

Hertsmere Borough Council  
**Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1)**  
Report: Methodology and  
Assessment of Green Belt Parcels

249570-4-05-01

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This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 249570-00

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**ARUP**



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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Background

Ove Arup & Partners Ltd (Arup) has been appointed by Hertsmere Borough Council to undertake a Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment as part of the evidence base to inform the early Local Plan review. The Green Belt Assessment assesses the Hertsmere Green Belt against the purposes of the Green Belt as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## 1.2 Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of a Green Belt Assessment is to provide evidence of how different areas perform against the Green Belt purposes set out in national policy; planning authorities may then take this into account alongside other evidence in making decisions about possible changes to Green Belt boundaries. A boundary revision can take the form of an expansion or a contraction. However, equally a Green Belt Assessment may conclude that no changes are appropriate.

The Green Belt Assessment provides an independent and objective appraisal of all existing Green Belt land in Hertsmere. This report has been undertaken in accordance with the Brief, which sets out the main aims of the Study:

- Review national and local policy context of Green Belt, best practice in Green Belt assessments and existing Green Belt assessments undertaken by neighbouring authorities in order to identify and agree detailed methodology for the Study;
- Analyse the existing Green Belt in the Study area and identify individual strategic areas for further analysis. This may include some Green Belt areas beyond the Borough's administrative boundary where the strategic areas are shared with adjoining local authorities;
- Review the role of each of the strategic areas against the aims and purposes set out in the NPPF and any local purposes identified;
- Score the strategic areas by how well they contribute to the fundamental aim and purposes of Green Belts<sup>1</sup>;
- Provide advice on the efficacy and consistency of existing and future local policies applying to the Green Belt in the Study area; and

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<sup>1</sup> Score should be provided against individual purpose of the Green Belt only. This is because an area which performs strongly against one purpose but not so well against others could still be considered very valuable because of its strong performance against that one purpose. However this site may have a lower cumulative score than areas which perform moderately against all purposes of the Green Belt which could give the wrong impression that the site is not as valuable.

- Identify smaller land parcels within the strategic areas for potential Stage 2 assessment. This could potentially include land parcels for future urban and village extension and where appropriate areas for new settlements.<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that the Study, in itself, does not determine whether Green Belt should be released or explore the potential suitability of areas of Green Belt for development. The assessment provides evidence on the performance of the Green Belt in Hertsmere against the NPPF purposes and recommends areas that would warrant further consideration by the Council as part of the wider Local Plan process. This decision making process will balance a broader range of considerations explored in the wider Local Plan evidence base.

### 1.3 Report Structure

The report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 sets out the context at the national and local level;
- Chapter 3 provides the policy context at the national and local level, together with a summary of Green Belt Assessments undertaken by neighbouring authorities;
- Chapter 4 sets out the methodology for the Study;
- Chapter 5 sets out the key findings of the Study;
- Chapter 6 provides recommendations from the assessments;
- Chapter 7 sets out the conclusions of the Study;
- Annex Report contains the Green Belt Parcel pro-formas.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that while a strategic area may score highly against Green Belt purposes, additional smaller areas within the strategic area may still be suitable for development. This objective does not preclude the Council undertaking further, detailed assessment of other sites that were not identified as a result of the strategic level work undertaken in Stage 1.

## 2 Green Belt Context

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### 2.1 History of the Green Belt

The concept of Green Belt dates back to the origins of the modern British planning system and is frequently credited as one of the most notable achievements of the planning system, halting the outward ‘sprawl’ of London into the countryside. The rapid expansion of the railways in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries had suddenly brought once remote settlements within commuting distance of central London. Hertsmere in particular saw a rapid change in its character during this period. Connections to central London via the London and Birmingham, Midland and Great Northern railway companies placed the area firmly within the London commuter belt and generated a rapid urbanisation of the borough’s small market towns and estate villages. For example, the population of Bushey increased ten-fold, from just 850 in 1801 to over 8,000 in 1921<sup>3</sup>; latterly, Potters Bar grew by 129% during the 1930s<sup>4</sup>.

After the war, concerns grew about the rapid change of rural areas around London and the impact of urban sprawl. The Metropolitan Green Belt, first suggested by Raymond Unwin in 1933 as a ‘*green girdle*’ and defined by Patrick Abercrombie in the Greater London Plan of 1944 (later established in the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947), curtailed the further unchecked growth of London’s urban area. This original Green Belt was 6 to 10 miles and encompassed much of modern Hertsmere, with responsibility for designating Green Belt boundaries at the time falling to the County Councils of Hertfordshire (through the County Development Plan approved in 1958) and Middlesex.

Circular 42/55, released by government in 1955, encouraged local authorities to establish their own Green Belts. The 1955 Circular set out three main functions of the Green Belt:

- To check the growth of a large built-up area;
- To prevent neighbouring settlements from merging into one another; and
- To preserve the special character of a town.

Circular 50/57, published in 1957, distinguished the inner and outer boundaries of Green Belts and established the importance of defined and detailed permanent boundaries. Later, in 1962 the Minister of Housing and Local Government published the advice booklet titled ‘The Green Belts’. The booklet recorded that the last of the Home Counties development plans had been approved in 1959, enabling the completion of the first Metropolitan Green Belt. However, it was not until 1971 that this saw significant expansion. The Hertfordshire County Development Plan (published in 1951 and approved by the Minister for Housing and Local Government in 1958), and brought forward in the First Review of the County Development Plan by Hertfordshire County Council (published in 1964

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<sup>3</sup> A Vision of Britain (Undated) *Bushey CP – Historical Statistics*.

<sup>4</sup> White, J. (2001) *London in the Twentieth Century: A City and Its People*.

and approved in 1971) extended the Green Belt to the north of the County along the A1(M) corridor. A further two iterations of the Plan extended this still further to cover most of Hertfordshire.

Shortly afterwards, in 1974, the Borough of Hertsmere was established, encompassing Bushey Urban District, Potters Bar Urban District, Elstree Rural District and parts of the Watford Rural District (Aldenham). The Borough inherited the defined Green Belt boundaries, which have remained largely unaltered since.

In 1976, attempts to extend the Green Belt still further were rejected by the Secretary of State on the grounds that the proposal would neither check the unrestricted sprawl of built-up areas nor safeguard the countryside from encroachment (Ministry of Housing and Local Government Circular 42/55). Instead, modification Policy (2) provided for the maintenance of the Green Belt in the south of the County only, covering a 12-15 mile radius around Greater London.

Further Alterations and Reviews of the Hertfordshire County Council Structure Plan include the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan Alterations No 1 (1980) which enlarged the Green Belt in the north of the County, and the Hertfordshire County Council Structure Plan Reviews in 1986, 1990, 1998 and 2002 which changed little in terms of Green Belt policy. These were eventually superseded by the new statutory regional planning system that resulted in the creation of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS).

Concurrently, at the national level, Circular 14/84 was published in 1984 and introduced two new Green Belt objectives: assisting in urban regeneration and safeguarding the countryside from further encroachment. In January 1988, the Government introduced a series of policy statements which were known as Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). PPG2 on Green Belts was first published in 1988 and reiterated the advice contained in previous Green Belt Circulars.

Hertsmere, and the wider county of Hertfordshire, were covered by the Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) (2001) which reiterated the importance of the Metropolitan Green Belt in preventing sprawl from built-up areas. Policy E3 (Green Belts) stated that *'there is no regional case for reviewing Green Belt boundaries in the light of this strategy'* and that local authorities should frame policies in accordance with advice in PPG2.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 replaced RPGs with RSSs. At the same time, Hertfordshire was transferred to the East of England region, thus falling under the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy (EERSS). The 2008 EERSS policy on Green Belts – Policy SS7 (Green Belt) – stated that:

*'The broad extent of green belts in the East of England is appropriate, and should be maintained'.*

The Policy went on to state that selective Green Belt reviews may be required in Stevenage, Hemel Hempstead, Harlow and Welwyn/Hatfield, with Hertsmere not mentioned as a suitable location for a review. Shortly following the commencement of the Coalition Government in 2010, then secretary of state Eric



Pickles announced the Government's intention to abolish regional government, and the EERSS was subsequently revoked through a statutory instrument in January 2013.

During the same period, in 2012, the RPGs and PPGs were replaced by the NPPF which reiterated that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt was to prevent urban sprawl.

## 2.2 Previous Green Belt Assessments

### 2.2.1 Green Belt Topic Paper (1999)

During the Hertsmere Local Plan Inquiry of May to July 1999, the Council produced a topic paper on the Green Belt of Hertsmere. The topic paper recognised the remit of PPG2 and set out the Council's approach to identifying 'Key Green Belt Sites' and specifying the criteria against which limited infilling and redevelopment may take place. The topic paper set out the Council's approach to proposing certain changes to detailed Green Belt boundaries, the reasons for its proposals, and the reasons for rejecting other changes that had been proposed by objectors.

The Inspectors Report (2000) in response to the 1999 Local Plan Inquiry approved the inclusion of 'Major Developed Sites' in the Local Plan. It was stated that while the inclusion of Major Developed Sites in the Local Plan did not contribute to the Council's sustainability objectives, the very nature of these sites (in some cases with significant existing development) meant that it was reasonable to expect that these sites would evolve over time.

### 2.2.2 Review of Selected Green Belt Sites and Boundaries (2014)

Hertsmere Borough Council published a Review of Selected Green Belt Sites and Boundaries (2014)<sup>5</sup> to inform the forthcoming Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. The Review does not formally determine or designate key sites in the Green Belt or new boundaries, but it does reach conclusions and make recommendations on sites within the Green Belt and the boundary of the Green Belt which are detailed below.

#### Key Green Belt Sites

15 major developed sites in the Green Belt were listed within policy C18 in the Hertsmere Local Plan 2003 and shown on the Proposals Map. The Review reassessed all existing major developed sites and assessed potential additional sites, and reached the following conclusions:

- 13 of 15 major developed sites should continue to be subject to the same policies;

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<sup>5</sup> Hertsmere Borough Council (2014, edited June 2015) *Review of Selected Green Belt Sites and Boundaries*.

- The other two – International University, The Avenue, Bushey and Watford Campus, University of Wall Hall, Aldenham – should simply be retained within the Green Belt: i.e. have their major developed status removed, because of residential redevelopment;
- Three new areas merit redesignation as Key Green Belt Sites:
  - Blackbirds Sewage Works, Oakridge Lane, Aldenham;
  - Electricity Transforming Station, Hilfield Lane;<sup>6</sup>
  - Elstree Aerodrome, Hogg Lane, Elstree;
  - Willows Farm Village, London Colney.

### **Safeguarded Land**

Six safeguarded sites for housing were listed in the Local Plan 2003 under Policy H4 and policy B3 established an area of safeguarded site for employment at Cranbourne Road Employment Area. All were reassessed, and the safeguarded status of three of the housing sites was recommended to be retained, as well as the safeguarded employment site.

Two of the smaller sites were being developed, and one site at Woodcock Hill, Borehamwood had been designated as a village green and could not practically be developed for housing, so these were released from safeguarding. Development of the remaining three sites, whose safeguarded status was recommended to be retained, was not required in order to meet the Core Strategy housing target.

In addition, the Review noted the proposed designation of additional safeguarded land for employment to the east of Rowley Lane, as set out in the Core Strategy (2013). It was also noted that the boundaries of the new area would be defined in the forthcoming Site Allocations and Development Management (SADM) Policies Plan.

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

The identification of boundaries at Shenley village, Elstree village (northern part) and South Mimms village are supported to retain the openness of the Green Belt.

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

Five minor deletions are recommended in the Review:

- 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

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<sup>6</sup> Subsequently, the Electricity Transforming Station was deleted as a Key Green Belt Site (at post Hearing modification stage) as it has no infill area.

It was also recommended that 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 was no longer needed for community purposes).

### **Status of Proposed Alterations**

A number of the proposed alterations are proposed for inclusion in the Submission Site Allocations and Development Management DPD (2015). See section 3.2.

## 3 Policy, Guidance and Context

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### 3.1 National Context

At the national level, the NPPF, national Planning Practice Guidance and ministerial letters provide the policy and guidance context for the role and function of the Green Belt. The following sections summarise the current position.

#### 3.1.1 National Policy

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Central to the NPPF is the '*presumption in favour of sustainable development*' which for plan-making means that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet development needs and should meet objectively assessed needs unless specific policies of the NPPF (such as Green Belt policy) indicate that development should be restricted.

Protection of Green Belt around urban areas is a core planning principle of the NPPF. Policy for protecting Green Belt land is set out in section 9 of the Framework which emphasises the great importance that the Government attaches to Green Belts.

Circular 42/55 released by the Government in 1955 highlighted the importance of checking unrestricted sprawl of built-up areas and of safeguarding countryside from encroachment. It set out three main functions of the Green Belt which are now upheld in the NPPF:

- To check the growth of a large built-up area;
- To prevent neighbouring settlements from merging into one another; and
- To preserve the special character of a town.

The NPPF advocates openness and permanence as essential characteristics of the Green Belt stating that 'the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open' (paragraph 79). The NPPF details five purposes of the Green Belt:

1. *'To check against unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
2. *To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
3. *To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
4. *To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
5. *To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'.* (paragraph 80)

For ease of reference in this Assessment, these purposes are referred to as NPPF Purposes 1 to 5, with the assigned number corresponding to the order in which the purposes appear in the NPPF, as above.

In addition to the purposes of the Green Belt, the NPPF advocates enhancement to existing Green Belts. Paragraph 81 states that ‘local planning authorities are required to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt’ once Green Belt boundaries have been defined including looking for opportunities to:

- *‘Provide access;*
- *Provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation;*
- *Retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or*
- *Improve damaged and derelict land’.*

Paragraph 83 states that ‘local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans’ and that ‘once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan’. Importantly, the NPPF acknowledges the permanence of Green Belt boundaries and the need for Green Belt boundaries to endure beyond the plan period (paragraph 83). The need to promote sustainable patterns of development when reviewing the Green Belt boundaries is also acknowledged (paragraph 84).

The NPPF seeks to align Green Belt boundary review with sustainable patterns of development (paragraph 84). Local planning authorities are encouraged to ‘consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary’.

Paragraph 85 states that ‘when defining boundaries, local planning authorities should:

- *Ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;*
- *Not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;*
- *Where necessary identify in their plans areas of “safeguarded land” between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;*
- *Make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development;*
- *Satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period; and*
- *Define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.’*

### 3.1.2 National Guidance

The national Planning Practice Guidance is intended to provide up-to-date, accessible and useful guidance on the requirements of the planning system. The Guidance was updated in October 2014, reiterating the importance of the Green Belt and acknowledging that Green Belt may restrain the ability to meet housing need. The following paragraphs, from the ‘Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment’ PPG, are relevant to Green Belt Assessment:

- Paragraph 044 Do housing and economic needs override constraints on the use of land, such as Green Belt?** – *‘The NPPF should be read as a whole: need alone is not the only factor to be considered when drawing up a Local Plan. The Framework is clear that local planning authorities should, through their Local Plans, meet objectively assessed needs unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole, or specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted’ (as it is with land designated as Green Belt). ‘The Framework makes clear that, once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan.’*
- Paragraph 045 Do local planning authorities have to meet in full housing needs identified in needs assessments?** - *‘Assessing need is just the first stage in developing a local plan. Once need has been assessed, the local planning authority should prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period, and in so doing take account of any constraints such as Green Belt, which indicate that development should be restricted and which may restrain the ability of an authority to meet its need.’*

The national Planning Practice Guidance does not provide any specific guidance on conducting a Green Belt Assessment *per se*.

### 3.1.3 Ministerial Statements

Letters from ministers of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) or local government officers or general statements by ministers have clarified or re-affirmed aspects of Green Belt policy. During his time as Planning Minister, Nick Boles issued a series of Ministerial Statements on the Green Belt which, in general, continued to emphasise the protection of the Green Belt.

Perhaps the most significant statement came in March 2014 when correspondence between Nick Boles and PINS reaffirmed the importance and permanence of the Green Belt and that Green Belt may only be altered in ‘exceptional circumstances’ through the preparation or review of local plans<sup>7</sup>. The correspondence recognised

<sup>7</sup> Nick Boles / DCLG (2014) *Inspectors’ Reports on Local Plans*, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/292648/Scan-to-Me\\_from\\_ela-mfd-f6-zc1.link.local\\_2014-03-03\\_180547.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/292648/Scan-to-Me_from_ela-mfd-f6-zc1.link.local_2014-03-03_180547.pdf)

the special role of the Green Belt in the framing of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which sets out that local authorities should meet objectively assessed needs unless specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted, with the Green Belt identified as one such policy.

This position was reaffirmed in October 2014 when the national Planning Practice Guidance was amended (see section 3.1.2).

### 3.1.4 Legal Cases – ‘Very Special Circumstances’ and ‘Exceptional Circumstances’

The NPPF sets out that ‘*very special circumstances*’ relates to the consideration of planning applications in the context of existing Green Belt. Paragraph 87 states that ‘*As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances*’. Paragraph 88 goes on to state that ‘*When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations*’. Paragraph 89 identifies those type of development within the Green Belt which may be considered as acceptable in the context of ‘*very special circumstances*’:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- 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 it than the existing development.

Paragraph 90 expands on the above list by identifying other forms of development that are also not appropriate provided they ‘*preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt*’ namely:

- Mineral extraction;
- Engineering operations;

- Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and
- Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

As set out in section 3.1.1 and 3.1.3, ‘*exceptional circumstances*’ relates to forward planning for Local Plans in the context of Green Belt boundaries. There is no definition of ‘*exceptional circumstances*’ provided in the NPPF. There is limited case history relating to decisions about the setting or change of Green Belt boundaries in local plans and the definition of ‘*exceptional circumstances*’. However, there are two recent relevant examples of note.

The first is the Solihull Local Plan (Solihull Metropolitan District Council). In this case, a developer’s sites in Tidbury Green were placed into the Green Belt by the Solihull Local Plan (SLP) adopted in December 2013. The developer challenged the SLP on three grounds: (i) that it was not supported by an objectively assessed figure for housing need; (ii) the Council has failed in its duty to cooperate; and (iii) the Council adopted a plan without regard to the proper test for revising Green Belt boundaries. The claim succeeded at the High Court.

Solihull appealed against the decision, but the appeal was dismissed by the Court of Appeal. The Court held that the Inspector and Solihull had failed to identify a figure for the objective assessment of housing need as a separate and prior exercise, and that was an error of law. In addition, the Judge dismissed the Inspector’s reasons for returning the developer’s sites to the Green Belt, saying that:

*‘The fact that a particular site within a council’s area happens not to be suitable for housing development cannot be said without more [sic] to constitute an exceptional circumstance, justifying an alteration of the Green Belt by the allocation to it of the site in question’.*

More recently, in the case of Calverton Parish Council v Nottingham City Council, Broxtowe Borough Council and Gedling Borough Council, this position was upheld. In this case, the Parish Council applied to the High Court to quash parts of the Aligned Code Strategies of the three authorities, arguing that: (i) it had failed to consider whether housing numbers should be reduced to prevent the release of Green Belt land; and (ii) it had failed to apply national policy in considering its release. However, the Claim was rejected.

In Paragraph 42 of the decision, referring to the earlier Solihull decision, the Judge stated:

*‘In the case where the issue is the converse, i.e. subtraction, the fact that Green Belt reasons may continue to exist cannot preclude the existence of countervailing exceptional circumstance – otherwise, it would be close to impossible to revise the boundary. These circumstances, if found to exist, must be logically capable of trumping the purposes of the Green Belt; but whether they should not in any given case must depend on the correct*



*identification of the circumstances said to be exceptional, and the strength of the Green Belt purposes’.*

While supporting the earlier Solihull case, the judgement also confirms that ‘*exceptional circumstances*’ may override the purposes set out in the NPPF, depending on the strength of these purposes. In determining what is exceptional, an authority should balance:

- The ‘*acuteness/intensity of the housing need*’;
- The ‘*constraints on the supply/availability of land...suitable for development*’;
- The ‘*difficulties in achieving sustainability without impinging on the green belt*’;
- The ‘*nature and extent of the harm to this green belt*’; and
- How far the impacts on green belt purposes could be reduced.

In his decision, the Judge believed the Inspector had taken a ‘*sensible and appropriate*’ approach to adjudging the weight of exceptional circumstances versus the strength of the Green Belt purposes by weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of different alternative options for meeting housing need, including those which would not have involved Green Belt adjustments.

The need for a robust Green Belt Assessment is thus a necessity in order to identify weaker performing Green Belt, with this work feeding into the broader task of identifying what might constitute ‘*exceptional circumstances*’ within Hertsmere.

## 3.2 Local Context

Hertsmere is currently completing its Local Plan to replace the 2003 Local Plan. At the time this Study was undertaken, the Local Plan comprised three documents: the updated Core Strategy, adopted in January 2013; the Elstree Way Corridor Area Action Plan, adopted in July 2015; and the saved policies of the Hertsmere Local Plan (2003), as well as the Minerals Local Plan and Waste Local Plan prepared by Hertfordshire County Council.

The Site Allocations and Development Management (SADM) Policies Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination in November 2015 and will be adopted in November 2016. It is noted that at the time this Study is published, it is likely that the SADM will have been adopted and superseded the saved policies of the Hertsmere Local Plan (2003).

### 3.2.1 Hertsmere Local Plan (2003)

The purpose and requirements of the Metropolitan Green Belt are stated in the Hertsmere Local Plan (2003) as follows:

*‘The establishment and maintenance of the Green Belt has prevented the outward spread of Greater London, has retained the separate character of Hertsmere’s towns and villages and has prevented coalescence of*

*settlements. The Borough Council is firmly committed to the retention of the Green Belt.*

*In preparing this Plan the Council has revised the boundary of the Green Belt to ensure that firm and defensible boundaries are maintained which are clearly defined on the ground. In carrying out this review regard has also been paid to the need to ensure that adequate provision is made to meet the Borough's development needs over the period of this Plan. Arising from this the Council has concluded that some changes to the Green Belt boundary are appropriate to ensure a firm, defensible and consistent boundary is defined which accords with the advice in PPG2.'*

Policy C1 (Green Belt) states that within the Green Belt, as defined on the Proposals Map, there is a general presumption against inappropriate development notwithstanding the existence of very special circumstances.

Policy C2 (Safeguarded Land – general principles) states that normal Green Belt policy will apply to safeguarded land, as defined on the Proposals Map, until such a time as the Council may decide that the safeguarded land needs to be released through a review of the Plan to meet the longer term development needs of the Borough.

Policy C3 (Reuse of Buildings in the Green Belt) states that planning permission will not be granted for the reuse and adaptation of buildings in the Green Belt unless the proposed development complies with Policy C1. Where planning permission is granted, conditions can be imposed to prevent open storage, hardstanding or car parking or the erection of an enclosure that detracts from the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Policy C4 (Development Criteria in the Green Belt) sets out criteria for considering development proposals in the Green Belt which should be considered in addition to Policy C1 and other relevant Green Belt policies.

Policy C5 (House Extensions and Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt) sets out criteria for the determination of planning applications for house extensions, free standing buildings within the curtilage of residential properties and replacement dwellings in the Green Belt.

Policy C6 (Elstree and Shenley Villages – Infilling) states that infilling is acceptable within Shenley and that part of Elstree which is located within the Green Belt provided it does not result in the loss of open space and amenity land that is valuable to the village's character, or is visually or environmentally detrimental or results in outward expansion or encroachment into the open countryside.

It should be noted that, at the point this Study is published, it is likely that these policies will have been superseded by those set out in the SADM (2016).

### **3.2.2 Hertsmere Core Strategy (2013)**

Policy CS13 (The Green Belt) states the following:

*‘There is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, as defined on the Policies Map and such development will not be permitted unless very special circumstances exist. Development proposals, including those involving previously developed land and buildings, in the Green Belt will be assessed in relation to the NPPF.’*

Policy CS13 allows for limited infilling within village envelopes and Key Green Belt Sites (previously known as Major Developed Sites) and states that such sites and boundaries will be identified and reviewed through the emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.

Policy CS13 further states 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 and at Borehamwood, to the east of Rowley Lane, where it will be redrawn to reflect the removal of land for safeguarding for employment development.

### **3.2.3 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016)**

Policy SADM23 (Green Belt Boundary) states that an amended Green Belt boundary is shown on the Policies Map. The supporting text for the policy discusses changes to the Green Belt boundary, including those brought forward through Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy (see section 3.2.2) and a number of other minor amendments, several of which were recommended through the Review of Selected Green Belt Sites and Boundaries (2014) (see section 2.2.2): removal of Colney Fields, Barnet Road; removal of the Spire Hospital; removal of Print Works at Bushey Hall Golf Course and allocation for housing development; and a number of other minor boundary amendments which provide more logical boundaries. A previously safeguarded area of land for housing in Borehamwood, known locally as Woodcock Hill, has been returned to the Green Belt following its designation as a Village Green.

Policy SADM24 (Village Envelopes) states that village envelopes are shown on the Policies Map for parts of Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms. The areas defined by the village envelopes are part of the Green Belt, within which limited infilling will be permitted. Such infilling will be permitted if it complies with Core Strategy Policy CS13 and other relevant plan policies (see section 3.2.2).

The supporting text for this policy defines infilling as a form of development whereby buildings are proposed within a gap along a clearly identifiable built-up frontage or within a group of buildings. The term does not include backland development, either in the form of plot amalgamation or tandem development. Infilling will only be permitted where it is limited in scale. For housing, the term ‘limited’ refers to development which does not create more than two extra dwellings.

Policy SADM25 (Key Green Belt Sites) identifies a number of Key Green Belt Sites where continuation of existing use is supported. It then states that infilling or redevelopment may be appropriate within the defined ‘envelope’ area in each site

if it is ancillary to or supports an existing or approved on the site, and lists a number of factors that will be taken into consideration when determining the appropriateness of infilling or redevelopment.

The supporting text for this policy discusses current uses of the Key Green Belt Sites and a number of changes to the Green Belt boundary, linked to the findings of the Review of Selected Green Belt Sites and Boundaries (2014) (see section 2.2.2). Three sites are newly designated as Key Green Belt Sites: 1) Willows Farm Village, London Colney; 2) Blackbirds Sewage Works, Oakridge Lane, Aldenham; and 3) Elstree Aerodrome, Hogg Lane, Elstree. The latter two of these were recommended for Green Belt designation in the 2014 Review.

Policy SADM27 (Development Standards in the Green Belt) sets out principles against which the Council will assess all applications for development within the Green Belt, stating that the scale of development will be controlled and that the Council will make a comparison between existing and proposed development in judging scale. It is also stated that a like for like replacement in terms of building is not necessarily acceptable and that:

*‘The nature and intensity of the new use, its effect on amenity, landscape and the purpose of the Green Belt in that locality will be important considerations’.*

The mapping contained in this Study is based on the adopted Green Belt boundaries as of June 2016 (Hertsmere Local Plan, 2003). It should be noted that, at the point this Study is published, it is likely that the SADM will have been adopted as part of the statutory development plan for the Borough. As such, there is likely to be a degree of crossover between the recommendations of this Study and the Green Belt amendments set out in the SADM.

### 3.3 Other Context

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) published guidance for Green Belt Assessment in 2015 in the context of the need to accommodate strategic housing (and employment) requirements. The guidance highlights that *‘the purpose of a review is for the identification of the most appropriate land to be used for development, through the local plan. Always being mindful of all the other planning matters to be taken into account and most importantly, as part of an overall spatial strategy’.*

Emphasis is placed on the need for assessment against the five purposes of the Green Belt in the first instance. The guidance acknowledges that there are planning considerations, such as landscape quality, which cannot be a reason to designate an area as Green Belt, but that could be a planning consideration when seeking suitable locations for development.

The guidance outlines considerations to be made in relation to the five purposes as set out below:

- **Purpose 1: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas –** consider the meaning of sprawl compared to 1930s definition, and whether

positively planned development through a local plan with good masterplanning would be defined as sprawl.

- **Purpose 2: to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another** – the purpose does not strictly suggest maintaining the separation of small settlements near to towns. The approach will be different for each case. The identity of a settlement would not be determined solely by the distance to another settlement; the character of the place and of the land in between must be taken into account. A ‘scale rule’ approach should be avoided. Landscape character assessment is a useful analytical tool for this type of assessment.
- **Purpose 3: to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment** – seemingly, all Green Belt does this so distinguishing between the contributions of different areas to this purpose is difficult. The recommended approach is to look at the difference between land under the influence of the urban area and open countryside, and to favour open countryside when determining the land that should be attempted to be kept open, accounting for edges and boundaries.
- **Purpose 4: to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns** – it is accepted that in practice this purpose relates to very few settlements as a result of the envelopment of historic town centres by development.
- **Purpose 5: to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land** – the amount of potentially developable land within urban areas must have already been factored in before Green Belt land is identified. All Green Belt would achieve this purpose to the same extent, if it does achieve the purpose, and the value of land parcels is unlikely to be distinguishable on the basis of this purpose.

The PAS guidance additionally recognises the Duty to Cooperate, as set out in the Localism Act 2011, and soundness tests of the NPPF to Green Belt consideration. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to ‘*work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans*’ (paragraph 179). Additionally the level of housing that a local authority is required to for is also determined by whether there is an ‘*unmet requirement*’ from a neighbouring authority (paragraph 182).

The guidance recognises that Green Belt is a strategic policy and hence a strategic issue in terms of Duty to Cooperate. Areas of Green Belt should therefore be assessed collectively by local authorities. This is important particularly for areas of Green Belt land that fall into different administrative areas, and the significance attached to that land.

## 3.4 Green Belt Experience

### 3.4.1 Neighbouring Authorities’ Experience

Except for London authorities, local planning authorities now hold the responsibility for strategic planning following the revocation of regional strategies

in the Localism Act 2011. The national Planning Practice Guidance outlines the duty to cooperate as:

*‘...a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local and Marine Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.’*

This Assessment covers the areas of the Green Belt falling within the administrative boundary of Hertsmere Borough Council, as well as areas in neighbouring authorities where there is no defensible boundary feature which aligns with the Borough boundary. However, it is important to note that this assessment will not directly influence the approaches to Green Belt in neighbouring authorities and no recommendations will ultimately be made beyond the boundaries of Hertsmere.

The methodology and proposed parcels were shared with neighbouring authorities and discussed at a workshop held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Comments received have been taken into account in developing the methodology (see section 3.5 for further details).

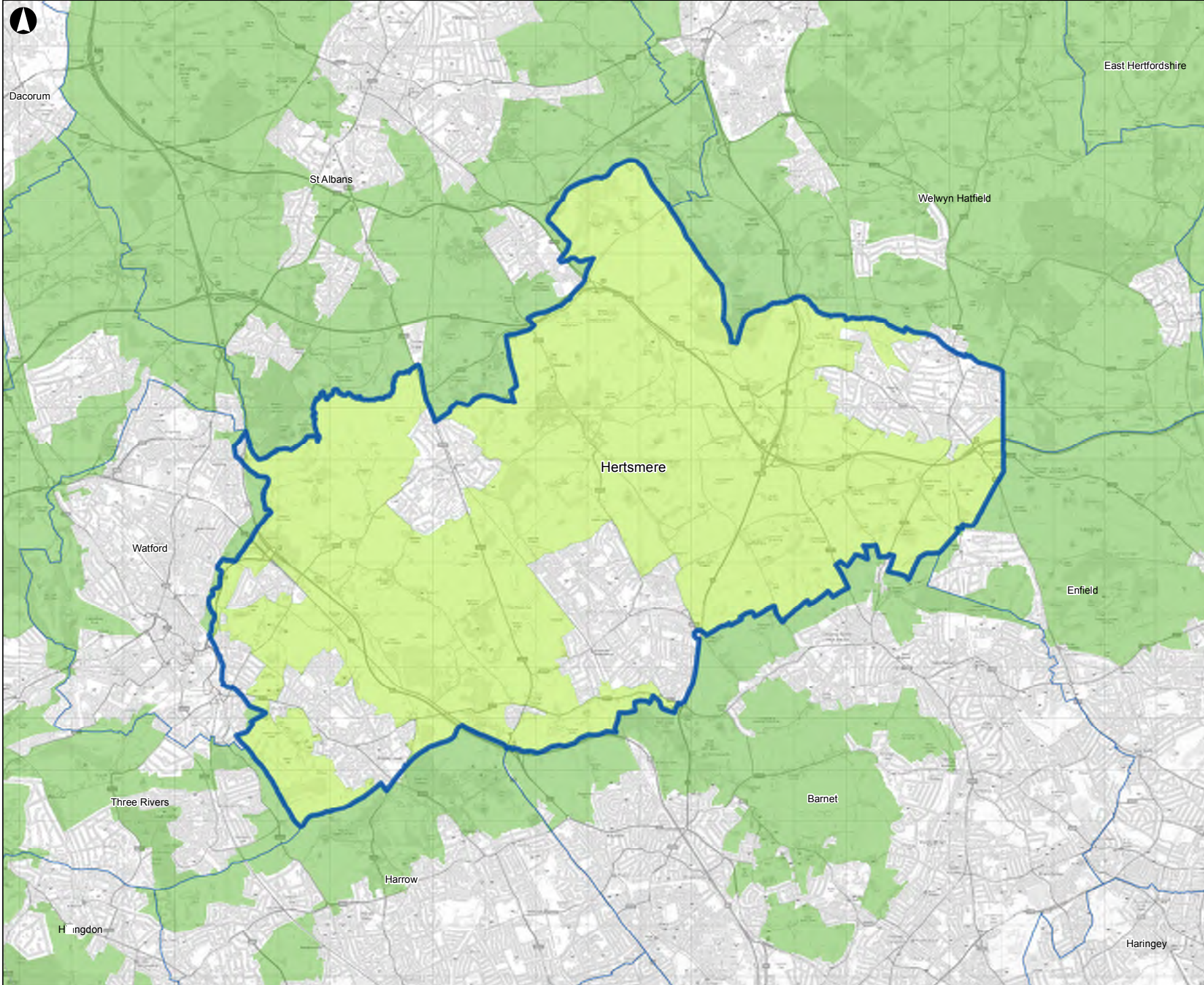
It is important to understand how each of the neighbouring local authorities are approaching Green Belt issues and the methodology employed in any reviews of the Green Belt they have undertaken, to ensure a level of consistency with neighbouring Green Belt studies where possible. Green Belt in adjoining districts (Map 3.1) may achieve the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl from the urban areas both within and outside Hertsmere. It may also play a role in protecting strategic gaps between urban areas and settlements both within and outside Hertsmere. The potential release of any Green Belt land within or outside Hertsmere may impact on settlement patterns and the role of the wider Metropolitan Green Belt.

The approaches to Green Belt Reviews taken in neighbouring authorities have been summarised in Table 3.1.

In summary:

- Welwyn Hatfield Borough has completed a review of its Green Belt land, having undertaken Stage 1 and Stage 2 Reviews. The Stage 1 Review (jointly undertaken with Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City & District Council) identified strategic sub-areas and small scale sub-areas that contributed least to Green Belt NPPF purposes 1-4 criteria, and a local Hertfordshire purpose (*‘To broadly maintain the existing settlement pattern’*), and recommended that individual local authorities consider these sub-areas in respect of infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape issues. The Stage 2 Review considered both small scale and strategic sub-areas that were recommended for further assessment in the Stage 1 Review. A number of sites considered for release from the Green Belt in the Stage 2 Review are located adjacent to the district boundary with Hertsmere, for example land in the gap between Potters Bar and Brookmans Park, however no recommendations to release this land from the Green Belt are made in the review. 80% of Welwyn Hatfield Borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

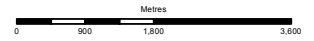
- St Albans City & District Council has also both Stage 1 and Stage 2 Reviews. Following the joint Stage 1 Study (see above) strategic sub-areas and small scale sub-areas that contributed least to Green Belt NPPF purposes 1-4 criteria were identified and it was recommended that individual local authorities consider these sub-areas in respect of infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape issues. The Stage 2 Review considered eight strategic sub-areas that were recommended for further assessment in the Stage 1 Review and identified nine individual sites for potential release. All of the district's area outside of main urban areas lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Land at London Colney is recommended for potential release at Stage 2 which abuts Hertsmere Borough, however the M25 forms a durable boundary between the two local authorities.
- Three Rivers District Council's Core Strategy states that there is no need to review the Green Belt in full, however, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2014) removed Green Belt designations in favour of housing and employment designations for several sites. The Metropolitan Green Belt occupies 77% of the Three Rivers District. None of the sites recommended for release from the Green Belt adjoin Hertsmere Borough Council.
- Watford Borough Council states that the general extent of the Green Belt will be maintained in the district while minor revisions may be made to correct anomalies and create defensible boundaries. There is no existing or planned Green Belt Assessment.
- London Borough of Harrow's Core Strategy and Development Management Document state are supportive of maintaining the Green Belt in its current form. The Metropolitan Green Belt comprises 20% of the Borough's total area and there is no existing or planned Green Belt Assessment.
- London Borough of Barnet's Core Strategy and Development Management Document state are supportive of maintaining the Green Belt in its current form. The Metropolitan Green Belt comprises 28% of the Borough's total area and there is no existing or planned Green Belt Assessment.
- As part of the evidence base for the 2010 Core Strategy, London Borough of Enfield prepared a Strategic Review of the Green Belt in 2010. A Detailed Review of the Green Belt boundary in 2013 formed part of the evidence base for the 2014 Development Management Document. Enfield has recently commissioned a Green Belt Review as part of a Local Plan Review. The 2013 Detailed Review recommended boundary changes at 30 sites (resulting in the loss of 10 hectares of Green Belt land) including Site 1.7 which abuts Hertsmere. The Metropolitan Green Belt comprises 40% of the Borough's total area.



- Legend**
- Hertsme Green Belt
  - Neighbouring Green Belt
  - Neighbouring District Boundary
  - Hertsmere District Boundary

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Client  
**Hertsmere District Council**

Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment  
 (Stage 1)**

**Map 3.1 Hertsmere and  
 Neighbouring Authorities'  
 Green Belt**

Scale at A3  
**1:70,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Issue</b>
Drawing No <b>3.1</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>



Table 3.1 Green Belt Approaches in Neighbouring Authorities

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
<b>Dacorum Borough Council</b>	Dacorum’s Local Plan comprises the saved policies of the 1991-2011 Local Plan, the adopted Core Strategy (2013), the Proposals Maps, and the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan 2012-2014 and Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2007.	<p>Paragraphs 8.28 to 8.34 of the Core Strategy set out the approach to Green Belt in the borough, highlighting that the Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national policy. It also identifies a number of major Developed Sites within the Green Belt which largely predate its designation, and where limited infilling of selected sites may be appropriate, where any new development does not increase the sites’ impact on the openness and functioning of the Green Belt.</p> <p>Policy CS5 reiterates national policy in protecting the openness and character of the Green Belt, local distinctiveness and the physical separation of settlements.</p> <p>Policy CS6 identifies a number of Selected Small Villages in the Green Belt, where there will be a need to allow for limited development which supports their existing role within the settlement hierarchy.</p>	<p>Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment Purposes Assessment (prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City &amp; District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council) (2013).</p> <p>A Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment is under preparation and will be published together with the forthcoming Settlement Hierarchy Study.</p>	<p>The first part of the assessment divided the whole study area into strategic parcels. The criteria for the parcel plan primarily related to the first four national Green Belt purposes set out in the NPPF together with a local Hertfordshire purpose:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;</li> <li>2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;</li> <li>3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;</li> <li>4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;</li> </ol> <p>Local Purpose) To broadly maintain the existing settlement pattern.</p> <p>Strategic sub-areas within parcels were identified for further assessment by each constituent planning authority in respect of wider issues relating to infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape issues.</p> <p>The second part of the assessment was a local assessment which was undertaken in two stages: a desktop review; and on-site inspection. The assessment identified areas of land which contribute least to Green Belt purposes. The identification of these areas also relied heavily on consideration of local factors such as urban form, landscape characteristics and urbanising influences.</p>

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
<p><b>Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council</b></p>	<p>Welwyn Hatfield’s Local Plan comprises of three documents Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 saved policies, the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan 2012-2014 and Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2007.</p>	<p>80% of Welwyn Hatfield Borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The Council recognises the important role of the Green Belt in the district, particularly in preventing its towns and settlements from merging into one another, preserving the countryside and concentrating development into its urban areas.</p> <p>Policy GBSP1 states that the Green Belt will be maintained as defined on the Proposals Map and excludes towns and specified settlements from the Green Belt, which are identified for the purpose of accommodating development needs in the district up to 2011 and beyond.</p> <p>Policy GBSP2 identifies the towns and specified settlements where development will be located in accordance with the policies for urban areas in the Plan, including Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield.</p>	<p>Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment Purposes Assessment (prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City &amp; District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council) (2013).</p> <p>Stage 2 Green Belt Review (2014).</p>	<p>The Stage 2 Assessment will consider further those parts of the Green Belt identified in the Stage 1 study as “contributing least” to the Green Belt purposes, together with other land surrounding the main settlements in the borough.</p> <p>The first part of the assessment divided the whole study area into strategic parcels. The criteria for the parcel plan primarily related to the first four national Green Belt purposes set out in the NPPF together with a local Hertfordshire purpose:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;</li> <li>2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;</li> <li>3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;</li> <li>4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;</li> </ol> <p>Local Purpose) To broadly maintain the existing settlement pattern.</p> <p>Strategic sub-areas within parcels were identified for further assessment by each constituent planning authority in respect of wider issues relating to infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape issues.</p> <p>The second part of the assessment was a local assessment which was undertaken in two stages: a desktop review; and on-site inspection. The assessment identified areas of land which contribute least to Green Belt purposes. The identification of these areas also relied heavily on consideration of local factors such as urban form,</p>

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
				<p>landscape characteristics and urbanising influences.</p> <p>The Part 2 Assessment considered areas of Green Belt recommended for further assessment in the Part 1 study, including strategic sub-areas and small scale sub-areas. Seven of the sites assessed at Part 2 made limited or no contribution to NPPF Green Belt purposes, 11 sites not contributing significantly to local purposes, 15 sites did not contribute to any Green Belt purposes and six sites made a significant local contribution without meeting national purposes. Fourteen sites had strong boundaries and offered the potential to be sub-divided, while five sites were identified as having a strong boundary beyond their boundary. The Council stated that it would consider separately which (if any) of the above areas it would consider for release from the Green Belt.</p>
<p><b>St Albans City &amp; District Council</b></p>	<p>St Albans City &amp; District Council Local Plan consists of the saved policies set out in the District Local Plan Review 1994.</p>	<p>The original St Albans District Plan (1985) placed all of the district within the Metropolitan Green Belt except for the main built-up areas. In approving the County Structure Plan Review in 1988, the Secretary of State could find no justification for a general revision of Green Belt boundaries however he allowed some flexibility in terms of minor adjustments to boundaries to make them better suited to long term purposes and development on redundant hospital sites.</p> <p>Policy 1 (Metropolitan Green Belt) lists the types of development and development requirements for new development within the Green Belt.</p>	<p>Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment Purposes Assessment (prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City &amp; District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council) (2013).</p> <p>Stage 2 Green Belt Review (2014).</p>	<p>The first part of the assessment divided the whole study area into strategic parcels. The criteria for the parcel plan primarily related to the first four national Green Belt purposes set out in the NPPF together with a local Hertfordshire purpose:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;</li> <li>2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;</li> <li>3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;</li> <li>4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;</li> </ol> <p>Local Purpose) To broadly maintain the existing settlement pattern.</p>

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
		<p>Policy 2 (Settlement Strategy) identifies the towns and specified settlements where development will be located including St Albans and Harpenden.</p>		<p>Strategic sub-areas within parcels were identified for further assessment by each constituent planning authority in respect of wider issues relating to infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape issues.</p> <p>The second part of the assessment was the purposes assessment which was undertaken in two stages: a desktop review; and on-site inspection. The assessment identified areas of land which contribute least to Green Belt purposes. The identification of these areas also relied heavily on consideration of local factors such as urban form, landscape characteristics and urbanising influences.</p> <p>The Stage 2 study assessed eight strategic sub-areas that contributed least towards the five Green Belt purposes and identified nine sites for potential Green Belt release and future development. Land at London Colney – which abuts the Hertsmere boundary – is recommended for potential release however both the site and Hertsmere are separated by the M25.</p>
<p><b>Three Rivers District Council</b></p>	<p>Three Rivers Core Strategy was adopted on 17 October 2011</p> <p>Other adopted plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development Management Policies Local Development Document (July 2013)</li> <li>- Site Allocations Local Development Document (November 2014)</li> </ul> <p>Work has recently started on reviewing the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>The Green Belt occupies 77% of the Three Rivers District. The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The District’s Core Strategy Strategic Objective 1 states that development must recognise and safeguard its distinctive character. Although the plan recognises that changes to the Green Belt boundary may be necessary over the plan period, changes that result in the loss of more than</p>	<p>The Core Strategy does not indicate a need for a full review of the Green Belt. It does however set out that detailed changes to the established boundary may be made through the Site Allocations document to accommodate growth. Green Belt designation was removed in favour of housing and employment allocations for several sites in the Site Allocations</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
		<p>1% of the Green Belt will not be permitted.</p> <p>Core Strategy Policy states that the general extent of Metropolitan Green Belt in Three Rivers District will be maintained with minor revisions through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document around main urban areas accommodating development needs.</p>	<p>Development Plan Document (adopted November 2014).</p> <p>The Council intends to undertake a Stage 1 and Stage 2 Green Belt review later in 2016 as part of the review of the Core Strategy.</p>	
<b>Watford Borough Council</b>	<p>Watford Borough Council's Local Plan comprises of four documents: 2006-2031 Part 1 Core Strategy, the Watford District Plan 2000 (saved policies), the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan 2012-2014 and Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2007.</p>	<p>The Watford Borough Core Strategy states that most of Watford's green infrastructure assets are located in the Borough's Green Belt. It is stated that the Council's approach is to retain the existing boundary while dealing with any boundary inconsistencies that have emerged since the production of the WDP2000 in the site allocations document.</p> <p>Policy GI 2 (Green Belt) states that the Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain the general extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt in the Borough.</li> <li>- Encourage appropriate positive use of the Green Belt to improve environmental quality.</li> </ul> <p>Make minor boundary revisions to correct anomalies and create defensible boundaries.</p>	N/A	N/A
<b>London Borough of Harrow</b>	<p>London Borough of Harrow's Local Plan comprises of the Core Strategy (2012), Development Management</p>	<p>Harrow's Green Belt covers 11 square kilometres (20% of the Borough's total area).</p>	N/A	N/A

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
	Policies Local Plan (2013), Site Allocations Local Plan (2013), Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan (2013) and the West London Waste Plan (2015).	The Development Management Policies Local Plan Policy DM 16 (Maintaining the openness of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land) sets out criteria for redevelopment or infilling of previously developed sites in the Green Belt, while Policy DM 17 (Beneficial use of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land) states that proposals for beneficial use of the Green Belt are supported where the use would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.		
<b>London Borough of Barnet</b>	London Borough of Barnet's Local Plan comprises of the Core Strategy (2012), Site Allocations DPD (2012), Development Management Policies DPD (2012), Mill Hill East Area Action Plan (2009) and Colindale Area Action Plan (2010).	28% of the Borough is designated Green Belt.  Core Strategy Policy CS 7 (Enhancing and protecting Barnet's open spaces) states that the Green Belt will be protected and enhanced.  Development Management Document Policy 15 (Green Belt and open spaces) states that development will only be allowed in the Green Belt in very special circumstances and that extensions to buildings in the Green Belt will not be allowed if it results in a disproportionate addition or over-intensification of the site. In addition, replacement or re-use of buildings and development adjacent to the Green Belt should not have a detrimental impact on the Green Belt.	N/A	N/A
<b>London Borough of Enfield</b>	London Borough of Enfield's local plan comprises of the Core Strategy (2010) and	Over one third of open land in Enfield is designated as Green Belt. Within the Green Belt, there are two major developed sites: Middlesex University's Trent Park	London Borough of Enfield undertook a Strategic Green Belt Review in 2010 to inform the Core Strategy (2010) and a Detailed	The 2013 review used criteria for defensibility to decide whether existing boundaries were 'strong' or 'weak'. It examined both the accuracy and durability of the detailed inner and outer Green

Authority	Local Plan Status	Green Belt Context	Green Belt Assessment	Methodology / Conclusions from Green Belt Assessment
	<p>Development Management DPD (2014).</p>	<p>campus and the Picketts Lock leisure complex.</p> <p>Core Strategy Core Policy 33 (Green Belt and countryside) states that the Council will continue to protect and enhance Enfield’s Green Belt.</p> <p>The Development Management Policies document policies DMD 85 to 91 set out criteria for: Land for food and other agricultural uses; agricultural workers’ dwellings; equine-related development; farm diversification; previously developed sites in the Green Belt and site specific policies.</p>	<p>Green Belt Boundary Review in March 2013 to inform the Development Management DPD (2014).</p>	<p>Belt boundary and recommended minor changes as considered necessary with the aim of securing a strong defensible boundary that will endure over the next 15 to 20 years. The review recommended 30 site changes (13 gains and 19 losses and a total net loss of 10 acres of Green Belt land. One site bounding Hertsmere – Site 1.7 (at Hadley Wood northwest) – was recommended for release from the Enfield Green Belt.</p>

### 3.4.2 Wider Experience

A brief examination of a selection of Green Belt Reviews carried out elsewhere in the country revealed the following key lessons in terms of methodology:

- A variety of approaches have been taken in assessing the functionality of Green Belt against the NPPF purposes. This partially reflects that each study has been undertaken in response to a specific brief and is tailored to the special local characteristics of the area in question.
- A two stage process has typically been used to firstly identify those Green Belt areas least sensitive to change and where development would be least damaging in principle, before moving onto a second stage to consider technical site constraints.
- For the purposes of the assessment, authorities have primarily divided the Green Belt into land parcels for assessment using durable, significant and strong physical boundaries which are clearly defined in the methodology, though some have used grid squares of a defined size to identify the land parcels for assessment.
- Only those purposes deemed relevant to the local context have been used in reviews rather than necessarily using all five, while in some instances authorities have combined multiple purposes within their assessments.
- In terms of interpreting the national purposes, definition of terms (both within the purposes themselves and criteria applied) is of key importance to a successful and transparent assessment.
- Assessment criteria used to assess individual purposes have been tailored to local circumstances.
- Qualitative approaches are primarily used in assessments, although some authorities have used more quantitative measures. The approach to scoring in assessments varies from simplistic traffic light systems to more complex approaches to scoring.

### 3.5 Consultation

Since the introduction of the Localism Act (2011), Local Authorities hold the responsibility for strategic planning and a clear duty to cooperate on strategic issues, such as Green Belt. The strength of Green Belt within Hertsmere against the NPPF purposes may have implications for the Green Belt in adjoining authority areas as part of the wider Green Belt (however, it should be noted that recommendations will only apply to Hertsmere and not to neighbouring authorities). As a result it is important to engage with neighbouring authorities on the proposed methodology and Green Belt parcels for assessment.

A roundtable workshop was therefore held with neighbouring authorities on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to discuss the methodology and proposed parcels for assessment and to



seek a level of consistency with neighbouring Green Belt studies where possible<sup>8</sup>. A summary of the key points raised and discussed is as follows:

- **Parcels for Assessment.** Comments were provided on the proposed parcels for assessment, in particular in relation to those that cross the district boundary and those utilised in the joint study undertaken by Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
  - *Response:* All comments on parcel boundaries were considered, in particular cross-district parcels, and some minor adjustment were made. It is noted that the rationale for identifying parcels is broadly consistent with the Dacorum/St Albans/Welwyn joint study, namely the use of water courses, roads, and railway lines to initially define parcels with sub-division where appropriate. With regard to the cross-district parcels, it is considered that appropriate permanent and defensible features have been identified and utilised for the Hertsmere study, although emphasis has been added to the methodology that no recommendations will ultimately be made beyond the boundaries of Hertsmere.
- **Purpose 1.** It was suggested that sprawl is a threat to the Green Belt from all scales of settlement and therefore a wider range of urban areas should be considered, rather than just larger built up areas.
  - *Response:* Purpose 1 as defined by the NPPF refers to the sprawl of ‘large built-up areas’. As this term is not defined within the NPPF, the settlement hierarchy provides the best proxy for this, defining the primary settlements within the district which are likely to be larger in size and more built-up in character.
- **Purpose 2.** Consistency between the proposed methodology and that utilised for the joint study undertaken by Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, in particular in relation to definition of ‘towns’ for Purpose 2, and the use of a local Hertfordshire purpose (*‘To broadly maintain the existing settlement pattern’*) in the latter study.
  - *Response:* Use of a the local Hertfordshire purpose was considered, but it was felt that the most robust approach was to reflect the local context in the interpretation of the NPPF purposes and given the role that Purpose 2 plays in maintaining the settlement pattern within Hertsmere.
- **Purpose 3.** The proposed percentage of built form to be utilised for the assessment was discussed in relation to other studies. In addition, the consideration of landscape character and quality designations in the Dacorum/St Albans/Welwyn joint study was raised.
  - *Response:* The percentage of built form to be utilised for the Hertsmere Purpose 3 assessment was considered appropriate based on Arup’s previous Green Belt assessment experience. Furthermore, as Green Belt is

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<sup>8</sup> Attendees comprised: St Albans City & District Council, Three Rivers District Council, Watford Borough Council, London Borough of Barnet, London Borough of Enfield, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, and Dacorum Borough Council. London Borough of Harrow were unable to attend the workshop, but the draft methodology was shared.

not designated on the basis of landscape quality and this consideration is not identified in the NPPF, it was not considered appropriate to include landscape character/quality assessment in the Hertsmere assessment.

- **Purpose 4.** The identification of appropriate ‘historic settlements’ was discussed, including the inclusion of individual historic assets in the assessment.
  - *Response:* Given the specific reference to ‘historic towns’ within national policy wording, it was considered inappropriate to consider individual historical assets within the Purpose 4 assessment (e.g. battlefield sites, historic parks and gardens).
- **Purpose 5.** It was acknowledged that Purpose 5 is not helpful in terms of assessing the relative value of parcels and should therefore not be included in the assessment criteria. However, the overarching importance of Purpose 5 at the Metropolitan level was acknowledged.

### 3.6 Implications for the Assessment

National policy, as set out in the NPPF, emphasises the importance and permanence of Green Belt. The NPPF sets out clearly the five purposes that the Green Belt is intended to serve, highlights that the Local Plan process offers the only opportunity for the Green Belt boundaries to be reviewed and stresses that boundaries should be defined using permanent and recognisable physical features. Neither the NPPF, nor the supporting national Planning Practice Guidance, provide guidance on how to conduct a Green Belt Assessment *per se*. The implied emphasis is thus on each authority to develop a methodology which is appropriate to the local context.

Crucial to the development of such a methodology is the establishment of satisfactory definitions for the key terms used in the NPPF purposes (yet not explicitly defined) – different interpretations of such terms would significantly alter how the Assessment is carried out. While a number of Green Belt Reviews do not articulate clearly how terms have been defined, the Green Belt Boundary Review for Dacorum, St Albans and Welwyn Hatfield provided definitions based on a combination of legitimate sources (for example, the Oxford English Dictionary) as well as the known aspirations sought through national and local policy.

Some key definitions which were considered for this methodology include:

- *Large built-up areas* (Purpose 1): This originally referred to London for the Metropolitan Green Belt, but the scope of how this is interpreted has shifted over time to include other large settlements within the wider Green Belt area. The Dacorum, St Albans and Welwyn Hatfield review applied the term to London, Luton/Dunstable and Stevenage. The Central Bedfordshire Green Belt Assessment applied the definition more broadly, considering any area deemed ‘urban’. When defining this term, the methodology for Hertsmere considered the settlement structure across the Borough and adjoining districts.

- *Sprawl* (Purpose 1): The definition of this term varies significantly. The PAS Guidance queries whether development that is masterplanned and promoted positively through a development plan would constitute sprawl, but this does not provide a specific and measurable definition which could be applied in a Green Belt Review, nor is it an entirely satisfactory explanation of sprawl alone. Other Green Belt Reviews, for example the Guildford Green Belt and Countryside Study, have edged towards a more spatial definition, considering sprawl as the ‘*creeping advancement of development beyond a clear physical boundary of a settlement*’. Given sprawl is a multi-faceted concept, it was prudent to consider both of these spheres in the definition adopted in this methodology.
- *Neighbouring towns* (Purpose 2): The interpretation of ‘towns’ varies across previous Green Belt Reviews. While it tends to be aligned to the defined settlement hierarchy, as set out in the relevant development plan, some authorities have chosen to apply a more local purpose. For example, in Runnymede, the threat of coalescence between many smaller settlements led to the Green Belt Review considering all settlements equally, including those ‘washed over’ in the Green Belt. By contrast, the joint Dacorum/St Albans/Welwyn Hatfield Green Belt review utilised an additional ‘local’ purpose (‘*To broadly maintain the existing settlement pattern*’). Given that in Hertsmere the Green Belt boundaries are, for the most part, closely abutting the edge of settlements, it might be most appropriate to consider all non-Green Belt areas as the ‘towns’ to be considered in the Purpose 2 assessment.
- *Countryside* (Purpose 3): The Dacorum/St Albans/Welwyn Hatfield Green Belt review adopted a ‘functional’ as opposed to ‘political economy’ definition of this term, centred on agricultural and other primary land uses, while others adopted broader definitions which took countryside to mean any open land. Evidently, this interpretation is not appropriate in areas which are entirely semi-urban, where Green Belt may have been applied to areas which are open but not genuinely of a ‘countryside’ character. Given the significant contrast between urban and rural areas seen in and around Hertsmere, in a similar fashion to similar districts at the fringe of London (for example, in Buckinghamshire and Essex), a similar ‘functional’ definition may be the most appropriate.
- *Historic Towns* (Purpose 4): Whilst many towns in the Metropolitan Green Belt have a long history in terms of their foundation, or even retain historic architectural features or layouts in their cores, in most cases their historic centres have been enveloped by modern development. In some cases, this might result in a limited relationship between the Green Belt and the historic areas of settlements. The West Midlands Joint Green Belt Review defined its historic towns by identifying settlements with conservation areas in their centres and considering the inter-visibility between these and the Green Belt. Others have utilised wider policy instruments to identify relevant settlements. For example, the Epping Forest Stage 1 Green Belt Review drew on a county-wide SPG, ‘Essex Historic Towns’, which clearly defined the district’s historic towns. Any relevant policy or evidence should be drawn upon in

order to define the relevant settlements for this assessment in the Hertsmere context.

In addition to other Green Belt Reviews, the PAS guidance on Green Belt Assessment is particularly helpful in setting out key parameters to consider when developing a Green Belt Assessment methodology. The key points to note are:

- A Green Belt Assessment is not an assessment of landscape quality, though elements of landscape assessment assist in assessing the Green Belt (for example, in identifying potential new boundaries or differentiating between areas of unspoilt countryside or semi-rural areas).
- The label 'historic towns' applies to a select number of settlements and it is therefore accepted that the Purpose 4 assessment will only be relevant in very few instances. As set out in section 4, it is considered that Purpose 4 is only relevant to the Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment in very limited locations.
- Purpose 5 is not helpful in terms of assessing relative value of land parcels and is therefore not relevant to the Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment. However, the overarching importance of Purpose 5 at the Metropolitan level is acknowledged.
- Green Belt is a strategic issue and should be considered collaboratively with neighbouring authorities under Duty to Cooperate, thus emphasising the importance of ongoing consultation with neighbouring stakeholders.

## 4 Methodology

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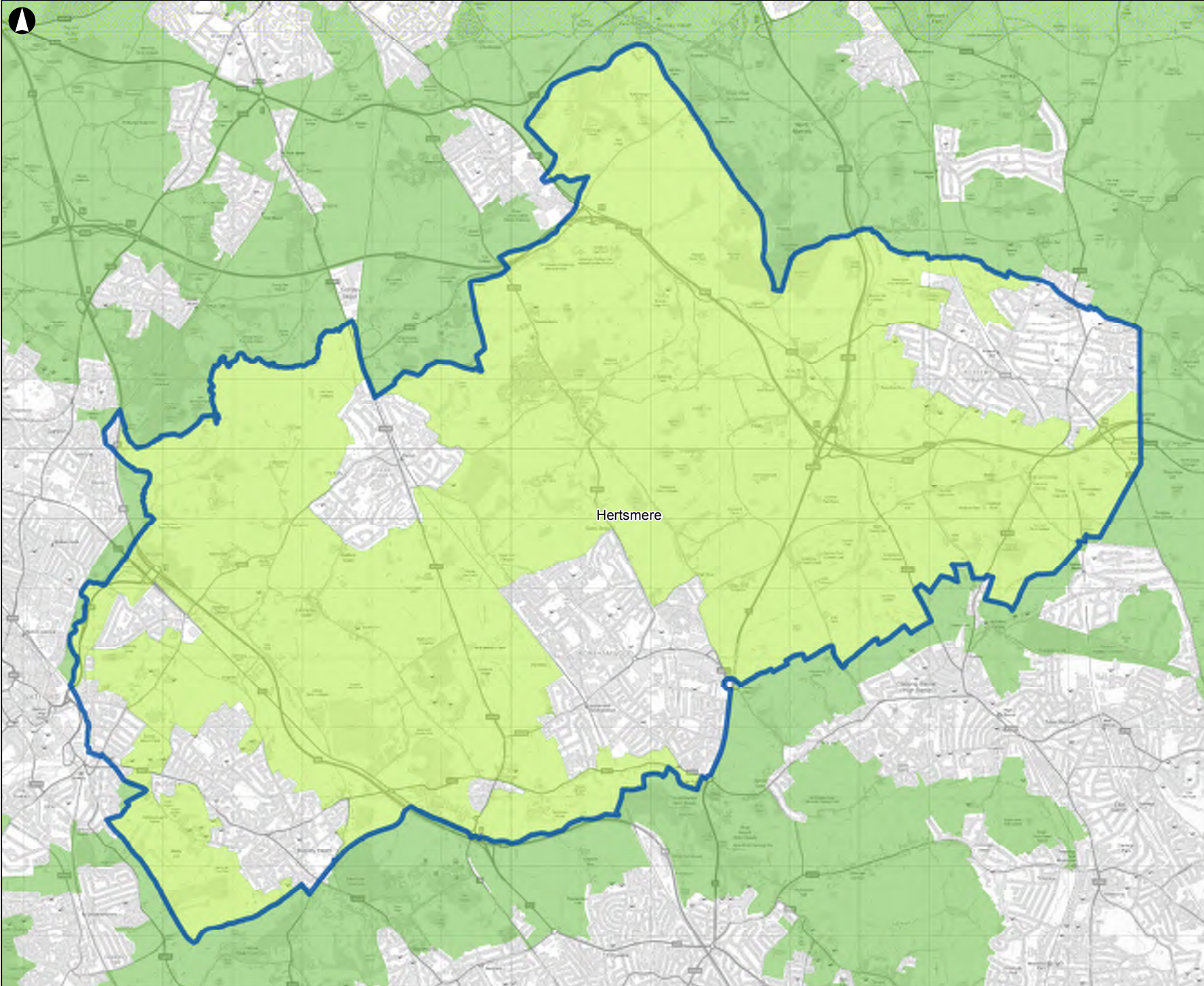
### 4.1 Introduction and Aims

The following section sets out the methodology used for undertaking the Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment. This encompasses an assessment of the whole of the Green Belt within Hertsmere and seeks to ascertain:

- Whether all land designated fulfils clear Green Belt purposes;
- The degree of significance attached to various parts of the Green Belt in strategic terms; and
- The extent to which some Green Belt could be considered for release without compromising its overall purpose.

The extent of the Hertsmere Green Belt is shown in Map 4.1.

It should be noted that the assessment was undertaken against the adopted Green Belt boundaries as of June 2016 and that, at the time this Study is published, the proposed amendments to Green Belt boundaries as set out in the SADM are likely to have been adopted. As such, there is likely to be a degree of crossover between the recommendations of this Study and the Green Belt amendments set out in the SADM.

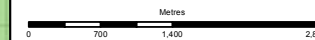


**Legend**

- Hertsmere Green Belt
- Neighbouring Green Belt
- Hertsmere District Boundary

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**Hertsmere District Council**

Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment  
(Stage 1)**

**Map 4.1 Hertsmere  
Green Belt**

Scale at A3  
**1:52,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Issue</b>
Drawing No <b>4.1</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>

## 4.2 Parcel Identification

### 4.2.1 Green Belt Parcels

Any potential alterations to the Green Belt must be based on a new permanent and defensible boundary; thus, permanent man-made and natural features have been selected as the basis of criteria for the identification of the Green Belt Parcels. In particular, the boundaries of the Parcels are based on the following features (Map 4.2):

- Motorways;
- A and B Roads;
- Railway lines; and
- Rivers, brooks, and waterbodies.

Given the range of urban and rural conditions found in Hertsmere, from the semi-urban fringes of Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar and Radlett to the relatively unspoilt countryside in the centre and north of the borough, a flexible approach to the identification of Parcels for assessment was deemed necessary. This was achieved through consideration of Parcel boundaries during the site visits, in particular in and around the non-Green Belt settlements, using additional durable boundary features where required, such as:

- Unclassified public roads and private roads;
- Smaller water features, including streams, canals and other watercourses;
- Prominent physical features (e.g. ridgelines);
- Existing development with strongly established, regular and consistent boundaries; and
- Protected woodland and hedgerows.

In some cases, boundary features are located close together, for example where roads, rivers, and/or railway lines running closely parallel to each other. These features were taken together to form one boundary rather than separately which would lead to small slithers of Green Belt land which would not form logical Parcels for assessment.

It was decided that, in cases where the Hertsmere District boundaries do not coincide with permanent and durable boundary features, Green Belt Parcels would overlap with Green Belt in neighbouring authority areas to align with the nearest durable feature. This approach ensures a consistent approach to the assessment of Green Belt throughout Hertsmere and takes into account the strategic, cross-boundary nature of the Metropolitan Green Belt. In cases where Green Belt at the edge of the Borough is not deemed to meet Green Belt purposes, this may have implications for its designation, not just within Hertsmere but also outside the Borough. However, it is important to note that this assessment will not directly influence the approaches to Green Belt in neighbouring authorities and no recommendations are ultimately made beyond the boundaries of Hertsmere.

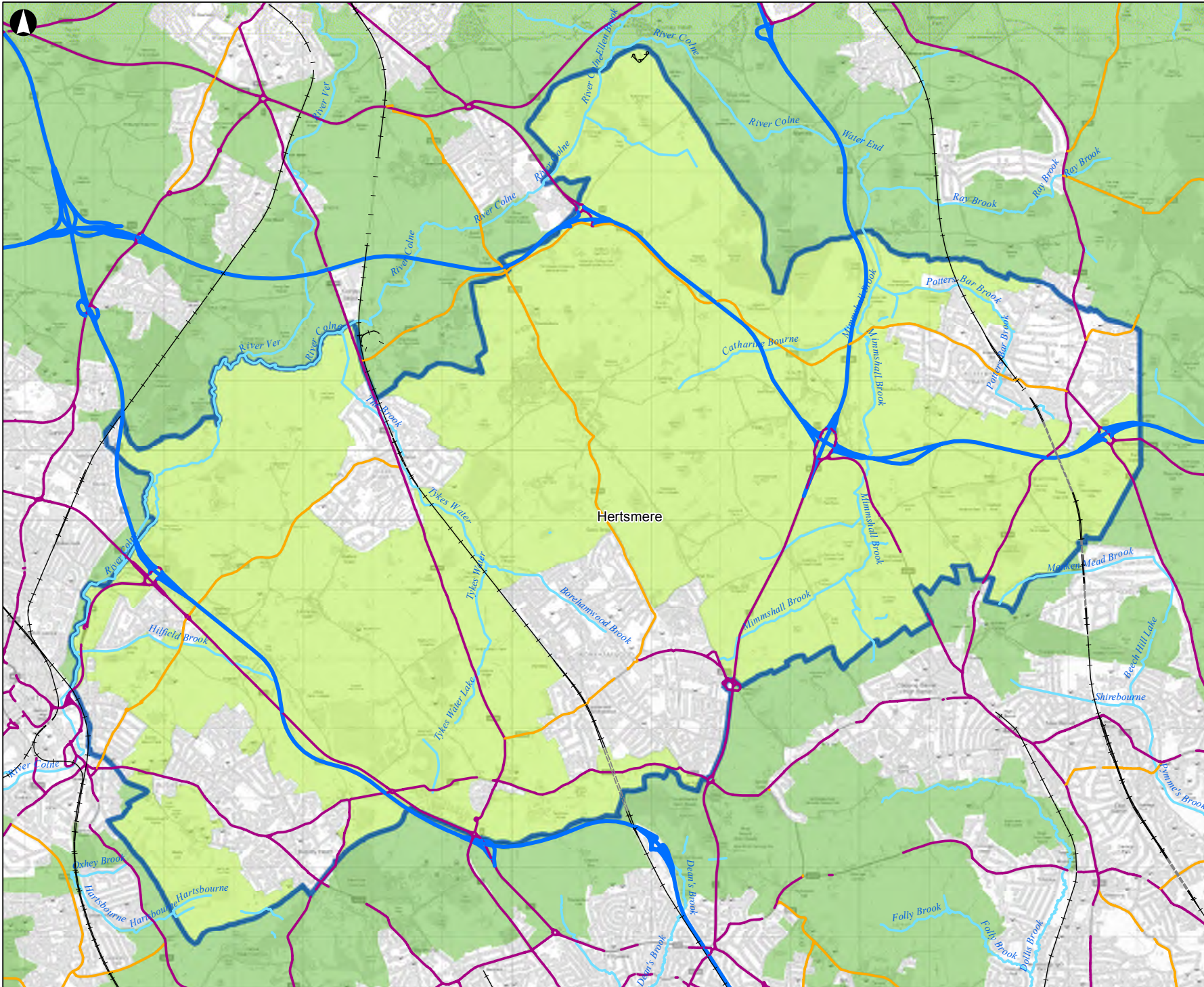
The Parcels used in the Assessment are provided in Map 4.3.

## 4.2.2 Non-Green Belt

As set out in section 1.2, Green Belt boundary revisions can take the form of an expansion as well as a contraction. For that reason, consideration of land that is not allocated as Green Belt for inclusion in the Green Belt is required. Based on previous experience of conducting Green Belt Reviews, the starting point for identifying non-Green Belt land was open land outside of the defined settlement limits set out in local development plans but not included in the Green Belt.

Following discussion with the Council, it was concluded that existing Green Belt boundaries are drawn sufficiently tightly to the built environment to negate any additional investigation within existing settlement limits.



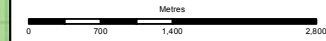


**Legend**

- A Road
- B Road
- Motorway
- Railway Line
- River
- Hertsmere Green Belt
- Neighbouring Green Belt
- Hertsmere District Boundary

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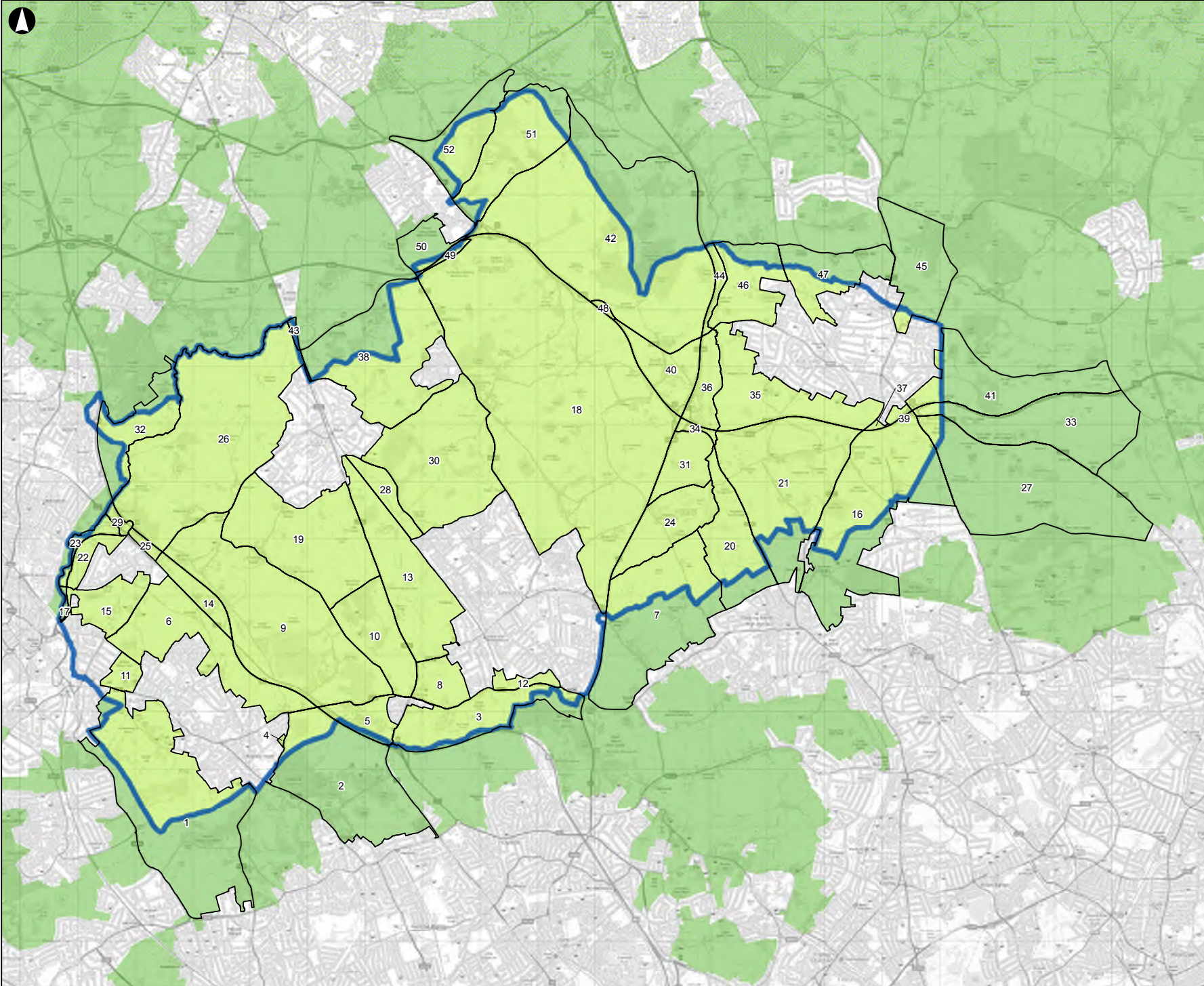
Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1)**

**Map 4.2. Defining Features for Green Belt Parcels**





Scale at A3  
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Drawing No <b>4.2</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>
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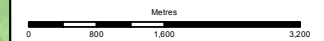


**Legend**

-  Green Belt Parcel
-  Hertsmere District Boundary
-  Hertsmere Green Belt
-  Neighbouring Green Belt

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Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment  
 (Stage 1)**

**Map 4.3. Green Belt Parcels**

Scale at A3  
**1:63,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Draft</b>
Drawing No <b>4.3</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>


### 4.3 Green Belt Parcel Assessment

Each of the Green Belt Parcels identified in section 4.2.1 and Map 4.3 were assessed against the purposes of Green Belt, as set out in the NPPF. No national guidance exists which establishes exactly how such an assessment should be undertaken. The PAS guidance, recent examples and previous experience reiterates the need to respect local circumstances and the unique characteristics that affect the way that the NPPF purposes of the Green Belt are appraised. The purpose of the assessment is to establish any differentiation in terms of how the Parcels function and fulfil the purposes of the Green Belt.

For each purpose, one or more criteria have been developed using both qualitative and quantitative measures. A score out of five is attributed for each criterion (Figure 4.1). If a Parcel is considered to have no contribution to a specific purpose, in addition to the detailed analysis undertaken, a statement is added to the pro-forma to this effect and no score is attributed.

It is important to note that each of the NPPF purposes is considered equally significant, thus no weighting or aggregation of scores across the purposes is undertaken. As such, a composite judgement is necessary to determine whether, overall, Green Belt Parcels are meeting Green Belt purposes strongly or weakly. The assessment also considers whether there are any smaller scale sub-areas within strongly performing parcels, which may meet the Green Belt purposes weakly and thus may be less sensitive and able to accommodate change. In these cases, the potential for Green Belt boundaries to be adjusted without significantly reducing ability to meet NPPF purposes is considered. A Parcel fulfilling the criteria relatively weakly, weakly or very weakly (1 or 2) across all purposes is deemed to be weaker Green Belt. These recommendations will be taken forward to inform any decisions taken on amending the Green Belt boundaries following further assessment work (outside the scope of this Assessment).

Figure 4.1 Criterion Scores

Overall Strength of Green Belt Parcel against Criterion	Score	Equivalent Wording
	0	Does not meet Criterion
	1	Meets Criterion Weakly or Very Weakly
	2	Meets Criterion Relatively Weakly
	3	Meets Criterion
	4	Meets Criterion Relatively Strongly.
	5	Meets Criterion Strongly or Very Strongly

The following sections examine the definition of each of the five purposes of the Green Belt in relation to local objectives and role of the Green Belt in terms of achieving its purpose locally; and set out the criteria and associated scoring applied.

### 4.3.1 Purpose 1

***Purpose 1: To check unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.***

The original strategic purpose of the Metropolitan Green Belt was to check the sprawl of London. However, as discussed in section 3.6, it is recognised that the wider Green Belt also plays a role in preventing the unrestricted growth of other large settlements. This assessment therefore considers the role of Green Belt Parcels in preventing the sprawl of London, but also in restricting the sprawl of large built-up areas across the Borough and within neighbouring local authorities. Large built-up areas for the purpose of this Assessment have generally been defined to correspond to the Tier 1 settlements (or equivalent) identified in the settlement hierarchy set out in the Hertsmere Core Strategy (2013) or used in recent Green Belt studies, both within and outside Hertsmere, to ensure a robust and evidence based approach to the assessment (see Map 4.4; Table 4.1).<sup>9</sup>

Table 4.1 Hertsmere Settlement Hierarchy (Hertsmere Core Strategy, 2013)<sup>10</sup>

Settlement (and area of settlement)	Tier
Borehamwood	1
Potters Bar; Bushey	2
Radlett	3
Shenley (that part proposed to be removed from the Green Belt); Elstree (that part outside of the Green Belt)	4
Elstree (that part within the Green Belt); Aldenham (including Hall Wall); Letchmore Heath, Patchetts Green; Ridge and South Mimms, Shenley (that part within the Green Belt)	5

Although ‘*sprawl*’ is a multi-faceted concept and thus has a variety of different definitions, this Assessment has adopted a simple definition, considering sprawl as ‘*the outward spread of a large built-up area at its periphery in a sporadic, dispersed or irregular way*’. In order to appraise the extent to which the Green Belt keeps this in check, it is necessary to consider:

- a) Whether the Green Belt Parcel falls at the edge of one or more distinct large built-up area(s);
- b) The degree to which the Green Belt Parcel is contained by built-form, and the nature of this physical containment, as well as the linkage to the wider Green Belt; and
- c) The extent to which the edge of the built-up area has a strongly defined, regular or consistent boundary.

<sup>9</sup> The only Tier 1 settlement in Hertsmere, Borehamwood (including the area known as Elstree immediately to the west of Elstree and Borehamwood Station), has a total developed area which is approximately 30% greater than either Potters Bar or Bushey. In addition to its land area, in terms of its population, jobs, services and facilities, it has clearly been identified as the largest settlement in the borough.

<sup>10</sup> Within tier 4 and tier 5, ‘Elstree’ relates specifically to Elstree Village only, rather than the developed area immediately to the west of Elstree and Borehamwood station.

Table 4.2 Large Built-Up Areas Considered in Purpose 1 Assessment

Hertsmere	Neighbouring Local Authorities
Borehamwood <sup>11</sup>	Greater London built-up area (including High Barnet (LB Barnet), Stanmore (LB Harrow) and Hadley Wood (LB Enfield)) Watford <sup>12</sup> St Albans Hatfield Hemel Hempstead

There are two stages in this assessment:

### Assessment 1(a)

Firstly, a Parcel must be at the edge of one or more distinct large built-up area(s) in order to prevent development which would constitute sprawl. This criterion must therefore be met for Purpose 1 to be fulfilled and is applied on a Pass/Fail basis.

### Assessment 1(b)

As stated at Assessment 1(a), Green Belt should function to protect open land at the edge of large built-up area(s) (Table 4.2). However, the extent to which a Parcel prevents sprawl is dependent on its relationship with the respective built-up area(s).

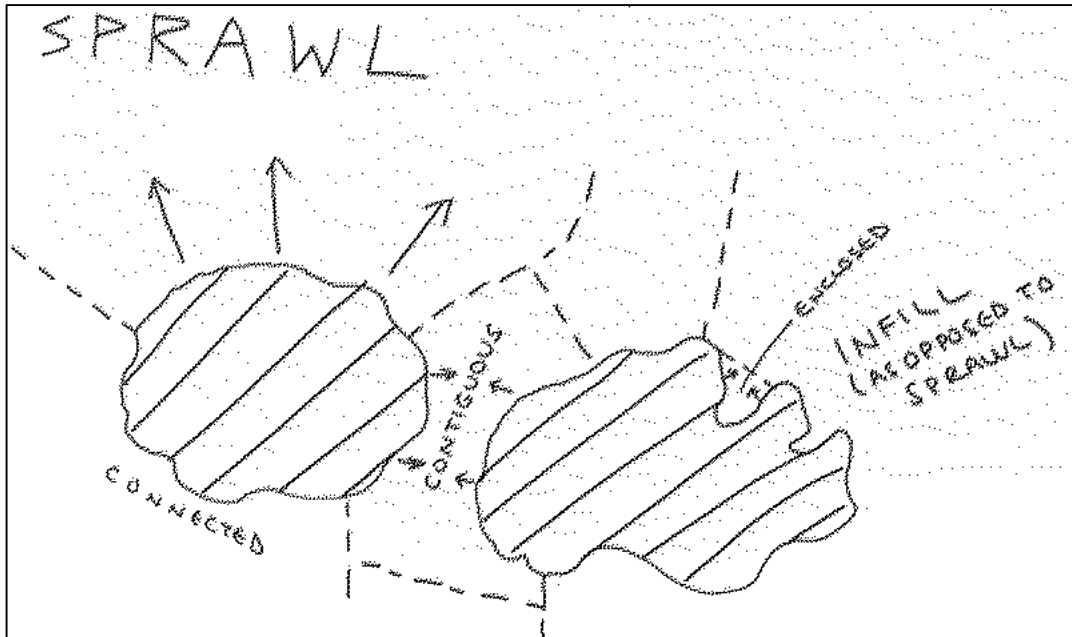
Assessment 1(b) initially focusses on the degree to which Green Belt abuts or is contained by the built-up area(s), the nature of this relationship and links to the wider Green Belt. The following criteria are used for assessment (Figure 4.2):

- A Parcel predominantly surrounded or enclosed by two or more distinct areas of built form and that also retains a strong link to the wider Green Belt, would play a particularly important role in preventing sprawl. For the purpose of this assessment, this is referred to as '*contiguous*'.
- A Parcel displaying a low level of containment by a large-built area, such as if it was simply abutting a large-built area, may prevent sprawl but to a lesser extent. This assessment refers to such areas as '*connected*' with a large built-up area.
- A Parcel almost entirely contained or surrounded by built development which forms part of a single built-up area and has limited connections to the wider Green Belt, would only prevent sprawl to a limited extent (rather, potential development would likely be classified as infill), is referred to here as '*enclosed*' by a single built-up area.

<sup>11</sup> For the purposes of this Study and to ensure consistency with the Local Plan, this includes the built-up area to the west of Elstree and Borehamwood railway station. Although the names 'Elstree' and 'Borehamwood' can be used interchangeably locally, this Study refers to the entire area as 'Borehamwood'. This also distinguishes it from the settlement defined in the settlement hierarchy as 'Elstree', a separate settlement which is sometimes referred to locally as 'Elstree Village'.

<sup>12</sup> Includes the built-up area (within Hertsmere) to the north of Bushey railway station.

Figure 4.2 Diagram illustrating the relationship between large built-up areas and Green Belt Parcels, and whether the Parcels are contiguous, connected or enclosed.



This initial assessment is supplemented by additional analysis on the role of Green Belt in preventing sprawl which would not otherwise be restricted by another barrier. The NPPF states that Local Authorities should *'define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent'* (paragraph 85). Boundary identification reflected this, based on the following definitions:

- Examples of durable features (likely to be permanent):
  - Infrastructure: motorway; public and man-made road; railway line; river.
  - Landform: stream, canal or other watercourse; prominent physical feature (e.g. ridgeline); protected woodland/hedge; existing development with strongly established, regular or consistent boundaries.
- Examples of features lacking in durability (soft boundaries):
  - Infrastructure: private/unmade road; bridleway/footpath; power line.
  - Natural: field boundary; tree line.

Where sprawl would not otherwise have been restricted by a durable boundary feature, the extent to which the existing built form had strongly established or recognisable boundaries is assessed based on the following definitions:

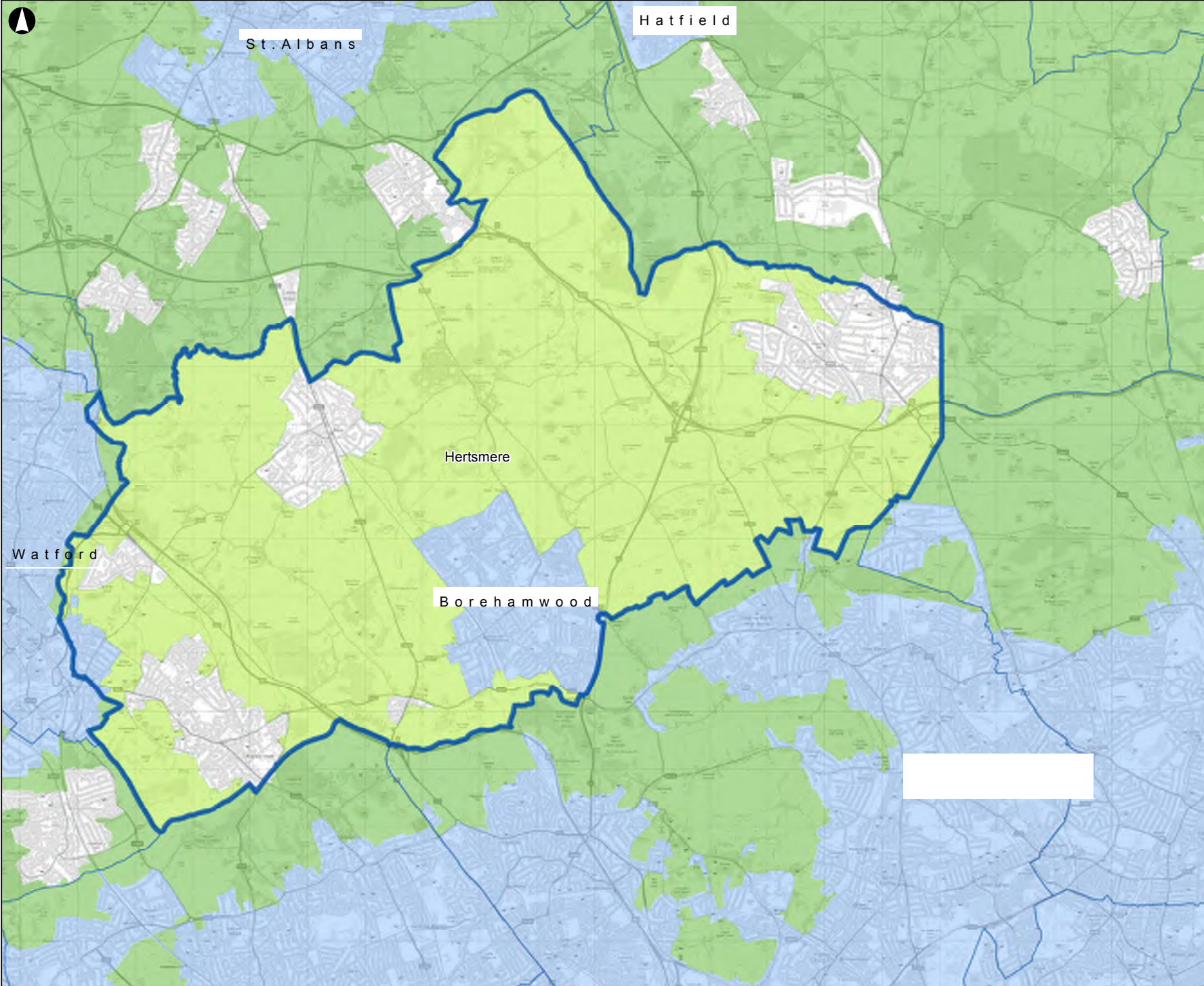
- 'Regular' or 'Consistent' built form comprising well-defined or rectilinear built-form edges, which would restrict development in the Green Belt.
- 'Irregular' or 'Inconsistent' built-form comprising imprecise or softer edges, which would not restrict growth within the Green Belt.

## Purpose 1 Assessment Criteria

The criteria used to assess the Parcels against Purpose 1 are set out below. Ordnance Survey base maps and aerial photography, together with observations during the site visits, were used to undertake this assessment.

Table 4.3 Purpose 1 Assessment Criteria

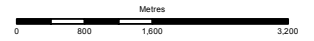
Purpose	Criteria	Score
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	(a) Land parcel is at the edge of one or more large built up areas	PASS: Green Belt Parcel meets Purpose 1. FAIL: Green Belt Parcel does not meet Purpose 1 and will score 0 for Criteria (b).
	(b) Prevents the outward sprawl of a large built-up area into open land, and serves as a barrier at the edge of a large built-up area in the absence of another durable boundary.	5+: Green Belt Parcel is contiguous with two or more large built-up areas which are predominantly bordered by features lacking in durability or permanence.
		5: Green Belt Parcel is contiguous with two or more large built-up areas which are predominantly bordered by prominent, permanent and consistent boundary features.
		3+: Green Belt Parcel is connected to one or more large built-up area(s) which is/are predominantly bordered by features lacking in durability or permanence.
		3: Green Belt Parcel is connected to one or more large built-up area(s) which is/are predominantly bordered by prominent, permanent and consistent boundary features.
		1+: Green Belt Parcel is enclosed by one large built-up area which is predominantly bordered by features lacking in durability or permanence.
		1: Green Belt Parcel is enclosed by one large built-up area which is predominantly bordered by prominent, permanent and consistent boundary features.
<b>Score</b>	<b>xx/5</b>	



- Legend**
- Large Built-Up Area
  - Hertsmere Green Belt
  - Neighbouring Green Belt
  - Neighbouring District Boundary
  - Hertsmere District Boundary

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(Stage 1)**

**Map 4.4 - Large Built-Up Areas considered in the assessment against Purpose 1 (To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas)**

Scale at A3  
**1:63,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Draft</b>
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## 4.3.2 Purpose 2

***Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.***

In addition to the clear function of this purpose in preventing towns from merging and therefore protecting existing gaps between towns, it also forms the basis for maintaining the existing settlement pattern. National policy provides no guidance over what might constitute ‘towns’ and whether this purpose should also take into consideration the gaps between smaller settlements.

Given Hertsmere’s predominantly nucleated settlement pattern, and that the Green Belt boundaries are in most cases drawn tightly to the defined primary settlements, the assessment of Green Belt Parcels considers gaps between all Tier 1-4 non-Green Belt settlements in the Borough, as well as non-Green Belt settlements in surrounding local authorities adjacent to the edge of the Borough. Settlements in Hertsmere were broadly defined in line with the Borough’s published settlement hierarchy, while those in neighbouring authorities were identified in respective Green Belt Reviews and using relevant local plan (Map 4.5; Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Settlements Considered in Purpose 2 Assessment

Hertsmere	Neighbouring Local Authorities
Borehamwood <sup>13</sup>	Bricket Wood
Bushey Heath / Bushey Village	Brookmans Park
Elstree <sup>14</sup>	Chiswell Green
North Bushey	Colney Street
Potters Bar <sup>15</sup>	Cuffley
Radlett	Great London built-up area (including High Barnet (LB Barnet), Stanmore (LB Harrow) and Hadley Wood (LB Enfield))
Shenley <sup>16</sup>	Hatfield
	Hemel Hempstead
	How Wood
	London Colney
	Park Street
	South Oxhey
	St Albans
	Watford <sup>17</sup>
	Welham Green

<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this Study and to ensure consistency with the Local Plan, this includes the built-up area to the west of Elstree and Borehamwood railway station. Although the names ‘Elstree’ and ‘Borehamwood’ can be used interchangeably locally, this Study refers to the entire area as ‘Borehamwood’. This also distinguishes it from the settlement defined in the settlement hierarchy as ‘Elstree’, a separate settlement which is sometimes referred to locally as ‘Elstree Village’.

<sup>14</sup> Comprising that part outside of the Green Belt sometimes referred to locally as ‘Elstree Village’.

<sup>15</sup> Including the immediately adjoining area within Welwyn Hatfield known as Little Heath.

<sup>16</sup> Comprising the Former Shenley Hospital development, removed from the Green Belt in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016).

<sup>17</sup> Includes the built-up area (within Hertsmere) to the north of Bushey railway station.

The extent to which an area of Green Belt protects a land gap is assessed using the following definitions:

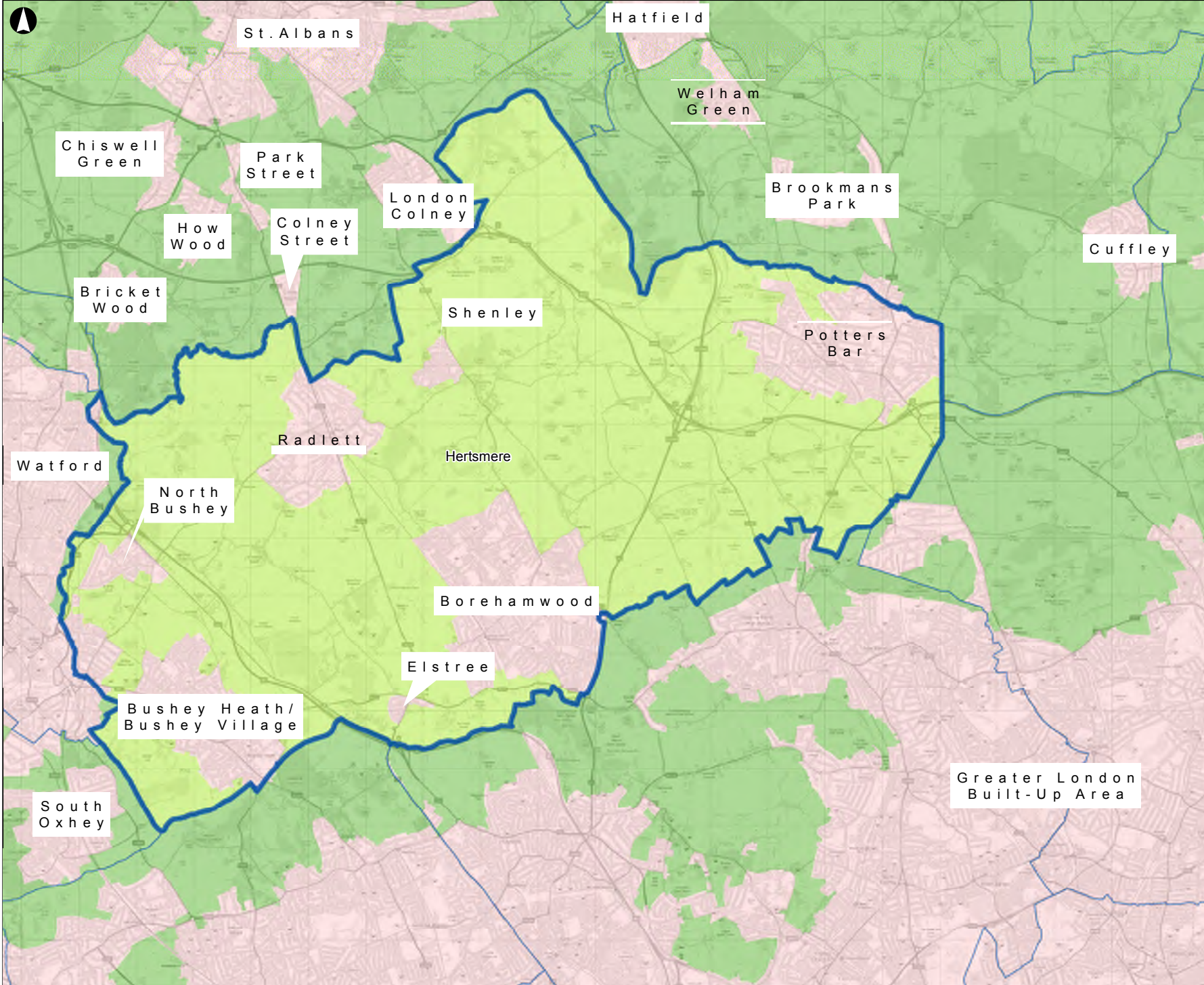
- ‘*Essential gaps*’, where development would significantly reduce the perceived or actual distance between settlements.
- ‘*Wider gaps*’, where limited development may be possible without coalescence between settlements.
- ‘*Less essential gaps*’, where development is likely to be possible without any risk of coalescence of settlements.

## Purpose 2 Assessment Criteria

The criteria used to assess the Green Belt Parcels against Purpose 2 are set out below.

Table 4.5 Purpose 2 Assessment Criteria

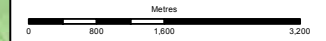
Purpose	Criteria	Score
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>	Prevents development that would result in merging of, or significant erosion of, gap(s) between neighbouring settlements, including ribbon development along transport corridors that link settlements.	5: An essential gap between non-Green Belt settlements, where development would significantly visually or physically reduce the perceived or actual distance between them.
		3: A wider gap between non-Green Belt settlements where there may be scope for some development, but where the overall openness and the scale of the gap is important to restricting merging.
		1: A less essential gap between non-Green Belt settlements, which is of sufficient scale and character that development is unlikely to cause merging of settlements.
		0: Green Belt Parcel does not provide a gap between any settlements and makes no discernable contribution to separation.
	<b>Score</b>	<b>xx/5</b>



- Legend**
- Settlement
  - Hertsmere Green Belt
  - Neighbouring Green Belt
  - Neighbouring District Boundary
  - Hertsmere District Boundary

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Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1)**

**Map 4.5 - Settlements considered in the assessment against Purpose 2 (To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another)**

Scale at A3  
**1:63,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Draft</b>
Drawing No <b>4.5</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>

### 4.3.3 Purpose 3

***Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.***

This purpose seeks to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, or a gradual advancement of urbanising influences through physical development or land use change. The assessment considers openness and the extent to which the Green Belt can be characterised as ‘*countryside*’, thus resisting encroachment from development. Openness refers to the extent to which Green Belt land could be considered open from an absence of built development rather than from a landscape character perspective, where openness might be characterised through topography and presence or otherwise of woodland and hedgerow cover.

Historic open land uses associated with the urban fringe and urban characteristics as well as the countryside exist in the Hertsmere Green Belt and include, but are not limited to: sports clubs, public utilities, motorways and their intersections, educational institutions, laboratories and research facilities, business parks, hotels, and areas of residential development. Some of these semi-urban uses have an impact on the ‘openness’ of the Green Belt as identified in the assessment.

#### Purpose 3 Assessment Criteria

The criteria used to assess the Parcels against Purpose 3 are set out below. Ordnance Survey base maps and aerial photography were reviewed in order to undertake the openness assessment.

The percentage of built form within a Green Belt Parcel is calculated using GIS tools based on the land area of features that are classified as manmade (constructed) within the Ordnance Survey MasterMap data, excluding roads and railway lines. The data includes buildings, some surfaced areas such as car parks, infrastructure such as sewerage treatment works, glasshouses and other miscellaneous structures.

The score attributed to a Parcel is initially determined on the basis of the percentage built form. Thresholds were informed by the pattern of development across the Borough and developed based on experience from previous studies and professional judgement. Scores are then considered further in light of qualitative assessments of character, undertaken through site visits and revised as judged appropriate. This assessment considers, in particular, the extent to which a Parcel might be reasonably identified as ‘*countryside*’ / ‘*rural*’ (in line with the NPPF). In order to differentiate between different areas, broad categorisation has been developed encompassing assessments of land use (including agricultural use), morphology, context, scale and links to the wider Green Belt:

- ‘*Strong unspoilt rural character*’ is defined as land with an absence of built development and characterised by rural land uses and landscapes, including agricultural land, forestry, woodland, shrubland/scrubland and open fields.
- ‘*Largely rural character*’ is defined as land with a general absence of built development, largely characterised by rural land uses and landscapes but with some other sporadic developments and man-made structures.

- ‘*Semi-urban character*’ is defined as land which begins on the edge of the fully built up area and contains a mix of urban and rural land uses before giving way to the wider countryside. Land uses might include publicly accessible natural green spaces and green corridors, country parks and local nature reserves, small-scale food production (e.g. market gardens) and waste management facilities, interspersed with built development more generally associated with urban areas (e.g. residential or commercial).
- ‘*Urban character*’ is defined as land which is predominantly characterised by urban land uses, including physical developments such as residential or commercial, or urban managed parks.

Table 4.6 Purpose 3 Assessment Criteria

Purpose	Criterion	Score
<b>Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	Protects the openness of the countryside and is least covered by development.	5: Contains less than 3% built form and possesses a strong unspoilt rural character.
		4: Contains less than 5% built form and/or possesses a strong unspoilt rural character.
		3: Contains less than 10% built form and/or possesses a largely rural character.
		2: Contains less than 15% built form and/or possesses a semi-urban character.
		1: Contains more than 15% built form and/or possesses an urban character.
		0: Contains more than 20% built form and possesses an urban character.
<b>Total score</b>		<b>xx/5</b>

### 4.3.4 Purpose 4

***Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.***

This purpose serves to protect the setting of historic settlements by retaining the surrounding open land or by retaining the landscape context for historic centres. As outlined in the advice note published by PAS, the assessment of this purpose relates to very few settlements in practice, due largely to the pattern of modern development that often envelopes historic towns today. Cambridge is a good example of a settlement where the setting of the historic centre is contextualised by rural features, where the views across the ‘backs’ retain a special status in planning terms.

In developing the methodology for this purpose, it was noted that a high level Green Belt Assessment prepared by Oxford City Council identified traits of the

surrounding countryside which contributed to the city's special character and historic setting. This relationship between the fringes of settlements and the surrounding Green Belts is a key factor in considering the contribution of a Parcel to this purpose.

This methodology has identified, through discussion with officers from Hertsmere Borough Council, the following geographical areas as being of relevance to this assessment in relation to Purpose 4:

- Bushey High Street Conservation Area, as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (2008); and
- Radlett (South) Conservation Area, as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (2012).

In the case of Bushey Village, it is considered that there is potential for a significant relationship between the historic core of this settlement (as defined by the Conservation Area Appraisals) and the adjoining Green Belt, whilst the Radlett (South) Appraisal notes the particular importance of this area in preserving the historic transition from the countryside to the centre to the north. Thus, both merit being defined as Historic Towns for the Purpose 4 assessment (Table 4.7, Map 4.6). Green Belt Parcels directly adjoining these historic cores were therefore subject to assessment against Purpose 4.

Whilst it is recognised that there are other historic villages with a clear relationship with the surrounding Green Belt, Purpose 4 relates to higher order settlements. Bushey Village forms part of the contiguous Tier 2 settlement of Bushey and is therefore relevant to Purpose 4.

Table 4.7 Historic Settlement Areas Considered in Purpose 4 Assessment

Hertsmere	Neighbouring Local Authorities
Bushey Village (High Street) Radlett (South)	N/A

## Purpose 4 Assessment Criteria

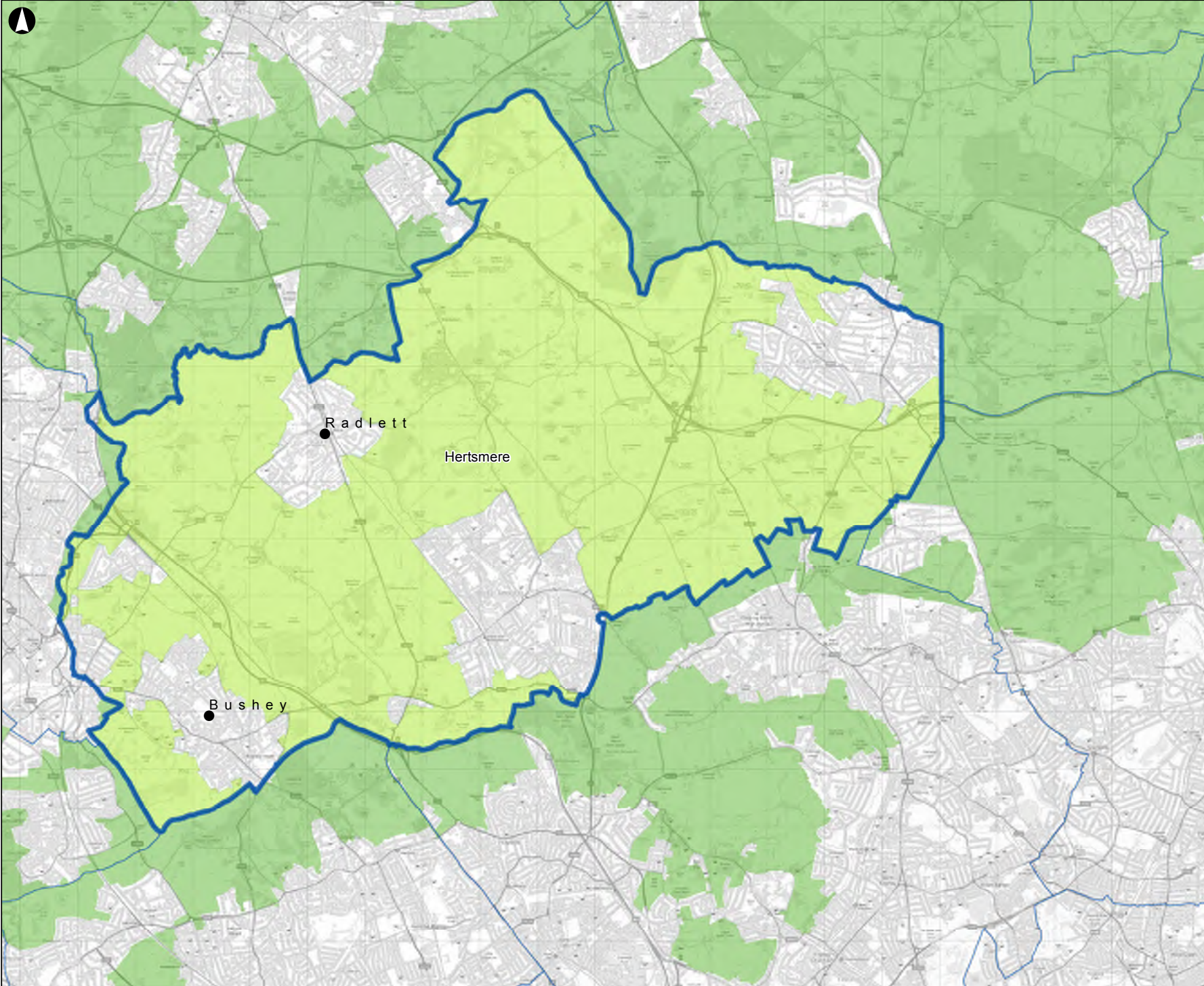
Two aspects are of particular importance with regard to assessment of Green Belt Parcels against Purpose 4:

- The role of the Parcel in providing immediate context for the historic settlement (along the boundary between the settlement and the Green Belt); and
- Contribution to views or vistas between the historic settlement and the surrounding countryside, looking both inwards and outwards where public viewpoints exist.

The relative importance of particular landforms or landscape features to the setting and special character of a historic town is adjudged using the Bushey High Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2008) and Radlett (South) Conservation Area Appraisal (2012). Potential vistas were identified using Ordnance Survey contour maps and sense checked on site visits.

Table 4.8 Purpose 4 Assessment Criteria

Purpose	Criterion	Score
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	Protects land which provides immediate and wider context for a historic settlement, including views and vistas between the settlement and the surrounding countryside.	5: Green Belt Parcel plays an important role in maintaining the unique setting of a historic settlement by providing unspoilt vistas of surrounding countryside from within the settlement or unbroken vistas into the settlement from afar, and protects open land which has a strong connection with the historic core, contributing to its immediate historic setting.
		3: Green Belt Parcel plays an important role in maintaining the unique setting of a historic settlement by providing unspoilt vistas of surrounding countryside from within the settlement or unbroken vistas into the settlement from afar, or protects open land which has a strong connection with the historic core, contributing to its immediate historic setting.
		1: Green Belt Parcel makes limited contribution to the broader setting of a historic town by providing a countryside setting for a historic core which is inward facing, and has a weak relationship with the surrounding countryside.
		0: Green Belt Parcel does not abut an identified historic settlement core.
		<b>Total score</b>



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**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment  
 (Stage 1)**

**Map 4.6 - Historic Towns considered  
 in the assessments against Purpose 4  
 (To preserve the setting and special  
 character of historic towns)**

Scale at A3  
**1:63,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Draft</b>
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Drawing No <b>4.6</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>
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### 4.3.5 Purpose 5

***Purpose 5: To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.***

Purpose 5 focuses on assisting urban regeneration through the recycling of derelict and other urban land. As outlined in Chapter 2, the advice note issued by PAS suggests that the amount of land within urban areas that could be developed will already have been factored in before identifying Green Belt land. Therefore, assessment of Green Belt against this purpose will not enable a distinction between Green Belt Parcels as all Green Belt achieves the purpose to the same extent.

Furthermore, during engagement with Hertsmere Borough Council, it was confirmed that there are no planned urban regeneration schemes that were being inhibited by Green Belt designations.

As a result, Purpose 5 is excluded from the Assessment.

### 4.3.6 Pro-Forma

The pro-forma template for the Green Belt Parcel assessment is provided in Appendix B.

### 4.3.7 Recommendations

Following completion of the Green Belt Parcel assessments, the criterion scores for Purposes 1-4 were collated and tabulated across all of the Parcels, to highlight those areas meeting the purposes to a lesser or greater extent. Parcels which meet the Green Belt purposes strongly have been identified and the recommendation made to the Council that these areas may be less preferable for release in their entirety.

Weaker performing Parcels, as well as any identified smaller scale sub-areas within Parcels which might be less sensitive and thus able to accommodate change, are identified and listed with a view to possible further detailed assessment beyond this Assessment. Parcels which perform weakly against NPPF Green Belt purposes will not automatically be considered as suitable for release from the Green Belt. Such Parcels will also have to demonstrate 'exceptional circumstances' for release (NPPF paragraph 83), while taking into account other sustainability and land-use considerations (NPPF paragraph 85).

The graduated, strength-based scoring approach to Parcels allows for a more flexible approach to the Stage 2 Assessment. For example, Parcels considered to be strongly performing against NPPF Green Belt Purposes may still be considered at Stage 2 if 'exceptional circumstances' are demonstrated and sustainability criteria is met.

It is understood that the outcome and recommendations from the Assessment will form part of the Council's suite of evidence-based studies to inform an early Local Plan review.

## 5 Key Findings

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### 5.1 Green Belt Parcels for Assessment

A total of 52 Green Belt Parcels were identified for assessment (see Map 4.3) using the methodology described in Section 4.2. Green Belt Parcels were defined using permanent and durable features including motorways, roads, railway lines, and rivers. Following consultation with stakeholders and site visits, parcel boundaries were reviewed and revised if necessary.

The completed pro-formas for each Green Belt Parcel can be found in the Annex Report. Appendix C sets out the scores for each Green Belt Parcel against the NPPF Purposes 1-4. The scoring is illustrated in Maps 5.1 – 5.4, and overall scores in Map 5.5.

### 5.2 Purpose 1 Assessment

***Purpose 1: To check unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.***

The overall findings of the Purpose 1 assessment are provided spatially in Map 5.1.

33 of the 52 Green Belt Parcels (63%) do not lie at the edge of an identified large built-up area and do not directly prevent sprawl, thus failing to meet Purpose 1. Spatially, these Parcels are located in the north/north-east and north-west of the Borough.

All of those Parcels abutting the edge of settlements play a role in preventing the sprawl of 'large built-up areas' (in reference to specific policy set out in NPPF Paragraph 80, and defined for the purposes of this assessment in Table 4.2 of this report).

17 Green Belt Parcels (33%) are connected to a single large built-up area and score 3 or 3+. This proportion reflects the presence of large built-up areas along much of the south of the Hertsmere Green Belt where it borders the large built-up areas of Greater London and Borehamwood and in the west where the Hertsmere Green Belt borders Watford large-built-up area.

Of these 17, over half (10) score 3+ and therefore play a heightened role in preventing sprawl by providing a barrier where the boundary of the Green Belt and the large built-up area is not robust, durable or readily recognisable.

In two instances Green Belt Parcels (Parcels 1 and 7) make a very positive contribution to Purpose 1, scoring 5+ and preventing the outward sprawl of Greater London and Watford into open land.

## 5.3 Purpose 2 Assessment

***Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.***

The overall findings of the Purpose 2 assessment are provided spatially in Map 5.2.

Just four of the 52 Green Belt Parcels (8%) fail to meet Purpose 2 and make no discernable contribution to the separation of settlements, generally as a result of their small scale (Parcels 4, 25, 37 and 39) and enclosure within a settlement (Parcel 4).

Seven Green Belt Parcels (13%) meet Purpose 2 only weakly. These parcels form part or the entirety of less essential gaps between non-Green Belt settlements, both in Hertsmere and in neighbouring local authority areas, and play little or no role in maintaining gaps between non-Green Belt settlements. These gaps tend to be large in scale (Parcels 12, 34, 35, 36, 40, 48 and 49) or configured in such a way that makes them less important to preventing the coalescence of settlements (for example the presence of the M1 Motorway in the cases of Parcels 12 and 34 and the M25 Motorway in relation to Parcels 34 and 49).

Nearly half of the Green Belt Parcels, 25 out of 52 (48%), meet Purpose 2 moderately with a score of 3. This relatively substantial score reflects the borough's dispersed settlement pattern and the important role played by the Green Belt in maintaining this.

16 Green Belt Parcels (31%) meet Purpose 2 strongly (scoring 5) by forming the whole of, or a substantial part of, essential gaps between non-Green Belt settlements. These gaps tend to be small in scale and particularly sensitive to change; development could result in the physical coalescence of non-Green Belt settlements. Furthermore, in a number of cases, ribbon development or physical characteristics such as topography perceptually reduce the scale of gaps (for example in Parcels 1, 3, 6, 8, 15, 28 and 43), thus further increasing the importance of the Green Belt in preventing coalescence.

The majority of Green Belt Parcels meeting Purpose 2 strongly are clustered in the south and west of the Borough, reflecting the dense settlement pattern and strong influence of the Borehamwood, Greater London and Watford urban areas on the Green Belt in these locations.

## 5.4 Purpose 3 Assessment

***Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.***

The overall findings of the Purpose 3 assessment are provided spatially in Map 5.3.

All but one of the 52 Green Belt Parcels (Parcel 4) meet this purpose to a greater or lesser extent. Parcel 4 does not meet Purpose 4 at all; the whole parcel consisting of a hospital site within an urban area and scoring 0.

Six of the 52 Green Belt Parcels (12%) meet Purpose 3 weakly, scoring 2. A further one parcel (Parcel 43) was deemed to meet Purpose 3 very weakly, scoring

1. Parcels scoring poorly or very poorly against Purpose 3 are distributed throughout the Hertsmere Green Belt with concentrations around the fringes of Greater London, Borehamwood and Watford and at infrastructure intersections throughout the Borough. These Green Belt Parcels have an urban or semi-urban character with higher levels of built form, but continue to maintain the openness of some areas of land.

Nearly half of the Green Belt parcels, 22 of 52 (42%) meet Purpose 3 moderately, scoring 3. These areas have been subjected to some development but still demonstrate a largely rural character, thus the Green Belt continues to prevent encroachment into the countryside.

22 of 52 Green Belt Parcels (42%) meet Purpose 3 relatively strongly or strongly, scoring 4 or 5. The relatively high proportion of Green Belt Parcels which are judged to be important for preventing encroachment reflects the significant swathes of unspoilt countryside, much of which has been subject to little or no physical development aside from small rural villages or agricultural structures. Particularly in the north and east of the Borough, urban settlements transition straight into open countryside, and the Green Belt plays an important role in ensuring this openness and the distinctive character of the countryside is maintained.

## 5.5 Purpose 4 Assessment

***Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.***

The overall findings of the Purpose 4 Assessment are provided spatially in Map 5.4.

While the Green Belt undoubtedly maintains the setting of a number of historic Hertsmere settlements, national policy is specific in its reference to ‘historic towns’ for this assessment. The assessment focussed on areas of Green Belt which directly abut Bushey High Street Conservation Area and Radlett (South) Conservation Area, both of which were identified through discussions with Hertsmere Borough Council. As such, the majority of Green Belt Parcels (48 of 52 (92%)) do not meet Purpose 4.

Three Green Belt Parcels (6%) are deemed to make only a limited contribution to this purpose, meeting it weakly (scoring 1). These Parcels are deemed to contribute to the broad contextual setting of an historic core (Bushey Village in the case of Parcel 1 and Radlett (South) in relation to Parcels 13 and 28) by maintaining open land or countryside, but have little direct interface with the historic core itself. In the case of Parcel 13 there is a limited sense of convergence with the parcel and the Radlett (South) Conservation Area with dense foliage physically and visually separating the historic core from the parcel.

One Green Belt Parcel (2%) is judged to meet Purpose 4 moderately, scoring 3. The Parcel (Parcel 19) provides immediate rural context for the historic settlement. The historic field pattern within the Parcel is also influenced by the adjoining Radlett (South) Conservation Area.

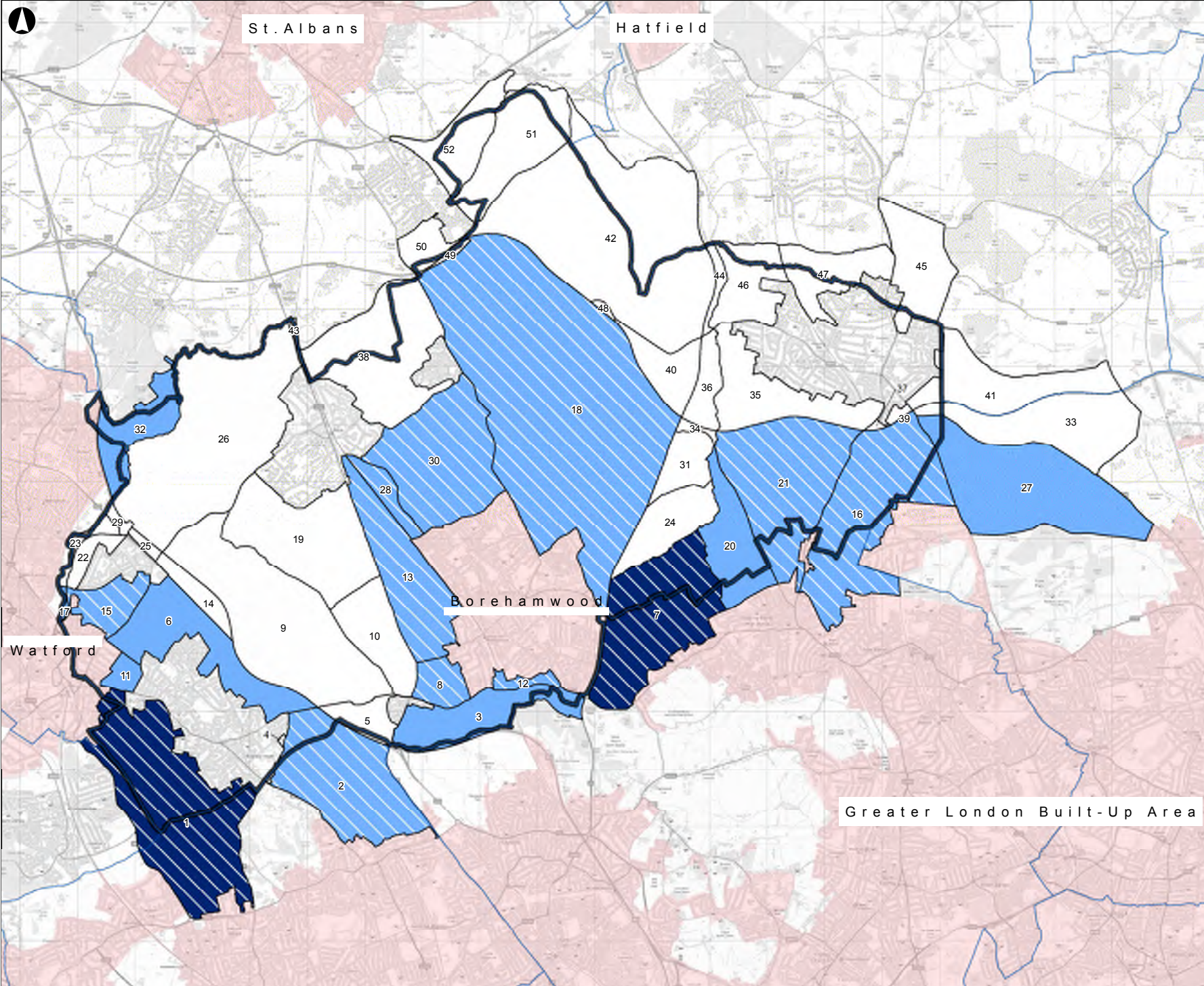
No Green Belt Parcels are judged to meet Purpose 4 strongly.

## 5.6 Overall Summary

All but one of the 52 Green Belt Parcels (Parcel 4) meet one or more of the NPPF purposes to varying degrees. The individual purpose scores are illustrated graphically in Map 5.5.

In order to summarise the outcomes from the assessment, the Green Belt Parcels have been categorised as follows:

- 35 Green Belt Parcels are judged to be strongly scoring Green Belt, meeting at least one of the purposes strongly (4 or 5);
- 14 Green Belt Parcels are judged to be moderately scoring Green Belt, with a moderate score (3) against at least one purpose and failing to score strongly against any purpose (4 or 5);
- Two Green Belt Parcels are judged to be weakly scoring Green Belt, failing to meet or weakly meeting all purposes (scoring 1 or 2);
- One Green Belt Parcel does not meet any Green Belt purpose, scoring 0 against all purposes.



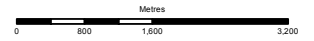
**Legend**

**Purpose 1b Scores**

- 0
- 1
- 1+
- 3
- 3+
- 5
- 5+
- Large Built-Up Area
- Green Belt Parcel
- Neighbouring District Boundary
- Hertsme District Boundary

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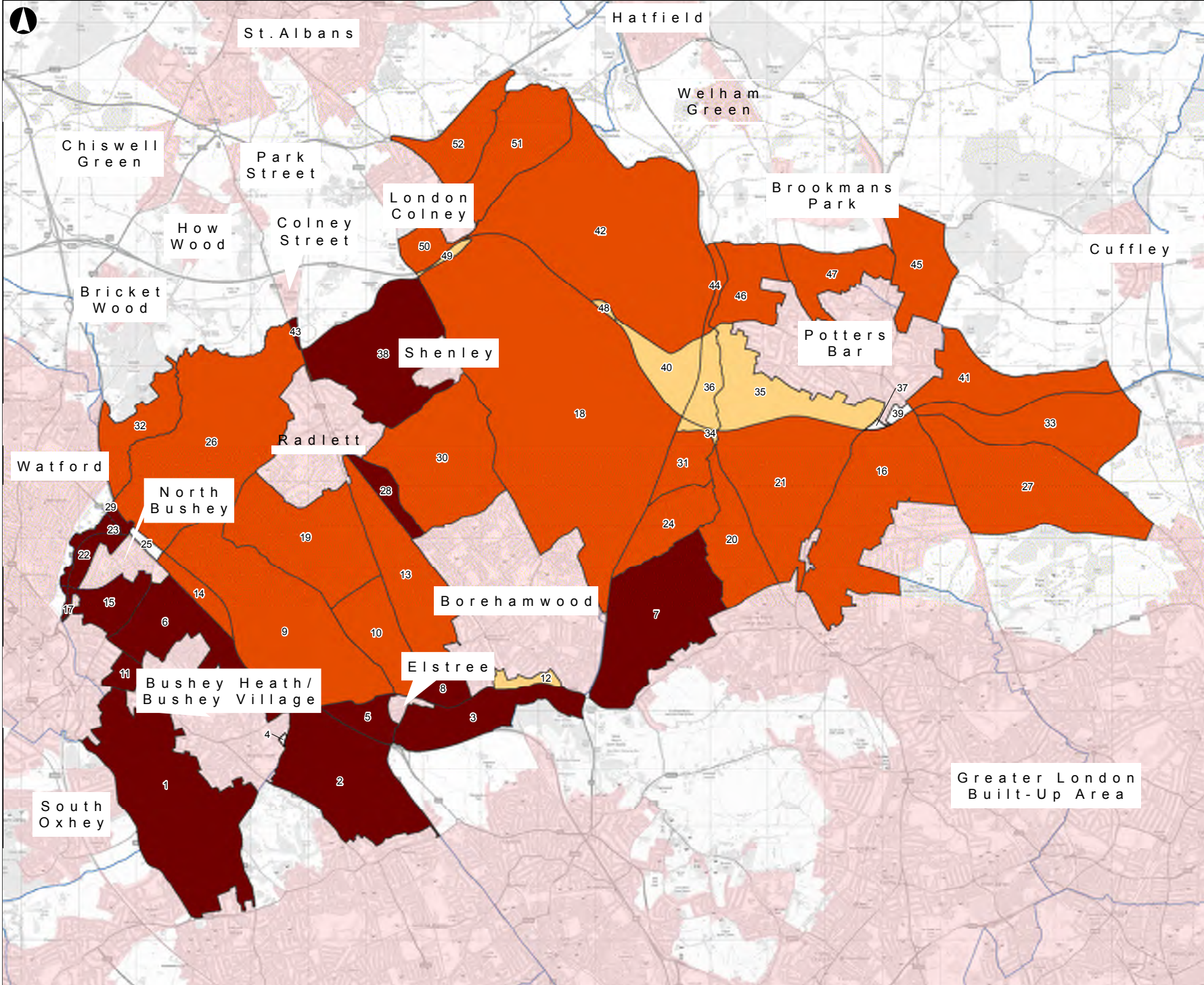
Job Title  
**Hertsme Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1)**

**Map 5.1 - Purpose 1 assessment scores (To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas)**

Scale at A3  
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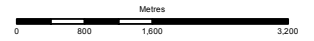
**Legend**

**Purpose 2 Score**

- 0
- 1
- 3
- 5
- Settlement
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- Green Belt Parcel
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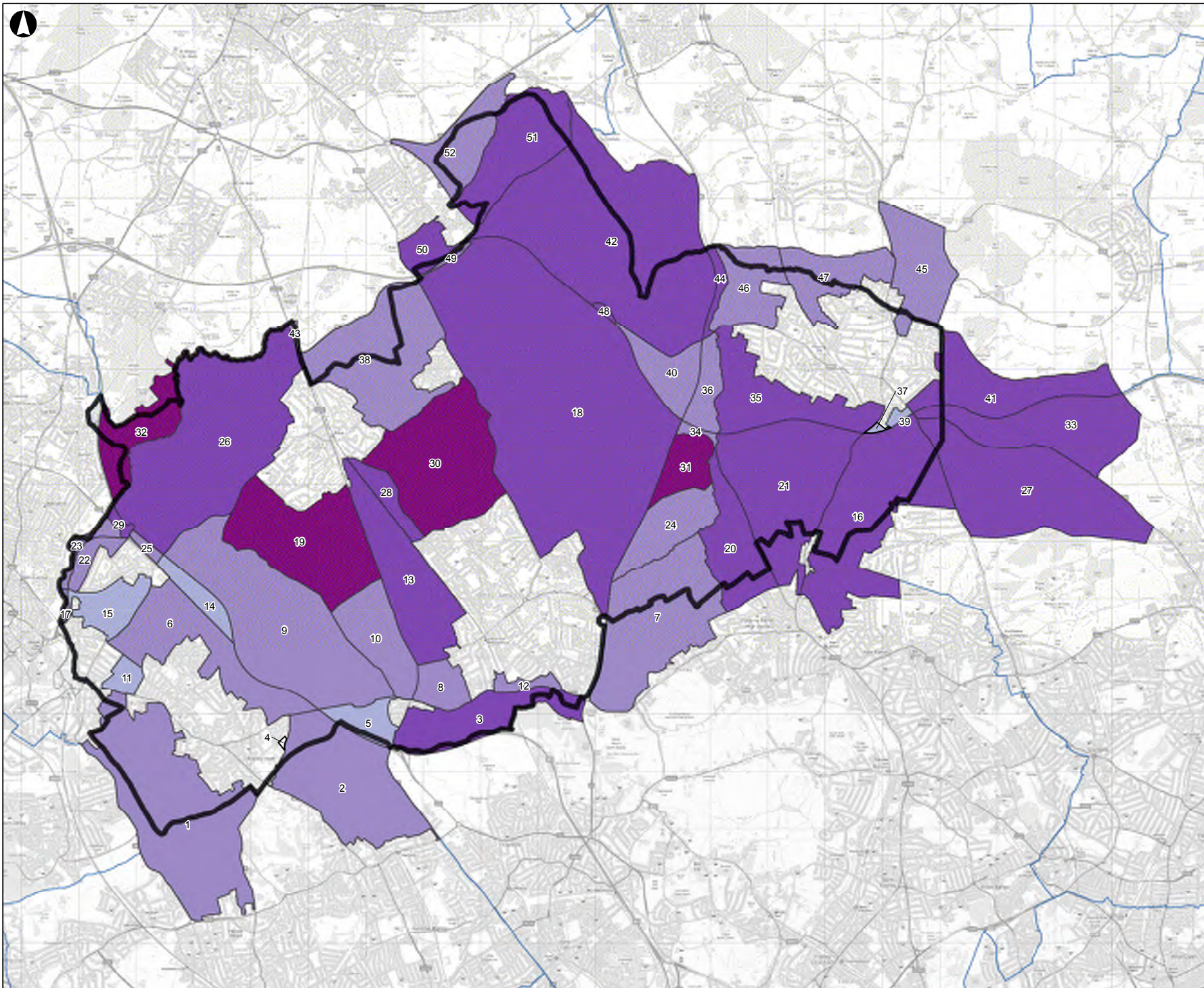
Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1)**

**Map 5.2 - Purpose 2 assessment scores (To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another)**

Scale at A3  
**1:63,000**

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Drawing No <b>5.2</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>
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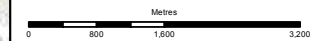
**Legend**

**Purpose 3 Score**

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Green Belt Parcel
- Neighbouring District Boundary
- Hertsmere District Boundary

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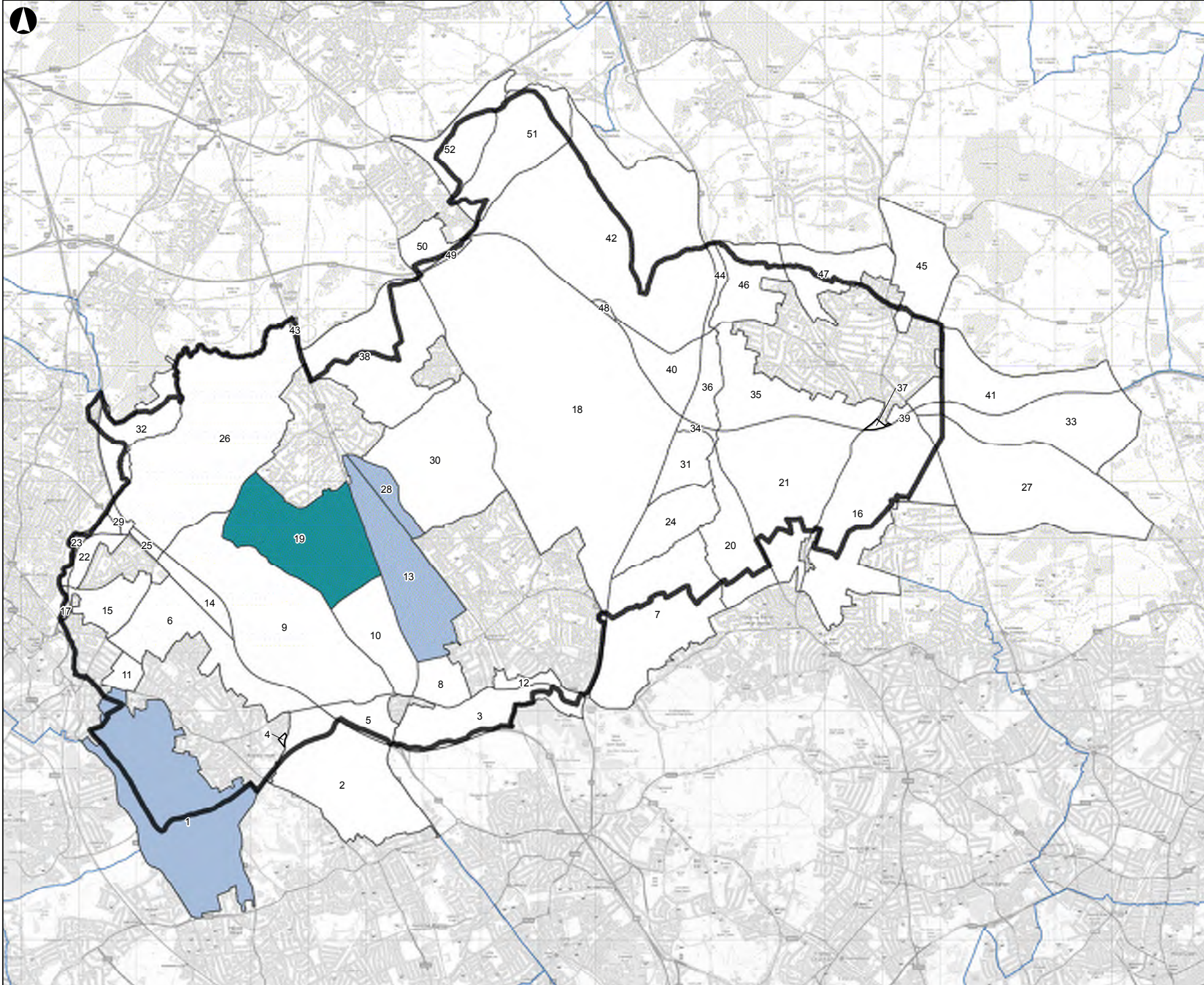
Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment  
(Stage 1)**

**Map 5.3 - Purpose 3 assessment scores  
(To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment)**

Scale at A3  
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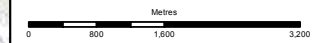
**Legend**

**Purpose 4 Scores**

- 0
- 1
- 3
- Green Belt Parcel
- Neighbouring District Boundary
- Hertsmeire District Boundary

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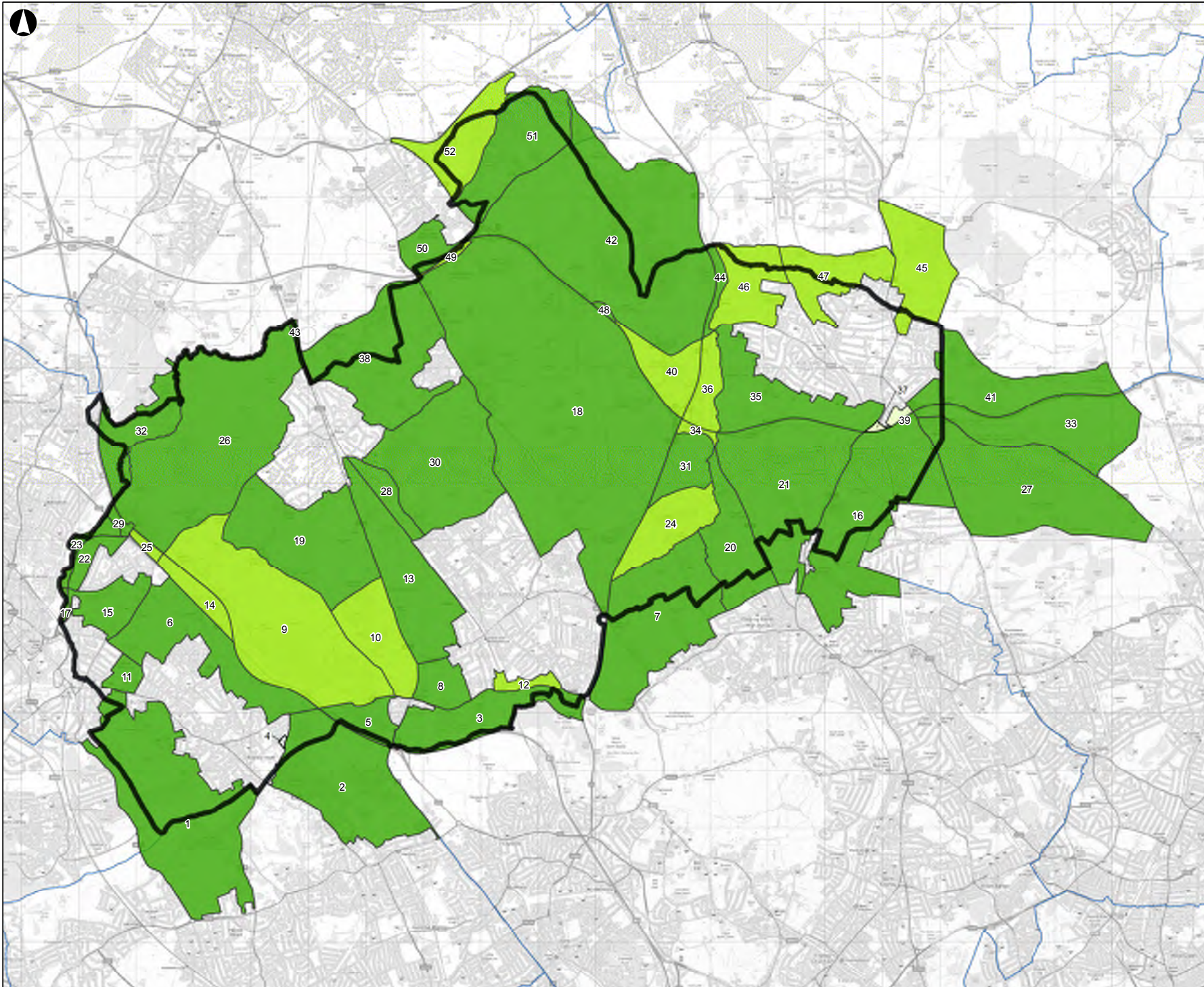
Job Title  
**Hertsmeire Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1)**

**Map 5.4 - Purpose 4 assessment scores (To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns)**

Scale at A3  
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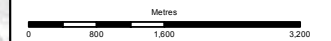
**Legend**

**Overall Score**

- Does not meet Green Belt purposes
- Weak
- Moderate
- Strong
- Green Belt Parcel
- Neighbouring District Boundary
- Hertsmere District Boundary

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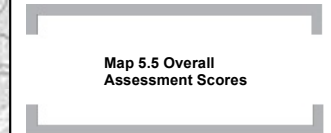


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**1:63,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Issue</b>
Drawing No <b>5.5</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>

## 6 Recommendations

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### 6.1 Summary

Following the assessments of the Green Belt Parcels against the NPPF purposes, a series of recommendations have been identified which Hertsmere Borough Council may wish to take forward in Part 2, including consideration of whether ‘exceptional circumstances’ exist to justify any alterations to the Green Belt boundary. It should be noted that all recommendations were made based on the Green Belt boundaries adopted as of June 2016.

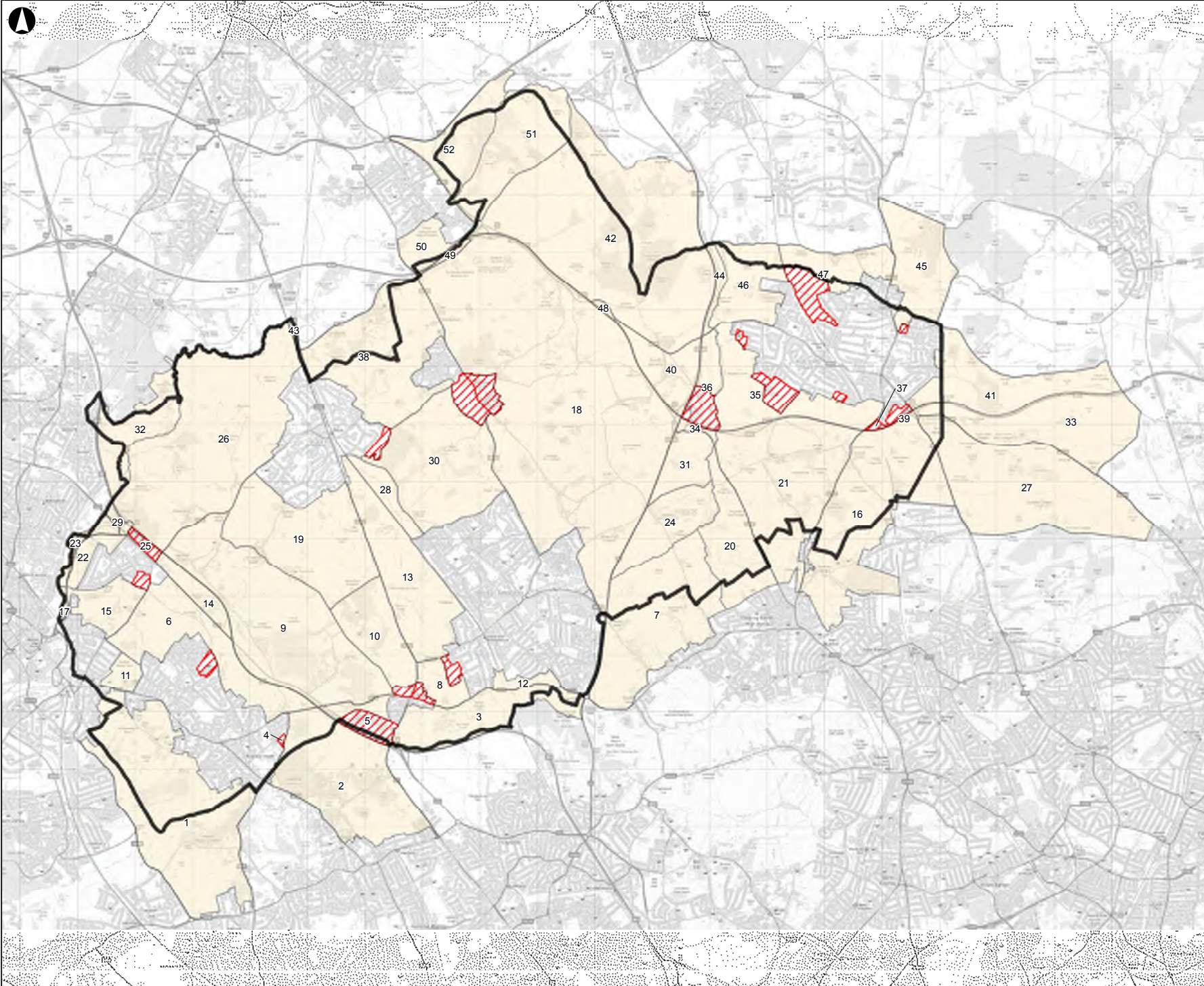
While it is clear that the majority of the Green Belt in Hertsmere is performing an important role in terms of the NPPF purposes, a number of areas have been identified which may warrant further consideration. The areas for further consideration can be broadly categorised as follows:

1. Parcels which do not meet any NPPF purpose (Parcel 4) and Parcels scoring weakly overall against all NPPF purposes (Parcels 37 and 39) which could be considered further by Hertsmere Borough Council as part of their Stage 2 work.
2. Medium or strongly scoring Parcels where there is clear scope for sub-division to identify weakly performing sub-areas, including the presence of boundary features which have the potential to be permanent and recognisable, which could be afforded further consideration in accordance with the above provisions.




With regard to recommendation category 2, sub-areas recommended for further consideration are identified in line with the principles for identifying boundaries of Green Belt Parcels. Boundaries of recommended sub-areas follow man-made and natural features within existing parcels which, based on initial site visits and further desk-based work have the potential to be permanent. It is important to note that sub-area boundaries are advisory only at this stage, and would require further refinement through a more detailed Stage 2 Assessment. Sub-areas have been identified for further consideration based on their performance against NPPF purposes only, rather than their suitability for development or release in terms of sustainability, infrastructure and wider planning considerations, including their existing land use.

A summary of the key findings and recommendations for each Parcel is provided in Appendix C. The recommended areas are shown in Map 6.1, with further detail being provided in sections 6.2 and 6.3 below. It is anticipated that parcels and parcel sub-areas will be considered in terms of potential land for housing, employment and infrastructure as part of the Stage 2 Assessment, but it should be noted that there are a wider range of factors that will be taken into account by the Council in determining locations for future development.

Furthermore, these recommendations do not preclude Hertsmere Borough Council undertaking further assessment of areas of the Green Belt falling outside categories 1 and 2 above.



**Legend**

-  Green Belt Areas for Consideration in Stage 2
-  Areas Not for Consideration in Stage 2
-  Hertsmere District Boundary

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P1	30-11-16	CG	ML	AB
Issue	Date	By	Chkd	Appd



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Client  
**Hertsmere District Council**

Job Title  
**Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment  
 (Stage 1)**

**Map 6.1 Areas Recommended  
 for Further Consideration**

Scale at A3  
**1:63,000**

Job No <b>249570-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Draft</b>
Drawing No <b>6.1</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>

## 6.2 Weakly Performing Green Belt Parcels

The following Green Belt Parcels have been identified as weakly performing and warrant further consideration in future work.

### 6.2.1 Green Belt Parcel 4



Green Belt Parcel 4, located within Bushey Heath / Bushey Village, fails to meet Purposes 1, 2, 3 or 4. The entire parcel is a hospital site with approximately 49% built-form coverage. The parcel neither prevents sprawl from an identified large built-up area nor coalescence between settlements. It does not abut an identified historic core, thus failing to meet Purpose 4.

The parcel is isolated from the wider Green Belt and is judged as playing no role in maintaining its integrity.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 4 does not meet any of the NPPF purposes and the entire parcel could be considered further. [It is noted that this site is to be removed from the Green Belt through in Policy 23 (Green Belt Boundary) of the SADM]

## 6.2.2 Green Belt Parcel 37



Green Belt Parcel 37 is located to the south of Potters Bar (which is not defined as a large built-up area for the purposes of this Study based on the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy – see section 4.3.1) immediately adjacent to the M25. The Parcel fails to meet Purposes 1, 2 and 4 – it is not at the edge of a defined large built-up area (Purpose 1) or historic town (Purpose 4), and makes little discernable contribution to the gap between Potters Bar and Greater London (Hadley Wood). With regard to Purpose 3, while only 5% of the Parcel is covered by built form (commercial premises), it is enclosed by large infrastructure and the urban edge of Potters Bar, which have an urbanising influence. The Parcel has little connection with the wider Green Belt.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 37 scores weakly against the NPPF purposes and could be considered further.

### 6.2.3 Green Belt Parcel 39



Green Belt Parcel 39 is located to the south of Potters Bar (which is not defined as a large built-up area for the purposes of this Study based on the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy – see section 4.3.1) immediately adjacent to the M25. The Parcel fails to meet Purposes 1, 2 and 4 – it is not at the edge of a defined large built-up area (Purpose 1) or historic town (Purpose 4), and makes little discernable contribution to the gap between Potters Bar and Greater London (Hadley Wood). With regard to Purpose 3, while only 1% of the Parcel is covered by built form, it is enclosed by large infrastructure and the urban edge of Potters Bar, which have an urbanising influence. The Parcel has little connection with the wider Green Belt.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 39 scores weakly against the NPPF purposes and could be considered further.

## 6.3 Areas for Potential Sub-Division

The following Green Belt Parcels should be considered for sub-division into smaller areas that warrant further consideration in future work.

### 6.3.1 Green Belt Parcel 5 (Centennial Park)



Green Belt Parcel 5 meets Purpose 2 strongly, Purpose 3 weakly and fails to meet Purposes 1 and 4. The Parcel forms the part essential gap between Bushey Heath / Bushey Village and Elstree which is of a small scale. The Parcel's character varies throughout, with a very rural feel in the north and periphery and a highly urbanised character at the business park in the south.

While the Parcel as a whole plays an important role in preventing the merging of Bushey Heath / Bushey Village and Elstree, the area covered by Centennial Park in the south is entirely urban in character, lessening its role in maintaining the openness of the countryside. The sub-area is relatively strongly bounded by dense planted features as well as A-roads to the east and south. Considered alone, the sub-area would make limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 5 performs strongly against the Green Belt purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The area covered by the Centennial Park, which may score less strongly, could be considered further.



### 6.3.2 Green Belt Parcel 6 (South of Little Bushey Lane)



Green Belt Parcel 6 is located to the north and east of Bushey Heath / Bushey Village. The Parcel meets Purpose 1 and 3 moderately, meets Purpose 2 strongly, and does not meet Purpose 4. The Parcel is connected to the large built-up area of Watford and forms part of the essential gap between Watford and Bushey Heath / Bushey Village and part of the essential gaps between these settlements and North Bushey and Elstree. The Parcel is predominantly rural in character with more urbanising influences in the west and east.

A small area to the south of Little Bushey Lane at Bushey Meads School is relatively self-contained within the Parcel. The sub-area is almost entirely enveloped by development, separated from the wider countryside by dense planted buffers along Little Bushey Lane, and has a more urban character thus playing a more limited role in relation to Purpose 3. Considered alone, it plays a very limited role in preventing the merging of settlements.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 6 performs strongly against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The area to the south of Little Bushey Lane, which may score less strongly, should be considered further.

### 6.3.3 Green Belt Parcel 8 ('Elstree Village'; east of Elstree Hill North (A5183))



Green Belt Parcel 8 is located to the north-east of Elstree and south-west of Borehamwood.<sup>18</sup> The Parcel scores strongly against Purpose 2, moderately against Purposes 1 and 3, and does not score against Purpose 4. As a whole, the Parcel is connected to the large built-up area of Borehamwood preventing its outward sprawl into open land (Purpose 1) and plays an important role in preventing the coalescence of Borehamwood and Elstree (Purpose 2). Overall, the Parcel has a largely rural feel with limited built form (Purpose 3). The Parcel is not located at the edge of an identified historic settlement (Purpose 4).

An area in the south-west of the Parcel, comprising the area of Elstree washed-over by the Green Belt, may score less strongly if considered separately. The sub-

<sup>18</sup> For the purposes of this Study and to ensure consistency with the Local Plan, this includes the built-up area to the west of Elstree and Borehamwood railway station. Although the names 'Elstree' and 'Borehamwood' can be used interchangeably locally, this Study refers to the entire area as 'Borehamwood'. This also distinguishes it from the settlement defined in the settlement hierarchy as 'Elstree', a separate settlement which is sometimes referred to locally as 'Elstree Village'.

area is covered by a significant level of built form and makes little contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. The sub-area (together with the identified sub-area in Green Belt Parcel 10) should be considered further to ensure consistency with the non-Green Belt area to the south of the A411.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 8 scores strongly against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The washed-over area of Elstree to the east of Elstree North Hill (A5193), which may score less strongly, should be considered further (together with the identified sub-area in Green Belt Parcel 10).

### 6.3.4 Green Belt Parcel 10 ('Elstree Village'; west of Elstree Hill North (A5183))



Green Belt Parcel 10 is located to the north of Elstree.<sup>19</sup> The Parcel scores moderately against Purpose 2 and 3, and does not score against Purpose 1 and 4. The Parcel forms part of the wider gap between Elstree, Borehamwood, Radlett

<sup>19</sup> Comprising that part outside of the Green Belt sometimes referred to locally as 'Elstree Village'.

and Bushey Heath / Bushey Village, however the scale of the gap is such that there is little risk of these settlements coalescing. As a whole, the Parcel has a largely rural character. The Parcel is not adjacent to a large built-up area or historic settlement.

The very south of the parcel at the edge of Elstree, south of the well-established planted buffer, makes a very limited contribution to preventing encroachment as it has been subject to various built developments. Additionally, it is of a small scale and forms only a small, less essential part of the wider gap to Radlett. The sub-area (together with the identified sub-area in Green Belt Parcel 8) should be considered further to ensure consistency with the non-Green Belt area to the south of the A411.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 10 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The washed-over area of Elstree to the west of Elstree North Hill (A5193), which may score less strongly, should be considered further (together with the identified sub-area in Green Belt Parcel 8).

### 6.3.5 Green Belt Parcel 8 (Land east of Waste Recycling Centre)



Green Belt Parcel 8 is located to the north-east of Elstree and south-west of Borehamwood.<sup>20</sup> The Parcel scores strongly against Purpose 2, moderately against Purposes 1 and 3, and does not score against Purpose 4. As a whole, the Parcel is connected to the large built-up area of Borehamwood preventing its outward sprawl into open land (Purpose 1) and plays an important role in preventing the coalescence of Borehamwood and Elstree (Purpose 2). Overall, the Parcel has a largely rural feel with limited built form (Purpose 3). The Parcel is not located at the edge of an identified historic settlement (Purpose 4).

A sub-area in the north-east of the Parcel, to the east of the waste recycling centre and adjacent to the edge of Borehamwood, has been identified that may score more weakly against the NPPF purpose. This area is physically and visually more

<sup>20</sup> For the purposes of this Study and to ensure consistency with the Local Plan, this includes the built-up area to the west of Elstree and Borehamwood railway station. Although the names 'Elstree' and 'Borehamwood' can be used interchangeably locally, this Study refers to the entire area as 'Borehamwood'. This also distinguishes it from the settlement defined in the settlement hierarchy as 'Elstree', a separate settlement which is sometimes referred to locally as 'Elstree Village'.

aligned with the edge of Borehamwood, with limited connections to the wider countryside. As the recycling centre forms a buffer to the west, it plays a limited role in terms of Purpose 2 and, as a result of its small scale and limited relationship with the wider countryside, would also score less strongly against Purposes 1 and 3.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 8 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The north-east of the Parcel, which may score less strongly, should be considered further.

### 6.3.6 Green Belt Parcel 15 (North of Bushey Mill Lane)



Green Belt Parcel 15 is located to the south of North Bushey and north/east of Watford. The Parcel score strongly against the NPPF purposes. In particular, the Parcel is important in protecting the gap between North Bushey and Watford which is very narrow in scale physically and already compromised by ribbon development along Aldenham Road in the south-east of the Parcel. The Parcel also scores moderately against Purpose 1 (contributing to the prevention of sprawl from Watford) and weakly against Purpose 3. The Parcel is not located adjacent to an identified historic settlement.

A small area in the north-east, north of Bushey Mill Lane, is less important for preventing coalescence. This area is physically and visually severed from the wider countryside and has been subject to substantial encroachment in the form of the David Lloyd sports centre. It is recommended that this sub-area is considered further.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 15 scores strongly against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The north-east of the Parcel, which may score less strongly, should be considered further.

### 6.3.7 Green Belt Parcels 18/30 (Shenley Village)



Green Belt Parcels 18 and 30, located to the south and east of Shenley, both score strongly against the NPPF purposes. Both Parcels meet Purposes 1 and 2 moderately (playing a role in the prevention of sprawl from Borehamwood and maintaining the gaps between Borehamwood, Radlett, London Colney, Potters Bar and Greater London (Chipping Barnet), and Purpose 3 strongly. Neither Parcel scores against Purpose 4.

There is scope for sub-division regarding the sections of the Parcels at Shenley Village. This combined sub-area is more densely developed, plays a limited role

in terms of preventing encroachment into the countryside (due to the density of the existing built form), and is more visually connected to the settlement edge with a more limited relationship with the wider countryside. To ensure consistency with the area of the village to the north of Radlett Lane, this sub-area should be considered further.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcels 18 and 30 score strongly against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The sub-area to the south of Shenley, which may score less strongly, should be considered further.

### 6.3.8 Green Belt Parcel 25



Green Belt Parcel 25, located to the north-east of North Bushey, scores moderately against the NPPF purposes. The Parcel scores moderately against Purpose 3 – despite having a very low coverage of built form, the Parcel is small in scale, has limited connections to the wider countryside, and is subject to urbanising influences such as large transport infrastructure. The Parcel does not score against Purpose 1, 2 or 4.

As there is no scope for sub-division of the Parcel, it is recommended that, exceptionally, the whole Parcel is considered further. It is completely



disconnected from the wider countryside and the sense of rurality is substantially diminished by road infrastructure on all sides. It plays very little role in terms of the wider strategic Green Belt.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 25 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes. While there is no scope for sub-division, it is recommended that, exceptionally, the whole Parcel should be considered further.

### 6.3.9 Green Belt Parcel 30 (Land adjoining Radlett)



Green Belt Parcel 30, located to the south of Shenley and Radlett, and to the north of Borehamwood, scores strongly against the NPPF purposes. The Parcel scores strongly against Purpose 3 due to its low coverage of built form and strong rural character, and moderately against Purpose 1 and 2, preventing sprawl from the large built-up area of Borehamwood and forming part of the gaps between Borehamwood, Radlett and Shenley. The Parcel is not located at the edge of the historic part of Radlett and therefore does not score against Purpose 4.

There is however scope for sub-division in the north-west of the parcel adjoining Radlett. This area, bounded by dense wooded to the east and south, the edge of Radlett to the west and Shenley Road to the north, is relatively small in scale and

makes only a limited contribution to the gap between Radlett and Shenley (Purpose 2). Furthermore, it is visually more connected to the settlement edge and has a limited relationship with the wider countryside to the east.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 30 scores strongly against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The north-west of the Parcel, adjacent to Radlett, which may score less strongly, should be considered further.

### 6.3.10 Green Belt Parcel 35 (Sunny Bank School; Dame Alice Owen's School and surrounding area; Wroxham School)



Green Belt Parcel 35 – recommended sub-areas: Sunny Bank School (left); Dame Alice Owen's School and surrounding area (centre); Wroxham School (right).

Green Belt Parcel 35 is located to the south/west of Potters Bar (which is not defined as a large built-up area for the purposes of this Study based on the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy – see section 4.3.1). As a whole, the Parcel scores strongly against the NPPF purposes, primarily against Purpose 3 due to the Parcel's low coverage of built form and its unspoilt rural character. The Parcel scores weakly against Purpose 2, forming a small part of the less essential gap between Potters Bar and Greater London (Chipping Barnet and Hadley Wood). The Parcel does not score against Purposes 1 and 4.

There are a number of identified sub-areas at the edge of Potters Bar which would score less strongly if considered alone, including:

- Wroxham School and playing field (which has an urban character and is disconnected from the wider countryside);
- Dame Alice Owen's School and surrounding area, including paddocks north of Bridgefoot Lane and the area bound by Sawyers Lane and Baker Street; and
- Former Sunny Bank School and playing fields.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 35 scores strongly against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division in three separate areas: Wroxham School and playing field; Dame Alice Owen's School and surrounding area; and Sunny Bank School and playing fields. These sub-areas may score less strongly and should be considered further.

### 6.3.11 Green Belt Parcel 36 (South Mimms Services)



Green Belt Parcel 36 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes. It fails to meet Purposes 1 and 4 and only forms a very small part of the less essential gap between Potters Bar, Borehamwood and Shenley, and so scores weakly against Purpose 2. With regard to Purpose 3, 19% of the parcel is covered by built-form, located almost entirely to the south and west of Wash Lane (South Mimms Services). The north of the Parcel is particularly important for maintaining the overall openness of the countryside and preventing encroachment. However, the south of the Parcel has a very different character and is dominated by the South Mimms Services which makes a limited contribution to this and to the wider purposes.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 36 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The southern section of the Parcel (South Mimms Services, to the south and west of Wash Lane) may score less strongly and could be considered further.

### 6.3.12 Green Belt Parcel 45 (South of The Causeway)



Green Belt Parcel 45 is located to the north of Potters Bar (which is not defined as a large built-up area for the purposes of this Study based on the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy – see section 4.3.1) and scores moderately against the NPPF purposes. It fails to score against Purpose 1 and 4 as it is not adjacent to an identified large built-up area or historic settlement. The Parcel scores moderately against Purpose 2, forming part of the wider gap between Potters Bar and Brookmans Park and a small part of the less essential gap between Potters Bar and Cuffley. The Parcel also score moderately against Purpose 3.

The small areas to the south of the Causeway, in the south of the Parcel, does not contribute to the identified settlement gaps. It is enclosed by the edge of Potters Bar to the south and east, and by The Causeway to the north and west. It is severed from the wider countryside physically and has a stronger relationship with the settlement than the more open areas of Green Belt to the north.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 45 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The area to the south of The Causeway in the south of the Parcel may score less strongly and could be considered further.

### 6.3.13 Green Belt Parcel 47 (Potters Bar Golf Club)



Green Belt Parcel 47 is located to the north of Potters Bar (which is not defined as a large built-up area for the purposes of this Study based on the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy – see section 4.3.1) and, as a whole, scores moderately against the NPPF purposes. The Parcel performs moderately against Purpose 2, forming part of the wider gap between Potters Bar and Brookmans Park with the eastern part of the Parcel particularly important in this regard. The Parcel also scores moderately against Purpose 3 with a low coverage by built form but with areas of a semi-urban character. The Parcel is not adjacent to an identified large built-up area or historic settlement and therefore does not score against Purposes 1 or 4.

The Potters Bar Golf Club, bounded by the edge of Potters Bar to the east, west and south and a densely planted buffer to the north, is less important for preventing coalescence between settlements and is effectively enveloped by urban development on three sides. It would score weakly if considered alone and it is recommended that it be considered further.

**Recommendation:** Green Belt Parcel 47 scores moderately against the NPPF purposes, but there is clear scope for sub-division. The area covered by Potters Bar Golf Club may score less strongly and could be considered further.

## 7 Conclusions

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This Study has examined the performance of the Green Belt in and around Hertsmere against the Green Belt purposes, as set out in the NPPF. The assessment has considered 52 Green Belt Parcels, bounded by readily recognisable, durable physical features.

Much of the Green Belt Hertsmere was first established through the development plans for Hertfordshire and Middlesex approved during the 1950s, with the designation extended to cover most of the modern Borough in the 1971 Hertfordshire County Development Plan. In 1974, the Borough of Hertsmere was established and adopted the existing Green Belt boundaries, which have remained largely unchanged since that time. The Hertsmere Green Belt plays an important role in preventing the outward spread of Great London, retaining the separate character of Hertsmere's towns and villages, and preventing the coalescence of settlements.

Although the Green Belt is not designated on the basis of environmental quality, with Hertsmere the Green Belt offers protection to areas of open countryside, arable farmland and small villages. Conversely, it is likely that Hertsmere will come under increasing pressure to accommodate the demand of housing growth and neighbouring authorities' objectively assessed needs (including London).

The 52 Green Belt Parcels were assessed against four of the five NPPF purposes which were deemed relevant to Hertsmere context. The degree to which different parts of the Green Belt contribute to the individual purposes varies across the Borough. The overall findings were as follows:

- 35 Green Belt Parcels are judged to be strongly scoring Green Belt, meeting at least one of the purposes strongly;
- 14 Green Belt Parcels are judged to be moderately scoring Green Belt, with a moderate score against at least one purposes and failing to score strongly against any purpose;
- Two Green Belt Parcels are judge to be weakly scoring Green Belt, failing to meet or weakly meeting all purposes;
- One Green Belt Parcel does not meet any Green Belt purpose.

While it is clear that the majority of the Green Belt in Hertsmere is performing an important role in terms of the NPPF purposes, a number of areas have been identified which may warrant further consideration by Hertsmere Borough Council as part of their Stage 2 work, which can be categorised as follows:

1. Parcels which do not meet any NPPF purpose (Parcel 4) and Parcels scoring weakly overall against all NPPF purposes (Parcels 37 and 39) which could be considered further.
2. Medium or strongly scoring Parcels where there is clear scope for sub-division to identify weakly performing sub-areas, including the presence of boundary features which have the potential to be permanent and recognisable, which could be considered further.

Sub-areas have been identified for further consideration based on their performance against NPPF purposes only, rather than their suitability in terms of sustainability, infrastructure and wider planning considerations. These recommendations do not preclude Hertsmere Borough Council undertaking further assessment of areas of the Green Belt falling outside categories 1 and 2 above.

The recommended areas are distributed throughout Hertsmere, but generally consist of distinct areas of Green Belt which are small in scale, possessing semi-urban characteristics and located adjacent to or even enclosed with urban areas, this performing little or no role in preventing the outward sprawl of large built-up areas, the coalescence of settlements, encroachment into the countryside, or protection for the setting of historic towns. Collectively, the indicative recommended areas represent approximately 265 hectares of Green Belt land, which equates to 3.3% of the total area of Green Belt in Hertsmere.<sup>21</sup>

It is important to note that the recommendations set out in this report will not automatically lead to the release of land from the Green Belt. Ensuring maximum protection for the Green Belt, in line with national policy, should continue to be a core planning principle in the formulation of Local Plan policy. The areas identified through this Study as warranting further consideration will need to be subject to more detailed assessment in the next stage of the Green Belt Assessment, to determine the appropriateness and feasibility of adjustments to the Green Belt boundary. Following this work, further decision making by the Council in updating the Local Plan will determine which area, if any, might be released from the Green Belt. The Green Belt Assessment will ultimately sit as part of a suite of evidence which will be used to inform future plan making.

The Council will also need to carefully consider whether, in accordance with the NPPF, there are any 'exceptional circumstances' that justify the Green Belt boundary in Hertsmere to be altered through the early Local Plan review. At that time, the Council will need to consider the Green Belt boundary having regard to its intended permanence in the long term, so that any proposed boundaries are capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

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<sup>21</sup> Based on the area of designated Green Belt land as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 (DCLG, 2016)





## Appendix A

### Glossary of Terms



Term	Definition
Connected	Displaying a low level of containment rather than simply adjoining an area.
Contiguous	Predominantly surrounded by built form (from a least two large built-up areas) but also retaining a strong link to the wider Green Belt.
Duty to Cooperate	A legislative requirement in the Localism Act 2011 which places a duty on local planning authorities and county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local and Marine Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
Enclosed	Almost entirely contained or surrounded by built development.
Encroachment	A gradual advancement of urbanising influences through physical development or land use change.
Essential Gap	A gap between settlements where development would significantly reduce the perceived or actual distance between them.
Large Built-Up Area	Areas defined to correspond to the major settlements identified in the respective Local Plans in Hertsmere and neighbouring local authorities that border the Hertsmere Green Belt, and used in the NPPF Purpose 1 assessment.
Largely Rural Character	Land with a general absence of built development, largely characterised by rural land uses and landscapes with some other sporadic developments and man-made structures.
Less Essential Gap	A gap between settlements where development is likely to be possible without any risk of coalescence between them.
Neighbouring Town	Refers to settlements within Hertsmere, as well as settlements in neighbouring authorities immediately adjacent to Hertsmere's Green Belt, for the assessment against NPPF Purpose 2.
Open Land	Open land refers to land that is lacking in built development.
Openness	Openness refers to the extent to which Green Belt land could be considered open from an absence of built development.
Semi-Urban Character	Land which begins on the edge of the fully built up area and contains a mix of urban and rural land uses before giving way to the wider countryside. Land uses might include publicly accessible natural green spaces and green corridors, country parks and local nature reserves, small-scale food production (e.g. market gardens) and waste management facilities, interspersed with built development more generally associated with urban areas (e.g. residential or commercial).
Sprawl	The outward spread of a large built-up area at its periphery in a sporadic, dispersed or irregular way.
Strong Unspoilt Rural Character	Land with an absence of built development and characterised by rural land uses and landscapes, including agricultural land, forestry, woodland, shrubland/scrubland and open fields.
Urban Character	Land which is predominantly characterised by urban land uses, including physical developments such as residential or commercial, or urban managed parks.
Wider Gap	A gap between settlements where limited development may be possible without coalescence between them.



## Appendix B

### Pro-Forma



Green Belt Parcel		Small Scale Location Plan
Area (ha)		
Local Authority		
Location Plan		
Description		



<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Score</b>
(1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	(a) Land parcel is at the edge of one or more large built-up areas.		
	(b) Prevents the outward sprawl of a large built-up area into open land, and serves as a barrier at the edge of a large built-up area in the absence of another durable boundary.		
<b>Purpose 1: Total Score</b>			<b>/5</b>
(2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Prevents development that would result in merging of or significant erosion of gap between neighbouring settlements, including ribbon development along transport corridors that link settlements.		
<b>Purpose 2: Total Score</b>			<b>/5</b>
(3) Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Protects the openness of the countryside and is least covered by development.		
<b>Purpose 3: Total Score</b>			<b>/5</b>
(4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Protects land which provides immediate and wider context for historic settlement, including views and vistas between the settlement and the surrounding countryside.		
<b>Purpose 4: Total Score</b>			<b>/5</b>

<p>Site Photos</p>	
	<p>Photograph 1:</p>
	<p>Photograph 2:</p>          <p>Photograph 3:</p>



## Appendix C

### Summary of Purpose Scores, Findings and Recommendations



Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments						Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Overall Summary		
	(a)	(b)						
1	PASS	5+	5	3	1	Strong	<p>The parcel meets purposes 1 and 2 strongly. Although the area north of Merry Hill Road feels more detached from the wider countryside, it still plays an important role in preventing further encroachment of development into the countryside and also makes a limited contribution to purpose 4.</p> <p>The parcel is not recommended for further consideration.</p>	
2	PASS	3+	5	3	0	Strong	<p>The parcel meets purpose 1 moderately and 2 strongly. Although the south of the parcel has been subject to more substantial encroachment, the Green Belt in Hertsmere (in the north) plays an important role in maintaining the openness of the countryside and has been successful in preventing encroachment.</p> <p>The parcel is not recommended for further consideration.</p>	
3	PASS	3	5	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel meets all relevant Green Belt purposes and is not recommended for further consideration.</p> <p>The parcel meets purpose 1 moderately, purpose 2 very strongly and purpose 3 strongly. It forms a substantial portion of the gap between London (Barnet) and Borehamwood.</p> <p>The parcel is not recommended for further consideration.</p>	
4	FAIL	0	0	0	0	Does not meet	<p>The parcel does not meet any Green Belt purposes and is not recommended for further consideration.</p>	No

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Overall Summary	Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			
	(a)	(b)						
						Green Belt purposes		
5	FAIL	0	5	2	0	Strong	<p>As a whole, the parcel meets purpose 2 strongly, maintaining the gap between Elstree and Bushey Heath/Bushey Village which is of a small scale.</p> <p>However, the south of the parcel around Centennial Business Park has an urban character in contrast to the wider parcel, and is relatively strongly bounded by dense planted features, as well as A- roads to the east and south. As it is already completely developed, it also makes limited contribution to purpose 2.</p> <p>Overall, it would make limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes if considered alone and is recommended for further consideration as a sub-area.</p>	Yes
6	PASS	3	5	3	0	Strong	<p>As a whole, the parcel meets purposes 1 and 3 moderately and purpose 2 strongly. In particular, it plays an important role in maintaining the narrow gaps between Watford, Bushey Heath/Bushey Village, North Bushey and Elstree.</p> <p>However, a small area south of Little Bushey Lane plays a very limited role in preventing the merging of settlements. It is almost completely enveloped by development and separated from the wider countryside by dense planted buffers along Little Bushey Lane. This area is effectively contained within Bushey Heath/Bushey Village and has a more urban character, thus</p>	Yes

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
						playing a more limited role in relation to purpose 3.  Overall, it would make limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes if considered alone and is recommended for further consideration as a sub-area.		
7	PASS	5+	5	3	0	Strong	The parcel meets purposes 1 and 2 very strongly and purpose 3 moderately.  While the south of the parcel (within LB Barnet) has a mixture of different land uses, including golf courses, ribbon development and smaller fields and wooded areas, in contrast the north of the parcel within Hertsmere is has a very open and rural character and contributes strongly to purpose 3.  No sub-areas have been identified which would score less strongly and the parcel is not recommended for further consideration.	
8	PASS	3+	5	3	0	Strong	Although the parcel scores strongly against purpose 2, there are two identified areas which might score less strongly if considered alone:  - North-east of the parcel, east of the waste recycling centre, adjacent to the edge of Borehamwood. This area is physically and visually more aligned with the edge of Borehamwood, with limited connections to the wider countryside. As the recycling centre forms a buffer to the west, it plays a limited role in terms	Yes



Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
							of purpose 2 and as a result of its small scale and limited relationship with the wider countryside would also score less strongly against purposes 1 and 3. - South-west of the parcel, the built-up area of Elstree. This area is built-up to such a density that it makes no contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, and should be considered further to ensure consistency with the non-Green Belt area to the south of the A411.	
9	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	The parcel scores moderately against purposes 2 and 3. Although the villages of Patchett's Green and Letchmore Heath diminish the openness of the Green Belt slightly, the Green Belt designations maintains their rural, low density character and restricts further encroachment. There are no readily identifiable sub-areas for further consideration and the parcel should not be considered further.	
10	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	Although the wider parcel meets purposes 2 and 3 moderately, the very south of the parcel at the edge of Elstree, south of the well-established planted buffer, makes a very limited contribution to preventing encroachment as it has been subject to various built developments. Additionally, it is of a small scale and forms only a small, less essential part of the wider gap with Radlett. This sub-area should be considered further to ensure consistency with the non-Green Belt area to the south of the A411.	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Overall Summary	Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			
	(a)	(b)						
11	PASS	3	5	2	0	Strong	Although the parcel meets purpose 3 weakly, it meets purpose 1 moderately, preventing the outward sprawl of Watford, and is particularly important for maintaining the gap between Watford and Bushey Heath/Bushey Village.  There are no distinct sub-areas which score less strongly and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	
12	PASS	3+	1	3	0	Moderate	The parcel performs moderately against Green Belt purposes 1 and 3 and more weakly against purpose 2. The parcel forms only a very small part of the gap between Borehamwood and London (Edgware) and makes a limited contribution to preventing coalescence. However, the parcel is very open and, particularly the western area, is rural in character. It plays an important role in preventing encroachment into the countryside on the south side of Borehamwood and is not recommended for further consideration.	
13	PASS	3+	3	4	1	Strong	The parcel performs moderately against purposes 1 and 2, and strongly against purpose 3. It makes a weak contribution to purpose 4 due to the limited linkages between the Green Belt and Radlett's historic core. However, there are no readily recognisable sub-areas which could be recommended for further consideration.  In particular, the north of the parcel has a very open and rural character and has limited visual interaction with the surrounding settlement. This area plays an important role in preventing	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
						encroachment into the countryside, and maintains the overall scale of the gap between Radlett and Borehamwood.		
14	FAIL	0	3	2	0	Moderate	The parcel scores moderately against purpose 2 and scores weakly against purpose and does not meet purposes 1 or 4. It plays an important role in preventing ribbon development along the A41, which would reduce the scale of the gap between North Bushey and Bushey Heath/Bushey Village (both physically and perceptually). There is no obvious scope for sub-division within the parcel and it is recommended that it is not considered further.	
15	PASS	3+	5	2	0	Strong	The parcel scores strongly against purpose 2, but a small area in the north-east, north of Bushey Mills Lane, is less important for preventing coalescence. This area is physically and visually severed from the wider countryside and has been subject to substantial encroachment in the form of the David Lloyd sports centre. It is recommended that this sub-area is considered further.	Yes
16	PASS	3+	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel scores moderately against purposes 1 and 2 and strongly against purpose 3. The parcel does not meet purpose 4.  The character varies between the north and south of the parcel. The southern area, within LB Barnet, has a more semi-urban character around Monken Hadley Common. This area is separated from the wider countryside visually and physically. The northern area within Hertsmere has a very rural, open	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
						<p>character and plays an important role in preventing encroachment into the countryside.</p> <p>There are no readily identifiable sub-areas for further consideration and the parcel should not be considered further.</p>		
17	PASS	3	5	3	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores moderately against purposes 1 and 3 and strongly against purpose 2, playing a particularly important role in maintaining the narrow gap between Watford and North Bushey. The parcel is of a very similar character throughout, consisting of a wooded area between an A-road and the River Colne. There is no scope for sub-division and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.</p>	
18	PASS	3+	3	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel overall meets purposes 1 and 2 moderately and purpose 3 strongly. However, the west of the parcel at Shenley village is more densely developed and plays a limited role in terms of preventing encroachment into the countryside, and to ensure consistency with the area of the village to the north of Radlett Lane this area should be considered further.</p>	Yes
19	FAIL	0	3	5	3	Strong	<p>The Parcel meets Purposes 2 and 4 moderately, maintaining the historic setting of Radlett and the overall scale and openness of the gap between Radlett and Bushey Heath/Bushey Village and Elstree. It also plays a particularly important role in preventing encroachment into an area of particularly unspoilt countryside.</p>	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
20	PASS	3	3	4	0	Strong	<p>There are no identified sub-areas that would score less strongly against the purposes and it is recommended that the site is not considered further.</p> <p>The parcel scores moderately against purposes 1 and 2 and strongly against purpose 3. The parcel is of a similar, open character throughout, largely consisting of golf courses, playing fields and arable farming fields.</p> <p>There is no obvious scope for sub-division and the parcel should not be considered further.</p>	
21	PASS	3+	3	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores moderately against purposes 1 and 2 and strongly against purpose 3. Although the rurality of the parcel is diminished slightly in the south, the openness of the parcel is not unduly diminished and the parcel broadly maintains an open character, preventing encroachment into the countryside. It is also important for preventing the outward sprawl of London.</p> <p>There is no obvious scope for sub-division of weaker performing Green Belt areas and the parcel should not be considered further.</p>	
22	FAIL	0	5	3	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores strongly against purpose 2. It plays an important role in maintaining the very narrow gap between Watford and North Bushey, which is very small in physical scale. Although the parcel does not meet purpose 1, it is noted that, at a more strategic level, it is physically very close to Watford and forms part of a broader Green Belt area that</p>	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
						<p>prevents its outward sprawl. Additionally, there is very little development throughout and the parcel plays a role in preventing the encroachment of development into the countryside.</p> <p>There is no obvious scope for sub-division and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.</p>		
23	FAIL	0	5	3	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores strongly against purpose 2. It plays an important role in maintaining the very narrow gap between Watford and North Bushey, which is very small in physical scale. Although the parcel does not meet purpose 1, it is noted that, at a more strategic level, it is physically very close to Watford and forms part of a broader Green Belt area that prevents its outward sprawl.</p> <p>Although the parcel is divided by a number of defensible physical features, it is judged that there are no identified areas which perform weakly against the Green Belt purposes and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.</p>	
24	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	<p>The parcel scores moderately against purposes 2 and 3, maintaining the overall scale of the gap between Borehamwood, and Potters Bar and London (Chipping Barnet), and preventing encroachment into the open countryside.</p> <p>While the east and west of the parcel have slightly different characters, it is unlikely that there would be a discernable</p>	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Overall Summary	Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			
	(a)	(b)						
							difference in the performance of these areas against the Green Belt purposes and, as such, it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	
25	FAIL	0	0	3	0	Moderate	<p>The parcel scores moderately against purpose 3 but does not meet purposes 1, 2 or 4. Although part of the parcel, in particular the northern area, maintains a high level of openness and a largely rural character, the south is more semi-urban (consisting of residential properties).</p> <p>As there is no scope for sub-division of the parcel, it is recommended that, exceptionally, the whole parcel is considered further. It is completely disconnected from the wider countryside and the sense of rurality is substantially diminished by road infrastructure on all sides. It plays very little role in terms of the wider strategic Green Belt.</p>	No
26	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores strongly against purpose 3, maintaining the broadly open and rural character throughout. In particular, the east of the parcel at the edge of Radlett is particularly open. Furthermore, the parcel maintains the overall scale of the gap between Radlett and North Bushey/Watford.</p> <p>There are no obvious sub-areas that are bounded by defensible features and that would score less strongly if considered alone, and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.</p>	
27	PASS	3	3	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores moderately against purpose 1 and 2 and strongly against purpose 3. The parcel is largely open and has a similar rural character throughout. There are no obvious sub-</p>	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
							areas which would score less strongly and the parcel should not be considered further.	
28	PASS	3+	5	4	1	Strong	<p>The parcel meets purposes 2 and 3 strongly, preventing ribbon development in the narrow gap between Borehamwood and Radlett and preventing encroachment into the open countryside. It also contributes to preventing the outward sprawl of Borehamwood (purpose 1) and performs (albeit weakly) against purpose 4, maintaining the rural context for the historic part of Radlett.</p> <p>No obvious sub-areas have been identified which would score weakly against the purposes that would be contained by defensible, readily recognisable features. It is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.</p>	
29	FAIL	0	5	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores strongly against purposes 2 and 3, maintaining the openness of the countryside and preventing the eroding of the narrow gap between Watford and North Bushey. No obvious sub-areas have been identified and it is recommended that it is not considered further.</p>	
30	PASS	3+	3	5	0	Strong	<p>The parcel meets purposes 1 and 2 and meets purpose 3 strongly. It does not meet purpose 4.</p> <p>There is however scope for sub-division in the north-west of the parcel adjoining Radlett. This area, bounded by dense wooded to the east and south, the edge of Radlett to the west and</p>	Yes



Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
							<p>Shenley Road to the north, is relatively small in scale and makes only a limited contribution to the gap between Radlett and Shenley (purpose 2). Furthermore, it is visually more connected to the settlement edge and has a limited relationship with the wider countryside to the east. It is recommended that this sub-area is considered further.</p> <p>Additionally, the density of development in Shenley means that this area plays a limited role in terms of preventing encroachment into the countryside, and to ensure consistency with the area of the village to the north of Radlett Lane this area should be considered further.</p>	
31	FAIL	0	3	5	0	Strong	The parcel scores moderately against purpose 2 and very strongly against purpose 3. It is of a similar character throughout and there are no obvious sub-areas which would score less strongly alone. It is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	
32	PASS	3	3	5	0	Strong	The parcel scores moderately against purposes 1 and 2 and strongly against purpose 3. It plays an important role in preventing the outward sprawl of Watford into very open countryside, as well as encroachment. There are no identified sub-areas which would score less strongly and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	
33	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel scores moderately against purpose 2 and strongly against purpose 3. The parcel is largely open and has a similar	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
						rural character throughout. There are no obvious sub-areas which would score less strongly and the parcel should not be considered further.		
34	FAIL	0	1	3	0	Moderate	The parcel meets purpose 2 weakly and purpose 3 moderately. While the parcel is surrounded by infrastructure and contains a traveller site, it maintains the overall openness of the countryside and forms part of a wider swathe of open land between Potters Bar and London to the south. There is no scope for sub-division and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	
35	FAIL	0	1	4	0	Strong	The parcel scores strongly against purpose 3, preventing encroachment into an area of very open countryside, but there are a number of identified sub-areas at the edge of Potters Bar which would score less strongly if considered alone, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wroxham School and playing field (which has an urban character and is disconnected from the wider countryside)</li> <li>- Paddocks north of Bridgefoot Lane and area bound by Sawyers Lane and Baker Street</li> <li>- Sunny Bank school and playing fields</li> </ul>	Yes
36	FAIL	0	1	3	0	Moderate	The parcel scores weakly against purpose 2 and moderately against purpose 3. The parcel does not meet purposes 1 or 4. The north of the parcel in particular is important for maintaining the overall openness of the countryside and preventing encroachment. However, an identified sub-area at South Mimms Services, south and west of Wash Lane, makes a limited	Yes

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Overall Summary	Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			
	(a)	(b)						
							contribution to this and to the wider purposes. It is recommended that this area is considered further.	
37	FAIL	0	0	2	0	Weak	The parcel only meets purpose 2 weakly and does not meet any other purpose, thus should be considered further.	No
38	FAIL	0	5	3	0	Strong	The parcel meets purpose 2 and meets purpose 3 strongly. There is possible scope for sub-division at the former Harperbury Hospital site in the north of the parcel and at the garages in the west, however the boundaries around these areas are not considered durable. The parcel is not recommended for further consideration.	
39	FAIL	0	0	2	0	Weak	The parcel only meets purpose 2 weakly and does not meet any other purpose, thus it is recommended that it is considered further.	No
40	FAIL	0	1	3	0	Moderate	The parcel meets purpose 3 moderately, and has a contrasting character between the more developed areas of South Mimms and the open countryside to the north and east. However, development is generally low density and no readily recognisable boundary features have been identified which might be used to identify a weakly performing sub-area. The Parcel is not recommended for further consideration.	
41	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel meets purpose 2 moderately and purpose 3 strongly. The parcel has an open and rural character throughout and there is little scope for sub-division. The parcel is not recommended for further consideration.	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
42	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel scores moderately against purpose 2 and strongly against purpose 3. It plays an important role in maintaining the openness of the countryside and preventing encroachment, and also maintains the overall scale of the gap between Potters Bar and London Colney. No distinct sub-areas have been identified for assessment and the parcel is not recommended for further consideration.	
43	FAIL	0	5	1	0	Strong	The parcel scores very strongly against purpose 2 (forming the majority of the gap between Radlett and Colney Street). Although it scores weakly against Purpose 3, the parcel is very important for preventing coalescence between settlements and ribbon development, and is not recommended for further consideration. It contains no strong features which would allow for sub-division.	
44	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel scores moderately against purpose 2 and strongly against purpose 3. It forms part of the wider swathe of open countryside between Potters Bar and Welham Green/Brookmans Park, and prevents ribbon development along Swanland Road. There is no clear scope for sub-division and it is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	
45	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	The parcel meets purposes 2 and 3 moderately and does not meet purposes 1 and 4. While much of the parcel plays an important role in maintaining the gap between Potters Bar and Brookmans Park, the small area to the south of the Causeway does not contribute to this gap. It is enclosed by the edge of	Yes

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	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
46	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	<p>Potters Bar to the south and east, and by The Causeway to the north and west. It is severed from the wider countryside physically and has a stronger relationship with the settlement than the more open areas of Green Belt to the north. This sub-area should be considered further.</p> <p>The parcel scores moderately against purposes 2 and 3. The south-east of the parcel, south of the Potters Bar Brook, may score less strongly if considered alone but it was judge that it continues to play an important role in preventing encroachment of development into the countryside, preventing the outward growth of urban development into a largely unspoilt open land. It should not be considered further.</p>	
47	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	<p>The parcel scores moderately against purposes 2 and 3, maintaining the scale and openness of the gap between Potters Bar and Brookmans Park. Although the west of the parcel has a more semi-urban character, it is important for preventing coalescence with Brookmans Park.</p> <p>The Potters Bar Golf Club, bounded by the edge of Potters Bar to the east, west and south and a densely planted buffer to the north, is less important for preventing coalescence between settlements and is effectively enveloped by urban development on three sides. It would score weakly if considered alone and it is recommended that it be considered further.</p>	Yes
48	FAIL	0	1	4	0	Strong	<p>The parcel scores strongly against purpose 3. It forms part of the wider swathe of open countryside between Potters Bar,</p>	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments					Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)	
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns			Overall Summary
	(a)	(b)						
49	FAIL	0	1	3	0	Moderate	London Colney and Radlett and prevents encroachment into the open countryside. It is recommended that it is not considered further.	
50	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel forms part of the wider gap between London Colney and Shenley and maintains a strong level of openness immediately to the south of London Colney, meeting purpose 3 strongly by preventing encroachment into open countryside. The parcel is not recommended for further consideration as there is no scope for sub-division to identify weaker performing areas and the parcel of a similar character throughout.	
51	FAIL	0	3	4	0	Strong	The parcel meets purpose 2 moderately and 3 strongly. It maintains a similar character throughout, maintaining the openness of the countryside and the overall scale of the gap between London Colney and Hatfield. There is no scope for sub-division, as there are no identified weaker performing areas which are bounded by defensible, readily recognisable features. It is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose Assessments						Summary of Findings	Sub-Area(s)
	Purpose 1 – To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		Purpose 2 – To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3 – Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4 – To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Overall Summary		
	(a)	(b)						
52	FAIL	0	3	3	0	Moderate	The parcel meets purposes 2 and 3 moderately. It maintains a similar character throughout, maintaining the openness of the countryside and the overall scale of the gap between London Colney and Hatfield. There is no scope for sub-division, as there are no identified weaker performing areas which are bounded by defensible, readily recognisable features. It is recommended that the parcel is not considered further.	