity of the Green Belt is of great importance, it is acknowledged that many smaller schools are located in the Green Belt. The Council recognises their continued need to operate and change in response to changing educational demands. When a planning application is made, full weight should be given to Green Belt considerations, balanced with the NPPF's requirement to provide for schools.

## 5. Reviewing Existing Key Green Belt Sites

- 5.1 Hertsmere currently has fifteen Key Sites in the Green Belt (formerly Major Developed Sites), which are delineated on the Proposals Map of the Hertsmere Local Plan 2003. They are listed in paragraph 5.2 below. The South Mimms (Bignells Corner) Special Policy Area, which is in the Green Belt, is not classified as a Key Site: it is currently subject to a separate policy.
- 5.2 The current MDS sites are:
- Aldenham School, Letchmore Heath
  - Bio Products Laboratory - Dagger Lane, Aldenham
  - Bushey Hall School (now Bushey Academy)
  - Bushey Meads School
  - Dame Alice Owen's School – Sawyers Lane, Potters Bar
  - Haberdashers' Aske's School (Boys) – Aldenham Road, Elstree
  - Haberdashers' Aske's School (Girls) – Aldenham Road, Elstree
  - Imperial Cancer Research Fund (now called Cancer Research UK) –Blanche Lane, South Mimms / Ridge
  - International University – The Avenue, Bushey
  - National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) – Blanche Lane, South Mimms / Ridge
  - Nicholas Hawksmoor School and Sports Centre (now called Hertswood Lower School) – Cowley Hill, Borehamwood
  - Purcell School – Aldenham Road, Bushey
  - Queen's School - Aldenham Road, Bushey
  - St Margarets School – Merry Hill Road, Bushey
  - Watford Campus, University of Hertfordshire, Wall Hall, Aldenham
- 5.3 Many of the Key Sites in Hertsmere were developed before the Green Belt designation and are predominantly education, research and healthcare facilities. Of these fifteen sites, five are secondary schools within the state system and five are private secondary schools. Of the other five sites, three are major research establishments, one is the former Wall Hall Campus of the University of Hertfordshire and one the former International University which occupied the complex originally constructed as the Masonic School for Boys.
- 5.4 Over the years a number of these sites have benefited from planning permission for extensions, new buildings, sports facilities and ancillary residential accommodation to enable their continuing use. Some limited infilling and extensions of buildings on these sites has been allowed to enable essential upgrading of facilities. Two sites have been substantially redeveloped for residential purposes following the cessation of the original educational use.
- 5.5 Prior to 1995 development on many of these sites was considered appropriate development since it was associated with institutions standing in extensive grounds – i.e. a particular use. Following the introduction of the PPG2 on Green Belts in 1995 new building for this use was considered to be inappropriate. However local authorities could identify major developed areas within which infilling and limited change could take place. The Council therefore identified major developed sites in its Local Plan of 2003.
- 5.6 The NPPF (2012) now allows for limited infilling (or partial or complete redevelopment) which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

- 5.7 For all the Key Sites therefore, it has been considered reasonable to permit limited infilling or redevelopment. In this context, infilling means the filling of small gaps between existing built development on the site. The Council encourage infill development to occur within the envelope wherever possible. The purpose of these envelopes is to ensure that development will have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development. For all Key Sites, the envelope for appropriate infilling was previously determined on the basis of the developed site and not on the basis of any planning permission that was unimplemented at the time.
- 5.8 For education sites, there has been a continuing need for development in order to provide improved facilities for the students to meet the requirements of the national curriculum and standards set by education authorities such as Ofsted as well as the Disability Discrimination legislation.
- 5.9 The three research institutions have long been established in the Borough. These sites are all substantially developed, with alterations occurring as a result of the natural evolution of each technology and needs of the institution. They are major employers, and contribute to the economy and reputation of the Borough.
- 5.10 The following tables discuss each of the fifteen MDS sites and South Mimms Services in turn, summarising the history, current use, recent planning history and future plans. The table concludes with comments relevant to this review, including a recommendation on the future designation of the site.



**Table 1.1: Aldenham School, Aldenham Road, Letchmore Heath**

***History and use***

Founded in 1596 by Richard Platt when he obtained Letters Patent to build "the Free Grammar School and Almshouses" at Aldenham from Queen Elizabeth I. The Foundation Stone was laid in 1597. Aldenham School is a co-educational grammar school for boarders and day education, including a preparatory and senior school for ages 3 to 18. Certain buildings on the site date back to the 1820s and three buildings are listed. The site is situated to the south of Letchmore Heath and to the north east of Elstree. It is approximately 1km from the Haberdashers Aske's Schools to its southeast.

***Planning History***

There is a wealth of planning history on the site of Aldenham School dating back to 1981, when complete records were kept. The majority of alterations consist of improving, refurbishing, demolishing and replacing buildings, plus the installation of temporary classroom buildings. The majority of these alterations have occurred within the area of what are now two envelopes for appropriate infilling. They are tightly defined around the older buildings, but do not cover all of the school's operational area. On 15 August 2002 the Bushey Aldenham Planning Committee supported in principle a Development Strategy document (in effect a master plan) including an overall objective of enhancing the school's facilities.

***Criteria***

As an educational establishment the school meets the use criteria for a KGBS. In terms of impact on the Green Belt the rationalisation and proposed expansion of the envelope will have little to no impact on the openness of the Green Belt as the buildings already exist.

***Future Plans***

Aldenham School has a 10 Year Strategy with programmed works for changes to the school fabric. The Site Allocations representations states that they wish to review the overall boundary of the site including the two envelopes. There are a number of buildings outside the envelope and there is little scope to locate new buildings within the envelope due to the highly built up nature and listing of some buildings within the envelopes.

***Comments***

The school and the envelope is on land designated as a Site of Archaeological Interest. The northwest boundary sits adjacent to the boundary for the Letchmore Heath Conservation Area. The School House, 1 Elm Cottages, and the Library are Grade II Listed Buildings.

***Recommendation***

To maintain this site as a KGBS. As an educational establishment with large grounds it will ensure that the Green Belt is maintained in terms of keeping a strategic gap between north Bushey, Bushey and the western part of Bushey that adjoins Watford.

***Envelope Adjustment***

The current envelopes do not fully reflect what is on the ground. The two envelopes should be joined into one envelope and expanded on the north western boundary to include the prep school which now has no separation from the main school. Another area where the envelope could be adjusted is the staff accommodation at the front of the main school, where half is currently included in the envelope and half is excluded. To create a more rational boundary the envelope should include the cluster of staff accommodation that is currently excluded. There is one house which, although in the same area of the remaining staff accommodation, is slightly removed from Coach House and Elm Cottages and this should remain outside the envelope.

Figure 1.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries

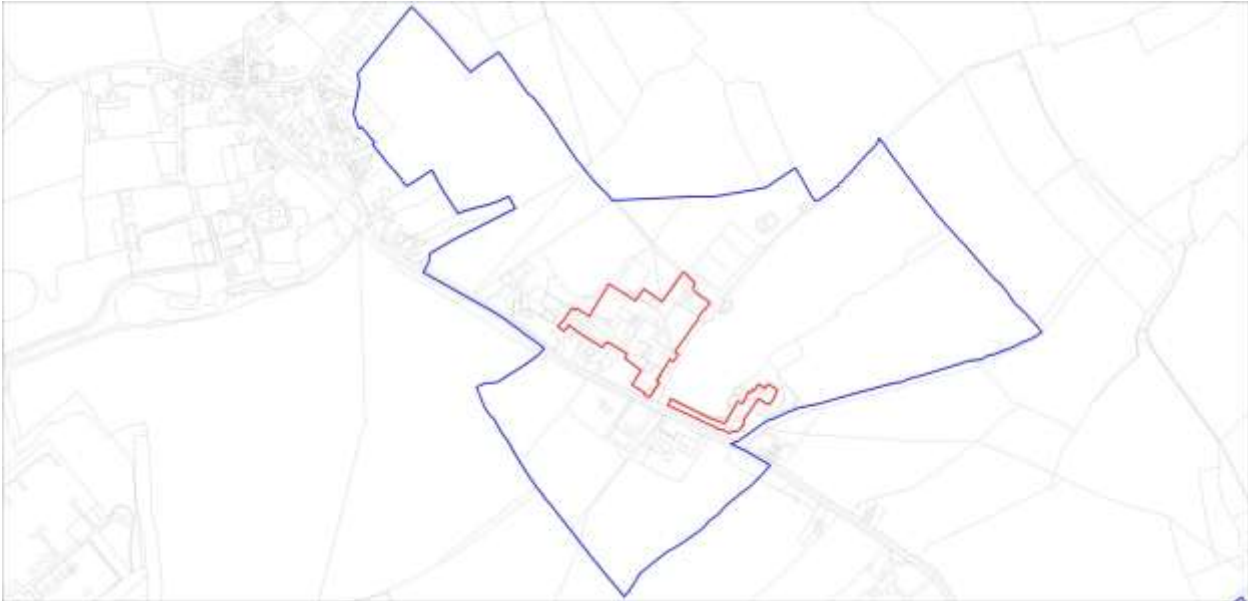


Figure 1.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 2.1: Bio-Products Laboratory, Dagger Lane, Aldenham**

***History and use***

The Bio Products Laboratory (BPL) is a not-for-profit organisation owned entirely by the Government. Based in Dagger Lane near Elstree, the organisation undertakes research and development used to inform and provide products to the global health market, specialising in blood products such as plasma. The site employs over 50 professional researchers working within the overall structure of the NHS and Department of Health.

***Planning History***

Planning history shows a variety of consents being sought for the property from the late 1980s through to 2006. These all relate to the management of the site as a scientific facility with the exception of car parking being sought for the Lister Cottages. Permission for the temporary use of portacabins and their retention has also featured frequently.

***Future Plans***

Plans submitted in response to the investigations for this project show that they intend two extensions to the warehouse totalling approximately 480m<sup>2</sup>. This extension would be outside the current envelope, which hugs the existing building footprint. There is also an intention to demolish the old laboratory and production building 3125m<sup>2</sup> and build the Monoclonal Production Building (cellular research) which would be 1800m<sup>2</sup> along with another two administrative buildings and a medical building (totalling 1750m<sup>2</sup> for the three). A proportion of the Monoclonal Production Building falls outside the envelope (approximately 25%) all the other proposed buildings are inside the existing envelope. There is also an intention to expand the research and development building, which falls outside the Envelope. The occupier of the site has proposed an extended envelope to the existing, and two new envelopes to accommodate a new electrical 'ring main unit' and a proposed sewerage facility.

***Criteria***

As a research facility BPL meets the use criteria. The proposed new buildings, extensions and uses will require planning permission and will need to have its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the other relevant designations assessed at the time.

***Comments***

Part of the site is within a Site of Archaeological Importance. The west and north west boundary of the site abuts a wildlife site and a Local Nature Reserve.

***Recommendation***

To maintain this site as a Key Site.

The research and development building is not included in the current envelope. There are no specific plans to use the space currently used as a car park for any other use. There is an argument for extending the envelope on the site to encompass the R&D laboratory, bearing in mind that there is a proposed extension to a couple of the existing buildings.

The Lister Cottages are included in the Key Site boundary because they have shown previously to be within the Bio Products estate. They do not have an envelope.

Figure 2.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries



Figure 2.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 3.1: Bushey Hall School, Falconer Road, Bushey (now Bushey Academy)**

***History and use***

The school was originally built between 1926 and 1929 on the site of Bushey Manor which was demolished c1920. The school was the Royal Masonic Junior School and operated as a boys boarding school. Later the school became known as Watford Technical High School and Grange Park School. It became co-educational in the 1970s. The school is now designated as a foundation school for secondary age pupils. The buildings at the rear of the school, which are used for teaching, were urgently in need of replacement. A planning application was submitted in 2010 to redevelop the site to meet current standards.

***Planning History***

Over the years permission has been sought and granted for minor alterations to improve the safety and accessibility of the site and the buildings. Overall there have been small changes to building fabric but no extensions to overall building footprint. The application in 2010 to replace the majority of the buildings on the site was approved and construction is on-going.

***Future Plans***

There are no known plans for the school beyond the construction of the new school buildings. Land at and/or adjoining the former swimming pool (now First Place Nurseries) has been suggested for housing. This is separately considered in the Council's housing land availability work.

***Criteria***

The impact on the Green Belt needs to be assessed in the determination of applications at the site. This is one of the narrowest gaps between urban areas in the Borough. There is a reasonably strong possibility that if the site is further developed that this could threaten greater coalescence between Bushey, North Bushey and Watford, particularly when considered cumulatively with other extensions and redevelopment nearby. There are a good number of other Key Green Belt Sites in this area. Care therefore needs to be taken in the redevelopment of the school so as to avoid urban sprawl and the coalescence of North Bushey, Watford and Bushey.

***Comments***

The site is within the Bushey High Street Conservation Area. The site is bordered to the east by the residential area of Bushey, to the north by open Green Belt, to the west by the residential area of west Bushey, which is not in the Watling Chase Community Forest.

***Recommendation***

That the site remains a KGBS. The boundary of the envelope has been altered to reflect the footprint of the new building (following the 2010 planning permission). This boundary (like the previous one) is tight around the buildings as there will be little need to expand them further at present.

Figure 3.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries

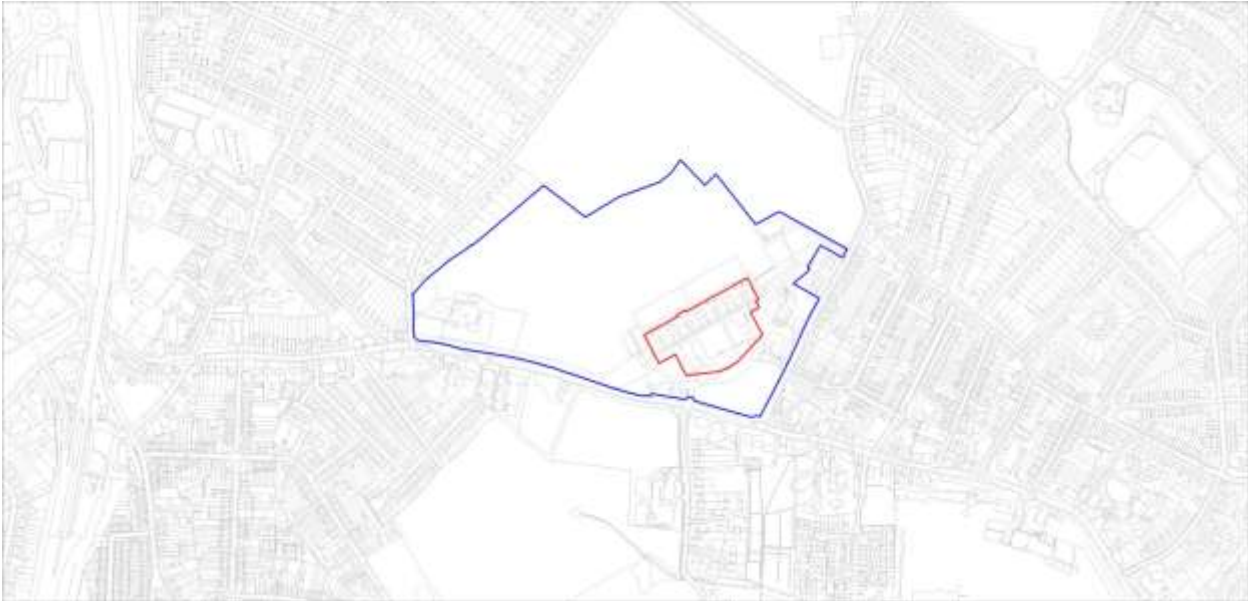


Figure 3.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 4.1: Bushey Meads School, Coldharbour Lane, Bushey**

***History and use***

The school was founded in 1957. It offers secondary education from Year 7 through to the end of sixth form.

***Planning History***

Several extensions and new buildings for classroom facilities within envelope. An application for a new single storey sixth form building just outside the envelope but close to the existing buildings received planning permission in 2005 (TP05/0515), although it has not yet been built.

***Future Plans***

Bushey Meads have been notified that they will be part of the 2013 wave of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative. This is a rebuilding and renewal project aimed at bringing together the buildings and information technology of secondary schools in England up to modern standards. While it is anticipated that the project will result in the refurbishment of the current buildings on the Bushey Meads campus there is also a relatively high certainty that the BSF initiative will result in new buildings being built on site. As a result of the consultation there has been a request by the school that the envelope be expanded to encompass what is currently the tennis courts and paved area at the rear of the school buildings. However, no plans have been provided by the school, to show where the new buildings will go.

***Criteria***

As a large educational facility the school still qualifies for KGBS status. The extra classroom that was granted permission in 2005 has already been assessed as to its effects on the Green Belt and due to the design and placement of the building it was considered to have a negligible effect.

***Comments***

The site is bordered to the north-west, south-west and south by the residential areas of Bushey.

***Recommendation***

That Bushey Meads remains a Key Green Belt Site. Some minor adjustments are needed to give a more rational boundary to the envelope in terms of the current building footprint.

Figure 4.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries



Figure 4.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries





**Table 5.1: Dame Alice Owen’s School – Sawyers Lane, Potters Bar**

***History and use***

The school was founded in 1613 by Dame Alice Owen for 30 boy scholars from Islington. A girls school was founded in 1886. In the 1960s a search was undertaken to find a new school site and in 1973 a combined girls and boys school was opened on the current site just outside Potters Bar. The school teaches Year 7 through to Sixth Form (ages 11-18).

***Planning History***

In 2006 permission was granted for the demolition of the maths block and construction of a new two storey block. Several extensions and replacement buildings have also occurred in the last few years. These have included a new car park area and performing arts centre, boiler house building, and extensions to the squash court building.

***Future Plans***

There is a possible intention to undertake a major new building programme involving a partial re-siting of the school slightly south of the current footprint with a large portion being proposed outside the current envelope. There has been a planning application each for a new science block and for a new sports pavilion. Both have been granted planning permission.

***Criteria***

The school is a large educational establishment that will retain the use after any redevelopment. This will then continue to be an approved use for a KGBS. In the plans submitted to Council the school is moving the footprint further south and away from the housing that is close by and “regreening” the area that they vacate. This will therefore result in a very limited impact on the Green Belt and may well reduce the likelihood for further sprawl in the future. While there may be an argument that the movement of the footprint is encroachment into the Green Belt, this would be negligible and is not considered to increase the risk of further encroachment in the future.

***Comments***

The school is relatively close to the Green Belt Boundary on the south western edge of Potters Bar. Across the road from the site is Dugdale Hill, which is a wildlife site. The southernmost corner of the site is very close to the M25.

***Recommendation***

That Dame Alice Owens remains a Key Green Belt Site.

**Envelope Adjustment**

The current envelope should be changed to reflect the current building envelope and recently approved new buildings.

Figure 5.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries



Figure 5.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 6.1: Haberdashers' Aske's School (Boys) – Aldenham Road, Elstree**

***History and use***

The school was established in 1690 at Hoxton in London. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the school split in two and moved to the Telegraph Hill area of South East London and to Hampstead in North London. In 1961 the Hampstead school moved to its current site in Elstree. The school has a separate building for the prep and pre prep school. All years of schooling are now catered for.

The site itself was once part of the large Aldenham estate. Aldenham House which is on the school site and a Grade II\* listed building was constructed in 1672, remodelled in 1785 and enlarged and remodelled again in 1870-73, and further extended in 1883. Additions were also carried out in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The last seated owner of Aldenham House was Vicary Gibbs. On his death in 1932, the house and extensive gardens were auctioned on his death in 1932. The house was turned into a country club. With the onset of war, Aldenham was requisitioned by the BBC and equipped as an overseas broadcasting station, sending out allied propaganda to the Middle East and Latin America. After the war, the house remained empty until purchased by the school in 1959.

The Aldenham Estate site today accommodates the Hilfield Reservoir, the Bio Products Laboratory, Elstree Aerodrome, Aldenham Park; and Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' and Haberdashers' Aske's Girls' Schools.

***Planning History***

The planning files show that there has been a major reconstruction of the science and geography building with an access road. There have been extensions to car park areas and driveways. Several extensions have been made to existing buildings and re-siting of sport pitches and courts. A new sport changing facilities and maintenance buildings were recently granted permission.

***Future Plans***

The school has a relatively extensive redevelopment programme, planned to occur in several phases. The majority of the redevelopment will be replacement of existing buildings. There has been a request to extend the envelope of the main school and create a separate envelope for the prep school. The extension of the envelope for the main school would bring the envelope more in line with what is currently built on the site and allow a little more freedom for the rebuilding programme. The creation of a new envelope may be justified in that there is a considerable distance between the main school and the prep school and it would be inappropriate to extend the envelope of the main school that far. The prep school is now well established and has recently opened pre prep classes and may well merit a separate envelope.

***Criteria***

The proposed development and redevelopment of this site will not encourage any urban or suburban sprawl, or merging of towns/villages. There will be a minor encroachment into the countryside as a result of the new sports centre but this will be negligible and is unlikely to encourage further encroachment in the future.

***Comments***

The site is subject to several designations in the Hertsmere Local Plan. The north eastern boundary of the site is adjacent to a wildlife site. The area of land immediately around and including the buildings on the site is also identified as a wildlife site, which is specifically identified as having a protected species. There is a Scheduled Ancient Monument close to the northern most boundary of the site, which is surrounded by a site of archaeological interest. The entire school site is identified as being part of a historic park and garden. Aldenham House and stables are Grade II\* listed buildings

**Recommendation**

Maintain as a Key Green Belt Site.

The plans included in the information sent to the Council show an intention for a new sports centre with a new English and Drama unit above it and a new teaching area all within the same area of the school. However the master plan that has been received by Council does not give the exact placement, size or footprint of the proposed buildings, only their general positioning within the school.

**Envelope Adjustment**

The current envelope does not contain the whole of the current building footprint of the school with several buildings either partially or fully outside it. The school has requested that the envelope be changed to encompass the existing and proposed buildings and therefore better represent the correct building footprint. The prep school is some distance from the main school, is well established and is now also functioning as a pre prep school. The building footprint is substantial enough and the school is defined enough to warrant it own envelope. The new envelope has been drawn to reflect the building footprint: it does not include the playing area or car parking that are adjacent to the prep school.

Figure 6.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries

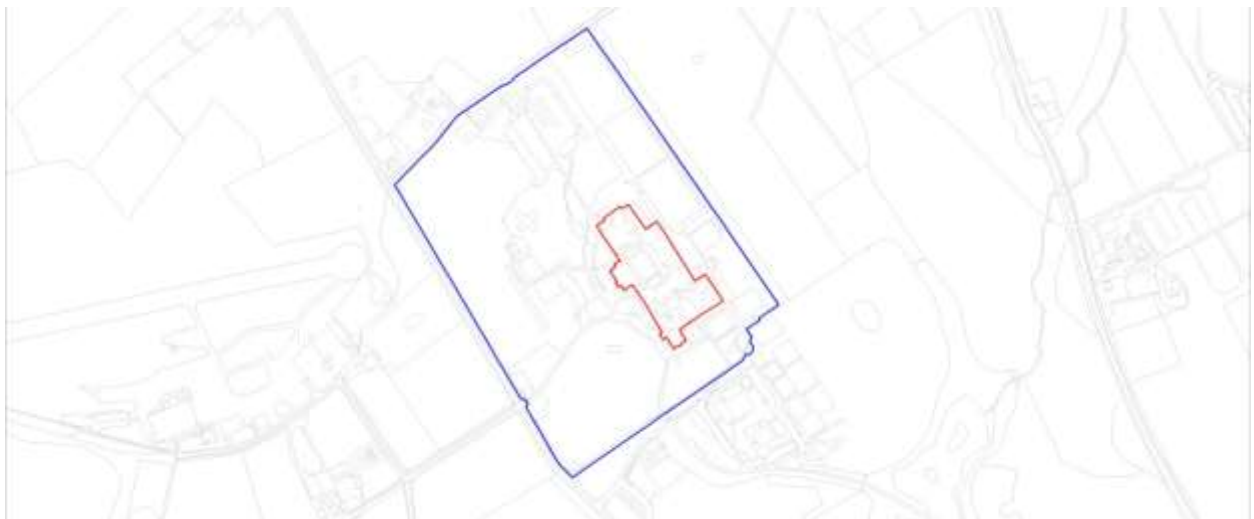


Figure 6.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 7.1 Haberdashers' Aske's School (Girls) – Aldenham Road, Elstree**

***History and use***

The school was founded in 1875 in Hoxton in 1898. The school moved to Acton and then moved to its current site next to the Haberdashers' Askes' Boys in 1974. It teaches girls from the age of four through to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> form. The site was originally part of the Aldenham estate.

***Planning History***

The site has an extensive planning history including the extension of classroom blocks, a new gymnasium, and a building for an indoor swimming pool.

***Future Plans***

It is anticipated that a rationalisation of the current footprint of the school could meet their needs, with only small adjustments to the envelope. It is intended that the old swimming pool site could be used for a new dining room facility to meet their need for increased seating capacity with classrooms above, and a new junior school hall could then occupy part of the area currently used by the dining hall, which would then leave room for an increase in playground area. The small changes in the envelope would incorporate the music school built in 1978 and include the corner opposite the design workshop where there would be better (single storey) maintenance/ workshop facilities.

***Criteria***

As an educational facility the school is still considered to be an appropriate use for a KGBS. The new swimming pool is being built and the adjustments proposed to the envelope are minor and will enclose existing structures. Therefore there will be no impact on the openness of the Green Belt in terms of urban/suburban sprawl, merging of towns/villages or countryside encroachment.

***Comments***

The entire site is designated as a historic park and garden. The area of land including and surrounding the building is a wildlife site containing a protected species. The boundary of the school adjoining Haberdashers' Boys School is also close to a wildlife site..

***Recommendation***

That the school remain a Key Green Belt Site. The envelope should be adjusted to incorporate the requested existing buildings that are just outside of the existing envelope.

Figure 7.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries



Figure 7.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 8.1: Cancer Research UK (CRUK) – Blanche Lane, South Mimms / Ridge**

***History and use***

Cancer Research UK was formed in 2002 after the merger of Imperial Cancer Research Fund with Cancer Research Campaign. It is now the world's largest independent organisation dedicated to cancer research. The use is well established on the site.

***Planning History***

Clare Hall was being used as hospital from the 1890's. In 1978 permission was given for an outline application for the construction of medical research laboratory buildings. Since then there has been a continual expansion of the site for laboratories, ancillary offices and car parking. A master plan was granted permission in 1996 and has since been revised, the latest being in 2002. Since 2002 there have been applications on reserved matters and for permission to construct buildings in accordance with the 2002 outline planning permission. Planning application TP 06 /1565 dealt with reserved matters pursuant to the 2002 permission and provided updated phasing plans for the overall outline development.

***Future Plans***

CRUK has three outstanding phases of development (phases 2,3,and 4). Phases 2 and 3 are currently under construction and consist of the construction of additional research laboratories and ancillary facilities including additional car parking. Phase 4 has not yet begun.

***Criteria***

In terms of its impact on the Green Belt the expansion of the built footprint will result in the spread of building, bringing that closer to the village of Ridge. Another effect of the expansion will be encroachment into the countryside. Whilst this is contained within property boundaries it will be substantial and visible. Another effect of the expansion of the site is the greater risk of South Mimms and Ridge merging. The M25 will ultimately prevent this but an overpass allows easy access between the two villages. While it is acknowledged that the development is occurring along Blanche Lane away from South Mimms, there is an increased risk of a precedent being set for future expansion to the north. As permission has already been granted for the expansion plans, it is concluded that these issues have been taken into account.

***Comments***

The CRUK Laboratories are situated to the east of the village of Ridge, and to the south west of South Mimms. The two villages are less than a mile apart. The site is under a TPO and Clare Hall is a Grade II listed building.

***Recommendation***

That the site remains a KGBS site. It is further recommended that the southern portion of CRUK land, which is currently being developed, be shown as a KGBS site. This would be similar to the Queens School site, in that a road separates the two sites: in this case, it is the access to the NIBSC site.

The envelope should be expanded on the northern portion of the CRUK site to include the new buildings. A new envelope should be drawn around Clare Hall and the adjacent new building. A further new envelope should be drawn for the building shown as phase 3 according to the new phasing plans accompanying Planning Permission 06/1565, as it is currently under construction.



Figure 8.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries

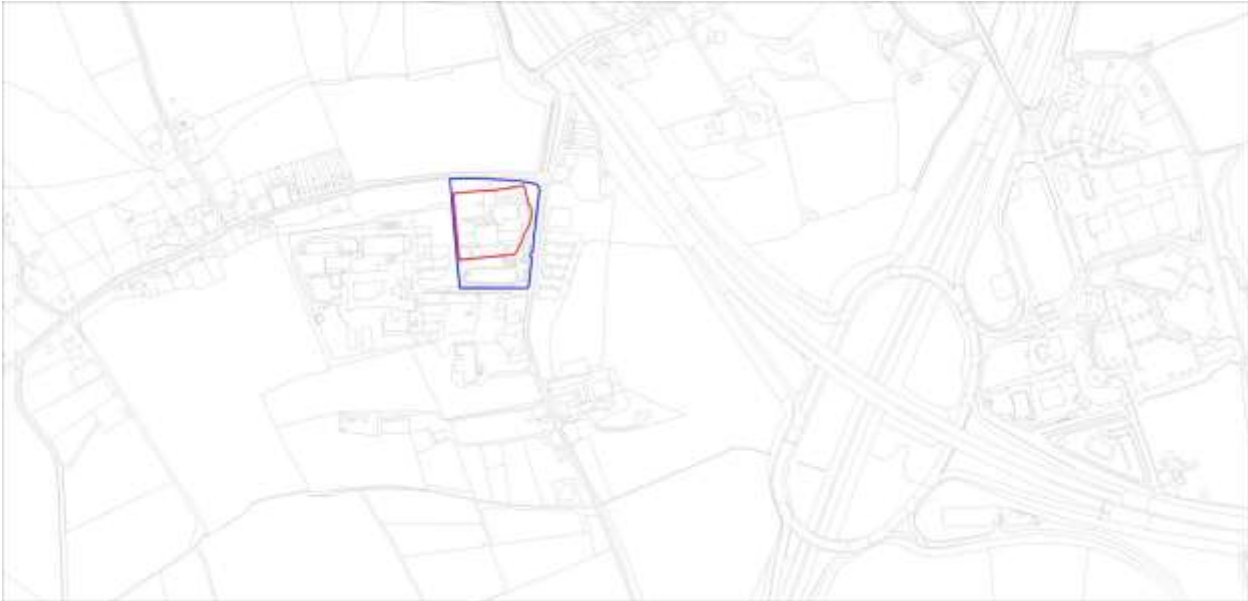
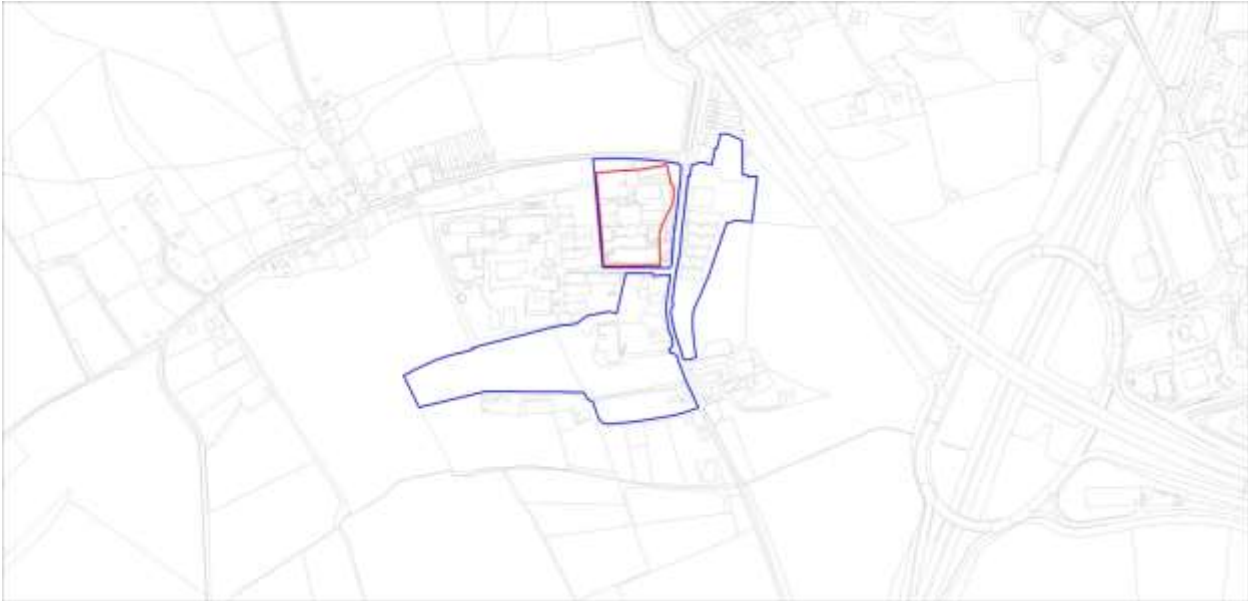


Figure 8.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 9.1: International University – The Avenue, Bushey (Redeveloped)**

***History and use***

The site was originally the Royal Masonic School for Boys (senior boys – the junior school being the current Bushey Hall School). It was built in 1903, and closed in 1977. The International University of Europe then took over the site until 1993. Since then the site has been used for the location of several film and TV productions.

***Planning History***

The school had an extensive planning history relating to expansion of classrooms additional dwellings and other issues relating to the school use. Much of the history relating to the University is that of internal alterations and listed building consent. Since the closure of the University there have been several applications relating to the conversion and expansion of the property to residential use which have since been permitted. Although there have been several amendments, the redevelopment of the site is substantially completed.

***Future Plans***

The site will be redeveloped into over 300 dwellings with associated car parking and leisure facilities.

***Criteria***

The site is being redeveloped for housing and as such no longer meets the criteria for a Key Green Belt Site.

***Comments***

Several of the buildings on site are listed. The area of the site where the buildings are located is identified as an estimated housing site in the Hertsmere Local Plan. The field on the western side of the Avenue is proposed public open space.

***Recommendation***

This site no longer meets the criteria for suitable designation as a Key Green Belt Site. The use is no longer as an education establishment and the buildings clearly appear as a residential estate and not as any of the listed types of building usually designated, nor of the type of use that is classed as being appropriate within the Green Belt such as an agricultural or sports building.

The site should therefore have its designation as a Key Green Belt Site removed but it can continue to form part of the wider Green Belt north of Bushey.

**Table 10.1: National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) – Ridge**

***History and use***

The origins of the scientific work of this Institute date back to 1928 and the activities of the Medical Research Council's National Institute for Medical Research situated at Mill Hill in London. In the 1970's the responsibility for the control and standardisation part of the work was transferred to the newly established National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC). Since 1976 the Institute has been directly funded by the Department of Health. Originally situated at Hampstead in London. NIBSC moved to purpose-built accommodation in South Mimms in 1987. The Biological Standards Act of 1975 established the National Biological Standards Board, which manages NIBSC. The Act also established the Institute as the UK's Official Medicines Control Laboratory for biological medicines and laid down its statutory functions.

***Planning History***

Planning permission was granted in 1979 for the construction of medical research laboratory buildings, since then there has been a reasonably steady expansion of the site. Since the early 1990s master plans have been deposited with the Council for outline permission with permission also being sought for the various amendments and reserved matters.

***Future Plans***

NIBSC have a master plan through to 2014. This plan includes nine new buildings, one small car park surrounded by buildings and two very large car parks extending the existing parking areas. The two large car parks will be built upon land currently covered by dense tree and shrub growth. There is also a plan for a tennis court in the south east corner of the site. NIBSC also want to expand the general site area into the west neighbouring field, which they own.

***Criteria***

The planned development of the site will have a restricted amount to sprawl. Ridge will appear closer. The buildings are visible and dominant from road vantages in an otherwise rural setting. While the development does not provide the same level of risk as the CRUK expansion in terms of coalescence with South Mimms, there are definite issues of encroachment. However, it is considered that very special circumstances were demonstrated in order to gain the planning permission for the master plan.

***Comments***

The buildings proposed will be grouped together close to the existing buildings. If the boundary is changed to include the west field, the site will extend along almost the entire length of the developed area of Ridge village and conservation area. The field adjoins an area of archaeological interest.

By expanding the site beyond its current boundary it will enable possible future development that might conflict with the desire to protect not only the openness of the Green Belt in this location, but also impact on the conservation area and Site of Archaeological Interest. By expanding the boundary and envelope, the proportion of buildings to site area would remain approximately the same. This could lead to an unacceptable precedent. If the envelope was to remain the same each phase of the development would have to be applied for separately and an argument made each time for building beyond the envelope. Conversely by enlarging the envelope as part of this review, it would prevent the need for this and would be a more proactive method of managing the expansion of the site. The principle of the envelope is to allow for infill in between existing buildings. The proposed new buildings are closely grouped together so there is little opportunity for infilling between the buildings to the north of the site. However, there are two new buildings proposed to the south of the site that are further away from the main cluster. This could lead to more infilling should the envelope include these two buildings.

Access to the site is gained across what was originally CRUK land off Blanche Lane. It is also in close proximity to Ridge and South Mimms.

**Recommendation**

That the site retain the Key Green Belt Site status. As NIBSC have purchased more land the general KGBS boundary should be redrawn to include the western field.

The envelope for appropriate infilling should also be redrawn to include the buildings that have been built since the last Plan and are currently under construction (permanent UK Stem Cell Bank and Flu Centre). The buildings across the service road are more imposing and dominating than they appear on the aerial photography and plans. Although the road may form a definable boundary it would be an anomaly to exclude these buildings, especially as there is an intention to build another building on the same area of the site. It is therefore recommended that the envelope boundary cross the road and encompass the existing buildings on the site.

Figure 10.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries



Figure 10.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



| <b>Table 11.1: Hertswood School (Lower) – Cowley Hill, Borehamwood</b>  |
|---|
| <p><b>History and use</b></p> <p>In 2000 Holmshill middle and Nicholas Hawksmoor upper schools amalgamated to become Borehamwood's secondary school, Hertswood. The lower school is situated at the Cowley Hill site while the upper school is off Thrift Farm Lane.</p>  |
| <p><b>Planning History</b></p> <p>Nicholas Hawksmoor School was granted permission for construction in 1954, Holmshill was constructed in the same era. Both schools have a relatively constant history of expansion and rebuilding. A new music and drama block and additional classrooms was granted permission in 1999 on the Lower School site. This block was part of the amalgamation programme and has been constructed. Since the amalgamation no applications for major construction have been received.</p> |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b></p> <p>The school board are considering consolidation of the Upper and Lower Schools onto this site. This would entail complete reconstruction.</p>  |
| <p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>Although it is no longer a school specialising in sports but a state secondary school, it still qualifies as a KGBS use. At the moment there is not any risk to the site causing urban sprawl and/or encroachment in to the Green Belt. However, if the school were to expand in the future there would be a risk of these occurring.</p>   |
| <p><b>Comments</b></p> <p>The site is the eastern edge of Borehamwood with the Cowley Hill site being situated at the apex of Cowley Hill and Potters Lane. While the school is situated in the Green Belt it is directly across the road from residential development.</p>   |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That the school remain a KGBS. The envelope of appropriate infill can be retained for the time being as a guide to the consideration of the future layout and extent of building at the remodelled school in the Green Belt (and hence its impact).</p>   |

Figure 11.2: Current and Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 12.1: Purcell School – Aldenham Road, Bushey**

***History and use***

Formerly the Royal Caledonian School, the site became Purcell School in 1996. It is now considered to be one of Britain's best specialist music schools designed for exceptional young musical talents.

***Planning History***

Royal Caledonian School - A new sports pitch and additional accommodation through internal alterations were granted consent.

Purcell School - Several new buildings for teaching facilities such as a music centre and general teaching have been approved since the Purcell School opened. Most recently an outline application for future alterations, including the demolition of buildings and the erection of new buildings has been approved.

***Future Plans***

The recent outline application contained a master plan detailing new buildings; these will fulfil a range of , including sports and teaching facilities, boarding and social areas, and teachers' offices.

***Criteria***

The plans that the school have provided as their long term master plan are unlikely to cause any harm to the Green Belt. Although the school has requested a slight expansion to their envelope this could not be perceived as urban sprawl or encouraging the merging of towns. However as with the neighbouring Queens' School, and nearby Bushey Hall School, the school is situated in the strategic gap between Bushey and North Bushey, although the current proposed development plans are unlikely to affect the openness of the Green Belt in the area. However, it is an issue to be mindful of in the future.

***Comments***

The school abuts Queens' School site and to the north east the North Bushey residential area. The school also backs on to Bushey Hall Golf Course. The school grounds form part of the proposed strategic gap between Bushey, North Bushey and Watford. Several of the buildings appear on the Local List, including Main School Block, Headmasters House, West Lodge, and the Art and Practice Rooms.

***Recommendation***

The school should remain a Key Green Belt Site. While it does not require any major adjustments of the envelope there are some adjustments that should be made to bring whole buildings into the envelope (namely the new music block) and provide better rationale to the envelope.

Figure 12.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries



Figure 12.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 13.1: Queen's School - Aldenham Road, Bushey**

***History and use***

Queens' School was formed in September 1969 by the amalgamation of Bushey Grammar School and Alexandra School on a 52 acre site on both sides of Aldenham Road. In September 1985, Grange Park School became part of Queens': this was later reopened as Bushey Hall School.

***Planning History***

Application approved on 26/03/07 for major new sports facility (under construction at the time of writing). Other extensions to the school facilities and internal alterations have occurred over time.

***Future Plans***

No information has been received in regards to future expansion.

***Criteria***

The school is a large educational establishment on two sides of Aldenham Rd and as such qualifies as a KGBS according to the use criterion. The school is situated in an important area of the Green Belt between Bushey and North Bushey and is part of what is proposed in the Core Strategy as a strategic gap. Although the school has no immediate plans for expansion any proposals for expansion will be assessed as to whether they will increase the risk of the merging of Bushey and North Bushey.

***Comments***

The school site on the south eastern side of Aldenham Road abuts the International University site. The site on the north western side of Aldenham Road abuts Purcell School, a sports centre and Bushey Hall Golf Course. The combined school site also forms part of the strategic gap.

The envelope on this site needs to be adjusted to include a building at the front of this part of the school campus and the new sports facility currently under construction. Room could be left on the western side of the envelope to provide for possible new classrooms but without any plans or even a definite requirement for classrooms this is considered to be inappropriate.

***Recommendation***

That the school remain a Key Green Belt Site.

**Envelope Adjustment**

The envelope on the south eastern side of Aldenham Road should be adjusted so it is accurate and the buildings that are currently excluded are included, along with the sports facility, which is currently under construction. If the school does wish to build extra classrooms, the school can apply to have the envelope reviewed when and if this is required.



Figure 13.2: Current Site and Envelope

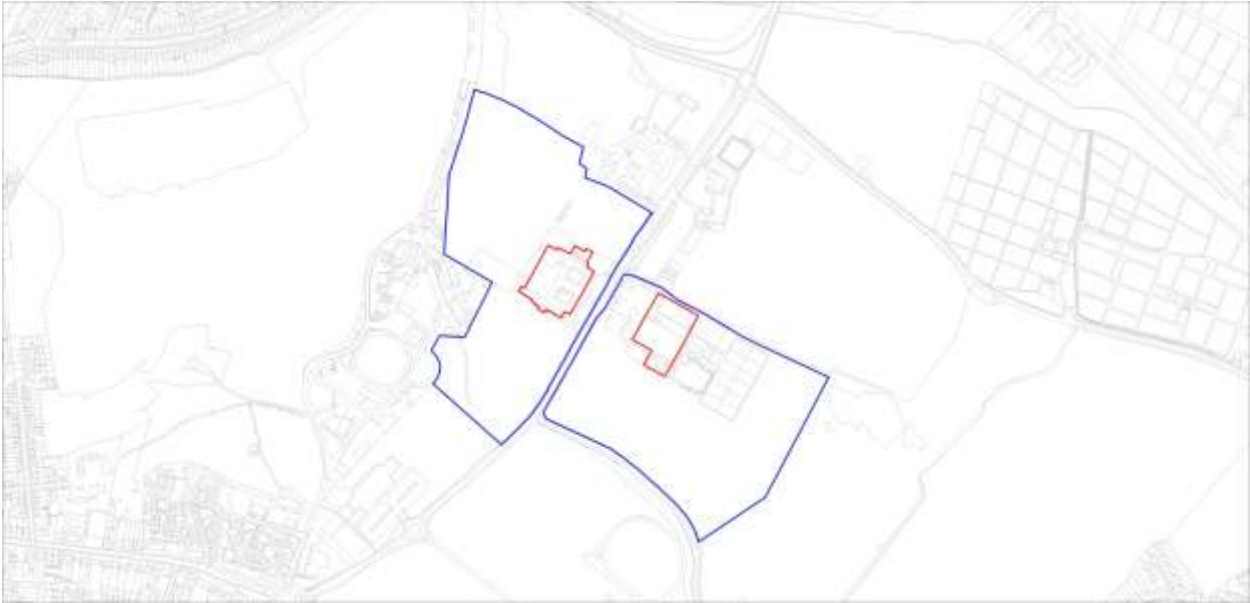


Figure 13.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 14.1: St Margarets School – Merry Hill Road, Bushey**

***History and use***

St Margaret's School is a boarding and day school for girls aged 4-18 in Bushey. It was founded in 1749 and is one of the oldest girls' schools in the country. The school was originally formed to assist poor orphans of clergymen. The school did not move to its current site until 1897.

***Planning History***

- Changes to the entrance from Merry Hill Road have been granted permission.
- In 1998 an application was made for a new two storey sports centre with two all-weather pitches, new access, pupil setting down area and new car park.
- Other alterations are mostly internal or minor extensions and telecommunications masts.

***Future Plans***

The school has stated that due to the listed or outdated condition of some of the buildings on the site, there is a requirement for new science laboratories and music school as well as playing fields.

***Criteria***

The site is an educational establishment and it is anticipated that it will continue as such in the future. Expansion needs to be sensitively handled due to the site's position on the edge of Bushey. The level of the impact on the Green Belt is dependent on the positioning of future expansion. If the senior school on the northern side of Merry Hill Road expands, new buildings would have less impact in terms of sprawl and encroachment if they are located next to the existing clusters of buildings and closer to the residential area rather than the golf course. On the site on the southern side of Merry Hill Road, development close to existing development and the road will encroach less into the Green Belt and the risk of sprawl will be lowered.

***Comments***

The school is situated on the western side of Bushey with its eastern boundaries abutting the residential area of Bushey and Ashfield Junior School. The Orphan School and Chapel are Grade II listed historic buildings. The school has two sites. The senior school is currently identified as a major site in the HLP. The junior school is not, being on the area of land once referred to as Merry Hill Farm. On its own the junior school may not be considered large enough to constitute a Key Site. However, as a part of a combined school site, its cluster of buildings may be considered significant enough to warrant an envelope. The following buildings on the junior school site are locally listed - Merry Hill Farm House, Former House (now the pre prep school), former stables and Merry Hill House (the Prep School's Main Building). There is a Grade II listed barn close to the road on this site.

***Recommendation***

Retain the site as a Key Green Belt Site. It may be logical to rationalise the three envelopes into one L shaped envelope as the buildings are reasonably well grouped together to allow this to occur without compromising the future openness of the Green Belt. While it will leave some space between buildings if infill does occur, it will do so within the existing built form. As to the southern site the boundary should be recognised for this side of the road and an envelope drawn around the cluster of primary school buildings. The nursery school is too separated to include it in the new envelope, as are the old farm buildings, including the Grade II listed barn close to the road.

Figure 14.2: Current Site and Envelope boundaries

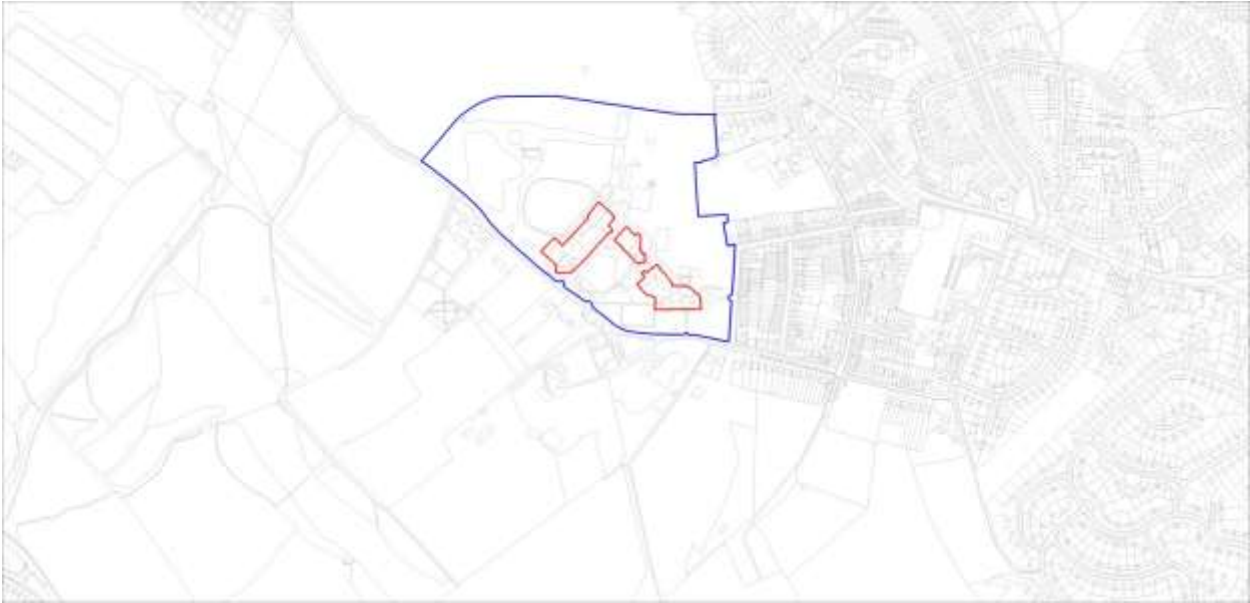


Figure 14.3: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 15.1: Watford Campus, University of Hertfordshire, Wall Hall, Aldenham**

***History and use***

The School of Humanities and Education was based at the University's Watford Campus. The gardens were designed by the landscape gardener, Humphrey Repton, and there was a sculpture trail, which was created as part of the Hertfordshire Arts in Public Places initiative. Wall Hall is an 18<sup>th</sup> century Manor House. The University has since moved the faculty to its new de Havilland Campus and the property developed for residential use.

***Planning History***

Wall Hall was redeveloped extensively for residential use between 2001 and 2005

***Future Plans***

Any future plans for the site would relate to the housing development and not the University so are not relevant to the role of a KGBS.

***Criteria***

The site has been redeveloped for housing and as such no longer meets the criteria for a Key Green Belt Site.

***Comments***

The old campus site is set in a historic park and garden, which also contains a wildlife site. There are 6 Grade II listed buildings on the site; Wall Hall (The Mansion), well head about 15 metres north of library at Wall Hall, sham ruin about 230 metres south, south east of Wall Hall, folly about 250 meters south, south east of Wall Hall, icehouse about 300 metres south east of Wall Hall, granary about 50 metres south east of Wall Hall home farm house. The northern boundary of the site adjoins a river floodplain.

***Recommendation***

This site no longer meets the criteria for suitable designation as a Key Green Belt Site. The use is no longer as an education establishment and the buildings no longer represent an appropriate Green Belt use and layout. The buildings appear as a residential estate.

It is concluded that the site should therefore have its designation as a Key Green Belt Site removed, but should retain its Green Belt designation.

**Table 16.1: South Mimms (Bignells Corner) Special Policy Area**

***History and use***

While the site did not become a Motorway Service Area until after the M25 was constructed there have been petrol stations, food outlets, and accommodation on the site since the 1930s. The section of the M25 between South Mimms and Potters Bar was the first to be constructed in 1973. The site was included in the Local Plan Inquiry Inspectors Report (1999) in which the Inspector considered that the site was adequately managed through Policy M14 of the Local Plan and as such a designation as a major site was superfluous.

***Planning History***

There have been a number of applications across the whole Bignells Corner site. Aside from the permissions for petrol station, accommodation, and food outlets, a lorry park was granted permission in 1978. The majority of the recent applications have dealt with the renewal of the service facilities, and advertisements. The hotel was granted permission to extend in 1999.

***Future Plans***

The site is owned or leased by a number of parties and uses within each plot. There is not a single plan or strategy for the long term management of the site as a whole with many of the responsibilities for maintaining the area belonging to the Highways Agency. Individual applications are assessed on a merit basis, and not as part of a comprehensive overview of the site.

***Comments***

The Special Policy Area policy refers largely to access and transport issues, which is reasonable given the site's proximity to the M25.

Consultation with the Highway Agency confirmed the Council's position that the current policy is working adequately and the substance does not need to be changed. The only request they made was that the operational control centre acknowledged.

It is appropriate to recognise the need to improve the vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the site. This could not only encourage non-vehicular use of the site but improve the manner in which vehicles move through the site.

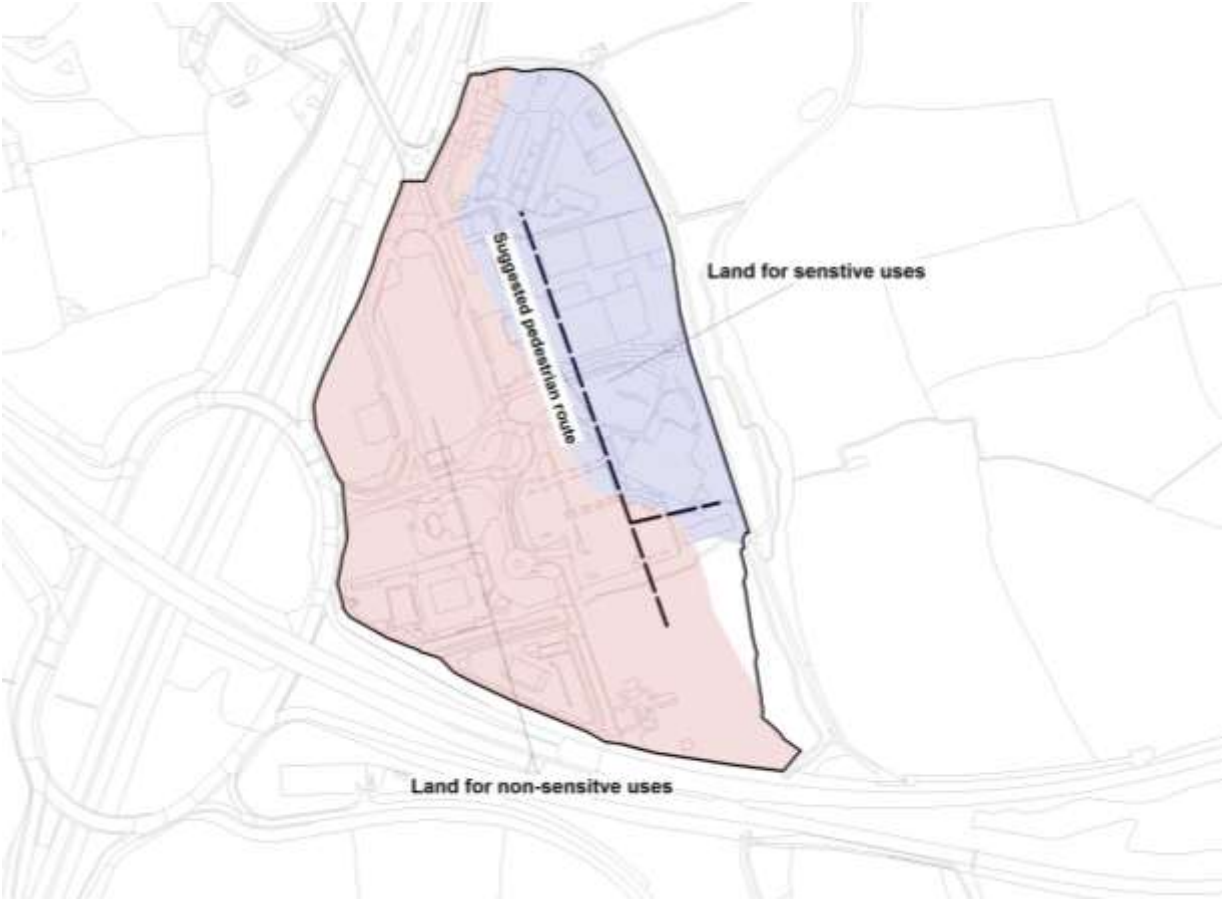
The area to the south known as Charleston Paddocks is recommended to remain within the site, where Wash Lane provides a good defensible boundary and including a functional floodplain. There is a small amount of previously developed land on the site at present and the adjacent site has seen the construction of a number of small buildings associated with the Highway Agency.

A portion of this site was offered for housing during the Issues and Options Consultation. However, at the moment this site is not needed for housing and the Core Strategy is not seeking to utilise this area of the Borough to meet any housing shortfalls, which fall outside of any defined settlement.

***Recommendation***

Maintain the status quo and carry the Special Policy Area into the new Local Plan. Include the operational control centre in the text of the policy and on the key to the land use zones and principles map which should also be retained; and add a point to the policy to improve the vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the site.

Figure 16.2: Site boundary and zones within the SPA



## 6. Potential Key Green Belt Sites

6.1 Potential new sites for designation as KGBS were selected from a variety of sources of Information. These include scrutiny of Borough maps in the Local Plan 2003 appendices, site allocation representations from agents and members of the public, through a previously compiled list of sites studied in the Urban Capacity Study (2006), and other local knowledge.

6.2 The shortlist of sites below has been carefully reviewed. The sites comprise:

- Arsenal Football Club Training Ground;
- Battlers Green Farm;
- Bhaktivedanta Manor, Letchmore Heath;
- Blackbirds Sewage Works;
- Centennial Park;
- Colney Fields;
- Electricity Transforming Station, Hillfield Lane;
- Elstree Aerodrome;
- Lincolnsfield Centre;
- Lismirrane Industrial Park, nr Centennial Park;
- Three Valleys Water, Clay Lane, Bushey;
- Tyttenhanger Sewage Works; and
- Willows Farm Village.

**Table 17.1: Arsenal Football Club Training Ground**

***History and use***

The site is a relatively new development; the land was previously used for agricultural purposes.

***Planning History***

- Planning permission was granted for the change of use from agriculture to training ground for Arsenal Football Club incorporating 8 football training pitches, a two storey building, car parking, an access road and landscaping (97/0985)
- The 1997 permission was altered slightly under the permission (99/0189) to change of use from agriculture to 8 football training pitches and the erection of an electricity substation and irrigation tank. Amendments to planning permission ref. TP/97/0985 were also requested.
- Permission was also granted subject to Section 106 agreement in 2005 (05/0670) for the site to be extended and a change of use from haulage depot to extend the football training centre. It also included the demolition of the existing warehouse, re-cladding of the existing office building, the erection of a sports hall (covered training pitch), the erection of an equipment storage building and revised vehicle circulation and parking.
- Most recently application 08/0137 was refused for the proposed installation of O2 telecommunications equipment comprising of a 20 metre monopole supporting 6 antennas and associated equipment cabinets.

***Future Plans***

None known – enquires were made but no response was received.

***Criteria***

Low intensity sports facilities are appropriate uses in the Green Belt. However this is a large private facility and it is questionable as to the level of onsite community value it would serve. While the site is large the majority of it is open and used as training pitches. There is a large building on site but this does not necessarily warrant an envelope

***Comments***

The site is to the north of Shenley and is partially identified as a landfill site and has a site of archaeological interest to the south.

***Recommendation***

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. This site does not warrant the KGBS designation, because, although the site is large site, the development on the site is not substantial enough.



**Table 18.1: Battlers Green Farm**

***History and use***

Battlers Green Farm Shop was established in 1960. The family-owned shop was originally a modest enterprise intended to do little more than supplement the income of a busy working farm. The Farm Shop was the keystone for the gradual development of Battlers Green Farm Rural Shopping Village. However, although the number of retailers has grown, the Farm Shop remains the shopping village's anchor store. Local produce is sourced wherever feasible and the atmosphere remains that of a true farm shop, still allied to the adjacent family farm and now supplying both local customers and visitors from further afield. However, the other retail units have increasingly diversified in the range of goods which are now sold and some have little or no connection with the farm or local 'craft' products.

***Planning History***

92/0709 (and subsequent applications) Agricultural buildings around farm courtyard were redeveloped for A1/A3 use. There have been additional individual conversions and changes of use over time.

***Future Plans***

None known – enquires were made but no response was received.

***Criteria***

The mix of agricultural and retail land uses on this site does not meet the requirements for designation. While there is a substantial cluster of buildings on the site, the majority of these were originally linked to the agricultural use of the site. These buildings are therefore not considered to be inappropriate use in the Green Belt.

Further development on the site could result in the site linking with the edge of Radlett. This potential sprawl would bring Letchmore Heath a little closer to Radlett, but it is unlikely to result in an increased risk of the two coalescing or further encroachment in that direction.

***Comments***

There are three listed buildings on the site two barns listed as Grade II and the Battlers Green Farmhouse as Grade II\*. There is a wildlife site to the west of the buildings.

***Recommendation***

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. This site does not warrant the Key Green Belt Site. Much of the development and particularly the buildings on the site are broadly associated with the agricultural use on the site.

**Table 19.1: Bhaktivedanta Manor, Hilfield Lane, Letchmore Heath**

**History and use**

A brief history of the site:

- 12th century: The Abbot of Westminster granted land at Aldenham to a Thomas Picot.
- 13th century: The surrounding land was owned by Lord Picot, and thus the place was named Picot's Manor.
- 1884: A mock-Tudor mansion was built there, replacing a much older real Tudor building.
- 1920's: By now the name had changed to Piggott's Manor.
- 1957 to 1972: Piggott's Manor was used as a nurses' training college run by St Bart's Hospitals.
- 1973: The Manor was donated to the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), founder, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, by the late Beatle, George Harrison, who had a close relationship to Prabhupada, meeting and staying with him on several occasions, and renamed Bhaktivedanta Manor. "Bhaktivedanta" is Sanskrit for "devotion-Vedanta".
- 1994: There was a campaign to keep the temple open against the wishes of the local planning authority, which involved a protest by some 36,000 people.

Over time ISKCON has increased the size of the grounds by purchasing a proportion of the neighbouring property of Hollands Farm. The site is now about 70 acres (28.3 ha) in area.

**Planning History**

The history of the site is long and varied and mostly relates to the period since the Temple was created. Most notable is the 1994 application which was refused by Council and allowed on appeal for the change of use to residential and non-residential theological college, and religious community together with use for public worship (including the observance of religious festival days), and construction of a driveway and access to Hilfield Lane (now named Dharam Marg)

**Future Plans**

ISKCON states that there is a need for additional public facilities for congregation members and visitors to the Temple. A planning brief was adopted by the Council for the site in December 2012: this accepts in principle the location of a new building at the site to meet the organisation's needs.

**Criteria**

This site has been in a non-residential use for some period of time. ISKCON use this site for a variety of purposes aside from its religious purpose. These include a range of educational facilities such as the College of Vedic Studies (COVS); which aside from offering retreats, workshops and courses, offers a residential facility to assist those enrolled for their personal growth. There is also an independent registered primary school on site, and the Manor also runs ISKCON Educational Services (IES), which specialises in giving presentations to schools about Hinduism. Aside from these activities the Manor offers a range of community services and has open days for the public. As an educational and community facility therefore, the Manor does meet the criteria. The area of the site (70 acres) is also substantial.

In terms of the effect on the Green Belt this site has the potential to result in a certain amount sprawl from development, which if unchecked could lead to the villages of Letchmore Heath, Patchetts Green and Aldenham coming closer together, with the encroachment into the Green Belt that this would entail being significant.

There is an argument that a Key Green Belt Site designation would be a good way in which to responsibly manage these risks over time, because development is normally considered appropriate within the envelope and inappropriate outside.

However the Manor House is Grade II Listed and the buildings to the rear also form part of the historic curtilage. It is around these buildings that an envelope would logically be drawn. The concern would be that the envelope would be effectively stating that building within the historic curtilage of the Manor and its outbuildings would be appropriate: this would be directly contrary to the maintenance of the Manor's special architectural and historic character. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and the NPPF, infilling may well be considered inappropriate.

During discussion with ISKON and their planning advisors they indicated that although there was some intention to expand the kitchen area and replace a dilapidated greenhouse any major new development is likely to occur outside the current built footprint that forms the basis for an envelope. Currently due to the importance of the site as the largest Hindu temple in the UK, ISKCON have a strong case to argue very special circumstances. Planning permission along with listed building and/or conservation area consent would still be required whether the proposals are inside or outside of the envelope.

**Comments**

The Manor is Grade II Listed historic building. The Manor building and its immediate surrounds are included in the Letchmore Heath Conservation Area.

**Recommendation**

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. The adopted Planning Brief for the site is an agreed way to proceed. The use of the site for educational purposes; the fact that it is well established in the Green Belt; the community service it provides; the extensive planning history, and the need to better manage the site in terms of its future planning might suggest that a KGBS would be appropriate. However, there is a clear conflict between conservation of the historic curtilage of The Manor and the likely envelope. ISKCON has indicated during discussions that any new development of the site is unlikely to occur beyond the current built footprint. This means that designating the site as a KGBS would have no material advantage to ISKCON or the Council in managing the future development of this site.

| <b>Table 20.1: Blackbirds Sewage Works, Oakridge Lane, Aldenham</b>  |
|--|
| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site was agricultural use until it became the sewage works in 1967.</p>  |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>The site was first identified for this purpose in the early 1960s. Planning permission for the development of the site for a sewage treatment facility was refused and the appeal dismissed in 1965. A second application in 1967 was given conditional permission, with a second treatment works granted approval in 1968. In 1971 a mess room, lockers and lavatories were granted permission.</p>  |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>In answering the review questionnaire regarding their future plans for the site; Thames Water replied that there were 'no current plans, but there is the possibility of releasing land to the north east of the access road'.</p>  |
| <p><b>Criteria</b><br/>This site meets the general use criteria for a former major site in the Green Belt, and was recommended by the Planning Inspector in the Hertsmere Local Plan – Inspectors Report 2000 to be included in the current Plan as a KGBS. The local planning authority did not accept this recommendation. The further development of the site is unlikely to cause undue harm to the openness of the Green Belt as it will not result in any urban/suburban sprawl, or in the merging of neighbouring towns. There could be very limited encroachment into the countryside but this would be negligible and unlikely to encourage further encroachment. The envelope could be drawn around the edge of the tanks, ponds and buildings a large portion of the site is taken up but it is all existing development and with no future plans for expansion this should not pose any issues for Thames Water.</p> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The site is approximately 700m northwest from the edge of Radlett. There are wildlife sites to the west and south-east of the site but these do not adjoin the site.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Approve Key Green Belt Site status. The site perhaps should have been recognised in the current Local Plan as a key site. The site has a sufficient amount of development to warrant an envelope. The Inspector in paragraphs 107.4-107.11 in the Hertsmere Local Plan Inspectors Report 2000 expressed an opinion that the Blackbirds Sewage Treatment Works should be identified in the Plan.</p>   |

Figure 20.2: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 21.1: Centennial Park, Elstree Hill South, Elstree**

***History and use***

The site was developed before the war as a depot for the Edgware to Bushey Heath extension as part of the Northern Heights programme of the Northern Line underground railway. However, the onset of war delayed the construction, but as work was reasonably advanced the depot was completed for use for bomber manufacturing. Following WWII, the Green Belt put restrictions on the possibility for new development in the area, as the plan was to use the new railway to stimulate new housing around the new route; without the new housing the route was deemed no longer viable. So the site was converted into the Aldenham bus depot, which it remained until 1985 when it became derelict. It was redeveloped in 1996 and is now the Centennial Park industrial/ business estate.

***Planning History***

The site was originally in the London Borough of Harrow and early planning history for the site is brief. In 1963 land adjoining the Aldenham bus works was utilised as a Police Dog Training School. Several applications to redevelop the site as a retail park were received in 1987 and refused. Hertsmere Council received the application for a business park in 1993, following a local government boundary change: planning permission was granted in 1996. Since then various applications have been received relating to the development and maintenance of the site and alterations to buildings. The most major recent development involved the erection of a hotel with conference and leisure facilities (TP 06/1165).

***Future Plans***

None known at present. Enquires were made before first drafting this report, but no response was received.

***Criteria***

It meets the expectation for a KGBS in that the site is used for an industrial / business park, and at over 26 hectares its size is substantial. While the development does take up the majority of the site there is a significant area that is undeveloped. It therefore justifies an Envelope of Appropriate Infill.

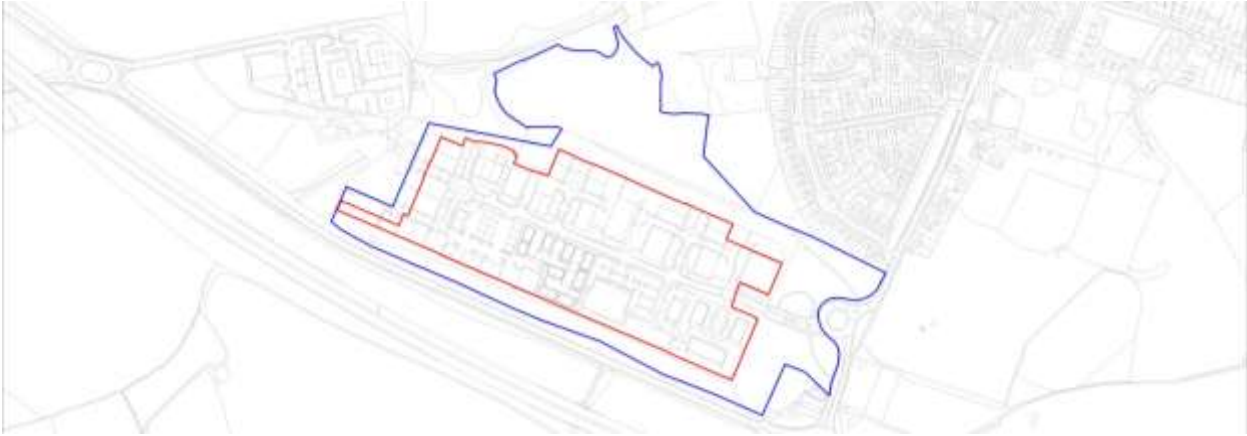
***Comments***

The site is on the south-western edge of Elstree and aside from being in the Green Belt is identified as a Key Employment Site in the HLP. A portion of the undeveloped part of the site is currently identified as Proposed Public Open Space in the HLP and a wildlife site borders the north western section of the property.

***Recommendation***

Approve Key Green Belt Site status. The use is compatible with the use criteria, and is of a substantial size.

Figure 21.2: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 22.1: Colney Fields, Former Savacentre Site, Barnet Road, London Colney**

***History and use***

There is little planning history associated with the site. The site may have been used during the construction of the M25 for workers cabins. The site was undeveloped until the hotel was built. It is known as the former Savacentre site because it was part of a large site on which the Savacentre was constructed. The Savacentre itself (now Sainsburys) is in St Albans District.

The site is accessed through the Colney Fields Shopping Park off Barnet Road.

***Planning History***

Hotel applications were all refused with the exception of a 66 room hotel in 2006. However, an appeal was allowed in 2007 for an 86 bed hotel with ancillary employee accommodation, guest only restaurant, meeting rooms and offices and associated landscaping. Recently an application was granted for the erection of an EDF substation.

***Future Plans***

None known – enquires were made but no response was received. However, the aforementioned hotel is being built.

***Criteria***

The hotel does appear to be part of a larger business/retail park. However, this is the only part of the site in Hertsmere Borough and once completed will be the only building on the site. The site is only just over half a hectare in size and the building footprint is likely to take up a large proportion of the site. The size of the site and the use of the building are not consistent with the designation as a KGBS.

***Comments***

The site is an odd shaped wedge of land bordered by an M25 slip road and the Borough boundary but the site itself has no other designations.

***Recommendation***

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. Although the site is part of a larger business/retail park this is the only site of the retail park in the Borough. At just over half a hectare and with the only use on the site being a hotel, which will take up the majority of the site, this site does not meet the criteria. This site has also been examined for a Green Belt boundary adjustment.



**Table 23.1: Electricity Transforming Station, Hillfield Lane**

***History and use***

The facility appears to have been built in the early 1950s and then extended in the 1960s. There is no record for any other planning history or use of the site prior to the transforming station.

***Planning History***

Planning permission for a substation appears to have been granted in 1951. Two applications were approved for the extension of the substation one in June of 1960 and the other in November of 1961, both were granted. There were no applications during the 1970s or 80s. However there were several applications for extension and additional buildings in the 1990s. There was an application approved for the design and external appearance of a GIS (Gas Insulated Switchgear) building in 2000; with another application for the erection of a tunnel head house and associated fencing and gates being granted in 2001; and in 2005 a request for the retention of highway works on Hilfield Lane was also approved.

***Future Plans***

Future development proposals at the site include:

- Elstree substation has been identified by central government as a site of critical national infrastructure, crucial to the continued provision of essential services. Upgraded fencing and surveillance equipment is proposed to increase site security and asset protection..
- EDF application for a new 132kV electricity distribution substation (GIS building).

***Criteria***

In terms of the criteria the transforming station is a national asset and does meet the use and size criteria. The issue is whether an envelope of appropriate infill can be identified as most of the site is developed by hardstanding and pylons and the buildings that are on the site are not grouped in one area but spread across the site.

***Comments***

A wildlife site surrounds the transforming station itself: the majority of it is contained within the National Grid property boundaries. The site is considered to have permitted development rights for a statutory undertaker for the generation, transmission or supply of electricity. This then allows it to replace much of the equipment without planning permission. This may be the reason that the site has not been previously considered for KGBS status. The other reason is the character of development on the site.

***Recommendation***

Support Key Green Belt Site status. This site has not been put forward previously for KGBS status, although it has been in existence since the 1950s and is a use which is suitable for the designation. An Envelope of Appropriate Infill could be drawn around the main buildings as the replacement of the other equipment is covered under Class G Part 17 of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.

Figure 23.2: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 24.1: Elstree Aerodrome, Hogg Lane, Elstree**

***History and use***

Originally the aerodrome was created on the Aldenham estate, which at the time was a country club. Members who owned private aircraft could use a specially prepared grass field, which also had a small hangar on the site. During the war, the concrete runway was constructed, together with the present hangars, and the aerodrome was used for modifying Wellington bombers.

Elstree Aerodrome is now is a general aviation airfield. Around 120 aircraft - most privately owned - are based at the 70-acre site, which has a 656 metre runway.

There are many companies located at the Elstree aerodrome, the major occupant being Cabair which provides aeroplane and helicopter flying training, charter flights and maintenance. Additionally other companies offer maintenance of aircraft interiors, avionics, aircraft instruments, engraving, aviation insurance, aviation shop, aircraft sales and a restaurant.

In 1968 the aerodrome was awarded the grant for Customs facilities. The Customs facilities operate on a request basis, and mean that aircraft may clear Customs both from and to Elstree without the necessity of landing at an intermediate aerodrome.

***Planning History***

Various applications were dealt with for the retention of portacabins between 1990 and 2004. Retention of car parking, the use of a mobile home for residential purposes and the replacement of fuel tanks have all been granted over the years.

***Future Plans***

None known – enquires were made but no information pertaining to the future development of the site was received.

A representation suggested that developing the built area of the site would enhance the tranquillity of Hertsmere (by preventing flights).

***Criteria***

As a civil airfield of reasonable size and offering a number of different facilities from training to maintenance and refurbishment, the aerodrome is sufficiently large and important enough to warrant the designation.

The issue is the placement of the envelope, as the buildings are well spaced in order to allow for aircraft manoeuvring and it is not usual to have large amounts of hard standing in an envelope. It may be acceptable in this instance to include the areas in front of the hangars in the envelope, as they cannot be built on (i.e. to allow aircraft to taxi in and out of the hangars safely).

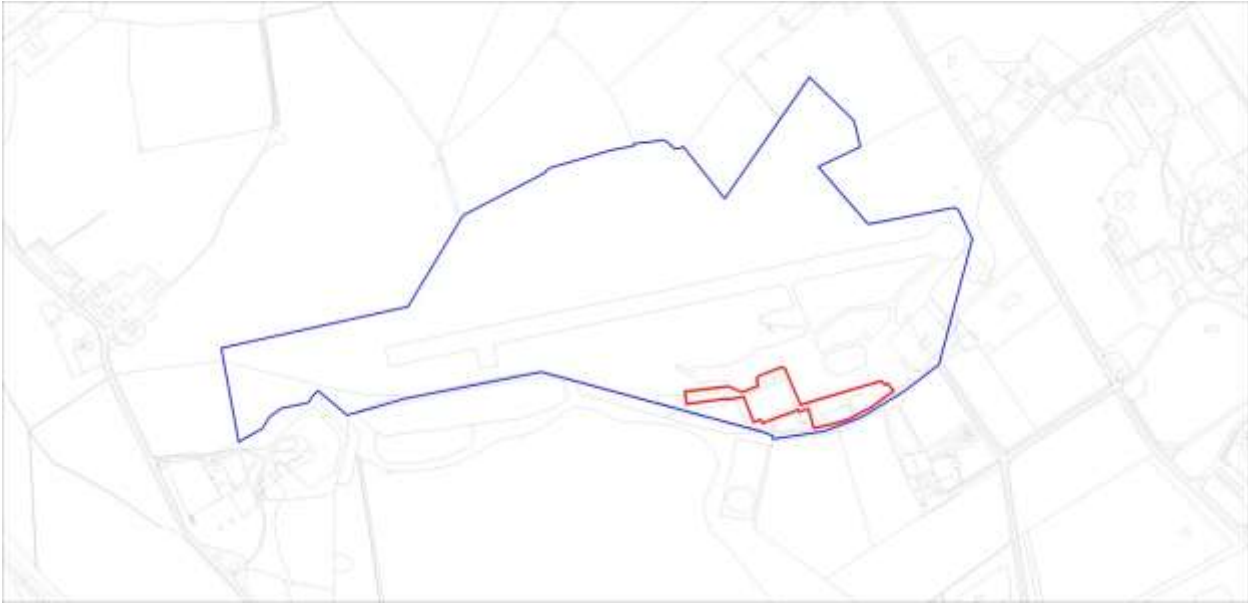
***Comments***

The site in the Green Belt. There are no other designations on the site. The CAA is identified as a consultee for development relating to the site.

***Recommendation***

Approve Key Green Belt Site Status. The site is of a substantial size and a reasonable number of buildings exist on the site. As they are well spaced the infilling envelope will include some hardstanding.

Figure 24.2: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



**Table 25.1: The Lincolnsfield Centre, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey.**

***History and use***

Part of the old Bushey Hall estate — the wartime location of the USAAF 8th Fighter Command Headquarters — this is a unique WW2 Heritage site. The large original house was demolished in 1955. The Lincolnsfield (Children's) Centre was an American School in the 1950s. It is now a registered children's charity catering for children, young people and adults with special needs. The premises provide catered and self-catering residential accommodation to enable groups, under adult supervision, to spend time away from their urban environment. There are also a variety of other facilities and activities on the site, including a children's farm yard and play area, together with a recreated 1940s house.

***Planning History***

The planning history only goes back to 1952 when it was given permission for use as offices and sports ground for the staff of Bushey Hall Hotel. The buildings and huts have all been given numbers and over time permission for change of use for buildings have in the main been granted permission for community uses such as football training and operatic rehearsals. The first permission granted for its current use was in 1978 when conditional consent was granted for the renovation of buildings to provide a temporary residential holiday facility for deprived children (buildings 21 & 29-36 inclusive). The site continued to be used for various community uses and sports ground. A riding school was set up in 1984.

Application TP 02/1190 granted permission for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of part single/ part two storey special needs school and four single storey residential blocks to provide accommodation for 32 pupils. Alterations to the road layout included the provision for a vehicle drop off point, 56 parking spaces and new pedestrian access.

***Future Plans***

None known

***Criteria***

The Lincolnsfield Centre is part of a reasonably large multi-use site, albeit one which retains a low density, and open character. The sports club, riding school, and the small children's farm yard activities are not incongruous uses in the Green Belt, nor are they of a scale that could be considered major development. The 1940s house and the events that are run on the site, such as WWII military re-enactments, are not of such a scale or frequency that has caused concern in the past.

The only use that may be appropriate for a Key Green Belt Site is that of the educational facilities. However this only represents a proportion of the site and is not substantial enough, in size or level of development, to warrant the designation. Even if a greater proportion of the site were being utilised by the education facilities, the multiple uses on the site would make the identification of suitable envelopes for appropriate infill difficult. It also limits the ability to coordinate the management of any future development on the site. The spread of building and range of uses suggest that future reuse of so-called previously developed land may be best tackled under normal Green Belt policy

***Comments***

The site is situated in the proposed strategic green gap between Bushey, North Bushey and Watford. Aside from the Green Belt there are TPOs identified on the site.

***Recommendation***

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. The site has too many disparate uses to allow it to be managed properly as a Key Site.

**Table 26.1: Lismirrane Industrial Park/ Waterfront, Elstree Road, Elstree**

***History and use***

The site was originally used as a wartime aero-engine testing factory. In 1956, the New Elstree Studios (later called the Danziger Studios) were founded on the site by converting the factory into a self-contained production headquarters with six sound stages and exterior shooting facilities (which would at one time employ some 200 craftsmen and technicians on its seven and a half acre site). The Studios were sold in October 1965 to RTZ Metals as warehouse storage. From this time, the site appears to have different uses occurring on different portions of the site. The site was further developed as engineering workshops in the 1970s, and then developed as Lismirrane Industrial Park in the early 1980s. RTZ was still operating on the site at this time. However in the late 1980s, the former RTZ site became known as The Waterfront and then the Waterfront Business Park.

***Planning History***

A long and complex planning history. The first recorded permission is of that granted for access to the proposed film studios. Over the next ten years various permissions were granted for extensions for a telephone exchange, stages, offices and scene docks and other film studio related uses. An application for the redevelopment for industrial park purposes was refused in 1982, and allowed on appeal in 1987. Most of the permissions granted in the 1980s pertain to change of use of the warehousing and various units contained within the Industrial Park: extensions to units were also granted permission. The former RTZ site was granted change of use in 1988 to Class B1. Various permissions after that (including the most recent) have been concerned with air conditioning and improvement of the buildings. Permission was refused for the development of the greenfield site immediately adjacent to the west of Lismirrane Industrial Park in 1999 for offices and parking (TP 99/0919).

***Future Plans***

None known – enquires were made but no response was received.

***Criteria***

Apart from the use criteria there is the assumption that a Key Site is substantial in size the NPPF does not prescribe what is considered 'substantial'. The Lismirrane/ Waterfront site is just over 3 hectares in size; in terms of the existing major sites in Hertsmere this is smaller than the smallest current major site. It is difficult to argue that this site is of considerable size or of great importance either through its use or size. For this reason, the site should not be nominated for KGBS status. However, the site will still be recognised in the Site Allocations document as a Local Employment Site.

***Comments***

The site is at the north western end of Centennial Park and is accessed off Elstree Road. It has no specific designations apart from being in the Green Belt. Although the site is close to Centennial Park it is physically separate. The land that separates the two business parks is owned by a third party, though this is not a determining factor.

***Recommendation***

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. The site is not considered large enough.

**Table 27.1: Three Valleys Water, Clay Lane, Bushey**

***History and use***

Clay Lane Water Treatment Works is of strategic importance for the supply of potable water for Three Valleys Water. The site has a long history dating back to the first service reservoir built in 1875. Demand for water in the area has continuously increased, resulting in the construction of the original Clay Lane Water Treatment Works in 1953, the subsequent granular activated carbon (GAC) filter plant upgrade in 1996 and the construction of the largest ultrafiltration plant in the world in 2001.

***Planning History***

- Planning permission was granted for the erection of a pumping station and water treatment plant in 1951.
- In 1974 consent was given for the widening and realignment of the entrance on Windmill Lane.
- Erection of an extension to the main building was granted permission in 1993.
- Amended permission was granted for the erection of an ozone plant building and other alterations to the site in 1995.
- In 1996 permission was granted for the erection of a single storey building and use as an environmental teaching centre.
- Consent was given in 1999 for the erection of a treatment works building.
- In 2006 permission was granted for the retention of horticultural buildings including a polytunnel and an eco-cabin at the environmental education centre.

***Future Plans***

Three Valleys Water made a representation on the site during the Site Allocations consultation. The representation mistakenly assumed the site was designated as safeguarded land in the Green Belt and wished it to remain so, along with the site being identified as a KGBS. The site is under continual review for the company's long term operational requirements.

***Criteria***

This site was identified for a major site designation in the HLP Post Inquiry Modifications (Version 2000). This was later changed and the site was designated it as Urban Open Land in adopted Local Plan 2003. Neighbouring land, including Birchville Court nursing home, was designated as a safeguarded site. The Green Belt boundary was amended and Water Treatment Plant removed from the Green Belt.

The rationale for considering the site in this report is that Birchville Nursing Home and neighbouring properties are identified as Safeguarded Land. There are two scenarios that we have considered for this area.

***Comments***

The majority of the site is identified as Urban Open Land and as a wildlife site. The area around the treatment works has not designation. The main building, which was constructed in about 1953, is included on the List of Locally Important Buildings in Hertsmere.

***Recommendation***

There are two options for this site. The decision of whether or not this site becomes a Key Green Belt Site depends on the position of the Green Belt boundary. The adoption of the Core Strategy in January 2013 allowed for the saving of Policy H4 of the Local Plan 2003 on safeguarded land in the Green Belt for housing.

If the Green Belt boundary were redrawn along Windmill Lane, then the site could be reconsidered as a KGBS. The original proposed envelope should be examined to include any new buildings that may have been constructed in that area of the site. The small cluster of buildings that constitute the Environmental Education centre would have an envelope. The

Council would need to justify exceptional circumstances to do this.

If the Green Belt is drawn along Heathbourne Road, then the site should not be identified as a KGBS.

Given previous decisions made regarding this site and the adjacent safeguarded land, together with the Inspector's comments on the Local Plan 2003, the weight of the argument favours exclusion from the Green Belt.



**Table 28.1: Tyttenhanger Pumping Station**

***History and use***

It is understood that there has been a pumping station on the site over a century: a reference was found in minutes of a meeting of the North London Society of Model Engineers referring to a visit made in 1951. These minutes allude to a steam bell crank pump being installed in 1911, which was soon to be replaced by turbines. The model engineers were visiting the site as the water company had given them permission to use the land surrounding the pumping station for a model railway. It is possible to see the model railway on aerial photographs.

***Planning History***

- TP/89/0575 for demolition and rebuild of pumping station, granted permission.
- TP 96/0928 for the erection of 5 no. steel tanks 6.6m high x 2.7m diameter with interconnecting pipework (Certificate of Lawfulness).

***Future Plans***

None known – enquires were made but no response was received.

***Criteria***

As a water treatment works the site could qualify as a KGBS due to its use but the size of the site cannot be described as substantial. Including the area of the model railway, the site area is approximately 4 hectares. However, the size of the site of the pumping station is approximately 7000m<sup>2</sup>.

***Comments***

The site is in the Green Belt and on the border of Hertsmere and St Albans Councils north of Coursers Road. There are no other designations on the site. Across the District boundary in the St Albans District the land is designated Metropolitan Green Belt and a Landscape Development Area (the policies attached to this designation are designed to encourage the improvement of landscape in the area). Nearby is the Green Belt settlement of Colney Heath.

***Recommendation***

Decline Key Green Belt Site status. Despite the main use of the site making it suitable for KGBS status, the size of the site is not substantial enough to warrant the designation.

**Table 29.1: Willows Farm Village**

**History and use**

The site has been in farm use for the majority of its history. There is also some light industrial activity. The Willows Farm Village came into being after 1990.

**Planning History**

Previously known as Bowmansgreen Farm, the planning history goes back to 1932. There are numerous applications, most pertaining to the running and maintenance of a farm. There are also applications recorded for the construction of an 11,000 volt overhead electricity supply line, granted consent in 1961, and the extraction of fill for the M25 which was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 1984. In 1990 permission was granted for the change of use of existing agricultural buildings to farm interpretation centre, toilets and refreshment area, and the construction of a wheelchair ramp to the milking parlour.

Various other applications in relation to this consent were given permission in the following years.

- Permission was granted for the continued use of various sheds for various light industrial uses throughout the 1990s.
- Telecommunications antennae were permitted.
- Annual permission was granted for the temporary use of land for the siting of a marquee for Christmas parties 2001-2007.
- More recently the temporary use of land to erect a marquee for corporate Christmas parties with dodgems and parking between 10th November and 5th January each for five years was granted in 2008 (TP 08/0899).

**Future Plans**

No definite ideas for the future of the site have been put forward. However, the owners have indicated to Council officers that future improvements may be wanted to complement existing facilities.

**Criteria**

The site is a local visitor attraction (with approximately 500,000 paying visitors per annum). There are precedents for large visitor attractions being designated as KGBS by other local authorities. The site is substantial in size (197.3 ha) and actually has land both within Hertsmere (160.6 ha) and St Albans (36.7 ha).

The majority of the development on the site is clustered in one area that would allow an envelope of appropriate infill to be drawn relatively easily.

**Comments**

The site is west of London Colney and the Borough boundary is reasonably close to the buildings. The site is identified as Green Belt, flood prone (levels 2 and 3) and a gateway site (for Watling Chase Community Forest) in the Local Plan. In the St Albans Plan the land surrounding the site and that land where the site crosses the boundary is identified as Green Belt and Landscape Development Area (the policies attached to this designation are designed to encourage the improvement of landscape in the area).

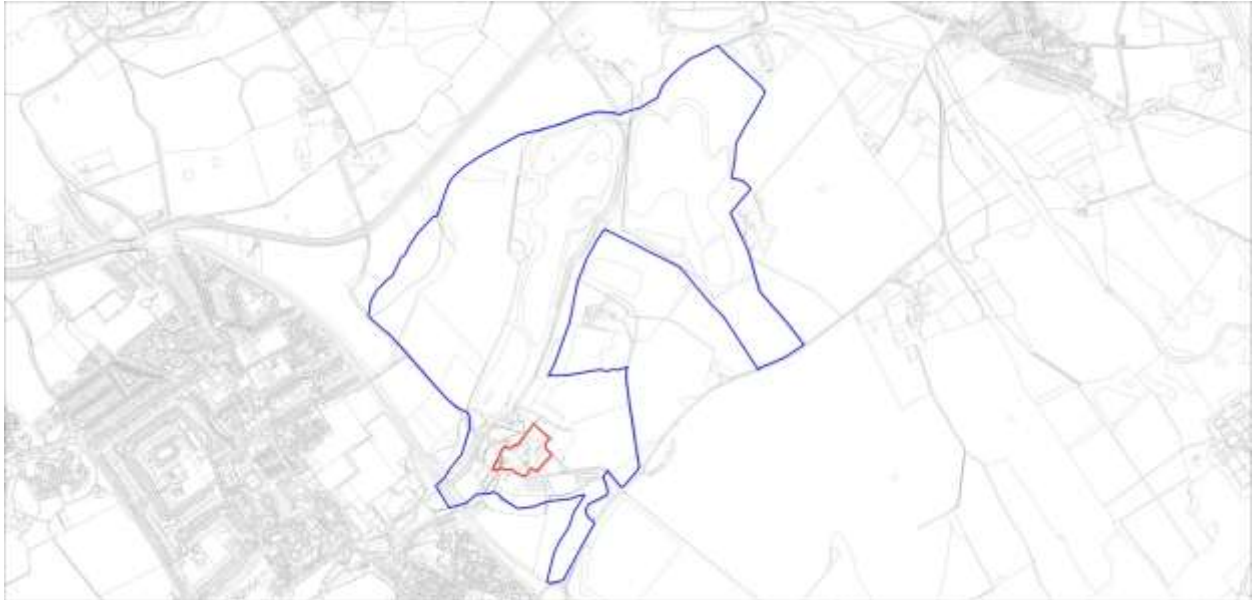
**Recommendation**

Approve Key Green Belt Site Status. The site meets the size and use requirements. Granting KGBS status would allow for better management of this site, particularly as the permanent buildings are all clustered together on one part of the site.

The wider site is also a working farm. It is difficult to separate the two uses in terms of the buildings, as many of the buildings are being used for both purposes. For example, machinery used to maintain the Farm Village will also be used to maintain the farm. The exception to this is the farmhouse, which has been excluded from the recommended envelope. The larger farm

site has been identified as the KGBS as the farm itself is not easily separated from the Farm Village. There are walking trails and fishing lakes which are considered to be to be part of the wider Farm Village experience but which are some distance from the central area of activity.

Figure 29.2: Proposed Site and Envelope boundaries



## 7. Review of Local Green Belt Boundary Alterations

- 7.1 Potential Green Belt boundary changes were considered using the same sources of information as the potential Key Green Belt Sites in Section 6. Some of the sites initially identified as possible Key Green Belt Sites were not considered suitable: they have been carried forward into this element of the review – i.e. to assess whether minor boundary alterations may be warranted. Representations on the Issues and Options document were also received regarding the removal of land from the Green Belt. Of the 38 sites assessed 25 sites have been further considered, including Safeguarded Land.
- 7.2 Where sites are included in the review a GIS map was generated showing the current boundaries of the site. Maps and aerial photographs were examined to determine means of access. The sites planning history schedule was collated, and where representations had been received, these were added to the information considered.
- 7.3 Possible boundary changes were assessed at the following locations:
- Spire Hospital Bushey, Heathbourne Road, Bushey (see Table 7.1)
  - Bushey Hall Golf Club, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey (see Table 7.2)
  - Centennial Park, Elstree (see Table 7.3)
  - Colney Fields, Barnet Road, London Colney (see Table 7.4)
  - The Furzefield Centre, Mutton Lane, Potters Bar (see Table 7.5)
  - Land rear of Hartfield Avenue, Borehamwood (see Table 7.6)
  - The Lincolnsfield Centre, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey (see Table 7.7)
  - Potters Bar Golf Course, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar (see Table 7.8)
  - Land rear of 6 to 16 The Warren and 3 Longridge, Radlett (see Table 7.9)
  - Land rear of The Warren, Radlett (see Table 7.10)
  - Cemetery, Watling Street; Flats 1-24 Oakbank; 5-23 (odd nos.) 10 and First Place Nursery, Cobden Hill, Radlett (see Table 7.11)
  - Land at the rear of 27-37 Heath Road, Potters Bar (see Table 7.12)
  - Land off Hartspring Lane and East of A41 near Bushey (see Table 7.13)
  - The Wroxham School, Wroxham Gardens, Potters Bar (see Table 7.14)
  - Sunny Bank Junior and Infant School, Potters Bar (see Table 7.15)
- 7.4 The boundary of safeguarded land has been reassessed in relation to the Green Belt. Safeguarded land is excluded from the Green Belt by definition. However, the land is treated as Green Belt for planning policy until it is needed for its specified use – either housing or employment. Local Plan (Policy H4) identifies land for future housing:



- Land at Heathbourne Road, Bushey Heath (see Table 7.16)
- Starveacres, 16 Watford Road, Radlett (see Table 7.17)
- Land to the east of Farm Way, Bushey (see Table 7.18)
- Land at Woodcock Hill, Borehamwood (see Table 7.19)
- West Herts College Annexe, Bushey (see Table 7.20)
- Haydon Dell Farm, Bushey (see Table 7.21)

Local Plan Policy B3 identifies land for future employment:

- Land adjoining Cranborne Industrial Estate, Potters Bar (see Table 7.22)

- 7.5 Land between the A1 and Rowley Lane, Borehamwood was identified as safeguarded land for employment in the Core Strategy (Policy CS8) (see Table 7.23)
- 7.6 The Core Strategy commits to the removal of the former Shenley Hospital development from the Green Belt, which includes Andrews Close. The estate was built in the 1990s and is a reasonably well self-contained area attached the village of Shenley. The boundary for this area is recommended in this document (see Table 7.24).
- 7.7 Sites and their boundaries are assessed against the five purposes for including land in a Green Belt:
  - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
  - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 7.8 Exceptional circumstances are required to support any Green Belt boundary change. Particular regard was given to ensuring the boundary would be equally or more defensible, and that there was a firm and logical reason for change. Changes are only recommended where this is the case.
- 7.9 The Core Strategy identified three villages where limited infilling would be appropriate – ref. Policy CS2 and paragraph 3.14. That is Shenley (the part excluding the former hospital site), Elstree (the part within the Green Belt) and South Mimms. Limited infilling is defined as being “very limited, typically one or two buildings, in small gaps”. The boundaries in Maps 1-3 (which follow Table 7.24) are tightly drawn around existing development; they avoid the extension of sprawl or sporadic development; and they avoid the potential for larger scale development which would generally undermine the Green Belt, its character and the character of the settlement within the Green Belt. Hertsmere Local Plan (Policy C6) had similarly identified Shenley and Elstree for limited infilling, although the precise areas were not delineated on the Proposals Map.

**Key to Maps with Tables 7.1 – 7.22**

|   |   |
|---|---|
|  | Proposed Green Belt Boundary                              |
|  | Land to be removed from the Green Belt                    |
|  | Safeguarded land (Proposed)                               |
|  | Land no longer safeguarded                                |
|  | Borough Boundary  |
|  | Land no longer safeguarded and returned to the Green Belt |

**Table 7.1 Spire Hospital Bushey, Heathbourne Road, Bushey**

***History and use***

There are records showing that a hospital has been on the site since 1898. The Bushey Health Clinic was closed on the site in 1937, and the Middlesex County Maternity Hospital operated on the site from 1937 to around 1948. In 1948 the hospital changed its name to Bushey Maternity Hospital and operated as such until 1977, when the hospital closed. The site eventually became an Independent Hospital. BUPA operated the hospital from approximately 1980 until recently. Spire Healthcare now manages the site.

***Planning History***

Planning permissions granted on the site are all associated with the maintenance and at times expansion of the hospital buildings. When the maternity hospital closed, there were several applications for various changes of use. Permission was eventually granted for the change of use from hospital to private nursing home in 1979, but this does not appear to have been implemented. Consent was granted in 1980 for an Independent Hospital comprising 60 beds, 2 operating theatres and other ancillary accommodation and 6 staff flats.

***Future Plans***

N/A

***Green Belt Criteria***

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

The current Green Belt boundary as it is drawn is not defensible.

This site does not fulfil any of the criteria for a Green Belt site. The site is built up and although there are TPO trees on the site there is little or no openness on the site. The boundary is not considered logical any more. The Green Belt boundary normally follows Heathbourne Road, except to take in the hospital.

- The openness of the Green Belt will not be affected by moving the boundary line to Heathbourne Road.
- None of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be compromised by the proposed shift to the Green Belt Boundary.
- There is no future conflict with the land use objectives for Green Belt given that there approved development in the site.
- Heathbourne Road is the more defensible boundary and likely to endure in the long term.

***Comments***

This site is not suitable for a KGBS site as it is too small and too heavily developed. The site is literally on the edge of the Bushey Heath residential area and the Green Belt. This is a minor Green Belt adjustment, and the Inspector's Report 2000 paragraph 7.9 of Chapter 3 comments on the differences in character between the two sides of Heathbourne Road.

***Recommendation***

Remove from the Green Belt to create a more logical and defensible Green Belt Boundary along Heathbourne Road (**Minor GB Adjustment**)





**Table 7.2 Bushey Hall Golf Club, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey**

**History and use**

The first nine hole golf course was first constructed in the grounds and parkland of Bushey Hall Estate in 1890. It is recognised as one of the oldest parkland golf courses in Hertfordshire.

**Planning History**

- In 2005 permission was granted for a new premises license in consultation with the Licensing Officer (TP 05/1173).
- An application for boundary fencing, walls and gates was at first refused (TP/01/0471) and then granted (TP 01/0884).
- Rebuilding of the clubhouse and new access was declined in 1998. An application for a new pond was approved in 2000.

**Future Plans**

There have been representations made to Council regarding the development of the site for housing.

**Green Belt Criteria**

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

The Golf Course forms an important component of the strategic green gap between Bushey, North Bushey and Watford.

- The openness of the Green Belt would be significantly affected by removing the Golf Course or even a portion of the course from the Green Belt.
- Three of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt would be compromised by a shift to the Green Belt boundary (sprawl, merging, and encroachment).
- There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt.
- The print works/ car park, to the front of the site could potentially be removed to create a logical defensible boundary to the Green Belt.

**Comments**

The site is to the south of North Bushey. It has a prominent or strong position within the landscape of the area. The site contains a number of designations which include the identification of flood prone land, a wildlife site and TPOs. Bordering the west of the site is a nature reserve.

**Recommendation**

Remove the print works from the Green Belt (**Minor GB Adjustment**)



**Table 7.3 Centennial Park, Elstree**

***History and use***

The site was developed before the war as a depot for the Edgware to Bushey Heath extension as part of the Northern Heights programme of the Northern Line underground railway. However, the onset of war delayed the construction, but as work was reasonably advanced the depot was completed for use for bomber manufacture. Following WWII, the advent of the Green Belt restricted the potential for new development in the area. The plan had been to use the new railway to stimulate new housing around the new route; without the new housing the route was no longer deemed viable. So the site was converted into the Aldenham bus depot, which it remained until 1985, when it became derelict. It was redeveloped in 1996 and is now the Centennial Park industrial/business estate.

***Planning History***

The site was originally in the London Borough of Harrow and early planning history for the site is brief. It appears that in 1963 that land adjoining the Aldenham bus works was also being utilised as a Police Dog Training School. Several applications to redevelop the site as a retail park were received in 1987 and refused. Hertsmere received the application for a business park in 1993, permission was granted in 1996. Since then various applications have been received regarding the development and maintenance of the site and alterations to buildings. The most major recent development involved the erection of a hotel with conference and leisure facilities (TP 06/1165).

***Future Plans***

None known- a representation was received requesting removal of the site from the Green Belt.

***Green Belt Criteria***

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options.

Exceptional circumstances: no exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

Centennial Park is a large business park development on the outskirts of Elstree. The entrance to Centennial Park off Elstree Hill South is still relatively open and visually separated from the portion of Elstree that is outside the Green Belt. It would also be difficult to create a more defensible boundary for the Green Belt than the existing as Centennial Park takes up the majority of the wedge of land framed by Elstree Hill South, Elstree/Watford Road, and North Western Avenue. If the Green Belt boundary were to be changed the logical boundary would include the entire wedge. This is inappropriate as it includes part of a wildlife site and land identified for future public open space. It would also have the potential to encourage development of the undeveloped areas of land, which would constitute an increase in size of the residential areas around Elstree village. This increased level of development aside from encroaching into the countryside would lessen the distance between Elstree and Bushey.

- The openness of the Green Belt will be affected by removing Centennial Park from the Green Belt.
- Three of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt would be compromised by a shift to the Green Belt Boundary (sprawl, merging, and encroachment).
- There are no future conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt because there is approved development on the site.
- The current boundary is logical and defensible.

***Comments***

The site is on the south-western edge of Elstree and aside from being in the Green Belt is identified as a Key Employment site in the HLP. A portion of the undeveloped part of the site is identified as Proposed Public Open Space in the HLP and a wildlife site borders the north western section of the property. The site has been recommended as a Key Green Belt Site elsewhere in this report. A representation was received from a consultancy on behalf of the client requesting removal of the site from the Green Belt, so the site has been assessed both as a potential KGBS and a Green Belt adjustment.

***Recommendation***

Retain this site in the Green Belt



**Table 7.4 Colney Fields, Barnet Road, London Colney**

**History and use**

There is a possibility that the site was used during the construction of the M25 for workers cabins. The site was however undeveloped until a hotel was built. The site is often referred to as the former Savacentre site as it was part of a large site on which the Savacentre was constructed. The retail park itself is in St Albans District and accessed off Barnet Road.

**Planning History**

Before applications for a hotel on the site, there is little planning history. Two of the hotel applications were approved in 2006 and 2010 for 66 and 86 beds respectively. Recently an application was granted for the erection of an EDF substation.

**Future Plans**

None known – enquires were made but no response was received. The site has been cleared to enable the construction of the 86-bed hotel.

**Green Belt Criteria**

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

The current Green Belt boundary is not considered appropriate. The site is right on the district boundary with St Albans. Directly across the Borough boundary is a large retail centre (recognised as a commercial centre in the St Albans District Local Plan) that has grown considerably since the current plan was developed: it is no longer in the Green Belt. Including the site in the Green Belt may be considered an anomaly now and the Green Belt boundary as a consequence is not defensible. The boundary of the Green Belt should be realigned to the rear of the hotel so that it runs along the slip road that comes off the M25.

- The openness of the Green Belt will not be affected by moving the boundary line to the rear of the site.
- None of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be compromised by the proposed shift to the Green Belt Boundary.
- There is no conflict with the land use objectives for Green Belt if the site is removed from the Green Belt.
- The current boundary is not logical or defensible and the use of the M25 slip road at the rear of the site is not only a defensible boundary but it is far more likely to endure as a boundary for future local plans.
- This would not increase the risk of any further development in the surrounding Green Belt.

This site was put forward as a Green Belt Boundary change in the last plan review and assessed by the Inspector: at that time it was determined that the site should remain in the Green Belt because there was no compelling reason to remove it. However, the site and the neighbouring shopping area are considerably more developed since then.

**Comments**

The site is an odd shaped wedge of land bordered by an M25 slip road and the Borough boundary but the site itself has no other designations. The site is not considered suitable for a Key Green Belt Site.

**Recommendation**

Remove this site from the Green Belt and redraw the boundary at the rear of the site so that it follows the M25 slip road (**Minor GB Adjustment**)



**Table 7.5 The Furzefield Centre, Mutton Lane, Potters Bar**

***History and use***

The County Council bought 40 acres of land in 1935 called Furzefield; it lay between Mutton Lane and Cranborne Road sewage farm. Eighteen acres of this land was to be developed into a sports facility to which the King George V Memorial Foundation promised a grant. World War II delayed the project but the playing field and a pavilion (converted from the existing British Legion Memorial Hall) was opened in 1957.

A swimming pool was built in the mid-1960s and a sports hall approximately ten years later.

***Planning History***

Most of the early planning history is linked to the King George V Playing Fields. Permission was granted in 1965 for a swimming pool. In 1975 a sports hall was given consent. Various other permissions sought regarding the sports centre development and extensions (not all granted) followed.

***Future Plans***

N/A

***Green Belt Criteria***

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

Exceptional circumstances: none

There is no justification for moving the Green Belt Boundary. Much of the site is open space and used for recreational purposes so despite being on the edge of a large conurbation the use of the site is compatible with Green Belt uses. The boundary is also defensible.

- The openness of the Green Belt will not be affected by leaving The Furzefield Centre in the Green Belt
- None of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be compromised by leaving the Centre in the Green Belt.
- There is no conflict with the land use objectives for Green Belt.
- The current boundary is logical and defensible.

***Comments***

The site is situated at the western edge of Potters Bar. Apart from the Green Belt there are no other designations on the site. There is a wildlife site and nature reserve identified on the northern boundary of the playing field.

***Recommendation***

Retain this site within the Green Belt.

| <b>Table 7.6 Land rear of Hartfield Avenue, Borehamwood</b>  |
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| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site is currently greenfield. Equestrian use - paddocks for horses</p>   |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>No planning history.</p>  |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>There have been representations made to Council regarding the development of the site for housing.</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.<br/>Exceptional circumstances: none<br/>The land forms an important component of the strategic green gap between Borehamwood, and North London. If this area of Borehamwood were to be developed the impact on the Green Belt in the area could potentially produce several adverse effects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The openness of the Green Belt will be affected by infilling this portion of the Green Belt.</li> <li>▪ Three of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt would be compromised by a shift to the Green Belt boundary (sprawl, merging, and encroachment).</li> <li>▪ There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt.</li> <li>▪ The current boundary is logical and defensible.</li> </ul> <p>This site has been put forward previously for the movement of the Green Belt boundary. In the Inspector's Report 2000 the Inspector concluded in paragraph 31.41 that the site makes an important contribution to the Green Belt. It is part of a scenically attractive area of landscape and in strategic Green Belt terms separates Borehamwood from London to the south and which is only 2 km wide at this point. The development of this site would result in the loss of important Green Belt land and would detract from this area of pleasant landscape, which provides an important visual setting for Elstree and Borehamwood on its southern side.<br/>The situation has not changed. There is no good reason to remove this land from the Green Belt.</p> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The land is situated at the southern end of Hartfield Avenue in Borehamwood. It lies behind housing on the eastern side of the road and site could potentially be accessed via the extension of Hartfield Ave. The site is designated as Green Belt and there is a wildlife site on the eastern border, which covers the railway tunnel.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Retain this site within the Green Belt.</p>   |



**Table 7.7 The Lincolnsfield Centre, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey**

**History and use**

Part of the old Bushey Hall estate — the wartime location of the USAAF 8th Fighter Command Headquarters — this is a unique WW2 Heritage site. The original house on the site was demolished in 1955. Also known as the American School in the 1950s, it was changed to a range of community uses and is now run as the Lincolnsfield Children's Centre -a registered children's charity providing opportunities for children, young people and adults with special needs. It provides catered and self-catering residential accommodation to enable groups, under adult supervision, to spend time away from their urban environment. There are also a variety of other facilities and activities on the site, including a children's farm yard and play area, together with a recreated 1940s house.

**Planning History**

The planning history only goes back until 1952 when it was given permission for use as offices and sports ground for the staff of Bushey Hall Hotel. The buildings and huts have all been given numbers. Over time permission for change of use for buildings have in the main been granted for community uses such as football training and operatic rehearsals. The first permission granted for its current use was in 1978 when conditional consent was given for the renovation of buildings to provide temporary residential holiday facility for deprived children (buildings 21 & 29-36 inclusive). The site has continued to be used for various community uses and sports. A riding school set up operation in 1984.

Application TP 02/1190 granted permission for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of part single/part two storey special needs school and four single storey residential blocks to provide accommodation for 32 pupils. Alterations to the internal road layout included provision for a vehicle drop off point 56 parking spaces and new pedestrian access.

**Future Plans**

None known

**Green Belt Criteria**

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

Exceptional circumstances: none.

Lincolnsfield Centre is part of a reasonably large multi-use site albeit one which retains a low density, and spacious open character. There is no rationale to have it removed from the Green Belt and to do so would mean that a hole would be cut into the Green Belt in an area that would leave the Green Belt vulnerable to further development. Neither is the Lincolnsfield Centre suitable as a Key Green Belt Site (for infilling).

- The openness of the Green Belt will not necessarily be affected by removing this site from the Green Belt; however the integrity of the Green Belt in the area would be seriously compromised.
- Three of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be potentially compromised by a change to the Green Belt boundary (sprawl, merging, and encroachment).
- There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt.
- The current boundary is logical and defensible.

**Comments**

The site is situated in the strategic green gap between Bushey, North Bushey and Watford. Aside from the Green Belt there are TPOs identified on the site.

**Recommendation**

Retain the site within the Green Belt.

| <b>Table 7.8 Potters Bar Golf Course, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar</b>   |
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| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site was purchased and developed as a golf course in the early 1920s. The course opened on 27 September 1924 and has been operating ever since.</p>  |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>The planning history for the site goes back until 1923 when the clubhouse was given permission. Extensions and internal alterations were granted permission in 1935 and an artisan clubhouse granted permission in 1936. Since then, the majority of applications have been for extensions or refurbishment. Applications for residential development were refused in 1959 and 1963</p>   |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>There have been representations made to Council regarding the development of the site for housing.</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.<br/>Exceptional circumstances: none.<br/>The Golf Course is in a good location for housing as it is close to the centre of Potters Bar. However unless a strong case can be made that Green Belt land should be released to meet proven housing development requirements and that this site is more suitable than other Green Belt locations, then this site should not be released partly or wholly from the Green Belt. Due to the size of the golf course whose boundaries go beyond the obvious urbanised area of Potters Bar, there is a definite threat that housing in the area could be seriously detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt, and lead to encroachment into the countryside. It would also result in the loss of pleasant landscape and of an important leisure facility close to the centre of Potters Bar.<br/>The Inspectors Report in 2000 on Hertsmere's Local Plan rejected this area as a housing proposal. He considered what exceptional circumstances might justify release of the land for housing – essentially overriding need for more housing and lack of other sites. He also commented in paragraph 31.32: "As well as the loss of a large tract of Green Belt land there would also be the substitution of what is at present a clearly identifiable and defensible GB boundary by one that would not be readily identifiable on the ground."</p> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The Golf Course is situated in the northern areas of Potters Bar and to the east of the railway line. Areas of the site are susceptible to flooding and classified in parts as flood zone 3b.</p>   |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Retain the site in the Green Belt.</p>  |

| <b>Table 7.9 Land to the rear of 6 to 16 The Warren and 3 Longridge, Radlett</b>   |
|--|
| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site is currently greenfield.</p>  |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>An appeal was dismissed in 1972 for 22 dwellings and bungalows.</p>   |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>There have been representations made regarding the development of the site for housing.</p>   |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.<br/>Exceptional circumstances: none currently<br/>Theoretically the stream would provide a recognisable geographical feature for a Green Belt boundary, and the development would hypothetically nestle into the form of the eastern side of Radlett. However, the site is greenfield and while there has been the odd case of neighbouring residents extending their back gardens into the area (though without any legal basis as the land is not in their ownership), there is no good basis for arguing that the site forms any part of existing domestic curtilages. There is also a definite separation from the surrounding properties, with their rear boundaries having well-established trees.<br/>Further, the Core Strategy is not seeking to expand Radlett into the Green Belt to accommodate any shortfalls in housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The openness of the Green Belt would be affected to some degree by removing the site from the Green Belt: development would constitute encroachment.</li> <li>▪ Two of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be potentially compromised by a change to the Green Belt boundary (prevention of sprawl and encroachment).</li> <li>▪ There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt.</li> <li>▪ The current boundary is logical and defensible.</li> </ul> <p>The site could be put forward for consideration should there be need to expand Radlett in the future.</p> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The site is situated to the rear of Nos 6-16 The Warren and No 3 Longridge on the north-eastern side of Radlett. Aside from the Green Belt designation, the site is also a wildlife site and is partly at risk of flooding: flood zones 2 and 3 are noted over portions of the site.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Retain this site within the Green Belt</p>  |

| <b>Table 7.10 Land to the rear of The Warren, Radlett</b>   |
|---|
| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site is currently greenfield. The site is situated to the rear of No 6-20 the Warren over the small creek and comprises of approximately 49 acres (19 hectares)</p>   |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>None found</p>   |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>A representation suggested developing the site for housing.</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.<br/>Exceptional circumstances: none currently<br/>The site is greenfield and there is a definite separation from the surrounding properties, in terms of distance, landscape, and vegetative screening. There is no basis for arguing that the site has any links to The Warren aside from the access. Development on this land would be definite encroachment into the Green Belt and wider countryside. That would undoubtedly be a precedent that would lead to further encroachment from the development of neighbouring properties. Unlike the other Warren site identified in representations, the geographic features are not as well-defined and development would not be able to fit into the existing outline of eastern Radlett. Further, the Core Strategy is not seeking to expand Radlett into the Green Belt to accommodate any shortfalls in housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The openness of the Green Belt will be affected by removing this site from the Green Belt.</li> <li>▪ Three of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be potentially compromised by a change to the Green Belt boundary (prevention of encroachment, sprawl, and a risk of coalescence the merging of Radlett and Shenley).</li> <li>▪ There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt.</li> <li>▪ The current boundary is logical and defensible.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The site is situated to the rear of Nos 6-20 The Warren and No 3 Longridge on the north-eastern side of Radlett. Aside from the Green Belt designation, there may be an issue of flooding at the southern end of the site where the stream is situated.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Retain this site within the Green Belt</p>   |

**Table 7.11 Cemetery, Watling Street; Flats 1-24 Oakbank, 5-23 (odd numbers only), 10 and First Place Nursery, Cobden Hill Radlett.**

**History and use**

The sites are in residential, cemetery, or early years educational use and are well established.

**Planning History**

Oakbank: An application for the erection of six houses was withdrawn in 1971 and in the same year permission was refused for a cellular therapy clinic. Permission was refused for residential development in 1974. At the same time an application for a Health Centre and a luxury block of 15 flats had received no decision. An application for residential development was given conditional permission in early 1976, and another was given in late 1976 (i.e. for a 3 storey block of 21 flats and 12 garages).

Cemetery: none found

5-23 (odd numbers only) Cobden Hill: There have been two applications for the construction of houses at the rear of the current houses: 6 two bedroom houses and 5 three bedroom houses with access road and parking spaces in 1992; and 8 two bedroom houses and 3 three bedroom houses new access road and parking provision. Neither was given permission.

First Place Nursery - previously known as the Radlett Nursery and Infant School. Building extensions and hardstanding have occurred over time.

10 Cobden Hill - also known as the old bakery. The planning history shows that between 1976 and 1988 several applications were made for alterations and extensions, not all of which were given permission.

**Future Plans**

A representation was made requesting that the Council investigate and correct Green Belt boundary anomalies in the area.

**Green Belt Criteria**

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

Exceptional circumstances: the Green Belt boundary merits review to ensure longer term permanence and greater defensibility.

The Council applied to change the Green Belt Boundary in the 1999 review with the following reasoning "The Proposals Map for the Hertsmere District Plan First Review 1991 shows the Green Belt boundary to the rear of Cobden Hill in Radlett following an arbitrary boundary through rear gardens. This boundary was based upon the Green Belt boundary defined in the First Review of the Hertfordshire County Development Plan. The Green Belt boundary defined in the 1983 District Plan Proposals Map was not consistent with the Inset Plan for Radlett at 1:10,000, which appears on the reverse of the 1983 Proposals Map. In reviewing the Local Plan, the Council considered it essential to review the detailed boundary to the rear of Cobden Hill to ensure that the boundary was clearly defined and the confusion which occurred in the past avoided."

The Inspector's Report was favourable towards the change stating in paragraph 7.14 that "I accept the Council's reasons for amending the Green Belt boundary at Cobden Hill. In following the line of the rear gardens of houses here and the boundary of the nursery school the new alignment would be a logical one and defensible in that it would be based on physical features on the ground." In paragraph 7.15 the Inspector writes "it has always seemed bad practice in my view for Green Belt boundaries to be drawn across areas where there are no physical boundaries to identify them: such situations should, I consider, be avoided whenever possible." Further, in paragraph 7.16 after stating that logical routes are not in themselves a justification for changing the Green Belt boundary the Inspector states "In this case a more clearly demarcated boundary for the Green Belt needed to be found and I support the proposal in the Plan for its change". Upon reflection, the Council changed its mind and did not wish to follow the view of the Inspector at that time.

- The openness of the Green Belt will not be affected by realigning the Green Belt in these

localities.

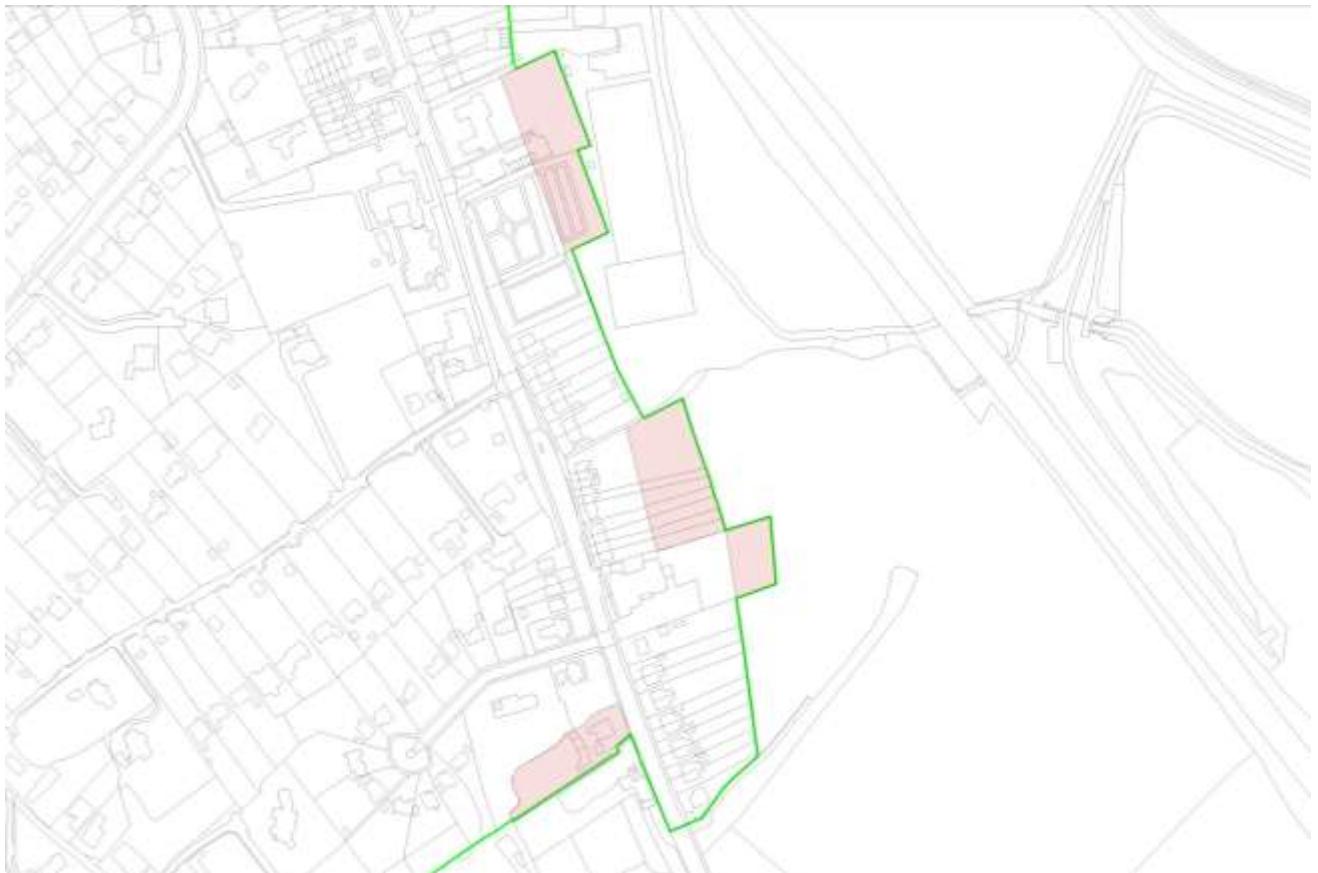
- None of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be compromised by a change to the Green Belt boundary.
- There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt.
- The proposed boundary is logical and defensible.

**Comments**

Aside from the Green Belt designation, all of the properties are in Radlett South Conservation Area. 5-23 Cobden Hill and 10 Cobden Hill are identified on the List of Locally Important Buildings in Hertsmere.

**Recommendation**

That the Green Belt boundary be redrawn as suggested (**Minor GB Adjustment**)



**Table 7.12 Land at the rear of 27-37 Heath Road Potters Bar**

**History and use**

The sites are a mixture of residential with large back gardens and greenfield

**Planning History**

In 1973 an application at 29-33 Heath Road for 15 detached houses and garages was refused. In 1999 an application was refused for the erection of 3 detached houses at 27-31 Heath Road.

**Future Plans**

Proposed development of approximately 30 dwellings at 27-31 Heath Road.

**Green Belt Criteria**

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

Exceptional circumstances: there are no exceptional circumstances regarding the requested removal of the large block of land from the Green Belt. Development on this land would be clear encroachment into the Green Belt. That would undoubtedly be a precedent that would lead to further encroachment from the development of neighbouring properties.

However, following investigations there could be a case for realignment of the Green Belt boundary on the neighbouring properties. Numbers 31 and 37 Heath Road in 1986 purchased half the field each at the rear of the houses numbered 31-37 Heath Road and altered their property boundaries accordingly. The Green Belt boundary used to run along the rear of all four boundaries and then cut through the rear of 29 Heath Road in a straight line then along the rear of the properties on Green Meadow. The Green Belt boundary now runs along the rear of 33 and 35 Heath Road but the point where it cuts through 37, 31 and especially 29 Heath Road does now appear to be a little arbitrary. Aerial photos show that the owners are using the additional garden area and that the land can be described as being curtilage land.

The alterations to the property boundaries of 31 and 37 Heath Road were made over 20 years ago. It is not normally considered to be good practice to have the Green Belt Boundary cut through the rear of domestic curtilages. However, it is unlikely that that any significant precedent would be set from the further erosion of the Green Belt from property owners buying Green Belt land and adding it to their curtilage for later removal from the Green Belt, given the long timescales potentially involved. On balance therefore, the Green Belt boundary could be altered to run along the rear boundary of 31 and 37 Heath Road, then in a straight line across the property of 29 Heath Road and then along the rear of the properties of Green Meadow.

- The openness of the Green Belt would not be unduly affected by realigning it as suggested.
- None of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be compromised by a change to the Green Belt boundary.
- There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt in this locality.
- The proposed boundary is logical and defensible.

This is a different conclusion from that reached by the Inspector in the Post Modifications Inquiry. Although this site was not discussed in the original Inquiry it was discussed in the Modifications Inquiry. The issue being that the maps showed a different boundary for these sites on the Draft Plan from the Modifications Plan. The Inspector found that there were no exceptional circumstances to warrant a change from the 1991 boundary. His argument for this was as follows: *"I fully accept the need for the council to adopt a consistency of approach, and I note elsewhere that it has moved arbitrary boundaries crossing gardens to clearer, more defensible lines. This may well be the only case in the Borough where the boundary does not run along a physical feature. I accept, too, that the boundary may run across a number of planning units. Nevertheless, I conclude that harm would be caused to the purposes of the green belt if the boundary were to be moved. Once the land were taken out of the green belt planning policies would permit its development. The openness of the land in question would not be protected. Its contribution to the green belt would be lost. Whilst physical features within gardens may change over time, this does not justify the revision here of this boundary that has*

*endured for fifty years.”*  
(Hertsmere Local Plan Modifications Inquiry Inspector’s Report; September 2001)

**Comments**

The site is near the Borough boundary in Potters Bar and in addition to being in the Green Belt there are TPOs on the site.

**Recommendation**

That the Green Belt boundary be redrawn as suggested (**Minor GB Adjustment**)





| <b>Table 7.13 Land off Hartspring Lane, Bushey and Land East of A41 near Bushey</b>  |
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| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>Open fields, agriculture, and a variety of other uses</p>  |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>Given the size of the area and the imprecise nature of the representation, the planning history has not been researched.</p>  |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>A range of uses including residential and industrial development have been proposed in representations submitted.</p>   |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. The proposals contain no exceptional circumstances.<br/>Several representations were received to request that land around Hartspring Lane and the A41 are removed from the Green Belt as their uses are more appropriate to urban areas. However, if any or all of this land were removed from the Green Belt a large hole would be created in the Green Belt, effectively extending the built area to the east and south of North Bushey. This could severely threaten the quality of the Green Belt and damage the worth of the proposed strategic gap between Bushey and North Bushey. An island of Green Belt would effectively be created between the two suburbs with only a narrow gap of Green Belt being left between the upper western reaches of Bushey.<br/>Although the A41 would create a clear and defensible 'boundary' to the east of Bushey increasing the level of development between the M1 and the A41 would effectively close the gap between North Bushey and Patchetts Green. This would also increase the future risk of the merging of Aldenham Village, Patchetts Green and Letchmore Heath. The remaining Green Belt between Bushey and the A41 would also be at an increased risk of development.<br/>While it is acknowledged that the uses of land in the area are not what may be ideally sought for Green Belt, this is not justification for removing the land from the Green Belt. Other Council reports discuss the employment and land use requirements of the Borough, which themselves do not justify development of this area of Green Belt land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The openness of the Green Belt would be seriously affected by altering the Green Belt boundary in this manner.</li> <li>▪ Three of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be potentially compromised by the proposed change to the Green Belt boundary (sprawl, merging and encroachment).</li> <li>▪ There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt in this locality.</li> <li>▪ The proposed boundary is illogical and is unsustainable in the long term.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>Several parcels of land were identified from representations in the general area for removal from the Green Belt. Apart from the Green Belt designation there are TPOs, landfill sites and areas of flood risk.</p>   |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Retain all the land within the Green Belt.</p>  |

**Table 7.14 The Wroxham School, Wroxham Gardens, Potters Bar**

***History and use***

The site is currently used as a primary school and nursery educating children from 4 to 11 years of age. The primary school has one form entry each year 1 to 6.

***Planning History***

There have been three planning applications in recent years at the school. In 1997 permission was granted for the construction of a new main entrance and enclosure to the school. In 1998 two applications were granted permission. The first granted permission for the erection of an additional classroom and ancillary accommodation at the rear of the school storage. The second application in 1998 granted permission for the erection of a single story storage building.

***Future Plans***

No formal plans have been received.

***Green Belt Criteria***

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

The site is an educational establishment and it is anticipated that it will continue as such in the future. In terms of the potential impact of the site on the Green Belt, whilst the site is well established, any expansion will need to be sensitive due to its position on the edge of Potters Bar.

***Comments***

The school is situated on the western side of Potters Bar with its eastern boundaries abutting residential area.

***Recommendation***

Retain Green Belt designation.

**Table 7.15 Sunny Bank Junior and Infant School, Potters Bar**

**History and use**

The site was used as a primary school, becoming redundant for that purpose in 2007.

**Planning History**

There is little planning history, after the school was built in 1960 and used as a junior and infant school; an application was approved in 1996 for a four bay mobile classroom, and a canopy in 2003. After the school stopped operating, alterations were made to one block to enable it to be used as an education support centre.

**Future Plans**

No formal plans have been received, although the previously developed part of the site may have potential for redevelopment as housing.

**Green Belt Criteria**

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

The site continues to be used as an educational establishment, although in a different form to its original use. In terms of the potential impact of the site on the Green Belt, whilst the site is well established, any expansion will need to be sensitive due to its position on the edge of Potters Bar, taking into account the previously developed portion (PDL) of the site.

The site is discussed in the SHLAA as being able to accommodate 69 dwellings, although this did not reflect the PDL on the site. Redevelopment on this scale would constitute urban encroachment. However taking into account the site's location, its contribution to the environment of this part of Potters Bar where the countryside effectively comes into the town, and the existence of former school buildings (the PDL), a smaller housing development may be appropriate. The Council then has the choice of:

- a) proposing no change to the Green Belt and allowing redevelopment of the PDL as and when; or
- b) proposing housing redevelopment on the PDL as a definite proposal in the Site Allocations DPD specifically contributing to the Core Strategy housing target.

Retaining the playing field in open use and making it available for public open space for use by existing residents (and new occupiers), would effectively maintain the environment of this area with limited impact on the Green Belt. It would also provide a significant community service.

That could happen under scenario a) or b) above.

This is a balanced choice.

**Comments**

The school is situated on the western side of Potters Bar with three of its boundaries adjoining residential areas. There is a need to identify some land for new housing but not at the expense of the local environment. The Council wishes to restrict the extent of new development. The more transparent approach is to identify a specific proposal for the former Sunny Bank School for homes and public open space and redefine the Green Belt. This realignment might be seen as a form of rounding off the town in this vicinity.

**Recommendation**

Realign the Green Belt boundary as a consequence of the housing and open space proposal (**Green Belt Change**).



**Table 7.16 Birchville Court Nursing Home, County End, The Callenders, Birchville Cottage, Euromast and Greenacres, Heathbourne Road, Bushey Heath**

***History and use***

A site history for Birchville Court nursing home can be found back until 1928 when the site was being used as a nurses' home. The use changed in 1987 when planning permission was granted for a change from a nurses' home to a nursing home for the elderly. Apart from a haulage yard (with storage of plant, equipment and materials) and the Euromast site, the other sites have been in continual residential use.

***Planning History***

Birchville Court nursing home - apart from the change of use in 1987 the majority of the permissions granted have been for extensions and alterations. A new cottage was granted permission in 1930.

County End was previously in the London Borough of Harrow. Early planning history shows that attempts to erect flats on the site, and another to convert to flats were refused; later, extensions and alterations were approved. In 2008 an application for an extension was allowed on appeal.

The Callenders site was originally a house with stables and garages. Permission was granted in 1963 for the change of use to residential accommodation for 36 old people. In 1974 an automatic unmanned telecommunications relay station was established with another being established in 1979 for the Ambulance Service. Over this period of time several applications were made to extend the house: not all were given permission. In 1987 permission was granted for the demolition of the existing dilapidated buildings and construction of 20 2/3 bedroom flats with vehicular access and garages. More recent applications have been minor alterations to the flats and the surrounding parking, and a couple of replacements to the 60 ft mast.

Birchville Cottage - various permissions have been sought for extensions, not all have been granted the latest on file was refused permission in 2001 and the appeal dismissed in 2002. A new garage was granted permission in 1987; Euromast – the Council was notified of the installation of the mast in 1998. Since then, various notices of installation under the General Permitted Development Order 1995 have been received by the Council for additional cabins on the site; Greenacres - permission was granted in 2007 for an extension. In 2003 an appeal was dismissed for an outline application for two 5 bedroom detached houses on the land rear of Greenacres. Previously the house was known as Killick Down: permission was granted for the house in 1926 and the garage in 1927.

***Future Plans***

A representation received on behalf of the Birchville nursing home stated that the nursing home needs its use to be extended and developed, and that the current haulage yard could be developed for housing.

***Green Belt Criteria***

Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision. This also applies to the release of safeguarded land.

The sites are collectively safeguarded under the current HLP and adopted Core Strategy. However a housing proposal is identified at Birchville Court Nursing Home (and adjoining haulage yard). If this is supported the area of land safeguarded should be reduced in extent. Then, as no further land is needed to meet the Core Strategy housing target, the remaining safeguarded land designation north of Birchville Court should remain.

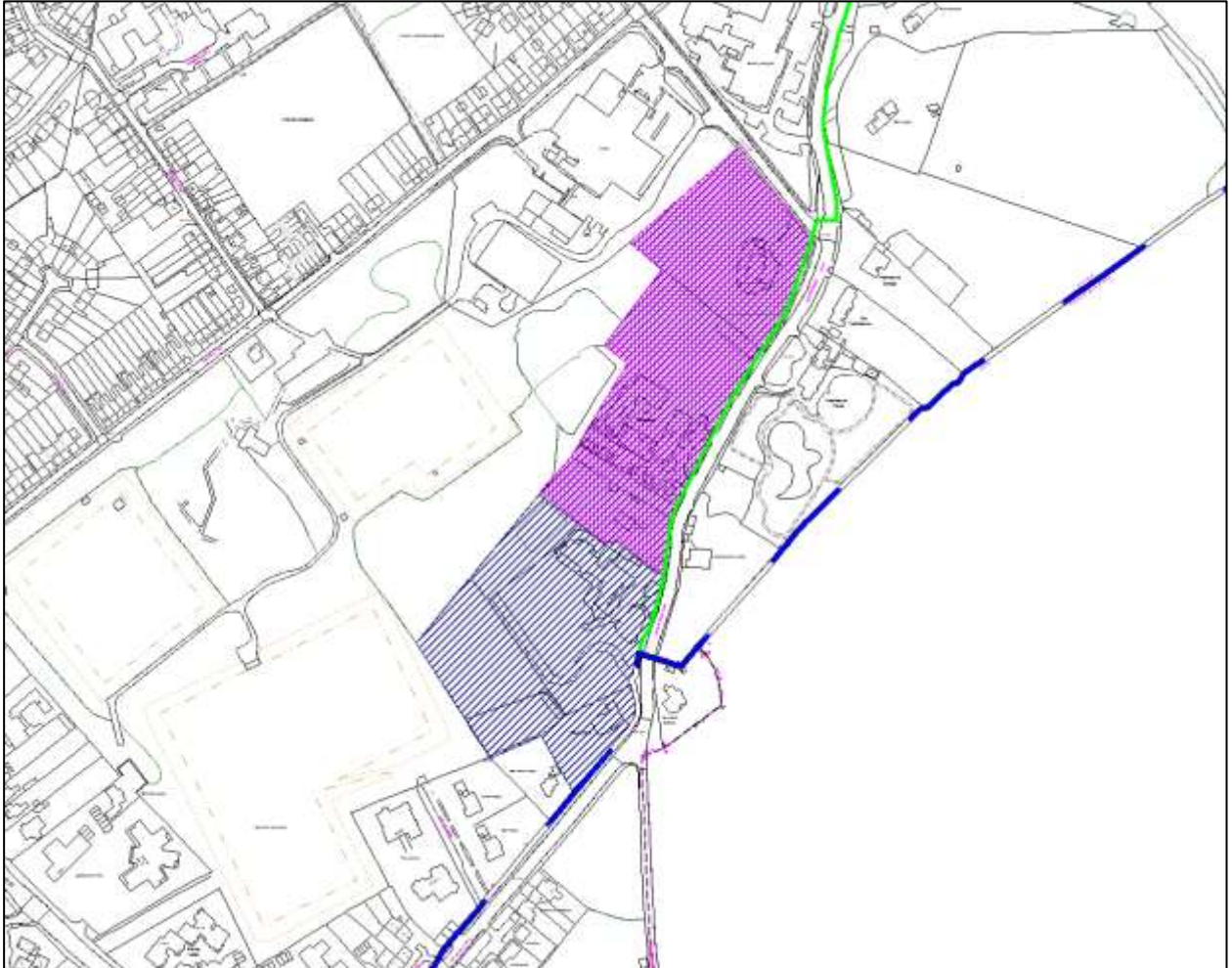
Heathbourne Road provides a definitive Green Belt boundary, and there is no exceptional circumstance to warrant changing it.

***Comments***

All these sites are safeguarded land (excluded from the Green Belt but treated for the time being as though it were in the Green Belt). The Callenders, one of the Euromast sites and Greenacres have TPOs on them. Residential development of the site which includes a haulage yard should on balance be an environmental improvement. Inclusion of the site as a proposal meeting the Core Strategy housing target points to a revision of the full safeguarded area.

**Recommendation**

Reduce the area of safeguarded land, retaining the existing Green Belt boundary (safeguarded land change).



**Table 7.17 Starveacres, 16 Watford Road Radlett WD7 8LD**

***History and use***

The property has been a residential property for many years.

***Planning History***

- Planning history for the site goes back to the 1940s.
- Several applications were made during the 1950s and 60s for residential development of the site. All of these were refused including an application that was refused by the Minister of Housing and Local Government.
- Permission was granted for the conversion of the house in 1958. An additional dwelling in the grounds of Starveacres was granted in 1958.
- More recently the installation of stable and a riding menage was granted permission in 1992.
- Single storey extensions were granted in 2001 and 2004.
- Alteration to the roof of the existing stable block was granted in 2005.

***Future Plans***

There have been representations made to Council regarding the development of the site for housing. The agent has suggested up to 50 houses could be accommodated on the site.

***Green Belt Criteria***

Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision. This also applies to safeguarded land.

The site is a residential property on the edge of Radlett in very large grounds. The site is safeguarded under the current HLP and adopted Core Strategy. Safeguarded land is land released from the Green Belt to be held in reserve for future development, if and when needed, normally upon a review of the local plan (in the interim it is treated as though it was in the Green Belt). The site's development would effectively constitute a significant enlargement of Radlett into a largely open area.

There are no exceptional circumstances that would justify the release of this piece of land for development now. It is not needed to meet the Core Strategy housing target. And there are no exceptional circumstances to warrant changing the Green Belt boundary either.

***Comments***

The site is situated on the north-western side of Radlett. Aside from being designated as safeguarded land in the Green Belt, the site also has TPOs, along the long driveway to the house.

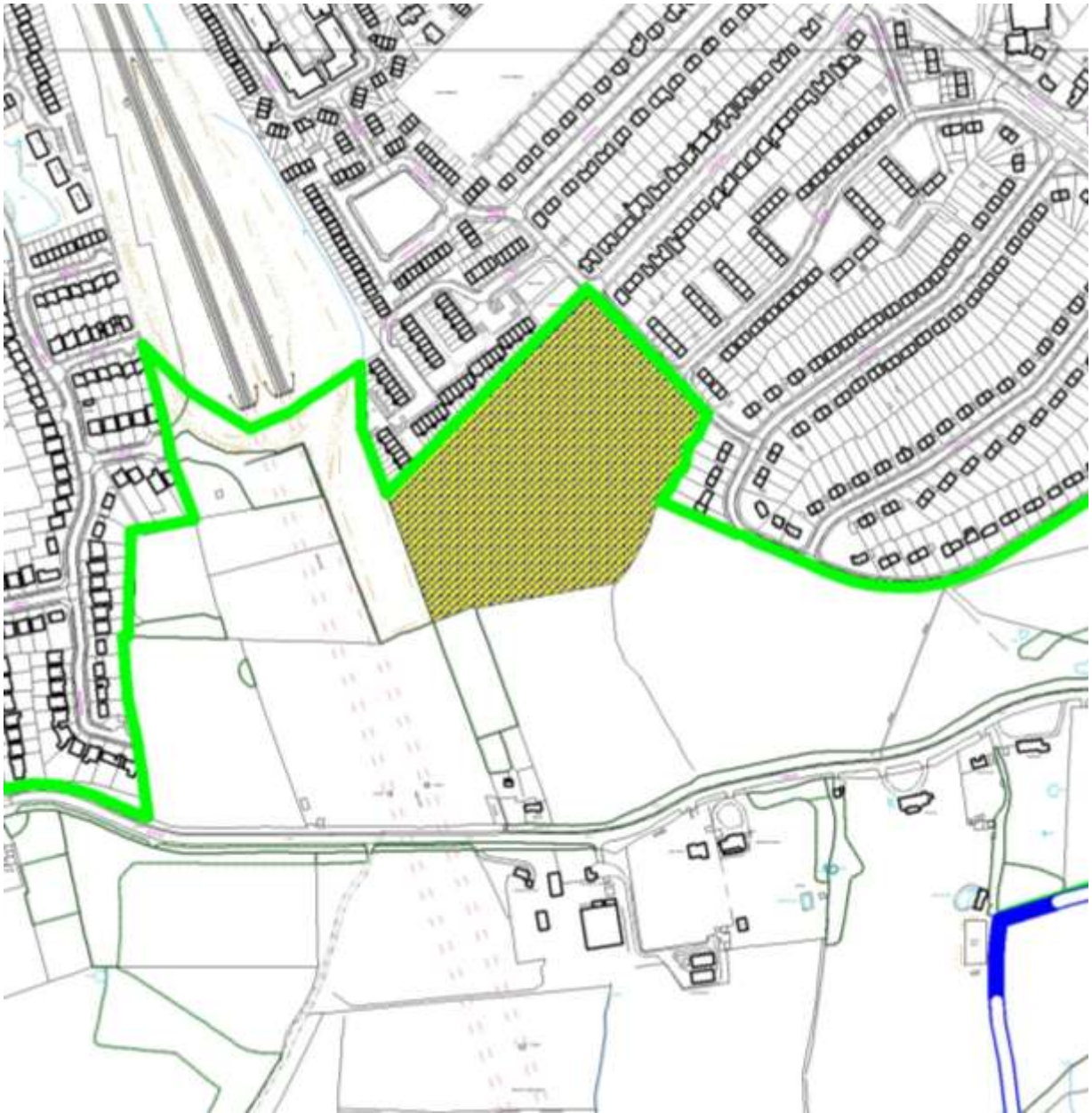
***Recommendation***

No change - retain the safeguarded land area and Green Belt boundary as they are.

| <b>Table 7.18 Land to the east of Farm Way</b>  |
|---|
| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site is currently greenfield although it has some hard surfacing.</p>   |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>No recent history known</p>  |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>A representation was received by Council recommending the site for residential development.</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The site is safeguarded under the current HLP and adopted Core Strategy. Safeguarded land is land released from the Green Belt to be held in reserve for future development, if and when needed, normally upon a review of the local plan (in the interim it is treated as though it was in the Green Belt). The site's development would effectively constitute a significant enlargement of Bushey into the countryside.<br/>There are no exceptional circumstances that would justify the release of this piece of land for development now. It is not needed to meet the Core Strategy housing target. And there are no exceptional circumstances to warrant changing the Green Belt boundary either.</p> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The site is located to the rear of the Ministry of Defence Estate on the western edge of Bushey. The site is safeguarded land. Like other safeguarded land it continues to provide a contingency and reserve for the future (if and when needed).</p>  |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>No change - retain the safeguarded land area and Green Belt boundary as they are.</p>  |



| <b>Table 7.19 Land at Woodcock Hill</b>  |
|--|
| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The site is greenfield, and was designated as a village green in 2008.</p>   |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>No known planning history.</p>  |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>None – to be retained as a village green</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision. This also applies to safeguarded land.<br/>There are exceptional circumstances justifying a change.<br/>The land was identified as safeguarded land removed from the Green Belt in the Local Plan 2003. Since the safeguarded land designation was placed on the site, the land has been designated Village Green by Hertfordshire County Council. It will not therefore be available for housing at any time in the future. Therefore there is no reason not to return the land to full Green Belt status. In terms of defensibility of the boundary, the redesignation of the land as Green Belt will not make the Green Belt more vulnerable, insensible or irrational.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The openness of the Green Belt will be enhanced by reinstating this site to full Green Belt status.</li> <li>▪ None of the 5 objectives for the Green Belt will be undermined by reinstating the formal Green Belt boundary, rather the opposite.</li> <li>▪ There are no current conflicts with the land use objectives for Green Belt in this locality.</li> <li>▪ The proposed boundary is logical and defensible.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The site on the southern edge of Borehamwood has been registered as a Village Green by Hertfordshire County Council. The land is also identified as a wildlife site and TPOs cover important trees.</p>   |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Remove the safeguarded land designation, and return the land to full Green Belt status (<b>safeguarded land change and Green Belt change</b>).</p>  |



Land no longer safeguarded and returned to the Green Belt

**Table 7.20 West Herts College Annexe, Bushey**

***History and use***

The current site is smaller than the original site, much of which has been developed for housing. There have been two applications on this site, one was withdrawn, and the other is for 22 new dwellings.

***Planning History***

- The site, previously known as Watford College Annexe, had little significant planning history until 1990 when permission was given to redevelop for class B1 purposes: this permission was renewed in 1994.
- Also in 1994 permission was granted for redevelopment for residential purposes.
- An application for the erection of a building to accommodate B1 (offices) and B8 Storage and distribution with associated car parking was made in 1995.
- Permission was later granted in 1996 for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 43 two storey terraced houses and maisonettes with associated parking, highways and gardens.
- This was followed by another application in 1996 for the construction of 11 two storey terraced houses and maisonettes with associated parking, highways and gardens. These are now known as 1-33 Woolmerdine Court and 72-88 Greatham Road.
- In 2000 an outline application was made for the remainder of the site for residential development, which went to appeal for non-determination and was dismissed.

***Future Plans***

Representations received for the site suggested both an entirely residential development, and also a mixed use development incorporating housing, business, leisure and sports facilities.

***Green Belt Criteria***

The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision. This also applies to safeguarded land.

The land was identified as safeguarded land removed from the Green Belt in the Local Plan 2003.

The Council approved residential development on the safeguarded area in 2013. There is therefore no point in retaining the safeguarded status any more. The current Green Belt boundary will be much clearer upon housing development, built and open uses being separate. No change to the Green Belt boundary is warranted.

***Comments***

Apart from the safeguarded land designation the site has a TPO. Neighbouring the site is a playing field. There is a nature reserve within close vicinity.

***Recommendation***

Remove the safeguarded land designation, but retain the Green Belt boundary (**safeguarded land change**).



**Table 7.21 Haydon Dell Farm, Bushey**

**History and use**

The site was used for agricultural uses, most notably a poultry farm until the 1960s. From the 1980s the site has been formally used for light industrial and storage.

**Planning History**

- The planning history for this site is recorded from 1974 onwards, when permission was refused for the conversion of the existing buildings into warehousing and the provision of car parking.
- This was followed in 1976 by an application for a garden centre, which was also refused.
- An application for the continued use of the premises for the packaging and distribution of eggs and other farm and dairy produce was withdrawn in 1982; however the use in association with storage and light industrial purposes together with studio, site management and security facilities was approved in the same year.
- An application for the change of use of buildings from storage to light industrial was refused in 1983; a similar application for the change of use of building 7 in 1984 was approved.
- A further application in 1985 for the change of use from light industrial to a shop was also approved, but an application to rebuild unit 4 as artist studios was refused.
- An outline application for residential development was withdrawn in 1989, and followed by another change of use application, which was approved.
- An application for 29 detached dwellings was withdrawn in 1998.
- In 2008 an application for 13 detached houses was withdrawn.
- An application was approved in 2010 and again in 2011 for demolition of existing industrial buildings and erection of 8 5-bedroom, detached, two storey houses, and new access road off Merry Hill Road.

**Future Plans**

The site has been redeveloped for 8 new dwellings

**Green Belt Criteria**

Up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision. This also applies to safeguarded land.

The land was identified as safeguarded land and removed from the Green Belt in the Local Plan 2003. The Council approved residential development on the safeguarded area in 2010/11. There is therefore no point in retaining the safeguarded status any more. The current Green Belt boundary is clear and surrounds the urban area of Bushey. No change to this boundary is warranted.

**Comments**

The site is on the south-western corner of Bushey: a portion of the site has a TPO.

**Recommendation**

Remove the safeguarded land designation, but retain the Green Belt boundary (**safeguarded land change**).

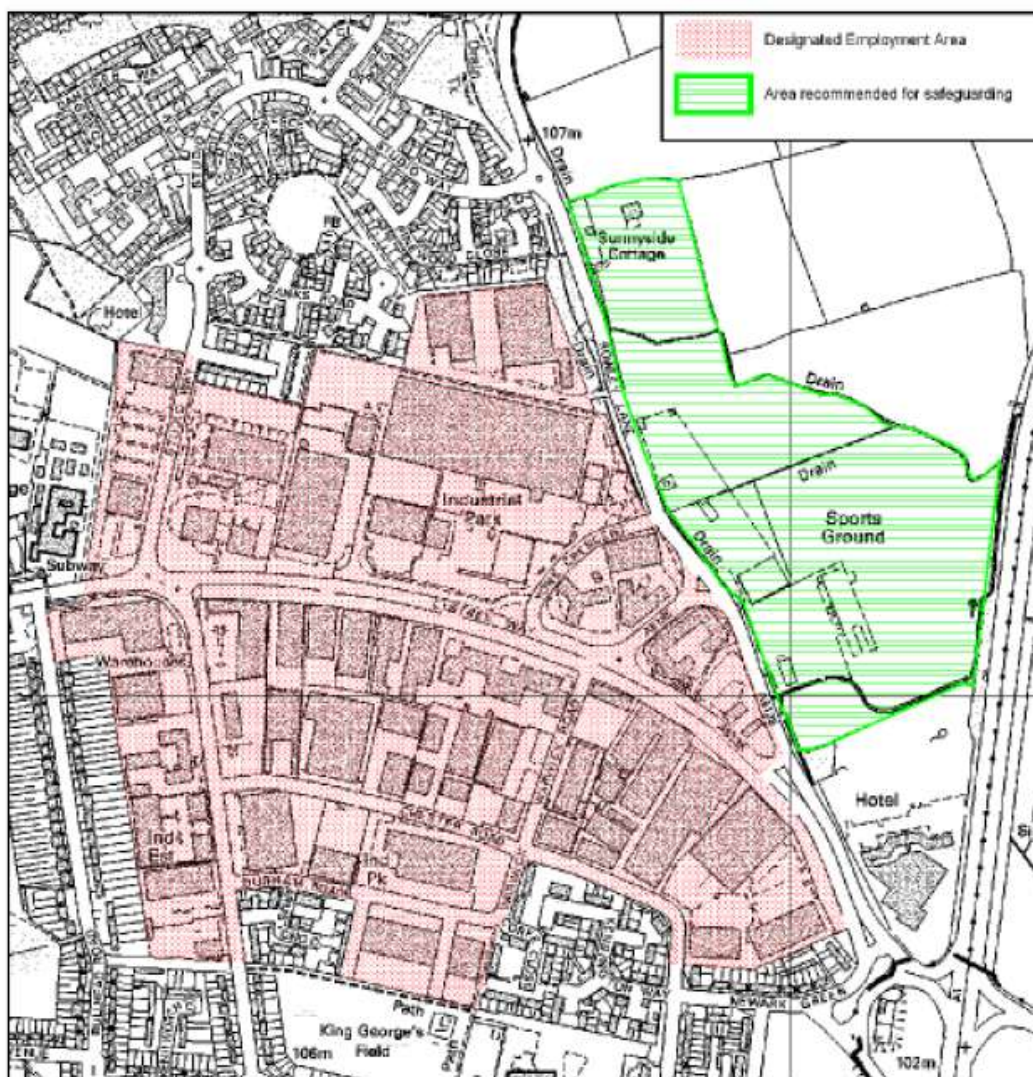


| <b>Table 7.22 Land adjoining Cranborne Industrial Estate Potters Bar</b>   |
|--|
| <p><b>History and use</b><br/>The land is currently greenfield.</p>  |
| <p><b>Planning History</b><br/>None known</p>  |
| <p><b>Future Plans</b><br/>None known</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Belt Criteria</b><br/>The NPPF states that up-to-date approved boundaries are essential, to provide certainty as to where Green Belt policies do and do not apply and to enable the proper consideration of future development options. Where existing local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision. This also applies to safeguarded land.<br/>The land was set aside as safeguarded land for employment use in the 1999 local plan review. It stated in the report that the land was in the employment area and therefore more closely related to the employment area than the Green Belt. A different Green Belt boundary would be more defensible – i.e. the one shown in the Local Plan 2003. The land is only to be released in exceptional circumstances for employment use.<br/>There is no reason to amend the Green Belt boundary here, nor change the safeguarded land status.</p> |
| <p><b>Comments</b><br/>The site is at the north-western corner of the Cranborne Industrial Estate in the upper reaches of Potters Bar. The only designation on the property is that of safeguarded land for employment (i.e. it is excluded from the Green Belt but treated for the time being as though it were in the Green Belt).</p>   |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b><br/>Retain the safeguarded land designation, with no change to the Green Belt boundary.</p>   |

**Table 7.23 Land between the A1 and Rowley Lane, Borehamwood**

An Employment Site Allocations Report was published in November 2011. This brought together the Council's evidence base on employment land and made a number of recommendations in respect of the future policy approach that should be taken. The evidence directed that the Council should make provision for future compensatory employment land designations. Based on an assessment of suitable sites in the Borough it was recommended that an area of land adjoining the Elstree Way Employment Area between Rowley Lane and the A1 be safeguarded for employment use. It was also recommended that the existing area of land safeguarded for employment use adjoining the Cranborne Road Employment Area be retained. Indicative boundaries were set out for safeguarded areas, with precise boundaries to be set out in the forthcoming Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.

Indicative safeguarded land map – November 2011



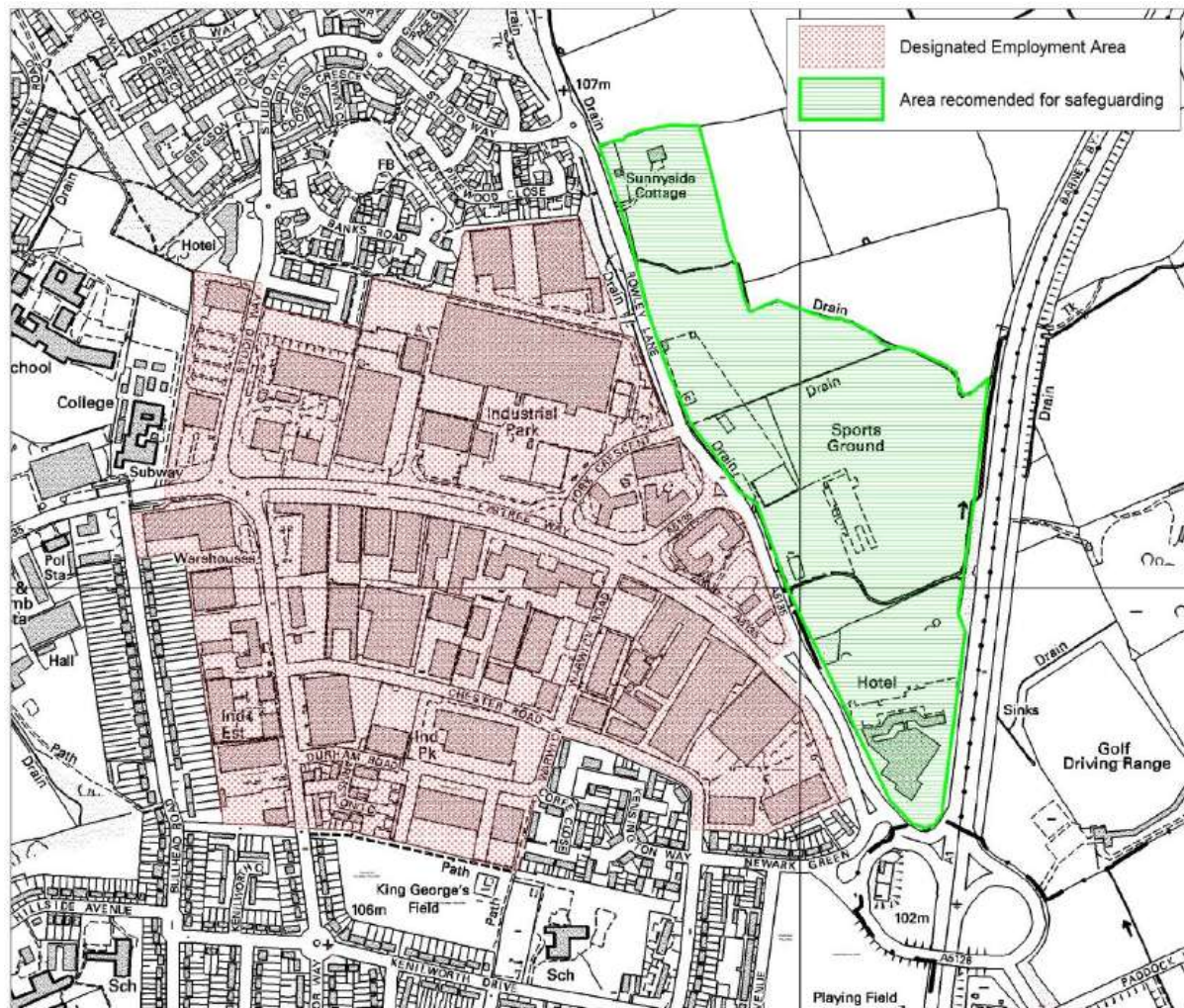
An addendum to the Employment Site Allocations Report was produced in February 2012 following representations made to the Council in the Regulation 27 consultation on the Revised Core Strategy.

The Council had understood that the Holiday Inn site, located between the A1 and Rowley Lane, was not available for development. It was therefore excluded from the area of



safeguarded land identified in the Employment Site Allocations Report. However subsequent representations indicated that the site would be available in future. An assessment was therefore made as to whether the land would be appropriately included within an enlarged area of safeguarded land. It was recommended that it should be included and a revised map was produced to this indicate this.

#### Indicative safeguarded land map – February 2012



An update to the Employment Site Allocations Report (November 2011) and the addendum to the Employment Site Allocations Report (February 2012) was prepared following the Regulation 30 Consultation on, and examination in public of the Core Strategy in May 2012.

During the examination of the Core Strategy (2012) specific consideration was given to the inclusion of the Holiday Inn site at Borehamwood within the area of safeguarded land, following the representations of the agent. It was agreed that the site already contains built development and has an established commercial use therefore it is distinguishable from the remainder of the safeguarded land. Arising from the discussion, the Inspector requested that the parties consider an appropriate addition to the text of the Core Strategy to recognise the exceptional circumstances relating to the Holiday Inn site. In a statement of common ground dated 28 May 2012 it was agreed that a new sentence be included within the Core Strategy supporting text.

The sentence is included in paragraph 5.9 of the adopted Core Strategy (see quote and

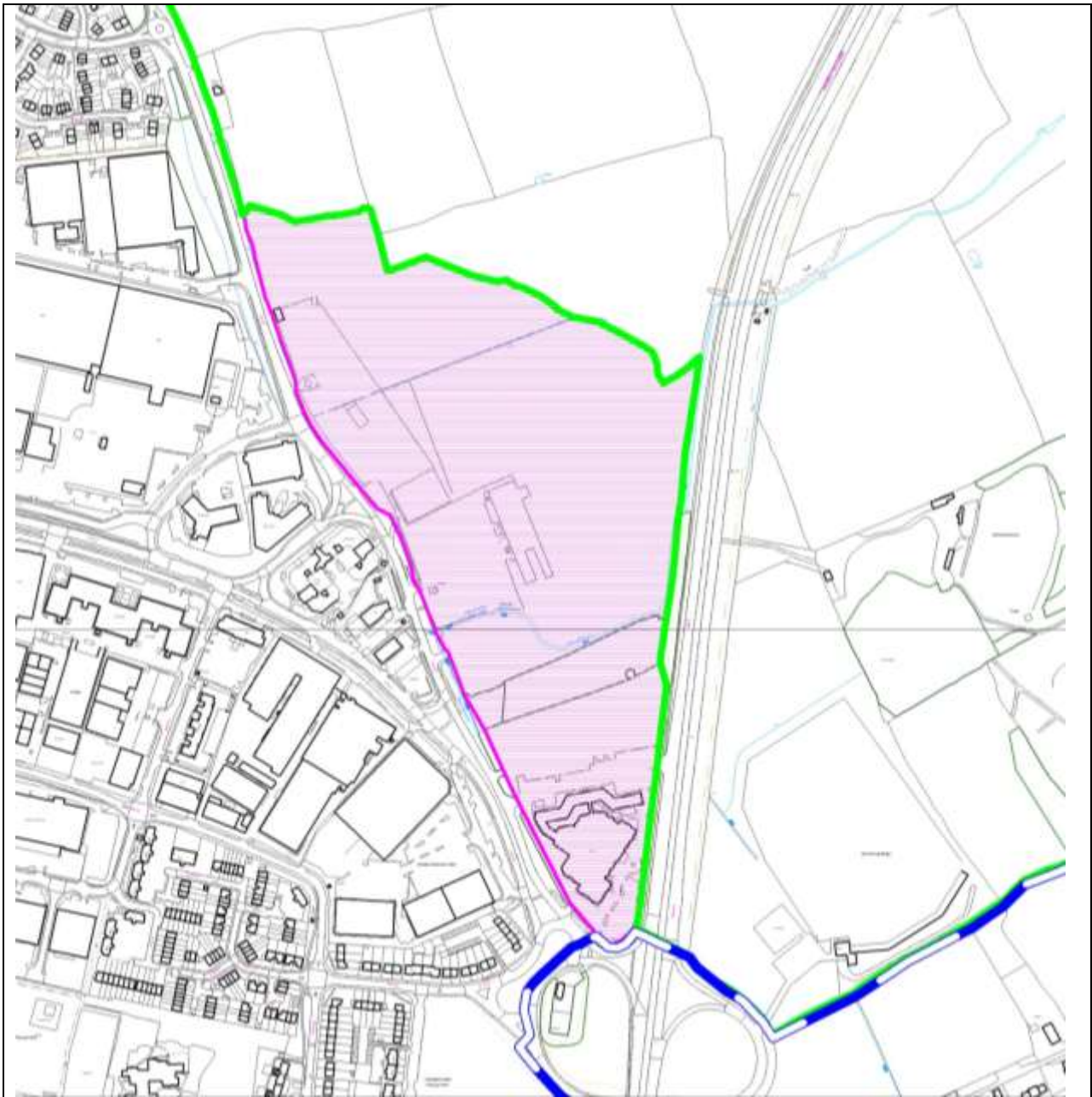
underlining below).

“The Green Belt will remain unchanged from that shown in the Hertsmere Local Plan (2003) except around Shenley where the boundary will be redrawn to reflect the recent redevelopment of Shenley Hospital, and at Borehamwood, to the east of Rowley Lane, where it will be redrawn to reflect the safeguarding of the land for employment use. The Holiday Inn site, at the southern end of this area, is recognised to have a significant amount of previously developed land and buildings and proposals for the infilling, partial or complete redevelopment of the site will, in the interim period, be considered on their individual merits. The new boundaries resulting from these changes, and any minor changes to existing village envelopes, will be determined through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.”

At the examination the Campaign to Protect Rural England argued that Sunnyside Cottage, located in the north west corner of the proposed safeguarded area, should be excluded. The Inspector agreed with CPRE. The boundary in this area should therefore follow a drainage ditch: this is considered to provide a suitably defensible boundary.

The SADM will define the safeguarded land area, which will be removed from the Green Belt. The safeguarded land for employment – see map below - includes all the land between the A1 and Rowley Lane up to the northern boundary effectively approved by the Planning Inspector. This includes the Holiday Inn site, as it falls within the wider tranche of land and may be closely related to the future development of an employment area. On balance this was considered preferable to omitting the Holiday Inn site.

Proposed area of Safeguarded Land for inclusion in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (SADM)



**(new safeguarded land area and Green Belt change)**

**Table 7.24 The former Shenley Hospital: Porters Park, Shenley (including Andrews Close)**

***History and use***

The site known as Porters Park currently comprises a residential development of around 900 homes. Originally it formed part of a substantial country estate. The use of the site changed significantly during World War 1 when a portion of it was requisitioned and used as an aerodrome. In 1924 the land was sold to Middlesex County Council for the purposes of building a mental hospital. The site was chosen because of its proximity to both the Middlesex boundary and Radlett railway station, the latter offering good access to London. During the 1930s two new psychiatric hospitals were built on the land. The hospitals were designed such that many of the existing buildings were incorporated, including the mansion, the walled garden, stables and coach houses. During World War 2 one of the hospitals was used as a military hospital. From the 1950s onwards there was a shift away from institutionalised care and the number of patients housed in the hospitals began to decline. The policy of "care in the community" was developed in the 1980s with the belief that patients would benefit from being cared for in smaller hostels or sheltered accommodation closer to their own communities. By the end of 1998 the last of the patients were moved out.

The Health Authority subsequently sold the site to property developers. A residential development was constructed providing approximately 900 homes. As a gift to the people of the village of Shenley and its neighbouring parishes, land was set aside for a park to be created. This comprises the most historic part of the site including the walled garden and the orchard. Shenley Park Trust was established in 1992 as an independent charitable trust to develop, manage and maintain the rural park.

Of the former hospital buildings only the most notable remain. These include the Old Chapel, the Water Tower and Orchard Villa. The Old Chapel and Orchard Villa (one of the Hospital wards) were gifted to the Shenley Park Trust.

***Planning History***

The planning history of Porters Park can be traced back as far as 1896. There are records of applications for general use housing on the site from 1955 onwards. Outline permission for the substantial redevelopment of the site for residential use was first granted in 1987 by the Secretary of State for the Environment. A number of subsequent applications for residential units were granted in the 1990s as the redevelopment of the site proceeded on a phased basis. In 2003 consent was granted to convert the Water Tower into residential use. In the period since, there have been a limited number of applications in respect of extensions and alterations to existing properties. Past residential consents were heavily conditioned to restrict permitted development rights.

The site falls wholly within the Metropolitan Green Belt. It is however clear from the planning brief published in 1986 that the future intention was to remove the site from the Green Belt. There is detailed consideration of achieving a permanent and defensible Green Belt boundary around the site involving the creation of a green border encircling all the developed area. Policy 53 of the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan 1986 Review specifically provided that substantial changes to existing Green Belt boundaries would be made in Shenley where the boundary would tightly enclose the existing developed area of the hospital buildings.

The area south of Porter's Park Drive is located within Shenley Conservation Area. This area was first included in 1988 when the conservation area boundary was extended. The boundary was amended slightly in 2011 following a conservation area appraisal. There are a number of buildings of interest on the site: the mansion (a grade II listed building) and its outbuildings; the chapel; the former stables; and the former kitchen garden wall and garden cottage (grade II listed).

***Planning Policy Context***

Policy C19 in Hertsmere Local Plan 2003 states:

Hertsmere will ensure that the Shenley Hospital site as defined on the Proposals Map continues to completion in its new role for housing, retail, small business accommodation, and public open

space. The detailed design, layout and form of the redevelopment will be controlled through:-

- (i) the policies of the planning brief 'Securing a good future for Shenley' (as amended) and any subsequent Development Briefs;
- (ii) the terms of the outline planning permission granted under reference 10434/1 and its accompanying legal agreements; and
- (iii) Hertsmere's current car parking standards and the other relevant policies of this Plan.

The redevelopment of the site is now complete and the above policy is largely redundant.

The Core Strategy was adopted in January 2013. This proposes that the Green Belt around Shenley should be redrawn around Porters Park, a largely suburban area following the redevelopment of Shenley Hospital. It notes that this was intended when the original brief for the hospital site was agreed in 1986 and also that it would be consistent with the status of Elstree village where the historic part of the village is situated in the Green Belt but the remainder is not. It states that the new boundary will be determined through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD. The relevant policy, CS13: The Green Belt, says that "The Green Belt boundary will remain unchanged from that shown in the Hertsmere Local Plan (2003) except where the boundary will be redrawn in the Site Allocations DPD around Shenley to reflect the recent development of Shenley Hospital..."

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012. Chapter 9 provides guidance on Green Belts. This replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 which was published in 1995. The following guidance is directly relevant to the case of Porters Park:

Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that "the essential characteristics of the Green Belt are their openness and their permanence."

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that "once established Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan".

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF provides guidance regarding the inclusion of villages in the Green Belt. It states that "if it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt".

Paragraph 85 states that when defining boundaries, local planning authorities should "define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent".

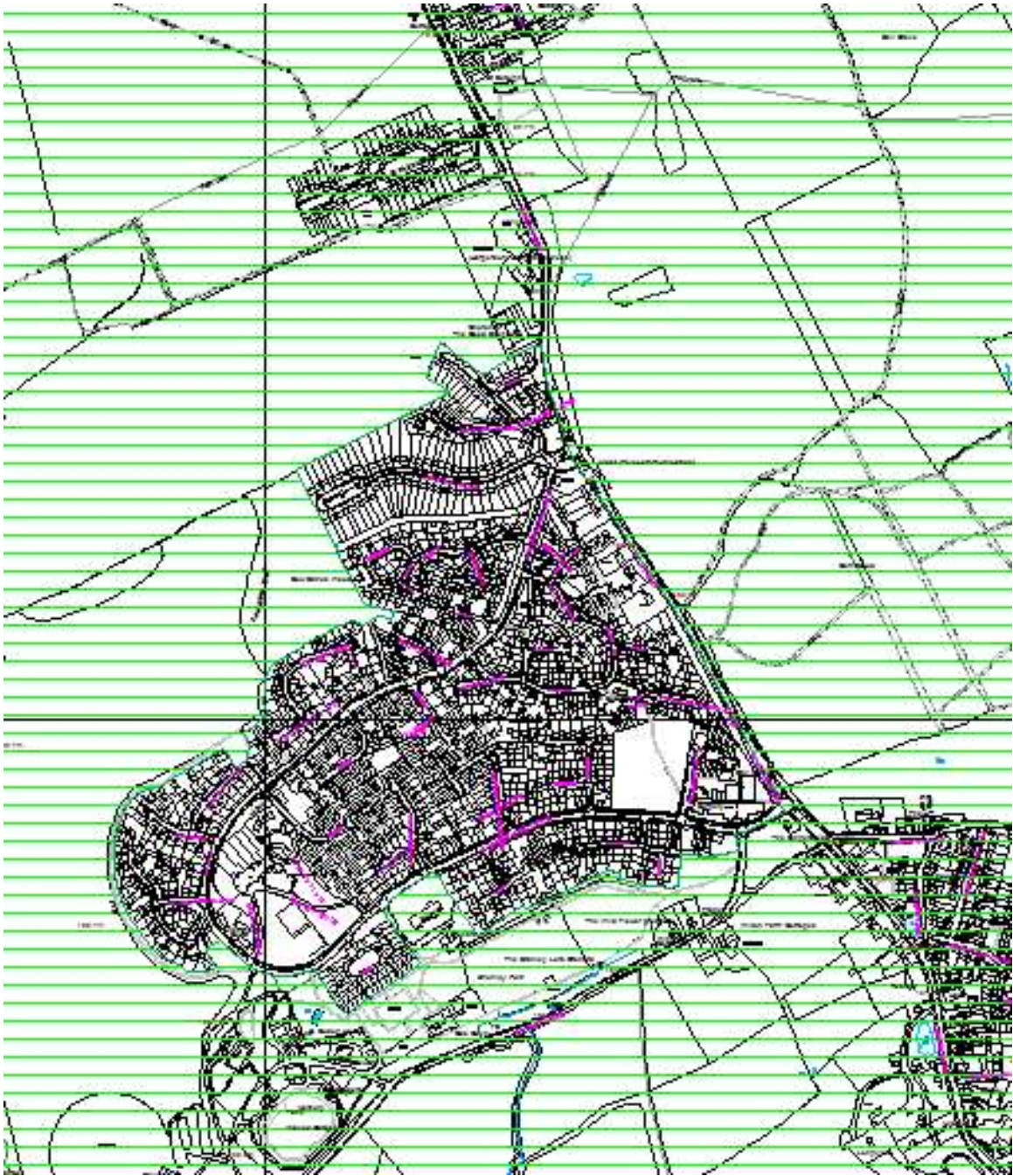
***Comments and recommendation***

The Council is currently preparing a replacement Local Plan, an appropriate point at which to alter the Metropolitan Green Belt boundary. Paragraph 85 of the NPPF provides guidance regarding the inclusion of villages in the Green Belt. Porter's Park has a largely suburban character and therefore does not contribute to the openness of the Green Belt to any significant degree.

The unshaded area on the attached map is recommended for removal from the Metropolitan Green Belt in line with Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy. This area does not meet the essential characteristic of Green Belts – i.e. their openness.

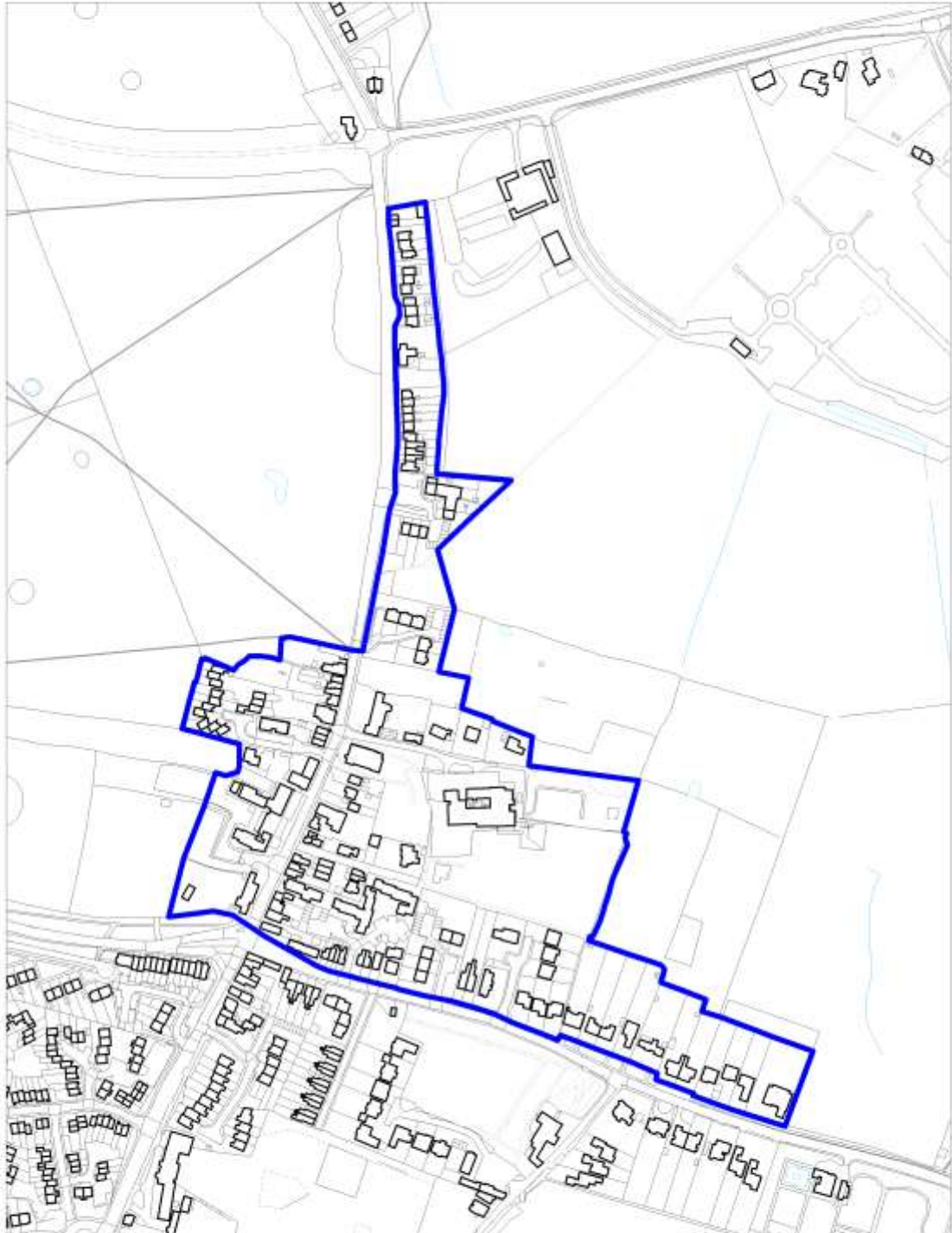
The new boundary is considered to be clear and well-defined, and therefore defensible. This will in turn support the permanence of the altered Green Belt.

**(Green Belt change)**



Note: the Green Belt is represented by the green cross-hatching.

Village Envelopes  
Policy SADM 20: Elstree



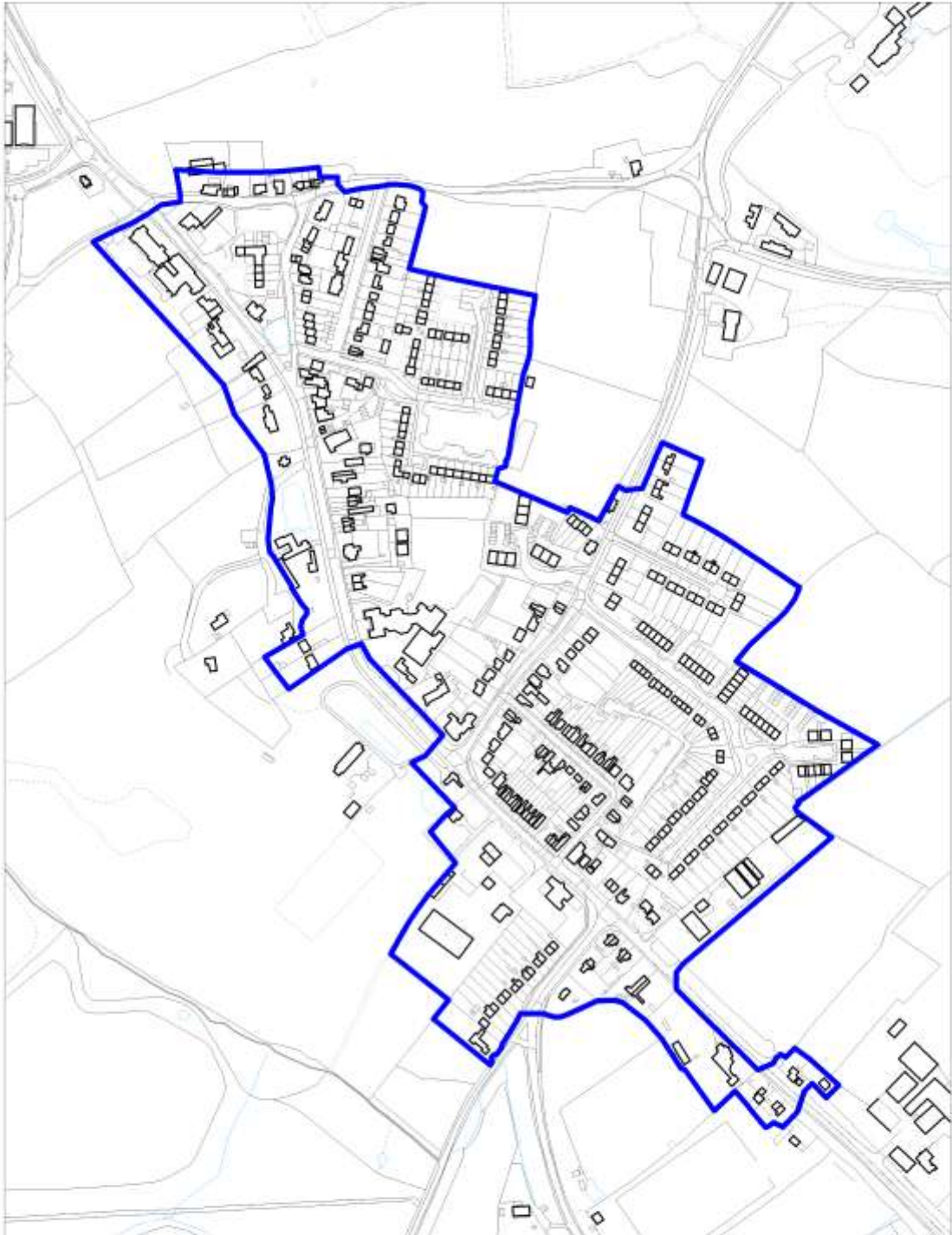
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Village Envelopes  
Policy SADM 20: Shenley

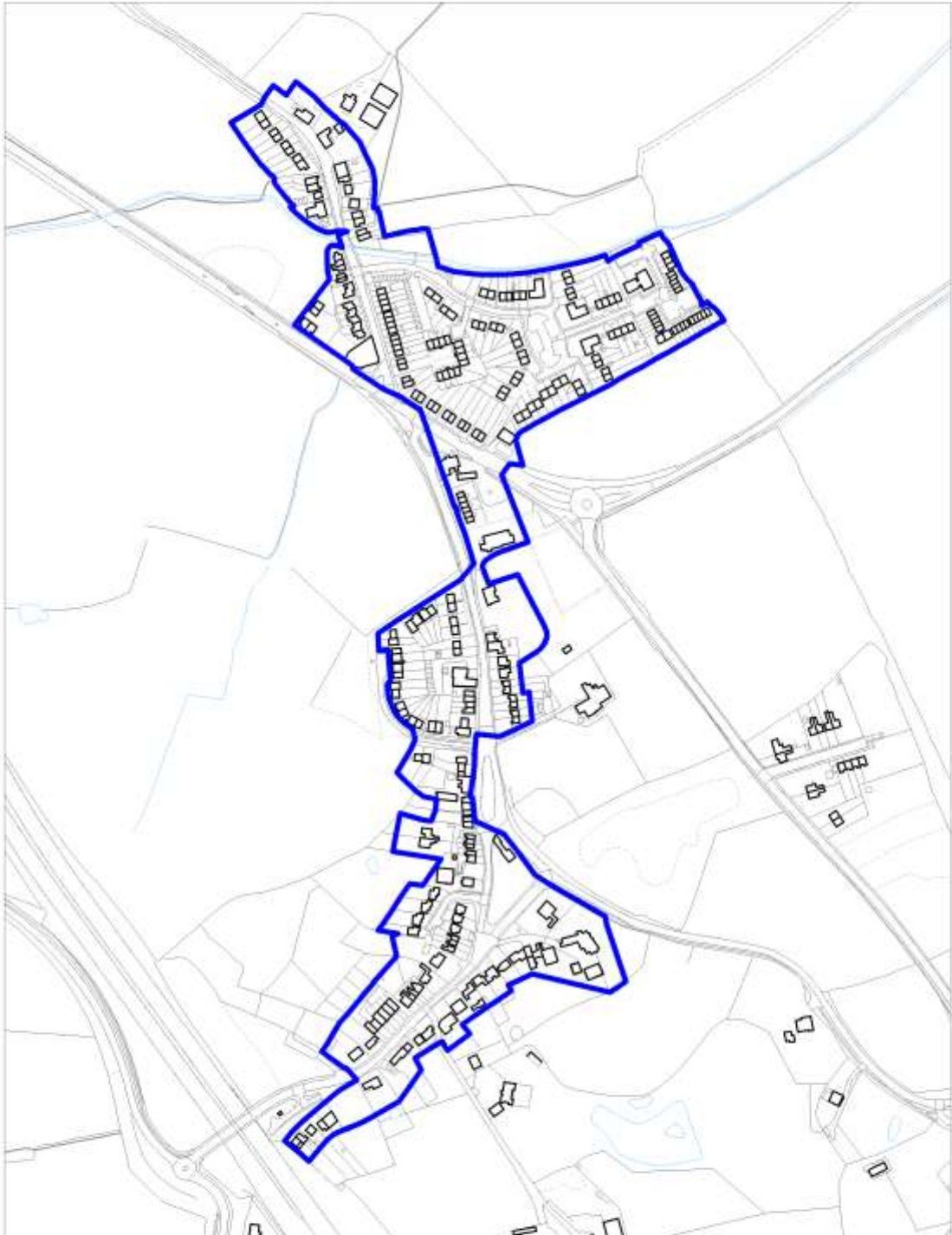


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Scale 1:3000

Village Envelopes  
Policy SADM 20: South Mimms



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## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations for Planning Policy

8.1 The conclusions and recommendations cover four aspects:

1. The definition of Key Green Belt Sites (formerly major developed sites in the Green Belt) and South Mimms Services Special Policy Area
2. The definition of safeguarded land
3. The definition of Green Belt villages where limited infilling may be permitted
4. Corrections to the Green Belt boundary

The policies that should apply to Key Green Belt Sites and South Mimms Services have been appraised. The recommendations suggest criteria by which development proposals and planning applications should be judged.

### Key Green Belt Sites

8.2 15 major developed sites in the Green Belt were listed with Policy C18 in the Hertsmere Local Plan 2003 and shown on the Proposals Map. Having reassessed all these and having assessed potential additional sites (in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively), the following conclusions have been reached:

- 13 of the 15 major developed sites should continue to be subject to similar policies – i.e. as Key Green Belt Sites, and in some cases with amended boundaries of the site and/or envelope within which infilling and redevelopment is permissible;
- the other 2 - International University, The Avenue, Bushey and Watford Campus, University of Hertfordshire, Wall Hall, Aldenham – should simply be retained within the Green Belt: i.e. have their major developed site status removed, because of residential redevelopment;
- four new areas merit designation as Key Green Belt Sites:
  - Blackbirds Sewage Works, Oakridge Lane, Aldenham
  - Electricity Transforming Station, Hilfield Lane
  - Elstree Aerodrome, Hogg Lane, Elstree
  - Willows Farm Village, London Colney(taking into account size of site, use, scale of existing development and potential infilling area(s)).
- A fifth area - Centennial Park, Elstree Hill South, Elstree - would meet the criteria for designation as a Key Green Belt Site but continued designation as a Key Employment Site with a requirement for development to comply with Green Belt development standards is an appropriate policy approach.

8.3 Policy C18 is still relevant in the main and can be augmented to reflect changes on the ground and in planning policy (see box below).

### **Key Green Belt Sites: Matters for Inclusion in the Policy**

- Delineate sites and infilling areas on the Policies Map
- Infilling or redevelopment may be appropriate within the defined 'envelope' areas subject to
  - (i) the impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it;
  - (ii) whether the proposal would be ancillary to, or support, an existing or approved use on the site;
  - (iii) the impact on the amenity of adjacent properties;
  - (iv) the impact of the relocation or introduction of a hard surfaced area such as a car park or playground; and
  - (v) whether the proposal would lead to any significant increase in motorised traffic generation.

- Encourage use of Green Transport Plans for these sites
- Encourage use of long term plans and/or agreed planning briefs to guide future development in an appropriate and co-ordinated way

8.4 The South Mimms (Bignell's Corner) Special Policy Area should continue, perhaps with some editing (see box below). Policy M14 in the Hertsmere Local Plan is working adequately: the Council has received representations requesting that the policy area and policies are continued. Measures to improve vehicular and pedestrian flows within the site are largely out of the control of the Council, unless a comprehensive planning application is submitted for a large part of the area. The need for improvements to the layout of the SPA suggests that a more proactive approach is required by all agencies. The area to the south of the existing services, known as Charleston Paddocks, is largely vacant and accessed only through the services themselves. The site (including Charleston Paddocks) is self-contained with clear boundaries on all sides.

### **South Mimms Special Policy Area: Matters for Inclusion in the Policy**

- Delineate the Special Policy Area on the Policies Map
- Identify acceptable uses and facilities, as being for the movement of people and goods on the motorway network, including those supporting the immediate needs of drivers, passengers and their vehicles
- Locate facilities for sleeping, rest and refreshment purposes away from the primary road carriageways
- Locate other operations and alterations to the road network in less sensitive locations
- Aim to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the site for service users and for through traffic
- Aim to improve the environment and screen the site better through tree planting
- Avoid:
  - worsening existing traffic or environmental conditions
  - building in the floodplain of Mimms Brook
- Hold the former Charleston Paddocks in reserve for motorway related uses to assist the rationalisation of the area
- Identify the need to prepare a development brief, in liaison with the relevant organisations.

## **Safeguarded Land**

- 8.5 Safeguarded land is land that was once designated as Green Belt. It is held as a reserve for future housing or employment needs. Until it is required for development, the land is effectively treated as though it were still in the Green Belt. The decision about when land is needed for development is normally taken in the context of a formal review of the relevant planning document.
- 8.6 Six safeguarded sites for housing were listed in the Local Plan under Policy H4. All have been reassessed. Three should be retained, albeit one in Heathbourne Road, Bushey with an amended boundary: it is unnecessary to use these sites now, because the Core Strategy housing target can be met without them. Two of the smaller sites (at Haydon Dell Farm and West Herts Annexe, Bushey) are being developed. The final site at Woodcock Hill, Borehamwood has been designated as a village green and cannot practically be developed for housing.
- 8.7 Two safeguarded sites for employment should be defined in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS8. Policy B3 in the Local Plan (land at Cranborne Road, Potters Bar) is effectively carried forward, while land at Rowley Lane, Borehamwood must be delineated for the first time.

## **Infilling Villages in the Green Belt**

- 8.8 Core Strategy Policy CS13 requires that boundaries, within which limited infilling is possible, should be defined at Shenley village, Elstree village (northern part) and South Mimms village. The definition should help to retain the openness of the Green Belt.

## **Alterations to the Green Belt Boundary**

- 8.9 In a context where it is not generally necessary to release land from the Green Belt to accommodate identified development needs, any changes to the Green Belt should be very limited. What is put forward through the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD should accord with the Core Strategy and normally be signalled by it. For example, the definition of employment safeguarded land at Rowley Lane, Borehamwood (Policy CS8) and the removal of Porters Park (Shenley Hospital development) from the Green Belt (Policy CS13).
- 8.10 A review of the Green Belt boundary, in part suggested by past considerations and representations, has been undertaken to identify:
- any existing anomalies in the boundary which should be rectified; and
  - any acceptable developments (either committed or completed) which may suggest a boundary change.
- Any change should justify the test of exceptional circumstances and, in particular, make the boundary clearer and more defensible in the longer term.
- 8.11 Five minor deletions (from the Green Belt) are recommended to take into account development change and circumstances on the ground:
- Spire Hospital Bushey, Heathbourne Road, Bushey
  - Bushey Hall Golf Club, Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey
  - Colney Fields, Barnet Road, London Colney
  - Cemetery, Watling Street; Flats 1-24 Oakbank; 5-23 (odd nos.)  
10 and First Place Nursery, Cobden Hill, Radlett
  - Land at the rear of 27-37 Heath Road, Potters Bar
- 8.12 Land at Sunny Bank Junior and Infant School, Potters Bar could also be deleted from the Green Belt, if a housing proposal is identified (and the school is no longer needed for community purposes, which appears to be the case).
- 8.13 Safeguarded land for housing at Woodcock Hill, Borehamwood (ref paragraph 8.6 above) has been designated as a village green. It will remain in open use and should be returned to full Green Belt status.