

Hertsmere Borough Council
Washed Over villages Study
Final Report

Issue | 27 August 2020

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 272956

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1 Introduction and Scope of Study

1.1 Background to the Commission

Ove Arup and Partners Limited (Arup) was commissioned by Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) to undertake this ‘Washed Over Villages Study.’ The study aims to demonstrate that ‘no stone has been left unturned’ in developing the spatial strategy and proposed allocations for the emerging Hertsmere Borough Local Plan. It follows on from the earlier Green Belt Assessments undertaken for Hertsmere Borough by Arup in 2017, 2019 and 2020 and makes reference to the findings from those studies, where appropriate.

The conclusions of this study will inform the spatial strategy by looking at whether it is necessary to restrict development in a washed over village because of its contribution to openness of the Green Belt, or conversely whether the village’s inclusion in the Green Belt should be reconsidered due to the limited contribution which the open character of the village makes.

Findings highlight the opportunity for washed over villages to accommodate some limited expansion or infilling. Thus, the study also provides the Council with an evidence base to help inform future decision-making should any applications be received for development in villages within the Green Belt.

This study also considers eight sites located around the washed over Green Belt villages that were promoted in the Council’s Call for Sites. This is to ensure the most suitable and deliverable sites are put forward for allocation by considering the consequence of patterns of development inside the Green Belt boundary.

1.2 Study Scope and Parameters

This study assesses the washed over villages only in terms of its contributions to the Green Belt policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF). It will be for the Council to take into account the findings of the study alongside other evidence in decision making about the Local Plan strategy and the suitability and deliverability of sites identified for allocation in Hertsmere to determine the final spatial option for growth.

The Council’s Local Plan site selection process must be guided by various other land use factors including (but not limited to) ecological constraints, flood risk, highways impact and land availability and access. This study looks to contribute to the most robust assessment of Green Belt performance, with focus on the role villages can play to meeting local development needs. As such the study builds on previous studies, including Green Belt Assessments Stages 1 and 2. The villages and sites for assessment in this study were considered as part of wider Green Belt parcels in the Green Belt Assessments and the findings of both should be read in conjunction with one another when making decisions on the spatial strategy for the borough.

The larger washed over villages of Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms were assessed as part of the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment. The washed over parts of

these villages were recommended to be considered further for release from the Green Belt. Therefore, these villages were not assessed further in this assessment. HBC is proposing to inset these currently washed-over villages and have separately commissioned Arup to identify new Green Belt boundaries for the inset villages.

This study offers a focussed review of a further seven wholly washed over villages and hamlets in terms of their contribution to openness of both the built area and the wider countryside, which has not been specifically looked at in other studies in detail. As such, this study relates to the over-arching landscape sensitivity to residential and employment development in the Hertsmere Sensitivity Study by LUC. In recognition of the need to balance accommodation of housing and employment development with conservation and enhancement of the Borough's landscape, the Landscape Sensitivity study seeks to increase the understanding of the local landscape and settlement patterns and the relative landscape sensitivity of different areas of the borough.

The Washed Over Villages Study provides a finer grain assessment in relation to seven wholly washed over villages and hamlets and eight sites within the borough which, due to being washed over, were only considered as part of the wider rural landscape in the Landscape Sensitivity Study. The assessment criteria in this Washed Over Villages study are designed to be cross referenced to the broader brush landscape assessment criteria in the LUC study.

1.3 Structure of this report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Context
- Section 3: Study methodology
- Section 4: Study area
- Section 5: Assessment of the washed over villages and the six sites
- Section 6: Summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

2 Context

2.1 Overview

This section sets the context for reviewing the washed over villages in Hertsmere and includes summaries of:

- National and local policy framework and requirements;
- Key points raised in the previous Hertsmere Green Belt Assessments;
- Case law; and
- Experience elsewhere to identify good practice.

The section concludes with the implications for the washed over village assessment.

2.2 National Policy and Guidance

2.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2019

At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) provides the policy context for the role and function of the Green Belt. The following sections summarise the current position, with a focus on policy relating to boundaries, infilling, and villages in the Green Belt.

The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how they should be applied. In recognition of the great importance Government attach to the Green Belt, Chapter 13 of the NPPF sets out policies for protecting Green Belt land. The chapter outlines that the “*fundamental principle of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open*”.

There are five purposes of the Green Belt. Hertsmere Council’s earlier Stage 1 and 2 Green Belt Assessments provide a full discussion on the five purposes that the Green Belt serves.

2.2.1.1 Boundaries

The general extent of Green Belts across the country including in Hertsmere is already established. Established Green Belt boundaries should

“only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans”. (Paragraph 136)

Paragraph 136 continues that strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to this intended permanence in the long term. Importantly, Paragraph 138 states that when reviewing existing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities should

“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.”

When defining Green Belt boundaries, of note here are Paragraph 139 (a), (b) and (f) of the NPPF states that plans should:

“(a) ensure consistency with the development plan’s strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;

(b) not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open...; and

(f) define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.”

2.2.2 Washed over villages

As set out by the NPPF, those villages that do make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt should remain washed over. This means that the whole village will retain its Green Belt designation. Any planning applications within these villages would therefore continue to be considered against national Green Belt policies. The NPPF limits development in the Green Belt in line with the fundamental principle to keep land permanently open. Paragraph 140 specifically presents the policy for villages located in the Green Belt as follows:

“If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.”

Here, the NPPF considers the inclusion of villages in the Green Belt as necessary where the village actively contributes to the overall openness of the Green Belt. Development in villages, assessed as making an important contribution in the Green Belt, is therefore restricted and only approved if very special circumstances are demonstrated. The NPPF states that:

“Paragraph 143. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 144. 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 resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

2.2.3 Infilling Development

Limited development is acceptable in washed over villages in some circumstances. Paragraph 145 (e) states that while local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, exceptions include limited infilling in villages.

2.2.4 National Planning Policy Guidance

The national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) is intended to provide up-to-date, accessible and useful guidance on the requirements of the planning system. Relevant to washed over villages, the PPG sets out when assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, that openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects- in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume.

2.2.5 Ministerial Statements

The Housing White Paper¹ published in February 2017, reiterated the Government's commitment to the Green Belt. It also emphasised that authorities should amend Green Belt boundaries only when they could demonstrate that they had examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting their identified development requirements.

2.3 Local Circumstances and Policy

2.3.1 Local Circumstances

Hertsmere is a largely rural Borough in Hertfordshire and situated immediately to the north of London. The four main settlements are Borehamwood and Elstree (east), Bushey, Potters Bar and Radlett, which are outside of the Green Belt. These areas have growing populations and are important economic centres both in Hertsmere and in wider South West Hertfordshire. There are a wide variety of shops and services, and rail and bus links to London, Watford and other key towns.

The remainder of the Borough has a rural character. There are several larger and smaller villages throughout the Borough, with a limited range of local shops and local services in each. The smaller villages rely on the larger settlements nearby for employment.

Green Belt boundaries were established in Hertsmere in the early 1950s. Around 80% of the Borough is Green Belt land (Figure 2.1), and the Council attach importance to the protection of this open land. There is built form present in the Green Belt, much of which predates the designation of the Green Belt.

¹ Document available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

The Green Belt boundary is tightly drawn around the four main towns. While the Green Belt designation washes over all of the smaller settlements in Hertsmere; anomalously for two settlements, Elstree and Shenley, part of the settlements is washed over, while the other part is inset. In particular, Elstree Village (Composers Estate) and Shenley (Porters Park), which have been more recently developed, are inset from the green belt.

A number of the washed over villages are also protected for their historic value and have designated Conservation Areas. This includes: Aldenham, Elstree, Letchmore Heath, Patchetts Green, Ridge, Round Bush, Shenley and South Mimms.

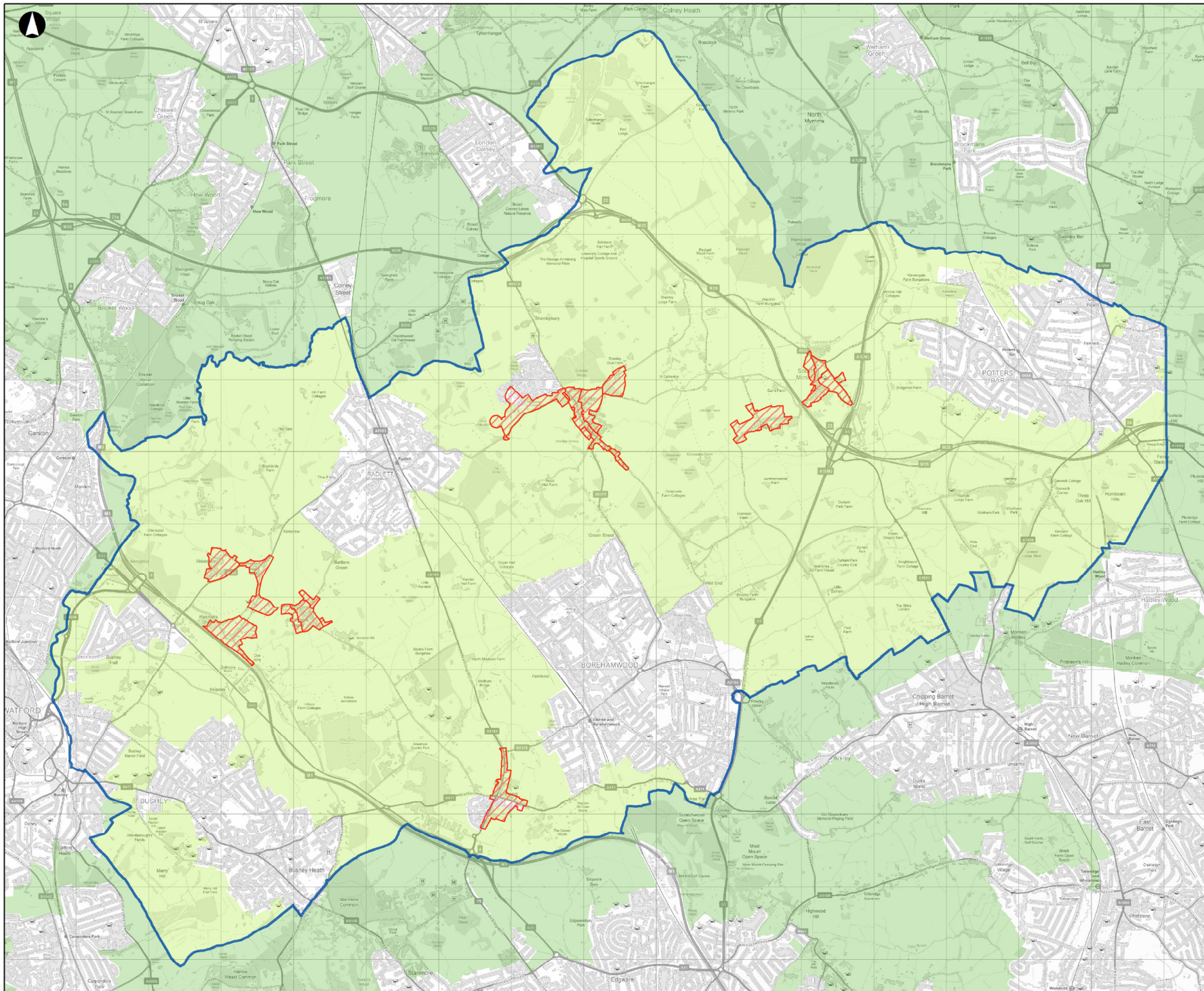
2.3.2 Local Policy

The Hertsmere Local Plan (2012-2027) is the current adopted policy document and is made up of four documents. Of these, the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) (SADM) contain Green Belt policies. The current Green Belt boundary is defined on the adopted Policies Map.

The Core Strategy sets out the general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt (Policy CS13), except where very special circumstance exists. Policy CS13 defines where limited village infilling can take place in Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms:

“Limited infilling within the village envelopes of those parts of Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms which are in the Green Belt will be considered appropriate, provided that it is sympathetic to its surroundings, retains and protects features essential to the character and appearance of the village and complies with other relevant policies in this Plan. Village envelopes for Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms for limited infilling will be identified through the Site Allocations DPD.”

Policy CS13 limits boundary changes stating that *“the Green Belt boundary will remain unchanged from that shown in the Hertsmere Local Plan (2003)”* apart from land around the development of Shenley Hospital and at Borehamwood, where it has been redrawn to reflect the removal of land for safeguarding for employment development.

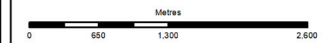


Legend

-  Washed Over Village Conservation Areas
-  Hertsmere Borough Boundary
-  Hertsmere Green Belt
-  Neighbouring Green Belt

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P1	27-08-20	DC	LW	KF
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Job Title
Hertsmere washed over villages assessment

**Figure 2.1:
Hertsmere Green Belt**

Scale at A3
1:50,000

Job No 272956-00	Drawing Status Issue
Drawing No 1	Issue P1

The SADM provides the current criteria for considering the scale of development in the Green Belt, (Policy SADM22):

4.78 Infilling areas in the service villages are defined by village envelopes. Their boundaries are drawn reasonably tightly around the main built area of each village, taking into account green space, larger sites with minimal development and gaps in the built frontage. It is considered that permitting small-scale development in the infilling areas will have limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

4.79 For the purposes of Policy SADM23, infilling is defined 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.

Village envelopes (Policy SADM23) 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 if it complies with Core Strategy Policy CS13 and other relevant plan policies. Planning permissions will only be granted for development for facilities for the movement of people and goods on the motorway network with the South Mimms Special Policy Area (Policy SADM26). New proposals should “*improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the site for users of the Motorway Service Area and for through traffic*”.

2.3.3 Emerging Local Plan Policy

The new Local Plan is currently being prepared. The Issues and Options 2017 consultation and engagement on potential sites for housing and employment has been completed. It is anticipated that the Publication of the Draft Local Plan will be out for public engagement the first half of 2021, with adoption anticipated for later 2022/2023.

Protecting the Green Belt against inappropriate or unplanned development was one of the Council's key priorities stated in the Issue and Options 2017 report. The Issues and Options report invited comments on five suggested approaches to meet development needs. One of these approaches was to deliver growth in Elstree and Shenley to create larger, more sustainable villages to support larger rural communities. It was recognised that this would require the development of land currently designated as Green Belt. Another approach was expanding smaller villages, which are within the Green Belt, to help to maintain their long-term sustainability; the main areas of search were South Mimms, Aldenham, Letchmore Heath, Patchetts Green and Ridge.

Substantial new and updated studies have been prepared to ensure that policies in the Local Plan are based on sound evidence. These include the Green Belt Assessment Stage 1 (2017) and Stage 2 (2019), and Additional Sites (2020), which provide an independent assessment of all Green Belt land across Hertsmere

to identify how it meets national Green Belt purposes; and the Inset Village Boundary Assessment (2020), which will identify Green Belt boundaries for currently washed over villages, which are proposed to be inset.

2.4 Previous Green Belt Studies

2.4.1 Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment

The Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment (2017)² reviewed the role and function of the whole Green Belt and considered the extent to which it contributes to the fundamental aim of retaining openness and meets the NPPF purposes. The study found that the majority of the Green Belt in Hertsmere is performing an important role in terms of the NPPF purposes.

The washed over villages and sites identified for assessment in this study were previously considered as part of larger parcels in the Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment. The parcels and resultant overall conclusions from the assessment are show in Figures 2.2 and 2.3.

The washed-over area of Elstree, Elstree Village, sits within Green Belt parcels 8 and 10. While both parcels meet Green Belt purposes - strongly (parcel 8)³ and moderately (10)⁴ - it was identified that the washed-over area of Elstree performs less strongly and should be considered further for potential release⁵.

The washed over parts of Shenley Village lie within Parcels 18⁶ and 30⁷. These parts of the parcels are more densely developed, play a limited role in terms of preventing encroachment into the countryside (due to the density of the existing built form), and are more visually connected to the settlement edge with a more limited relationship with the wider countryside. The assessment concluded those parts of the Parcels covering Shenley Village should be considered further for potential release to ensure consistency with the area of the village to the north of Radlett Lane.

South Mimms village in located in the south of Parcel 40⁸, which scores moderately against the NPPF purposes. Parcel 40 is not recommended for further consideration. The assessment acknowledges the contrasting character between the more developed areas of South Mimms and the open countryside to the north and east, however development was regarded as generally low density and no readily recognisable boundary features were identified which might be used to identify a weakly performing sub-area.

² Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment 2017 available here:
<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Documents/09-Planning--Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan/New-LP-GB-Assessment-Report2016.pdf>

³ Stage 1 GBA - Parcel 8, pages 68 & C3

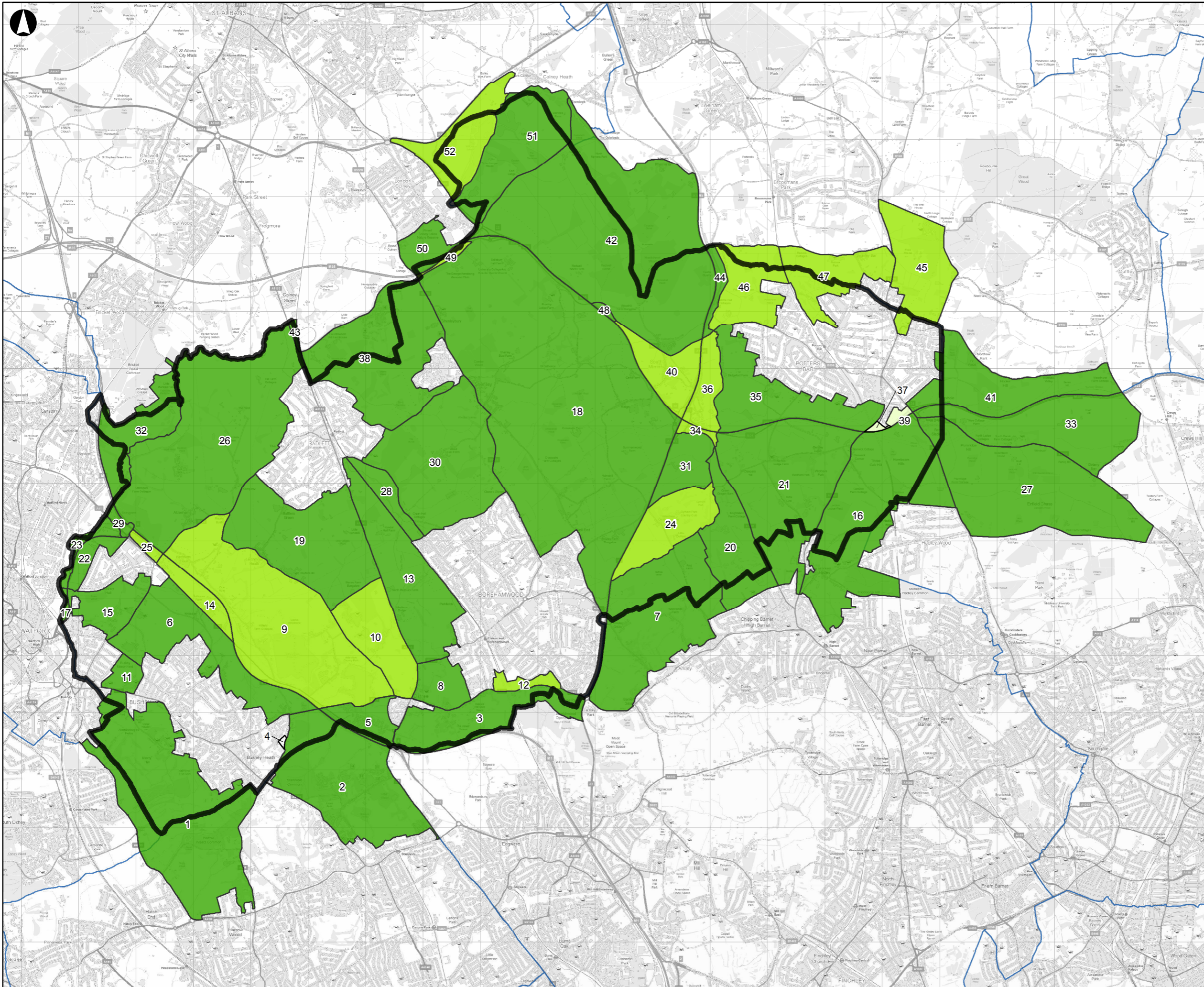
⁴ Stage 1 GBA - Parcel 10, pages 69 & C4

⁵ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 10 ('Elstree Village'; west of Elstree Hill North (A5183) page 69

⁶ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 18, pages 73 & C7

⁷ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 30, pages 73 & C11

⁸ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 40, page C14



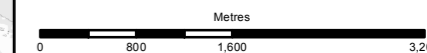
Legend

Overall Score

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

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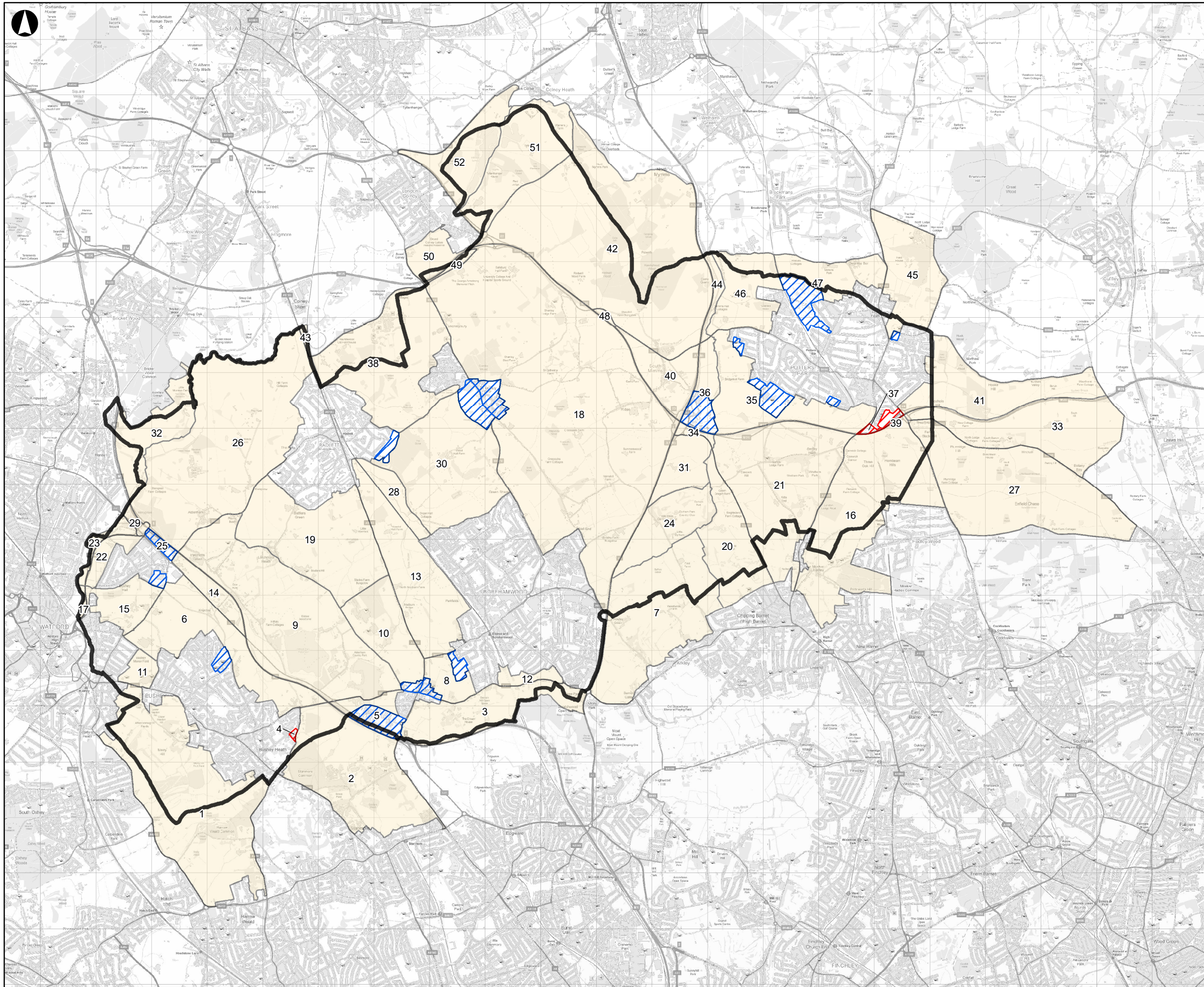
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Hertsmere washed over village assessment

Figure 2.2 Hertsmere Green Belt Stage 1 Overall Assessment Scores

Scale at A3
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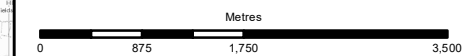


Legend

- Green Belt Parcels (GBA)
- Weakly performing parcels
- Areas for potential sub-division for consideration in Stage 2
- Hertsmere Borough Boundary

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Job Title
Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment (Stage 2)

**Figure 2.3:
Recommendations
from the 2017 GBA**

Scale at A3
1:65,000

Job No 261001-00	Drawing Status Issue
Drawing No 3.2	Issue P1

South Mimms service area is located in the south of Green Belt Parcel 36⁹ which score moderately against the NPPF purposes. The assessment for Parcel 36 noted the south of the Parcel has a very different character and is dominated by South Mimms Services. The southernmost section of the Parcel (South Mimms Services, to the south and west of Wash Lane) performs less strongly to the rest of Parcel 36 and the assessment concluded this area should be considered further for potential release.

The remaining washed over villages and sites lie within Parcels 9 (Letchmore Heath, Patchetts Green and Round Bush), 18 (Ridge), 21 (Bentley Heath), and 26 (Aldenham and High Cross). These Parcels were assessed as scoring moderately (Parcel 9¹⁰) or strongly (Parcels 18¹¹, 21¹², and 26¹³) against Green Belt purpose. It is noted in Parcel 9 however that the villages of Patchett's Green and Letchmore Heath diminish the openness of the Green Belt slightly. However, Parcel 9 along with Parcels 21 and 26 were assessed to have no readily identifiable sub-areas and the Parcels were not recommended for further consideration. No changes to the Green Belt were recommended for the section of the Parcel that includes Ridge, however, as already set out the part of Parcel 18 covering Shenley village was recommended for further consideration.

2.4.2 Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment

The 2019¹⁴ and 2020¹⁵ Green Belt Assessments provided a more refined and focussed assessment of smaller areas of Green Belt. This included areas that were identified for further consideration in Stage 1 or through the Council's call for sites in areas around the existing towns, larger villages and in the area proposed for the garden villages, as the most likely locations for significant growth. The sub-areas primarily adjoined the existing urban settlements. The sub-areas and overall conclusions from the assessment are show in Figures 2.4 and 2.5.

Land within and adjacent to the washed over part of Shenley was assessed as SA-27 and SA-28¹⁶. Both sub-areas perform strongly against the NPPF Purposes and, in their entirety, play an important role in the wider strategic Green Belt. However, the far north-western part of SA-27, and the north-eastern part of SA28, do not play a fundamental role in relation to the wider Green Belt. They were recommended to be considered further for release, as RC-3¹⁷, in the event that the washed over part of Shenley is 'inset' within the Green Belt.

⁹ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 36, pages 77& C13

¹⁰ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 9, page C4

¹¹ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 18, pages 73 & C7

¹² Stage 1 GBA Parcel 21, page C8

¹³ Stage 1 GBA Parcel 26, page C10

¹⁴ Green Belt Assessment Stage 2 report available here:

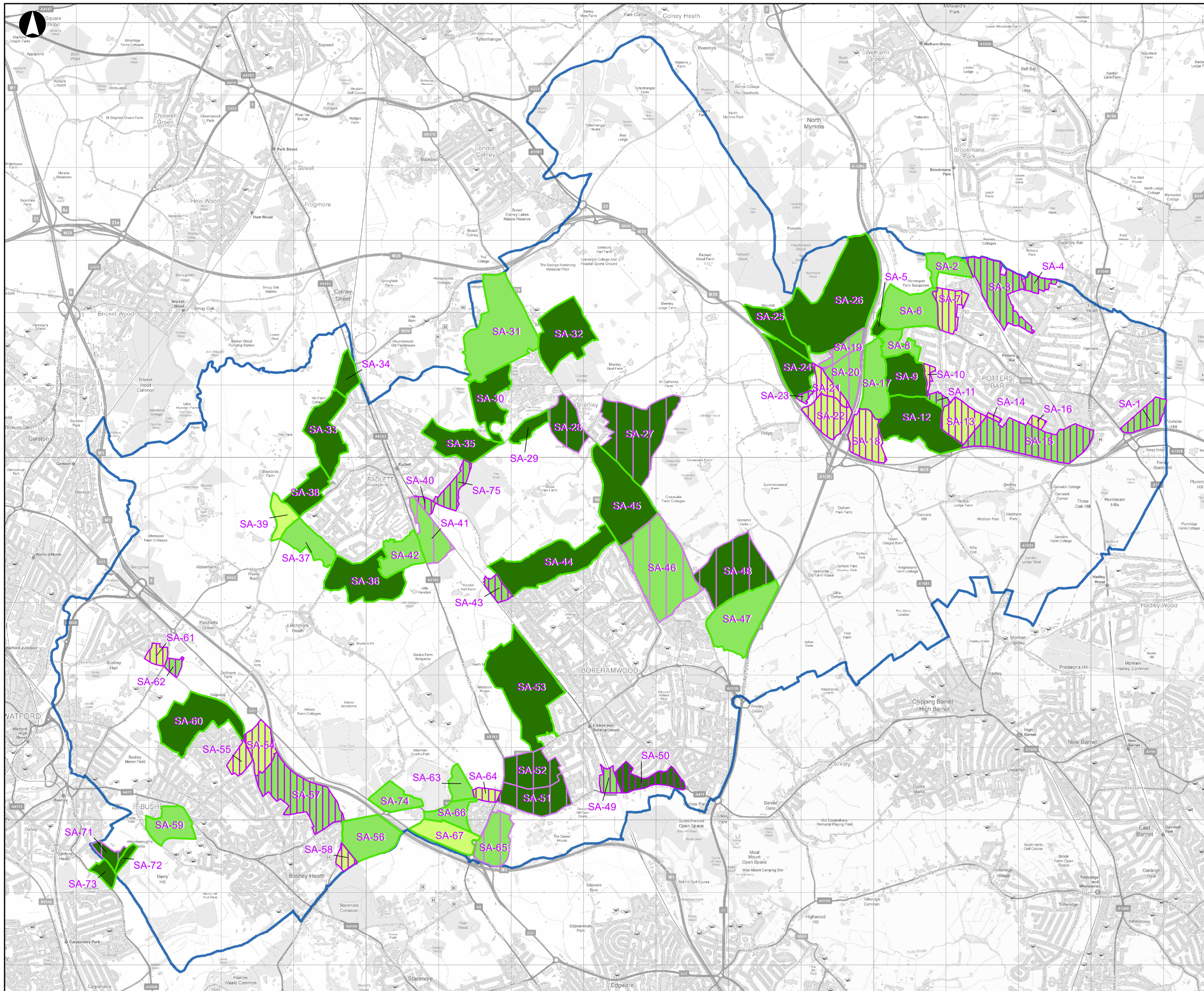
<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Documents/09-Planning--Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan/Green-Belt-Assessment-2-DRAFT-Final-Report.pdf>

¹⁵ Green Belt Assessment Stage 2 Additional Sites report available here:

<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Documents/09-Planning--Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Local-Plan/050320-HBC-GB-Stage-2-Additional-Sites-Final-Report-ISSUE.pdf>

¹⁶ GBA Stage 2, SA-27 & SA28, page 36; Annex Report, SA-27 page 119, SA-28 – page 124

¹⁷ GBA Stage 2, RC-3, page 85



Legend

Meets Purpose Assessment

- Weak
- Moderately
- Strong

Contribution to Wider Strategic Green Belt and Categorisation

- Important - Not recommended for further consideration
- Less important - Recommended for further consideration
- Partly less important - Partly recommended for further consideration
- Hertsmere Borough Boundary

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Metres

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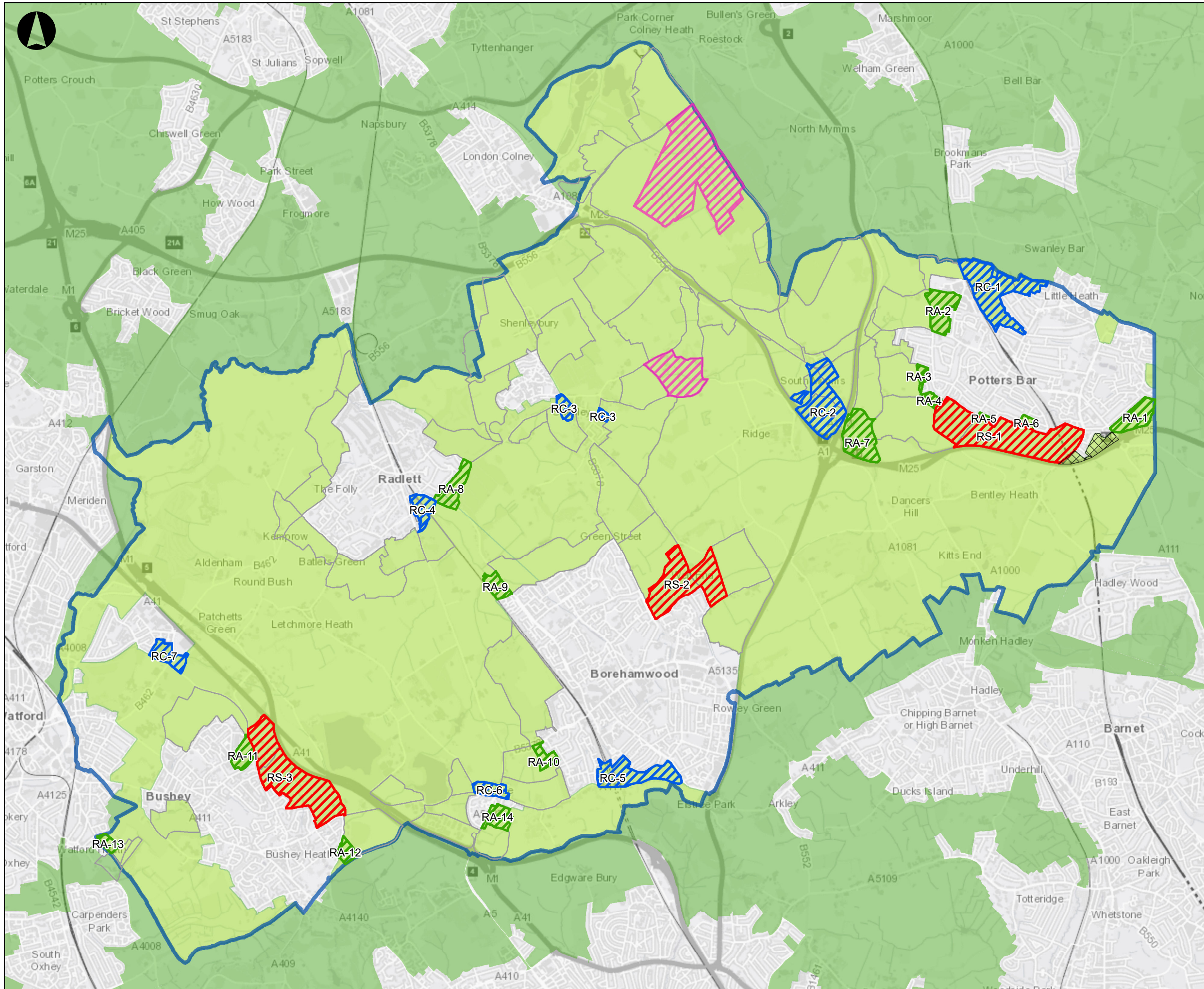
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Job Title
Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment (Stage 2)

**Figure 2.4:
Stage 2 GBA Sub-Area
Categorisation**

Scale at A3
1:50,000

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Drawing No 4.5	Issue P1

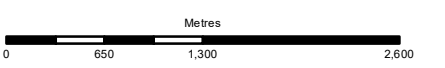


Legend

- Sub-Areas Not Recommended for Further Considerations
- Hertsmere Borough Boundary
- Hertsmere Green Belt
- Neighbouring Green Belt
- Recommended as Strategic Cluster
- Recommended in Combination
- Recommended in Isolation
- Recommended Area for Further Consideration of Garden Village
- Weakly performing parcels (GBA)

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Issue	Date	By	Chkd	Appd



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Hertsmere Green Belt Assessment (Stage 2)

Figure 2.5: GBA Stage 2 Recommended Areas, Garden Village Area and Parcels (Stage 1 GBA)

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Job No 261001-00	Drawing Status Issued
Drawing No 6.1	Issue P1

The washed over part of Elstree was assessed as SA-64 and SA-51¹⁸. While SA-64 met Green Belt purpose assessment criteria weakly and SA-51 met them strongly, they were both considered to play a less important contribution to wider strategic green belt. The entirety of SA64 and western part of SA-51 were recommended to be considered further for release from the Green Belt in combination, as parcel RC-6¹⁹.

South Mimms village was assessed as part of SA-22²⁰. It was assessed to meet purpose assessment criteria weakly and to play a less important contribution to wider strategic green belt, and therefore was recommended for further consideration. It was recommended for release in combination alongside the neighbouring sub-areas SA-21 and SA-23 and parts of SA-19 and SA-20 as RC-2²¹.

South Mimms service station was assessed as part of SA18. SA-18 performs weakly against NPPF purposes and plays a limited role in respect to the wider strategic Green Belt. It is noted that the release of the sub-area would result in the designation of a new Green Belt boundary around an area of development, formed of readily recognisable and durable features. It is recommended that sub-area 18 is considered further for release as RA-7²².

Only one of the other washed over villages, Kemprow/High Cross, was within a sub-area assessed at Green Belt Stage 2 (sub-area 39), as did Site HEL180 Kemprow, between White House and Adelaide Lodge, High Cross. The sub-area was assessed to meet the assessment criteria weakly²³; however, it was considered to make an important contribution to the wider strategic Green Belt. The sub-area was not recommended for further consideration as the Council developed its spatial strategy.

No other sites fell within a sub-area assessed at Green Belt Stage 2.

2.5 Case Law

There is limited case law relating to decisions around inseting of washed over villages. However, there have been some legal cases, which assist when considering how to assess washed over villages, in particular the definition of key terms.

2.5.1 Villages

There is no definition within the NPPF as to what constitutes a ‘village’. In a 2019 appeal, an Inspection referred to the Oxford English Dictionary definition of a “village” as a group of houses and associated building, smaller than a town,

¹⁸ GBA Stage, SA-51 & SA-64, page 36; Annex Report, SA-51 page 233, SA-64 page 294

¹⁹ GBA Stage 2, RC-6, page 91

²⁰ GBA Stage 2, SA-22, page 36

²¹ GBA Stage 2, SA-19, SA-20, SA-21 & SA-23, page 36, RC-2, page 82; Annex Report, SA-19 page 85, SA-20 page 89, SA-21 page 93 & SA-23 page 102

²² GBA Stage 2, RA-7, page 64

²³ GBA Stage 2 Parcel 39 page 36

situated in a rural area. The definition is extended to areas in cities or towns that have features characteristic of village life.²⁴

In another appeal case in 2019, an inspector rejected four homes proposed as ‘village infilling’ in a small settlement in Staffordshire green belt, ruling that it could not be considered a village because it did not have a church.²⁵ The settlement was judged to be no more than a hamlet and therefore it was judged that the proposal did not accord with the exception in Framework 145 (e).

While in 2018 an inspector approved plans for a new two-storey home as limited infilling in a washed over village near Solihull, referencing a 2015 court ruling that a ‘common sense’ approach should be taken regarding the physical extent of villages)²⁶. In the case, the inspector made clear that “a common sense, ‘on the ground’ view should be taken. On a visit to the appeal site, the inspector noted that despite sitting beyond its settlement boundary, the street is “visually and physically joined” to village, with nothing to clearly separate it. On this basis he considered it would be “perverse” to allow infilling in some smaller villages washed over by the green belt, but not in “a ribbon of development which extends out from a large and sustainable settlement”. The appeal was therefore allowed.

2.5.2 Openness

As discussed in the Green Belt Assessment Stage 2, the Turner judgement (2016) has highlighted important considerations surrounding the openness of the Green Belt. The judgment states that the concept of openness should not be limited to a volumetric approach comparing the size, mass and physical effect of openness before and after development. Greenness is also a visual quality, and the preservation of the visual openness should also be considered.

The Supreme Court in *R (Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) and others) v North Yorkshire County Council* [2020] UKSC 3²⁷ has recently provided important clarity as to the interpretation of the openness of the Green Belt and the relationship between ‘openness’ and ‘visual impact’ within the planning judgement of the decision maker. The judgment highlighted the important distinction in planning decisions between planning judgement and legal interpretation of planning policy. While visual impact may in the context of a particular case be judged a relevant factor by a decision maker in assessing

²⁴ This point is made in Paragraph 11 of the judgement by Centaur Homes against the decision of Cheltenham Borough Council (July 2019). Further information available here: Reference: APP/B1605/W/19/3225401

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?Caseid=3225401&CoID=0>

²⁵ This point is made in Paragraph 4 of the judgement in *A J Beaman Construction Ltd* against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (January 2019). Further information available here: APP/B3438/W/18/3211000

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?Caseid=3211000&CoID=0>

²⁶ This point is made in Paragraph 7 of the case of *Penrow Developments Ltd* against the decision of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (2018). Further information available here: Reference APP/Q4635/W/17/3191758

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?CaseID=3191758&CoID=0>

²⁷ Further information available here: <https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/uksc-2018-0077.html>

openness of the Green Belt it, in itself, will not be a strict nor mandatory determinative factor.

On the interpretation of ‘openness’ and the issue of ‘visual impact’ it was noted that:

“The concept of “openness” in para 90 of the NPPF [now para 146] seems to me a good example of such a broad policy concept. It is naturally read as referring back to the underlying aim of Green Belt policy, stated at the beginning of this section: “to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open ...”. Openness is the counterpart of urban sprawl and is also linked to the purposes to be served by the Green Belt. As PPG2 made clear, it is not necessarily a statement about the visual qualities of the land, though in some cases this may be an aspect of the planning judgement involved in applying this broad policy concept. Nor does it imply freedom from any form of development.”

Importantly, the Supreme Court re-enforced the importance of planning judgement within the role of the decision maker by stating:

“[Openness] is a matter not of legal principle but of planning judgement for the planning authority or the inspector.”

2.6 Washed Over Village Studies Elsewhere

In the absence of specific guidance to carry out washed over village assessments, it is helpful to review experience elsewhere to identify potential good practice. Table 2.1 provides a high-level of summary of approaches used elsewhere for a selection of authorities. It should be noted that the timescales for undertaking the reviews pre-dates the publication of the 2019 NPPF. In identifying good practice, this should be taken into account, to ensure that the methodology adopted is sound and reflects the latest policy requirements.

Table 2.1 Washed Over Village Assessment Experience Elsewhere

Local Authority	Study	Status	Summary of Approach
Runnymede	Runnymede 2030 Green Belt Village Review: Stage 1 Update	Published January 2018	<p>Purpose This study complemented the Stage 1 Green Belt Study. It looked to determine whether any built development that lies outside of designated settlements in Runnymede should be considered a village and whether they should remain washed over or excluded from the Green Belt.</p> <p>Village identification Definition in terms of form, population and service provision drawing on: Oxford English Dictionary definition, Office of National Statistics Rural-Urban classification guidance, and the South East Plan guidance on defining types of settlement / service centres.</p> <p>Approach: Assessed the open character of a village and the contribution it makes to the openness of the Green Belt. In line with PAS guidance, it focused on assessing openness and not landscape quality.</p> <p>Stage 1: Identified villages using the NPPF definition.</p> <p>Stage 2: Identified boundary around villages for assessment.</p> <p>Stage 3: Considered whether the village has an open character. Assessment based on density (built development as a whole and how this differs across the village area), scale and form, type of dwelling, plot size, building heights, enclosures or barriers, extent of open space or gaps in frontages (views or obscured) and topography.</p> <p>Stage 4: Considered the relationship that the village has with the openness of the surrounding Green Belt, based on views into and out of the village; relationship between open or private amenity areas on periphery of the village and surrounding Green Belt and how these interact with any gap to an adjacent settlement or development.</p> <p>Stage 5: Results from Stages 3 and 4 were taken together to assess whether an area had an overall degree of open character of openness (or not). This formed the basis as to whether a village should be ‘washed over’ by the Green Belt or excluded.</p> <p>Stage 6: If a conclusion was reached to exclude a village from the Green Belt, then a more in-depth and finer grain consideration of village boundary was undertaken.</p>
Guildford Borough	Guildford Borough Green Belt and Countryside Study: Vol IV – Insetting of Villages and Defining New Green Belt boundaries within Guildford Borough in accordance with the NPPF	Published April 2014	<p>Purpose: To determine the potential suitability or appropriateness of each village for inseting within the Green Belt,</p> <p>Approach: Used a three-stage assessment to test the primary considerations of openness and permanence.</p> <p>Villages: Used the settlement hierarchy to define villages.</p> <p>Stage 1: Assessed degree of openness within each village through analysis of urban form, density and the extent of developed land. This included mapping the detailed locations of developed and open areas to determine how this relates to openness of the wider Green Belt. Openness was assessed literally and perceptually.</p> <p>Stage 2: Assessed the surroundings area and potential new Green Belt boundaries at each village; and identifies defensible boundaries.</p> <p>Stage 3: Assessed the suitability of each village for inseting with the Green Belt and defining potential Green Belt boundaries. Used professional judgement – supported by the objective assessment within stage 1 and 2. Areas for consideration were as follows:</p>

Local Authority	Study	Status	Summary of Approach
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the majority of the village exhibit open character? • Do open areas within the village generally appear continuous with surrounding open land beyond the village – from within/ or outside the village? • Do the majority of the village edges exhibit incomplete, indistinguishable boundaries that would not permit the provision of new Green Belt boundaries in accordance with the requirements of NPPF para 85?
Tandridge Council	Green Belt Assessment (Part 3): Exceptional Circumstances and Insetting	June 2018	<p>Purpose: Makes recommendations as to which settlements should be ‘inset’ from the Green Belt in accordance with Paragraph 86 of the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>Villages: Used the settlement hierarchy to define villages.</p> <p>Approach: Openness assessment comprising three stages. Where it has been concluded that the village does have an open character, the second step is to assess whether that open character makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. The third step, if it is concluded that its open character makes an important contribution, is to assess whether it is necessary to prevent development in the settlement for the reason of contribution to openness. Where a settlement has passed each step of the assessment, the settlement should remain washed over by the Green Belt.</p>
Christchurch and East Dorset Council	Green Belt Assessment	Published 2017	<p>Purpose: Considered whether there is justification for any ‘washed over’ villages within the Green Belt to be identified as distinct parcels for assessment at Stage 2. Assessed whether washed over villages were sufficiently lacking in openness to warrant more detailed assessment in smaller parcels at Stage 2, with the view of potentially insetting them into the Green Belt.</p> <p>Villages: Used settlement hierarchy to define villages.</p> <p>Approach: Villages assessed for their contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (GB Purpose 3) and contribution to preventing the merger of neighbouring towns (GB Purpose 2). The settlement was then considered as an inset settlement area.</p> <p>Assessment to determine if village is sufficiently open to justify washed over status. Considered settlement size, density, form, the extent of urbanising characteristics (such as pavements and street lighting) and overall sense of openness.</p>

Local Authority	Study	Status	Summary of Approach
Chiltern and South Bucks	Review of Settlements within the Green Belt	April 2019	<p>Purpose: Review the status of the villages within the Green Belt. Assessed the openness of villages and where it should be retained or removed from the Green Belt.</p> <p>Village: A settlement of sufficient size and cohesion to be regarded as a place in its own right and which has a form which permits infilling.</p> <p>Stage A: Review whether a settlement area can be identified as a Village. If the settlement can be identified as a village, it moved onto the next stage of assessment.</p> <p>Stage B: Assessment of the openness in terms of the character of the village and its contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. If a village is regarded as being open in character and the village is regarded as contributing to the openness of the Green Belt the assessment would conclude that the village should remain in the Green Belt and be covered by a limited infilling policy. If the village is regarded as not being open and that it makes no contribution to the openness of the Green Belt then the village would pass onto the next stage.</p> <p>Stage C: Defining a defensible boundary where a village is considered for removal from the Green Belt.</p>

2.7 Conclusions / Implications

From the review of policy, previous studies and experience elsewhere, the following conclusions / implications for this washed over village assessment were identified:

- There is no Government defined methodology for carrying out a review of washed over villages in the Green Belt or detailed criteria for determining which villages should be inset.
- The fundamental policy principles of Green Belt should form the basis of assessing washed over villages, including:
 - Green Belt should prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
 - Land should not be included within the Green Belt boundaries, which is unnecessary to keep permanently open.
 - If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt.
 - Limited infill development is acceptable in some circumstances which would help to meet some local need on a small scale but would not adversely affect the village's character.
 - Green Belt boundaries should be clearly defined using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.
- There is no definition of what constitutes a village in the NPPF. However, a review of Case Law has assisted in defining a “village” as a group of houses and associated building, smaller than a town, situated in a rural area. A common-sense approach should be used when identifying the extent of a village. It should be physically and perceptually defined.
- Openness in washed over villages should be considered not only in terms of a ‘volumetric approach’ (i.e. physical coverage of built form) but also in terms of ‘visual elements’ (for example, visual linkages between settlements or functional character and linkages to the wider Green Belt).
- Washed over village studies elsewhere have focussed assessments on the degree of openness within each village and its contribution to the openness of the wider Green Belt. There is a commonality that openness is assessed by an analysis of character and urban form, developed land, visual intervisibility, and continuity with surrounding open land.
- The washed over villages and call for sites in this study have been previously assessed as part of larger parcels in the Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment. The washed over parts of Elstree and Shenley villages were identified for further consideration for potential release.
- The washed over parts of Elstree and Shenley villages and the whole of South Mimms village were assessed again in the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment. They were all recommended for further consideration for release.

- Kemprow/High Cross was the only other wholly washed over village that was assessed as part of a sub-area in the Green Belt Stage Assessment Stage 2. The sub-area was recommended for retention within the Green Belt.

3 Study Methodology

3.1 Overview

This section sets out the methodology developed for the washed over villages study. It also provides notes on the methodology's intended application, and assumptions and limitations associated with its use. The work makes appropriate references to the findings from the Green Belt Assessment work previously undertaken for Hertsmere Borough Council by Arup; as well as the emerging landscape sensitivity work by LUC²⁸.

As this study was being undertaken, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic broke out and the country went into lockdown. It was not therefore possible to undertake site visits. The study has been undertaken using secondary data sources, as well as drawing on the local knowledge of the study and the client team.

3.2 Methodology – Key Stages

The methodology for this study comprises of the following steps, which are expanded in more detail in the rest of this section.

- Desk study, document review and scoping.
- Study area definition.
- Development of GIS project for analysis.
- Define and agree assessment criteria;
- Reporting and recommendations.

3.2.1 Desk study, document review and scoping

This stage comprised scoping, gathering and focused review of the relevant background documents to set the scene for the study. These included the following:

- HCC (no date) Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessments;
- LUC (2020) Landscape Sensitivity to Residential and Employment Development in Hertsmere;
- HBC (various dates) Conservation Area Appraisals, where available and relevant; and
- LUC (2018) Sustainability Appraisal of the Hertsmere Local Plan: Potential Sites for Housing and Employment (Draft)

²⁸ LUC (2020) Landscape Sensitivity to Residential and Employment Development in Hertsmere, Draft Report, January 2020

3.2.2 Study area definition

The purpose of this stage was to identify which settlements should be included in the assessment and to define village boundaries for the purpose of the assessment. The stage was guided by national policy, case law, and experiences in other authorities to define the most appropriate and robust study area. The local context was also taken into account, specifically the HBC Settlement Hierarchy and conservation area extents.

For completeness, promoted sites from the council's Call for Sites that lie within or adjacent to the washed over villages have also been assessed.

3.2.3 Development of GIS project for analysis

The next stage was to develop a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) project in the software program ESRI ArcGIS, to build a series of spatially referenced base layers that could be interrogated for analysis in defining and applying the assessment criteria on site and in the reporting.

Data layers used included:

- Landscape Character Areas, plus local landscape units and buffers from the Landscape Sensitivity Study
- Heritage assets - archaeological sites and battlefields
- Conservation Areas
- Historic parks and gardens
- Key community facilities
- Smaller centres, parades and individual shops
- Green Belt
- Local Green Space
- Rights of way
- Road hierarchy
- South Mimms special policy area
- Sustainability Appraisal data layers, where relevant.

3.2.4 Define and agree assessment criteria

The assessment is intended to determine if the village still meets the NPPF criteria for continued inclusion within the Green Belt. For this, the land area is assessed on whether it makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt (NPPF, para 140). Further, the assessment reviews the potential for limited expansion or infilling within the villages to meet local development needs.

The assessment of the promoted sites considers the likely impact on villages open character and surrounding Green Belt openness if they were developed.

With the baseline context review and scoping undertaken and a review of the data layers in the GIS project, the next stage was to define a set of clear, transparent assessment criteria against which to assess each village and each site. Criteria were agreed with the client group and are introduced in section 3.3 below.

3.2.5 Reporting and recommendations

This stage comprised the capture of assessment findings into a concise report for each settlement and each site, documenting performance against the assessment criteria and formulating a short set of recommendations for each to guide decision makers within Hertsmere Borough Council.

3.3 Assessment Framework and Criteria

The assessment criteria for the villages and the sites respectively, are introduced below, followed by three-point assessment scales and definitions for application of the criteria. The criteria presented below reflect those used in the LUC Landscape Sensitivity study.

Each of the elements in the below tables (The Village Assessment Criteria, the Site Assessment Criteria, and Sensitivity Scale) influence, in part, the village or site's contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. The greater the positive representation, or, the greater the quality of each element the more each element contributes to the openness of the Green Belt.

Table 3.1 Village Assessment Criteria

Element	Rationale and discussion
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	In the context of openness and washed over villages these include prominent natural 'landmarks' and skyline features which contribute to settlement setting and sense of separation, such as distinctive woodland blocks and topographic or geological features. Landmarks could also include prominent built features which form the focus of views to settlements and their sense of identity, and which could potentially be affected by future development. These may include church spires, prominent buildings to settlement approaches and principal street junctions and village gateways, e.g. aspects which help define settlement legibility in the wider landscape.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement 'interface' points	This includes the concept of clarity and demarcation of a gateway and sense of arrival in a village from the wider landscape; the relationship between settlement and wider landscape; sense of porosity and key green spaces e.g. village greens which link landscape and 'townscape'.
Nodes, key open spaces	These are open spaces important to the form and structure of the village, including the contribution they make to character and also their historic dimension or sense of 'time depth' and importance to the evolution of the settlement.
Key views to/from settlement	Visual considerations will include character, extent, level to which views are experienced by users, and values associated with views, where information is available (e.g. if identified in the LCA or Conservation Area appraisals). This category will also

Element	Rationale and discussion
	include intervisibility (e.g. visibility between landmarks and areas, or views in and out of the settlement), elevation and long views to key landmarks e.g. St Albans Cathedral.
Settlement form and scale	This could include settlement characteristics important to an understanding of the settlement's identity, e.g. form – whether nucleated, linear or dispersed - urban form, density, extent of developed land, gaps, relationship to the wider landscape, presence of prominent or naturalistic features and skylines.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	This could consider relationship to landscape, topography and physical features, age, character, edge conditions, quality and level of integration between the settlement and the wider landscape, as appropriate.

Table 3.2 Site Assessment Criteria

Element	Rationale and discussion
Relationship to settlement	This considers the site's location relating to the visible settlement pattern or how the site contributes to the settlement's setting. The relationship to the settlement also considers how characteristic features of the settlement are reflected, for example; as local vernacular materials, planting species or vegetative structure.
Boundary conditions and qualities	This considers the degree to which the boundaries are in keeping with the settlement and wider landscape with particular attention to local vernacular or historic hedgerows. The degree of continuity of the boundary treatment is also considered.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site's relationship to the wider landscape is determined by a number of factors, including; the scale and pattern of field boundaries including cultural pattern, land uses, visible and physical connectivity of the site and wider landscape.
Nature and extent of views	This considers features of the views, such as the degree of openness or enclosure, composition of the skyline, if any positive archetypal features or detrimental urbanising elements are visible, the amount of development within the views as well as the cultural importance and distance of views

Table 3.3 Village Assessment Criteria Sensitivity Scale

Element	Sensitivity scale and definitions		
	Low	Moderate	High
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	Little or no presence of distinctive landmark or skyline/orientation features	Moderately prominent presence of landmark features and/or a moderate degree of presence of skyline/orientation features.	Very prominent and possibly historic and well-documented landmark features – distinctive, church spire or monument, prominent building integral to the character of the village. May also include prominent wider skyline or topographic features integral to settlement character and experience, such as distinctive woodland blocks,

Element	Sensitivity scale and definitions		
	Low	Moderate	High
			topographic or geological features.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement 'interface' points	Very eroded, weak gateways or sense of arrival, with very few or no archetypal features.	Moderately strong, partly intact settlement gateways or approaches, but may have some degree of erosion by modern development and boundaries.	Very strong (likely to be historically intact) settlement gateways or approaches, centred on a village green/sign and/or archetypal clusters of buildings – a village church, churchyard and traditional pub, for example.
Nodes, key open spaces	Very poor or weakly defined/eroded, or otherwise few or no nodes	Moderately well-defined character of key spaces. Likely to have moderate degree of intervisibility and legibility with other parts of the village/hamlet.	Very strongly defined character of key spaces – greens/commons etc. Likely to have strong intervisibility and legibility with other parts of the village/hamlet and potentially also the wider landscape.
Key views to/from settlement	Poor or interrupted or eroded views or limited views	Likely to be views of moderate extent with medium degree of definition by archetypal elements/buildings important to character/form of settlement.	Intact or expansive views or those defined by archetypal elements/buildings/structures essential to character/form of settlement. Views may have been identified as important in the LCA or the Conservation Area Appraisal, as relevant.
Settlement form and scale	Expanded settlement with little relationship to original settlement core or otherwise little sense of traditional form.	Settlement may be formed from a combination of traditional and eroded/expanded structural elements.	Small, scale traditional, settlements of compact nucleated, linear, loose or dispersed character and traditional/historic pattern, with strong relationship between settlement and immediate landscape.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	Very poorly integrated and/or exposed settlement edges, which may also offer considerable enhancement potential.	Moderately intact settlement edges, with some relationship between landscape and settlement edge and some erosion by modern development.	Intact and well-integrated settlement edges – strong relationship between physical landscape features/topography and the settlement edge. Positive relationship between buildings and boundaries e.g. well-vegetated garden boundaries.

Table 3.4 Site Assessment Criteria Sensitivity Scale

Element	Sensitivity scale and definitions		
	Low	Moderate	High
Relationship to settlement	Little or no direct connection to the existing settlement pattern or key roads/lanes.	Moderately connected to the settlement pattern with some presence of characteristic features/buildings/planting or materials of the settlement.	Well integrated into the settlement envelope with presence characteristic features/buildings/planting or materials of the settlement. May also include features which contribute to the settlements setting or structure.
Boundary conditions and qualities	Very eroded, weak boundaries, with very few or no archetypal features.	Moderately strong, partly intact boundaries, but may have some degree of erosion by modern development and boundaries.	Very strong (likely to be historically intact) boundaries. May be in a wider pattern of consistent boundary treatments of archetypal vegetation or built structure.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	Very eroded historic field pattern. Little to no natural landscape features integrated into the site with no visible or physical connection to the wider landscape.	Moderately well-defined historic field pattern with some presence of wider landscape elements situated within the site. Some visual/physical connections to the wider landscape.	Intact historic field pattern. The site features elements of the wider landscape within it and there are clear views or connections with the archetypal landscape surroundings.
Nature and extent of views	Poor or interrupted or eroded views or limited views	Likely to be views of moderate extent with medium degree of definition by archetypal elements/buildings important to character/form of settlement.	Intact or expansive views or those defined by archetypal elements/buildings/structures essential to character/form of settlement. Views may have been identified as important in the LCA or the Conservation Area Appraisal, as relevant.

3.4 Notes on Application; Assumptions and Limitations

Notes on scale

The criteria in Table 3.1 have been designed for use at the required settlement scale and are therefore appropriate for use at that scale. In this instance it has been used to assess tier Vi and Vii (other villages) settlements as per Hertsmere's settlement hierarchy.

The criteria relate to consideration of land uses relevant to the settlement fringe, e.g. residential and mixed-use development.

Notes on criteria application and forming judgements

The criteria are not mutually exclusive, e.g. they do not 'cancel each other out'. Rather, professional judgement should be used in determining which of the criteria are most important in each case.

Notes on the guidance and recommendations, and their intended use

General principles: - Generally, the guidance developed is for use at the village and/or site allocation scale. A further, finer grain level of analysis would be needed for masterplanning or similar work beyond the scale of establishing an outline development brief and the scale of an allocation

4 Study Area

4.1 Overview

This section introduces how the villages and sites have been identified for assessment in this study. The section reviews the Council's other evidence bases relevant to this study and defines villages in the Green Belt to review. It also provides an overview of the Council's Call for Sites process, and the eight sites, which have been included for assessment in this study.

4.2 Settlement Hierarchy

There is no national definition of what contributes a village. Case law provides an indication of what is 'defined' as a village – i.e. a settlement with a rural character, small grouping of houses, and scale smaller than a town.

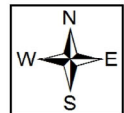
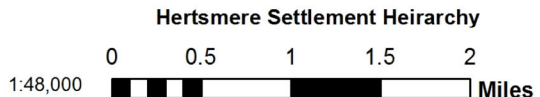
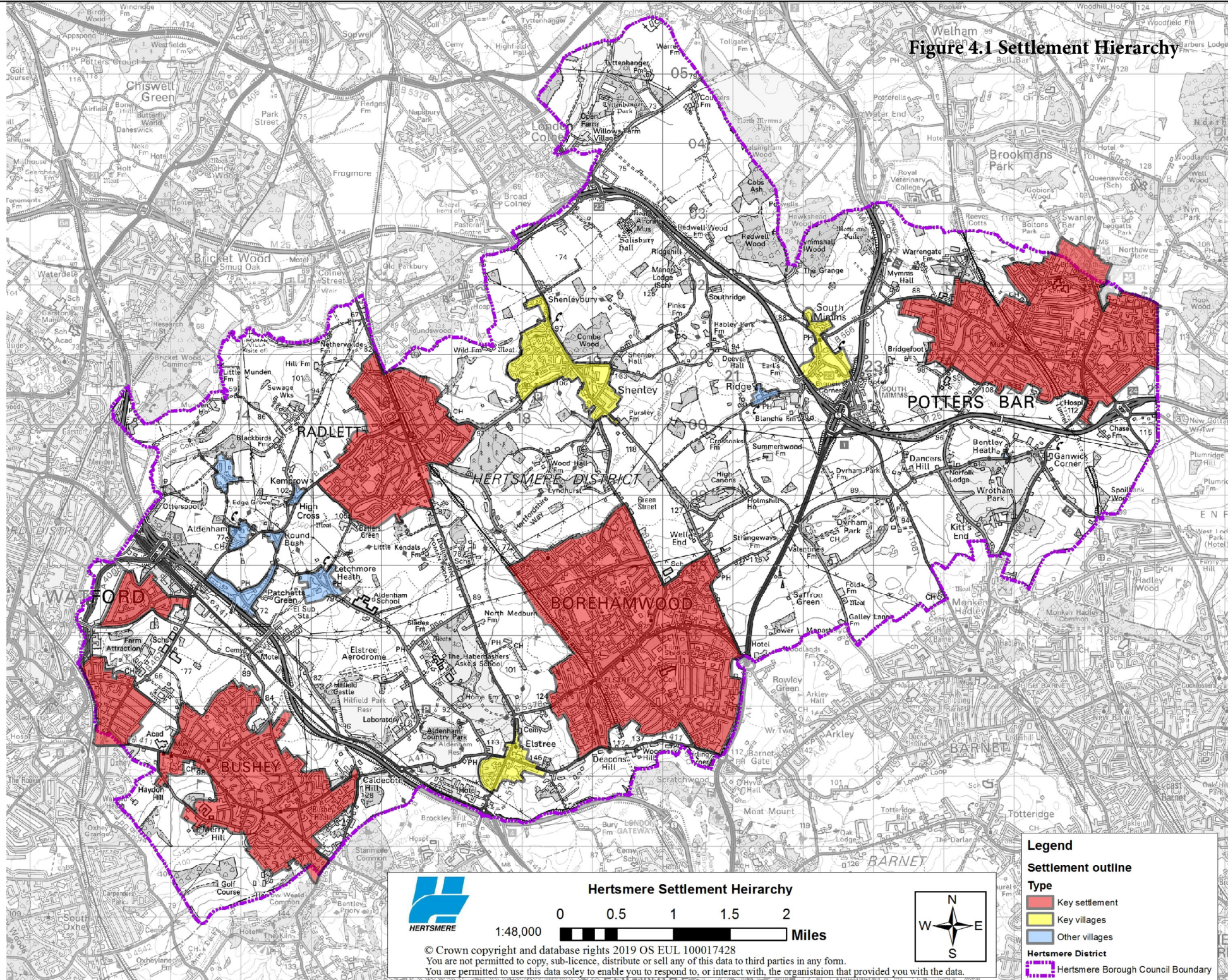
Hertsmere Council has prepared a settlement hierarchy²⁹ as part of the Local Plan review. The settlements within Hertsmere are separated into seven tiers, ranging from towns to small villages and hamlets (Table 4.1, Figure 4.1). The settlement hierarchy includes an assessment of the size and function of all the settlements in the borough, alongside their ability to accommodate growth. It also includes an assessment of the settlement's accessibility to services. The settlement hierarchy identifies Key Villages (Tier IV and V) and Other Villages (Tiers VI and VII). Both these categories of settlements share the aforementioned characteristics / definition of a village, although Tier VII settlements are specifically referred to as small hamlets (defined as settlements with less than 50 households).

²⁹ Hertsmere Council (no date) *Planning for Growth, Settlement Hierarchy and Accessibility Mapping Analysis – Technical Study*

Table 4.1 Hertsmere Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement	Tier	Settlement	Definition
Key Settlement	Tier I	Borehamwood Elstree	A diverse, growing population and an important economic centre for South West Hertfordshire, rail and bus links to London and other key towns, an international reputation for film and television production, along with a retail centre with a growing presence of national multiples.
	Tier II	Potters Bar	A key local town in the east of the Borough with a number of major employers, two distinct shopping areas, thriving industrial areas and rail and bus links to London and towns to the north.
		Bushey	Predominantly residential in character covering three distinct centres (Bushey Heath, Bushey Village and North Bushey) with bus and nearby rail links to Watford and London, significant pockets of local employment and a wide variety of shops and services.
	Tier III	Radlett	Largely residential in character with good rail links to London and a popular well-established district centre serving both the local population and an increasing number of visitors from further afield, with a large number of shops and local services.
Key Village	Tier IV	Shenley	A rural village with a distinctive centre that has grown substantially in the last 20 years with the development of the former Shenley Hospital. Largely residential in character with a limited range of local shops and local services, and limited opportunity for infill development
		Elstree (Village)	A distinctive village in its own right, with a small visible centre that contains a range of local businesses and local services with limited opportunities for infill development.
	Tier V	South Mimms	A distinctive village in its own right that is located close to the junction with the M25, with a limited range of facilities including a primary school.
Other Villages	Tier VI	Aldenham (including Wall Hall) Letchmore Heath Patchetts Green Ridge	Small rural villages which remain largely residential in character and land use, relying on larger settlements nearby for employment and local services.
	Tier VII	Round Bush Bentley Heath High Cross	Small hamlets with less than 50 households.

Figure 4.1 Settlement Hierarchy



Legend

Settlement outline

Type

- Key settlement
- Key villages
- Other villages

Hertsmere District

- Hertsmere Borough Council Boundary

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4.3 Key Villages

The three larger areas of Shenley, Elstree and South Mimms are identified as Key Villages. Current policy identifies them as appropriate areas to accommodate some growth. Core Strategy Policy CS13 defines where limited village infilling can take place in Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms.

Shenley and Elstree (Village) are classified as Tier IV Settlements, which are established residential settlements, with a small amount of local businesses. Both have distinct village centres that have a number of services and facilities including a local primary school. Parts of Shenley (Porters Park) and Elstree Village (Composers Estate) are inset from the Green Belt in Hertsmere, while the other parts of these villages are washed over by Green Belt. The washed over parts have 'village envelopes' within which limited infilling is permitted.

Inset areas are not subject to the same development restrictions as settlements in the Green Belt, where development must demonstrate that it is 'appropriate' in Green Belt terms. While the two parts of the villages are subject to different national policy designations, locally they are largely perceived by their residents as a single settlement, with recent areas of housing integrated into those communities (Hertsmere Draft Green Belt Topic Paper 2020).

South Mimms village is classified as a Tier V Settlement- a small rural village which includes a handful of local businesses. South Mimms is wholly washed over by Green Belt. It has a defined village envelope where limited infilling is allowed to take place.

As discussed previously in Section 2.4.1, the key villages were assessed as part of parcels in the Stage 1 Green Belt Stage Assessment Shenley (Parcels 18 and 30), Elstree (Village) (Parcels 8 and 10) and South Mimms (Village) (Parcel 40) and South Mimms service area (Parcel 36). This considered whether the parcels contributed to the five purposes of the national Green Belt policy. While all parcels were assessed to meet the purposes moderately or strongly, it was identified that the washed-over areas of Elstree (Village) and Shenley Village, as well as South Mimms service area perform less strongly and should be considered further. No change was recommended for South Mimms village at this stage.

As discussed previously in Section 2.4.2, the Stage 2 Assessment considered the key villages and immediately adjacent land – Shenley (sub-areas 27 and 28), Elstree (sub-areas 51 and 64), South Mimms Village (sub-area 22) and South Mimms service area (sub-area 18). It identified that these three villages and some immediately adjacent land should be considered further for inseting from the Green Belt given the limited contribution they play to meeting the Green Belt NPPF purposes.

Hertsmere Council is considering inseting the key villages. The emerging Hertsmere Green Belt Topic Paper (2020) assesses the implications of inseting Shenley, Elstree and South Mimms and considers the current arrangement to be somewhat anachronistic. The difference between these villages being inset and having an envelope for infilling, as is already the case currently, is assessed to be relatively limited. The Council further argues that inseting their entire built area would enable the plan to more closely align with the NPPF and remove a planning

constraint which unnecessarily constrains the extent to which infill development can occur.

The key villages of Shenley, Elstree (Village) and South Mimms were thus not considered further in this washed-over village assessment. The sites have been subject to an initial assessment in the previous Green Belt studies, which gave a preliminary recommendation for further consideration to inset the villages from the Green Belt. In a separate commission, Arup is identifying new Green Belt boundaries for the inset villages.

4.4 Other Villages

Other Villages includes those settlements classed as Tier VI (Aldenham including Wall Hall, Letchmore Heath, Patchetts Green and Ridge) and Tier VII (Round Bush, Bentley Heath and High Cross) in the settlement hierarchy. None of these washed over villages are identified as locations where infill development might be supported in the current Local Plan.

As set out in Section 2.4.1, the Other Villages were part of larger parcels considered in the Green Belt Assessment Stage 1. The Parcels (9, 18, 21 and 26) were assessed to meet the Green Belt strongly or moderately and were not recommended for further consideration (excluding that part of Parcel 18 recommended for further consideration at Shenley).

As set out in Section 2.4.2, at Stage 2, only one washed over village was within an assessed sub-area. Kemprow/High Cross washed over village was within the boundary of sub-area 39 for assessment. Although scoring weakly against the Green Belt purposes, the sub-area was considered to make an important contribution to the role of the wider Green Belt. It was not recommended for further consideration.

All of these villages have been included in this subsequent assessment. The defined geographical extent of these villages has been informed by the council's work on the settlement hierarchy and designated conservation areas where they exist (i.e. Aldenham, Roundbush, Patchetts Green, Letchmore Heath and Ridge). For those hamlets without conservation areas, (i.e. Kemprow/High Cross and Bentley Heath) the areas of built form and the presence of defensible and likely to be permanent boundaries were identified to help define the extent of these assessment area.

4.5 Washed Over Village Sites

As part of the Local Plan process, the Council held a call for sites. Eight sites were promoted in / around Tier VI and Tier VII washed over villages. All of these sites are included in this assessment to ensure that the Council has considered all appropriate development options to meet local housing needs. The locations of the promoted sites are shown in the site assessments (sections 5.10-5.15).

4.6 Summary

The seven washed-over villages that are assessed as part of this study are as follows:

Tier VI Settlements

- Aldenham (including Wall Hall);
- Patchett's Green;
- Letchmore Heath;
- Ridge;

Tier VII Settlements

- Kemprow/High Cross;
- Round Bush; and
- Bentley Heath.

The eight sites, promoted in the Council's call for sites, in the washed-over villages assessed as part of this study are:

- HEL179 – Hilfield Lane, Patchetts Green (Tier VI);
- HEL219 and HEL252 – Pegmire Lane, Patchetts Green (Tier VI);
- HEL345 – Aldenham Glebe, Roundbush Nursery, Round Bush (Tier VII);
- HEL180 – Kemprow, between White House and Adelaide Lodge, High Cross (Tier VII);
- HEL199 – Land at Church Lane, Aldenham (Tier VI);
- HEL234 – Well Cottage (Ganwick Corner), Bentley Heath (Tier VII);
- HEL343 – Land South of Letchmore Heath (Tier VI); AND
- HEL509 -Letchmore Heath (Tier VI)

5 Assessment of the Washed Over Villages and the Eight Sites

This section presents the findings from the assessment of the villages and the sites, applying the criteria developed in the section 3. The villages assessment is presented first, followed by the assessment of the eight individual sites.


5.1 Villages assessment

This section is presented in the following order:

- Aldenham (including Wall Hall);
- Roundbush;
- Patchett's Green;
- Letchmore Heath;
- Kemprow/High Cross;
- Ridge; and
- Bentley Heath.

5.2 Aldenham (including Wall Hall)



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  HELAA Sites
-  Woodland planting

Aldenham is a compact village located on the Aldenham Plateau. The parish (Aldenham Parish Council) dates back as far as Domesday and the village displays considerable time depth, being arranged around a prominent historic church and picturesque village green. For the purpose of the assessment and spatial planning in Hertsmere Borough more widely, Aldenham is grouped with the nearby, but separate residential development within the historic Wall Hall Estate, to the north-west.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	<p>Key landmarks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prominent church of St John the Baptist with its tall, buttressed puddingstone tower and characteristic short spirelet or ‘Hertfordshire Spike’, within the centre of the village. Wall Hall (a Grade II listed gothic style mansion, once known as Aldenham Abbey) and its parklands (Grade II Registered Park and Garden, with some work by Repton) to the north of the village. Formerly a campus of the University of Hertfordshire, now luxury apartments, with associated low-density housing development surrounding it. Wall Hall and parkland form an important part of the wider village setting. 	The prominent and historic landmarks have a high sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement ‘interface’ points	<p>Key gateways include Church Lane from the east and south, and Wall Hall Drive extending southwards from the Wall Hall Estate, to the north west.</p> <p>Church Lane (east) creates a positive, leafy and treelined gateway into the historic village core, whilst the same lane to the south has a slightly less sensitive character due to the presence of the fast Radlett Road and the Aldenham Golf Course to the west, offset against the otherwise densely tree-lined, rural character of the lane.</p> <p>Wall Hall Drive is a long, mostly straight, treelined formal avenue (and now a private road) leading to the Wall Hall Estate to the north-west.</p>	The entrances and thresholds to Aldenham are intact and have historic character which creates a high sensitivity.
Nodes, key open spaces	<p>Key spaces include the churchyard, which occupies a picturesque, slightly elevated site in the centre of the village, and the village green, surrounded by historic cottages, immediately opposite, on the western side of Church Lane. These two spaces are large in scale and make a notable contribution to defining the character of this compact village.</p>	The well-defined key open spaces of Aldenham reflect the historic character of the village and have a high sensitivity.
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Most views of Aldenham are localised short to mid-range views resulting from the density of trees and small blocks of woodland. Views from the village green of the mature trees and</p>	The views of historic assets within the settlement are

Element	Comment	Judgement
	historic buildings surrounding are characteristic views with St John the Baptist Church creating a focal point. There are glimpsed long distance views toward the church spire from the east of Aldenham.	important to the character and create a moderate sensitivity.
Settlement form and scale	Aldenham is a compact settlement of loosely nucleated formation and relatively 'porous' character, centred on the churchyard and the village green. It is however also considered together with the low-density development at Wall Hall, although the two essentially read as distinct areas of settlement due to the physical separation between them.	The compact settlement pattern of Aldenham and Wall Hall centred on historic features are well structured and have a high sensitivity.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>Aldenham is characterised by a mostly mature, wooded and well-vegetated edge, with development limits well-contained within it. A slightly more open edge is apparent at Holbrook Gardens, to the west but there is a distinct separation from the neighbouring Roundbush settlement to the east.</p> <p>Aldenham is a characteristic village representing the wider Aldenham Plateau Landscape Character Area (LCA) and features several of the sensitive features including; historic settlement pattern of small villages around greens, now designated as Conservation Areas, historic features listed buildings and Archaeological Sites and part of Grade II listed Wall Hall Registered Park and Garden, and recreational routes which allow access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape.</p>	The areas of the settlement which have a mature, well vegetated edge give the settlement a strong integration with the surrounding landscape, a distinct separation from the neighbouring Roundbush settlement and therefore a high sensitivity.

Overall sensitivity rating

The site has a sensitivity rating of **high**, despite the reduced sensitivity due to the presence of Radlett Road and Aldenham golf course. This is principally due to the settlement featuring a number of key distinctive, listed and landmark buildings, such as St John the Baptist church and spirelet, as well as listed landscapes such as Wall Hall's gardens. The 'porous' character and green space nodes within the settlement add to the high sensitivity.

Guidance and recommendations

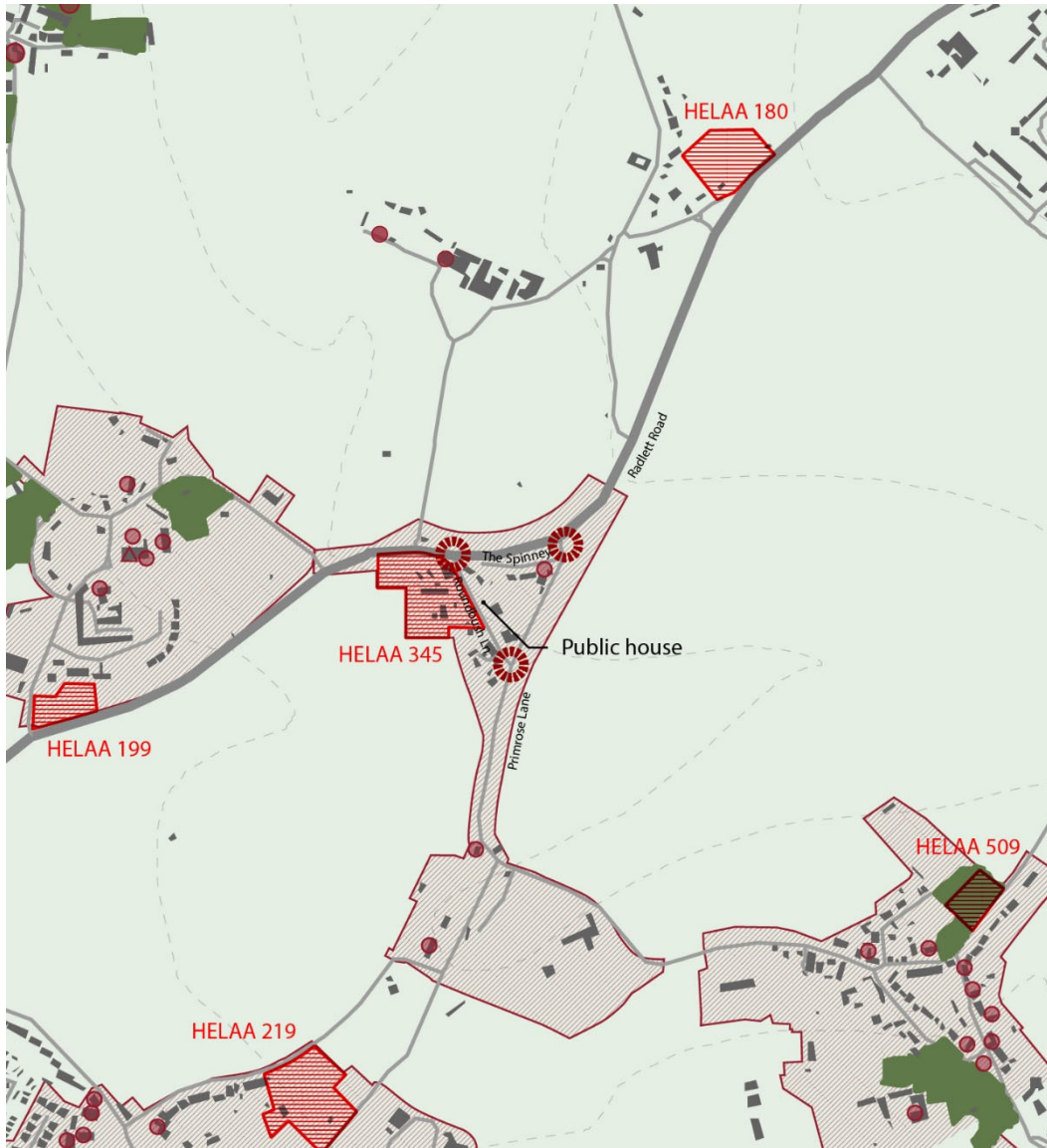
Due to Aldenham and Wall Hall's loose, nucleated structure and well vegetated settlement edges, the village contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, should **retain washed over status**.




Aldenham and Wall Hall have **low development potential** as development would likely interrupt the nucleated development pattern and reduce the openness of the settlement.

If any development takes place within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

- The views toward or from the key landmark buildings, green spaces and nodal points should be conserved and enhanced. For example; views of St John the Baptist church, Wall Hall and its parkland or their settings.
- The character and historic nature of the existing gateways into the settlement should be conserved and enhanced by maintaining the scale and treelined character of Church Lane and Wall Hall Drive. Where appropriate, design should also seek to reduce the influence of Radlett Road through screening using in keeping hedgerows.
- The character and openness of the nodal greenspaces and their setting and integration with their surroundings should be conserved and enhanced.
- The scale of development and established settlement pattern of nucleated clusters focused around nodal points within the village, for example; the village green and the distinct area around Wall Hall, should be reflected.
- The separation of Aldenham and Wall Hall should be maintained.
- The structural vegetation forming much of the settlement edge should be conserved and enhanced by maintaining or adding to the network of hedgerows, woodland blocks and vegetated settlement edge and ensure that the settlement has structural vegetation along the exterior boundaries, which are sympathetic to the wider landscape.

5.3 Roundbush



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  HELAA Sites
-  Woodland planting

Roundbush is a small hamlet, north of the village of Aldenham, centred on the historic Round Bush public house and with its northern edge defined by Radlett Road. Roundbush Nursery to the west has created a notable extension to the settlement footprint.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	<p>A key landmark within this small hamlet is the Round Bush public house, at the centre of the settlement.</p> <p>The mature trees along the lanes influence the skylines within the settlement.</p> <p>A detracting, but visually prominent feature, is the row of pylons north of Radlett Road.</p>	The limited number of landmark features evident gives a moderate sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement 'interface' points	<p>Key gateways include Primrose Lane to the south, and Radlett Road to the east and west.</p> <p>Primrose Lane is a historic, narrow lane of strongly rural, hedgerow-lined character.</p> <p>The eastern approach from Radlett Road is defined by a hedge lined rural lane (the northern end of Primrose Lane), truncated by the fast, straight Radlett Road. The western approach is formed by Roundbush Lane and The Spinney, which meet Radlett Road – these are partly wooded lanes lined with brick-built cottages and bungalows.</p>	The historic lanes and clusters of dwellings and the traditional public house at the centre of the settlement have a high sensitivity.
Nodes, key open spaces	The settlement has no public village green or green spaces. A social node is formed by the Round Bush public house but it does not feature an open space.	The public house but lack of public open space creates a moderate sensitivity.
Key views to/from settlement	<p>The hamlet is mainly surrounded by arable, gently undulating fields. Views appear mainly filtered by hedgerows to lanes that enclose the village.</p> <p>Most views are short and feature the one or two storey cottages characteristic of the settlement or are enclosed by the surrounding vegetation creating a treelined skyline.</p>	The intimate views featuring archetypal buildings have a high sensitivity, but the general short distance views reduce the sensitivity to moderate.
Settlement form and scale	<p>A compact, nucleated settlement set within the triangular intersection of three minor roads and lanes.</p> <p>Roundbush is largely defined by vernacular architecture, in the characteristic local red brick. A notable difference in terms of</p>	The small scale and compact nature defined by the historic lanes give a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	settlement form is provided by the Roundbush Nursery on the immediate west of the hamlet. The built form of the nursery has less relationship to the road and has a larger area of greenspace behind it than is typical for Roundbush.	
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>A mainly porous, but well-wooded settlement edge characterised by hedgerows and mature trees. The northern edge of the settlement is in proximity to the fast Radlett Road, however, a belt of woodland north of the Spinney reduces the effects of the larger road. The winding vegetated lanes maintain visual separation from the surrounding settlements of Aldenham, High Cross, Letchmore Heath and Patchetts Green.</p> <p>Roundbush contributes to the wider Aldenham Plateau Landscape Character Area by featuring several of the characteristic features including, historic sunken lanes, a good mix of vernacular buildings and typical materials of brick, clay tiles and flint. Roundbush exhibits sensitive landscape features of the wider LCA including; recreational routes, a rural landscape close to an area with a large population and a historic settlement pattern.</p>	The well vegetated settlement edges and back gardens of Roundbush integrate into the surrounding landscape whilst the winding vegetated lanes maintain visual separation from the surrounding settlements therefore, the sensitivity is high.

Overall sensitivity rating

The overall sensitivity rating is **high**. The high score is primarily related to the compact nature and well defined, vegetated edges of the triangular shaped settlement, the integration into the surrounding agricultural landscape and despite the small size, the contribution of views along historic lanes featuring archetypal buildings and treelined skylines.

Guidance and recommendations

Due to Roundbush's loose, small scale, defined, nuclear development structure and well vegetated, lanes and settlement edges; the village contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, should **retain washed over status**.





Roundbush has **low development potential** due to the compact nature of the settlement pattern and well-defined settlement edges.

If any development takes places within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

- The compact development pattern and small scale of Roundbush should be maintained and enhanced.
- The well vegetated settlement edges and the intact nature of the surrounding field pattern should be conserved and enhanced.
- The separation between the areas of Roundbush and Aldenham should be maintained and the distinct identities of the two settlements should be conserved and enhanced.
- The narrow, historic characterful nature of the lanes with well-established hedgerows surrounding Roundbush should be conserved and enhanced by maintaining the trees, hedgerows and embankments lining the lanes.
- The screening provided by the wooded belt north of Roundbush between The Spinney and Radlett Road should be conserved and enhanced.
- The wooded skyline and well vegetated nature of the settlement provided by the wooded surroundings and trees in back gardens, should be conserved and enhanced.

5.4 Patchetts Green



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  HELAA Sites
-  Woodland planting

Patchetts Green is a village containing a number of historic houses and cottages, south of Roundbush. It has a relatively loose, linear form and a distinct rural setting, with leafy, well-wooded edges and both a historic village green and a new village green in the centre of the recent residential Equestrian Centre redevelopment (46 dwellings).

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	Due to the views being constrained by the surrounding development or vegetation there are limited long views and no obvious landmarks.	The lack of landmarks gives a low sensitivity but the intact well vegetated lanes and treelined skyline is characteristic and gives a moderate sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement 'interface' points	<p>Key gateways include Hilfield Lane, Summerhouse Lane and Pegmire Lane.</p> <p>Hilfield Lane intersects with Summerhouse Lane toward the south-eastern edge of the hamlet. Both lanes have a leafy, historic rural lane character, and are defined by enclosure created by a combination of hedgerows and wooded belts and the front boundary of properties with hedges, fences or walls in front of large private driveways. Historic character is imparted by Delrow House, a gabled stucco dwelling (Grade II listed, early 19th century remodelling of 17th century house) behind a high boundary wall to the junction of the two roads.</p> <p>Hilfield Lane is defined by mature trees, which almost meet over the lane, hedgerows and a grassed and vegetated boundary ditch, along with a WWII pillbox on the edge of the road. The lane also has a slightly neglected character to the north of the junction with Summerhouse Lane, with a boarded-up development plot to the west, plus breaks in the historic hedgerow boundary e.g. for the recent development at Anvil Mews.</p> <p>Summerhouse Lane has a similarly rural and wooded character to Hilfield Lane, with one side characterised by intact hedgerows and the other broken out for gardens and driveways for mid and late 20th century housing within the hamlet. Mature stands of trees including pines are characteristic.</p> <p>Pegmire Lane is bounded by the village green, with the Three Compasses public house behind. The lane is defined by a dense, clipped mixed native hedgerow to the north side, with the south side largely lost to garden boundaries and driveways for mid-20th century houses.</p>	The historic and rural lanes lined with mature vegetation and examples of historic buildings and features gives a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Nodes, key open spaces	<p>A key open space and node is the village green and adjacent public house, as described above. The village green extends across to the opposite side of Hilfield Lane and includes a pond in this location.</p> <p>The equestrian centre development also has a localised village green to the north of the development opposite the historic village green.</p>	<p>The village green has a strong intervisibility and legibility to the adjacent public house and surrounding development of the settlement which gives a high sensitivity.</p>
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Due to the influence of the dense hedgerow and treelined lanes of the village, views into or out of the village are largely constrained with the exception of glimpsed views across the agricultural fields between Patchetts Green and Aldenham.</p> <p>The village green is a key focus of the settlement allowing for views across and a break in the enclosed character of the lanes lined with trees or hedgerows. Historic and archetypal buildings surrounding the village green and the node between Summerhouse Lane and Hilfield create localised characterful views.</p>	<p>The glimpsed views across the wider landscape toward Aldenham and the views of archetypal buildings which are essential to the character of the settlement have a high sensitivity, however, the infrequency and often short distance or confined nature of the views reduces sensitivity to moderate.</p>
Settlement form and scale	<p>Patchett's Green is a small scale partly linear hamlet, of low-density houses set in leafy gardens, often well set back from the lane network which creates a high level of openness. Some very large properties are evident, e.g. Delrow House. A range of materials have been used on the larger properties including painted timber and render and some smaller pre-war cottages exhibit yellow brick stock with red brick lintels and detailing.</p> <p>The recent Equestrian Centre redevelopment reflects some local materials such as traditional brick and weatherboarding as well as introducing some more modern materials. The development is arranged in long curved cul-de-sacs with some large detached properties often with little structural vegetation or front gardens.</p>	<p>The small and low-density nature of the settlement with a loose pattern and strong degree of openness gives a high sensitivity.</p>
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The settlement edge is mostly well integrated by virtue of the hedgerow lined and wooded rural lane network. More exposed edges are apparent toward the north-eastern edges of the settlement, although this appears more to be due to the scale of the properties on this road. The surrounding vegetation and narrow, meandering lanes also create a separation from the nearby Roundbush settlement to the east.</p>	<p>The well vegetated boundaries which integrate the settlement into the wider landscape gives a high sensitivity.</p>

Element	Comment	Judgement
	<p>The Equestrian Centre redevelopment backs onto a green buffer and embankment separating it from the M1.</p> <p>Patchetts Green is an important village of the Aldenham Plateau LCA with a historic structure around a village green, sunken lanes which enclose the open arable fields and retain a rural and tranquil character away from the noisy M1/A41 corridor. It includes sensitive features such as; the settlement pattern of the villages around its greens which is now designated as Conservation Area, recreational routes and landscapes with rural character close to a large population.</p>	

Overall sensitivity rating

The settlement has a **high sensitivity** due to the low-density nature, strong vegetated and historic lanes and with the settlement edge integrating well into the surrounding rural landscape.

Guidance and recommendations

Patchetts Green contributes to the openness of the Green Belt through its loose development structure with large and well vegetated back gardens combined with two village greens, well vegetated rural lanes and development edges which integrate the settlement into the wider rural landscape. Therefore, it should **retain washed over status**.






Patchetts Green has **low development potential** due to likely degradation development would have on the mature vegetation which integrates the settlement into the wider landscape and the openness of the wider Green Belt.

If any development takes places within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

- The thresholds to Patchetts Green and the features of the lanes, which give the historic character should be conserved and enhanced. These include; surrounding hedgerows and vegetation and adjacent front garden boundary treatments. Any new proposal should be sympathetic to the existing arrangement.
- The social node of both village greens and neighbouring public house should be conserved and enhanced and remain visually permeable.
- The generally linear and low-density settlement with houses well set back from the road giving a strong rural character to the lanes. These development patterns should be conserved and enhanced.
- The hedgerows and wooded areas which define the settlement edge and integrate it into the wider rural landscape should be maintained and enhanced.

5.5 Letchmore Heath



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  HELAA Sites
-  Woodland planting

Letchmore Heath is a small, nucleated, triangular, picturesque village centred on a village green and adjacent pond and the surrounding grouping of C16th-17th cottages. The settlement name comes from Old English meaning ‘Dirty Pond’ (LCA – Aldenham Plateau).

Letchmore Heath is in close proximity to other similarly sized settlements; roughly 1km east of Patchetts Green and 800m south east from Roundbush and 1km south west from the outskirts of the larger settlement of Radlett.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	<p>A number of prominent local landmarks also have notable cultural associations, due to the village’s close proximity to the Elstree Film Studios. Other historic buildings, such as Bhaktivedanta Manor (a large half-timbered mansion, formerly Piggott’s Manor), also have notable cultural associations, in this case as a temple of the Hare Krishna movement donated by George Harrison.</p> <p>The war memorial on the village green creates a focal point to the open space as well as offering cultural significance.</p>	The local landmarks within the settlement with contemporary and historic cultural notability create a high sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement ‘interface’ points	<p>Key gateways include Common Lane to the east, Grange Lane to the west and Aldenham Road to the south.</p> <p>Common Lane is an historic, sunken, hedgerow and hedgebank-lined lane with hazel coppice and ancient oak trees, which provides a strong rural approach and positive gateway to the village.</p> <p>Grange Lane has a strong rural quality with the long, linear village green and associated brick-built cottages with garden boundaries including white picket fences, forming an attractive approach to the village.</p> <p>Aldenham Road forms the final rural approach to the village, being partly more open in character than the other two, with low hedgerows looking out across open fields in places, plus variation in the form of woodlands and occasional cottages set back from the road. Aldenham School and sports centre complex are situated behind a low hedgerow north of the road. The white painted village gate detail upon entry to the settlement is a distinctive feature.</p>	The historically intact sunken lanes, archetypal clustered of cottages and lanes vegetated with mature trees and woodland create a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Nodes, key open spaces	Two village greens form the most distinctive landmarks – the one centred upon the war memorial opposite Bhaktivedanta Manor and adjacent to a village pond, and the long, narrow linear green following much of the length of Grange Lane.	The village greens form an integral sequence and character to the village and contribute to the legibility and therefore, create a high sensitivity.
Key views to/from settlement	Due to the narrow sunken lanes and the relatively compact nature of Letchmore Heath views are largely constrained and short distance. The linear village green is the focus of a series of views with a greater degree of openness across the village green in the south of the village. Most views have a wooded skyline.	Despite the limited long range views the short views of the archetypal village green and dwellings in a wooded setting create a moderate sensitivity.
Settlement form and scale	Letchmore Heath is a compact village nucleated around the intersection of the three roads on which the development is arranged. It displays a rich variety of vernacular building styles and features, including red brick, flint and painted render. There is generally a consistent scale and two storey height to the built form. Many of the buildings within Letchmore Heath are locally listed and are mixed in style and materiality contributing to the local built environment and local historic interest. The development density is lower in the west of the village surrounding the larger grounds of Bhaktivedanta Manor and the office buildings.	The strong and compact settlement pattern around the three roads creates a high sensitivity.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	A mostly integrated, well-vegetated and well-wooded settlement edge, particularly to the west with the parkland grounds of Bhaktivedanta Manor. The field pattern adjacent to the village is a finer grain than the larger agricultural fields in the wider landscape and include several sports pitches to the east of the village. Aldenham School and associated sports facilities are slightly separated from the southern edge of the settlement envelope along Aldenham Road. The nearby settlements to Letchmore Heath; Roundbush and Patchetts Green, are typically visually separated by the vegetation	The well vegetated back gardens facing the settlement edge and the finer grain field pattern surrounding the settlement integrate Letchmore Heath into the surroundings. Therefore, the sensitivity of the settlement edge is high.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	<p>surrounding the settlement and the winding lanes.</p> <p>Letchmore Heath features sensitive features of the wider Aldenham Plateau LCA such as; the historic settlement pattern of the small village located around the village greens, the designation as Conservation Area; the rural character of the landscape in proximity to a large population, historic features and listed buildings and recreational routes passing through the settlement.</p>	

Overall sensitivity rating

Letchmore Heath has a **high sensitivity** due to its compact nature with a number of historic and cultural buildings and lanes within it. The village has a strong wooded character with a high density of trees within the public and private greenspaces and along the well-defined settlement edge.

Guidance and recommendations

Due to Letchmore Heath's well-structured development pattern, well wooded character and back gardens, which integrate into the wider rural landscape the village contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, should **retain washed over status**.

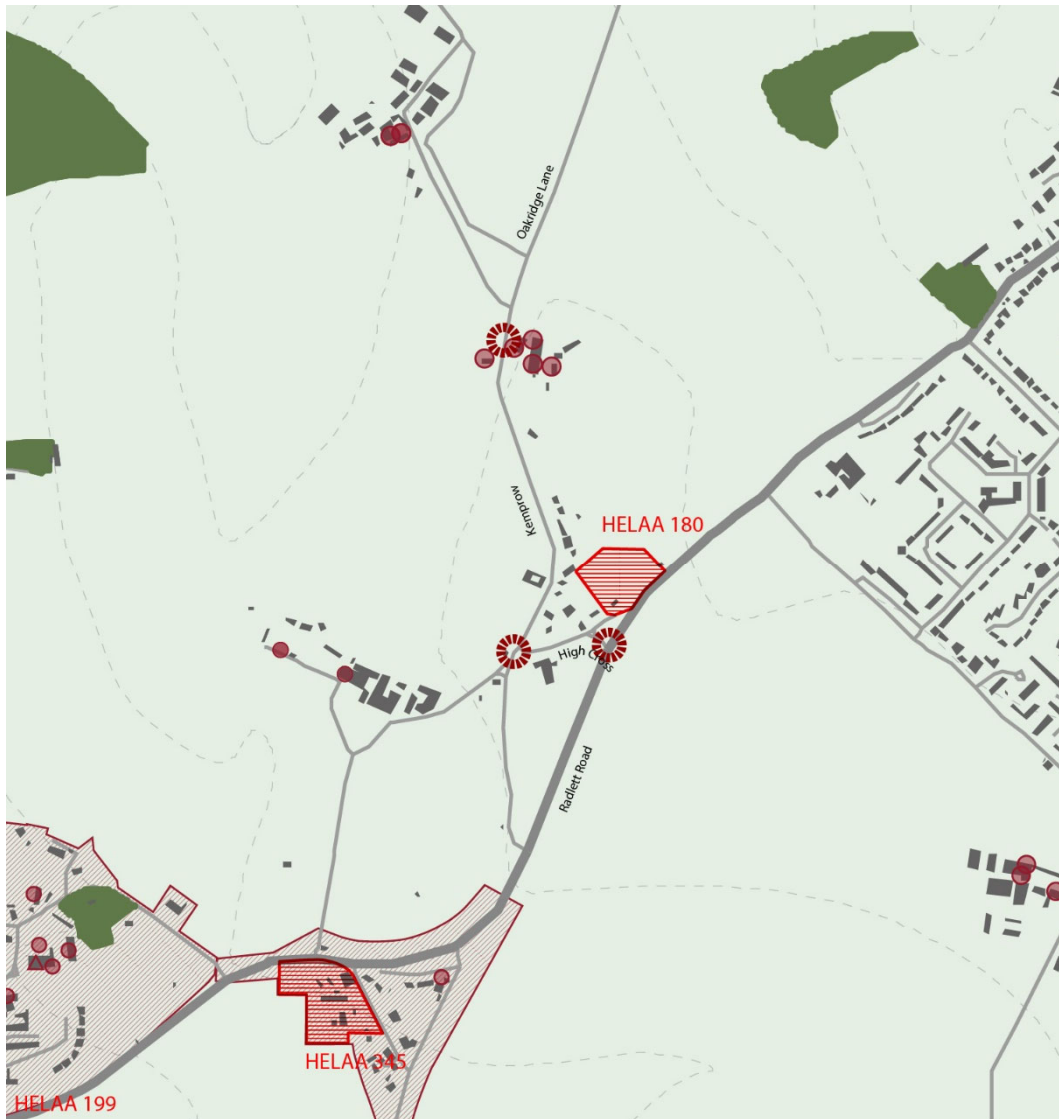
Due to Letchmore Heath's high development density within a well wooded settlement there is **low development potential** without compromising the openness of the settlement.

If any development takes places within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

- Views toward and from prominent local landmarks, such as Bhaktivedanta Manor, should be conserved and enhanced.
- The historic and the rural features surrounding the lanes including the hedgebanks along the Common Lane, the mature trees and hedgerows and the characteristic village boundary treatments of brick or flint walls, hedges and picket fences; these features should be conserved and reflected in any future development.
- The social and cultural importance of the village greens should be conserved and enhanced.
- Wooded skylines should be conserved and enhanced.
- The general consistency in scale and development size and pattern should be conserved as well as local vernacular styles and features.

- The well vegetated settlement boundary and the intimate scale and pattern of the surrounding fields should be conserved and enhanced.

5.6 Kemprow/High Cross



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  HELAA Sites
-  Woodland planting

Kemprow / High Cross is a small linear cluster of dwellings stretched along Kemprow lane and at the intersection with High Cross

Kemprow is in an elevated location on the Aldenham Plateau LCA. It is near Radlett, which is within 500m of the hamlet's eastern edge with Roundbush and Aldenham to the south west along the Radlett Road.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	Due to the linear nature of the settlement lined by hedgerows or development the views are channelled down the length of the hamlet with few prominent landmarks. The skyline is formed of a mixture of trees and rooflines.	The linear features of the settlement which contribute to the wayfinding have a moderate sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement 'interface' points	<p>Key gateways include Kemprow to the north and High Cross/Radlett Road to the south-east.</p> <p>Kemprow is a rural, hedgerow-lined road with occasional hedgerow trees and telegraph wires, whose character transitions into the linear settlement of Kemprow hamlet, with a couple of bungalows and red brick and flint cottages interspersed with some semi-detached interwar and more modern dwellings.</p> <p>High Cross/Radlett Road: High Cross is an historic rural approach to the hamlet, albeit truncated by a main road (Radlett Road) with associated wide verge planted with a cherry tree but also features telegraph poles and wires. The High Cross gateway is defined by a mix of period and later cottages and houses, often in mature well vegetated gardens, which sometimes include large trees including occasional 'exotics', such as Cedar of Lebanon. These rapidly give way to much larger properties (large, grand villas set back from the road, in well-wooded, private plots – including period Victorian/Edwardian tile hung and neo-Georgian red brick properties with stone detailing).</p>	The lanes with a mixture of historic and post war buildings contributes some moderately strong settlement gateways with moderate sensitivity.
Nodes, key open spaces	<p>The primary node of the settlement is the intersection between Kemprow and High Cross, which is a relatively enclosed intimate and well vegetated space with incidental open green verges.</p> <p>There are no distinct key open spaces other than the incidental green verges along the lane of Kemprow Road and</p>	The informal green verges and key crossroads with views toward intermittent historic archetypal and post war buildings of Kemprow and High Cross have moderately defined character and therefore, moderate sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	the small green triangles around the junctions of High Cross.	
Key views to/from settlement	<p>There are few views to or from the settlement. Most views are constrained by the hedgerows, vegetation or built form along the lanes. The view of the small green triangle by High Cross junction indicates the southern entrance to the hamlet.</p> <p>There are glimpsed long distance views across the adjacent pastoral fields and the wider rural landscape to the west including rows of pylons and distant treelined horizons. Glimpsed views of pylons are also visible to the east between Kemprow and Radlett.</p>	The views of Kemprow and High Cross are typically of moderate extent and intermittently feature archetypal features giving a moderate sensitivity.
Settlement form and scale	<p>The hamlet is generally linear with a low development density and a slightly fragmented development pattern in the north, with an increasing density toward the cluster of dwellings at the intersection of Kemprow and High Cross.</p> <p>The dwellings are typically one or two storeys and feature an assortment of ages, styles and materials including red brick, painted render and flint.</p> <p>The school to the west has little direct visual influence on the settlement.</p>	The linear structure along Kemprow and nucleated structure at the crossroads of Kemprow and High Cross road allow for a strong relationship with the surrounding landscape which creates a high level of sensitivity.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The western settlement edge is well defined by the Kemprow road and hedgerows while the eastern boundaries are formed by the well vegetated back garden boundaries leading onto small scale agricultural fields which are also lined by tall dense hedgerows with trees which visually separate Kemprow and High Cross from Radlett which has been identified as a historic town. The south-eastern edge is largely severed from the adjacent rural landscape by the Radlett Road but generally is well screened from the road by a hedgerow and row of trees.</p> <p>Edge Grove School is largely visually separate from Kemprow and High Cross and is partially integrated into the landscape by the mature trees surrounding the school and grounds. The occasional views of the school buildings to the west of Kemprow reduce the connection to the wider rural landscape.</p>	The varied and moderately intact edges which integrate into the surrounding landscape and maintain visual separation from the urban area of Radlett gives a moderate sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	Kemprow and Highcross are smaller settlements within Aldenham Plateau LCA and feature typical features of settlements of the LCA such as being surrounded by grazed arable land with rural character. Kemprow and High Cross include sensitive features of the wider LCA such as; rural character of the landscape close to a large population and a number of listed buildings.	

Overall sensitivity rating

Kemprow and High Cross have a **sensitivity rating of moderate**. This is a result of the combination of the historic rural approach to High cross and number of historic buildings, which exhibit a traditional vernacular and materials but the limited amount of nodes, greenspace or a cohesive settlement vernacular reduce the sensitivity to moderate particularly along Kemprow where it is less wooded and the development pattern is fragmented.

Guidance and recommendations

Due to Kemprow and High Cross' small scale and loose, linear development structure and well wooded centre, the hamlet contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, should **retain washed over status**.








Kemprow and High Cross has **low development potential** due to the small size of the hamlet and loose linear development pattern.

If any development takes places within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

- Key gateways into the settlement along Kemprow to the north and High Cross/Radlett Road to the south-east should be maintained and enhanced.
- The character and vegetation along the lanes in hedgerows or within front gardens should be conserved and enhanced.
- Historic vernacular and materials of the existing buildings should be reflected in any future development.
- The well vegetated of the nodal intersection of Kemprow and High Cross, which provides relative intimacy, should be conserved and enhanced.
- The well-defined or well vegetated settlement edges, particularly the north-eastern edge with the adjacent agricultural landscape should be maintained or enhanced.

5.7 Ridge



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  Woodland planting

Ridge is a largely linear settlement, set along Crossoaks Lane with a focus at the junction with Deeves Hall Lane and the cluster of historic buildings and church around the centre of the settlement.

Ridge is formed of a group of almshouses by architect George Gilbert Scott (Orchard Mead). The manor was once also known as Tyttenhanger (British History Online). Ridge is located within High Canons Valleys and Ridges LCA.

Ridge is in proximity to several farmyards or industrial complexes with the largest immediately south east of the settlement. Less than 500m directly to the east is the M25. Otherwise it is largely surrounded by open agricultural land with the closest settlement, South Mimms, situated on the opposite side of the M25.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	<p>The square tower of St Margret’s Church creates a local landmark from the village green; otherwise the woodland blocks defining the Catherine Bourne are the most prominent natural landmarks to the west.</p> <p>Urbanising features create some of the skyline south east of the settlement including the stacks of the laboratories, several pylons and the proximity to the M25.</p>	The historic core of the settlement and landmark structure of St Margret’s Church gives a high sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement ‘interface’ points	<p>Key gateways include Crossoak Lane to the east and west, Summerswood Lane to the west and Deeves Hall Lane to the north.</p> <p>Crossoak Lane is a narrow, hedgerow lined and often wooded lane of strongly rural character, creating a positive approach to the village from both the east and the west. Mature hedgerow oaks are a characteristic of parts of the lane. To the west, the lane terminates in a no-through road forming the approach to Crossoaks Farm.</p> <p>Summerswood Lane has a similarly dense, wooded character, albeit broken up at points by views over open fields with remnant hedgerows/tree lines and occasionally defined by pylons to the skyline.</p> <p>Deeves Hall Lane is similarly of a historic, rural, wooded and narrow character. The flint faced church of St Margarets adds an attractive historic character to the lane and the sense of arrival to the settlement.</p> <p>Blanche Lane from the southern approach is a steep, linear and</p>	The historic features and character of the key lanes and gateways to the settlement create a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	enclosed lane lined by hedgerows and the entrances to the laboratories. Blanche Lane from the north has a contrasting character with a wide, open carriageway lined by low hedgerows, well set back cottages and panel fencing which screens the M25. The key threshold of Blanche Lane is the roundabout connecting to the eastern end of Crossoaks Lane which is emphasised by being located along the topographic ridge.	
Nodes, key open spaces	Key nodes are the small village green at the junction of Crossoak Lane and Deeves Hall Lane, planted with red buckeye trees and adjacent to an attractive three bay rendered Georgian villa and the small playground on Crossoaks Lane toward the east of the settlement.	The settlement structure with the village green at the core of the settlement, adjacent to the church and local landmark, creates a high sensitivity.
Key views to/from settlement	The settlement is located along a localised ridgeline which creates long views southward across the rural landscape from locations along Crossoaks Lane. For example, from the Old Guinea public house, which features views of the wooded horizon in the south and glimpses of the High Canons Estate. Some views of the stacks of the laboratory complex south west of the settlement are possible from the south of Ridge.	The long-distance views over rural landscapes combined with the local views of archetypal and historic buildings creates a high sensitivity.
Settlement form and scale	Ridge is a compact linear hamlet of historic character, with built form often defined by red brick and clay tile roofed period dwellings, with some farmsteads and black painted weather boarded barns also characteristic and facing onto the principal street at Crossoak Lane. Some later and modern infill development is also apparent in places. The laboratory complex to the south west of Ridge alters the settlement form and scale but is generally not evident adjacent areas due to dense woodland planting which provides separation; however, it is glimpsed in some locations south of Crossoaks Lane.	The intact nature of the core of the historic settlement with strong visual connections with the wider landscape gives a high sensitivity.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	A mostly well-integrated settlement edge, due to garden boundary vegetation and the intimate, small	The mostly well-integrated settlement edge has a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	<p>scale field network and associated often intact hedgerows which surround the settlement.</p> <p>Ridge is one of the characteristic, visually prominent ridges with rural character and settlement pattern of the wider High Canons Valleys and Ridges LCA. Ridge includes some of the wider LCA's sensitive features such as; the intact small field pattern, the intact hedgerows along the various lanes, rural character of the built form and settlement setting, listed buildings and the visually prominent ridge.</p>	

Overall sensitivity rating

Ridge has a **sensitivity rating of high**. This is due to the complexity in vernacular, the structured and mature vegetation surrounding the rural lanes, well established linear settlement pattern and intimate scale of green space.

Guidance and recommendations

Due to Ridge's intact historic core and linear development structure along lanes with historic character and well-established hedgerows contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, should **retain washed over status**.

Ridge has **low development potential** due to the sensitive, intact nature of the historic lanes and historic core of the existing settlement.

If any development takes places within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

- Views toward St Margret's church tower and the prominence of the woodland blocks should be conserved and enhanced.
- The strong rural character of Crossoak Lane, Summerswood Lane and Deeves Hall Lane and the features that contribute to their character, such as the mature hedgerow oaks, views over open fields areas of woodland it passes through, should be maintained or improved.
- The social node of the village green should be conserved and enhanced.
- Long distance views across the agricultural landscape with treelined horizons and toward the High Canon's Estate should be conserved and enhanced.
- The rich variety of historic building styles and materials along Crossoak Lane should be reflected.
- The strong linear settlement pattern should be conserved and enhanced
- The buffer of woodland planting between the south-eastern settlement edge and the laboratories beyond should be conserved and enhanced.

- The intimate field pattern surrounding Ridge, combined with the hedgerows and back garden treatments which integrate the hamlet into the wider rural landscape should be conserved or enhanced.
- Opportunities to screen urbanising influences of the nearby stacks or pylons should be explored.

5.8 Bentley Heath



-  Church
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Gateway / threshold
-  Social node
-  Conservation area
-  HELAA Sites
-  Woodland planting

Bentley Heath is a small hamlet centred at the crossroads of Bentley Heath Lane and Dancers Hill Road with a strong relationship to Wrotham Park entrance to the south. Bentley Heath is located between Dancers Hill 1.4km to the west and Ganwick Corner 500m to the east. Bentley Heath lies within the Arkley Plain LCA.

Bentley Heath has number of cultural or historic buildings including the Holy Trinity Church of 1866 a prominent local building (estate chapel by architect Samuel Sanders Teulon) and a cluster of estate village type dwellings and buildings north of Wrotham Park.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Landmarks and prominent skyline/orientation features	Key landmarks include the designed landscape and parkland belt of Wrotham Park (Grade II Registered Park and Garden, with work by Capability Brown). Another landmark is the associated estate chapel by Victorian architect Samuel Sanders Teulon.	The historically noteworthy structures give a high sensitivity.
Gateways and settlement arrival/countryside and settlement 'interface' points	<p>The principal settlement gateways are formed by Bentley Heath Lane to the north, Dancer's Hill Road-Wagon Road to the east and Dancers Hill Road-Kitts End Road to the west.</p> <p>Bentley Heath Lane is a densely wooded rural lane, fringed by the cottages within Bentley Heath, with Teulon's red brick and polychrome gothic estate chapel for Wrotham Park located at the southern end of the road.</p> <p>Dancers Hill Road-Wagon Road is a rural road lined with hedgerows and mature hedgerow oaks, with Wagon Road similar in character albeit more densely wooded, due to the dense parkland boundary belt of Wrotham Park.</p> <p>Dancers Hill Road-Kitts End Road is a similarly rural gateway with a relatively open character west of Kitts End Road – low hedgerows with views over farmland, contrasting with the dense parkland perimeter planting of Wrotham Park on the eastern side of the road.</p>	The network of historic lanes lined with archetypal or characterful structures create a high sensitivity.
Nodes, key open spaces	Key nodes include the grand gateway and avenue to Wrotham Park off Dancers Hill Road, and Teulon's chapel and associated surrounding greenspace.	The grand gateway at the centre of the settlement is a key point of legibility of Bentley Heath and the landscape of Wrotham Park which gives a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Key views to/from settlement	Views are generally confined along Dancers Hill Road within the wooded centre of the settlement. Longer distance views are possible from Dancers Hill Road north across the open agricultural landscape and undulating topography with scattered trees, houses, industrial complexes and several rows of pylons forming the skyline. The long views which extend westwards from the house and surrounding grounds across the adjacent countryside are mentioned in the listing of Wrotham Park.	The expansive, long distance views across the agricultural surroundings combined with views of Wrotham Park and other local landmarks creates a high sensitivity.
Settlement form and scale	Bentley Heath is a highly compact, contained hamlet in a wooded setting – an estate village for Wrotham Park.	The small size and compact nature of the settlement which is well-integrated into a well wooded landscape which creates a high sensitivity.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	Bentley Heath is well-integrated with the wider landscape due to forming part of the setting to the designed landscape of Wrotham Park to the south, and due to the level of woodland cover surrounding the hamlet. Bentley Heath is an intrinsic part of the Wrotham Park and Bentley Heath LCA. It includes most of the sensitive features of the LCA; intact small-scale pre-18th century organic enclosure field pattern, listed buildings and their settings, the highly rural character and rural buildings and rural views from public footpaths.	The well wooded surroundings well-integrate the settlement, giving a high sensitivity.

Overall sensitivity rating

Bentley Heath has a **high degree of sensitivity**. This is primarily due to the strong cultural and historic connection to the Wrotham Park and designated landscape and the very rural and undeveloped nature of the small hamlet and its setting. The long sweeping views westward and the areas of densely vegetated woodland also contributes to the high sensitivity.

Guidance and recommendations

Due to Bentley Heath's compact development pattern, which is well-integrated into the surrounding wooded landscape, the hamlet contributes to the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, should **retain washed over status**.

Bentley Heath has **low development potential** due to the compact form of its original cluster of buildings and surrounding woodland as well as the historic setting of Wrotham Park.

If any development takes places within this village, the following principles should be considered for any scheme:

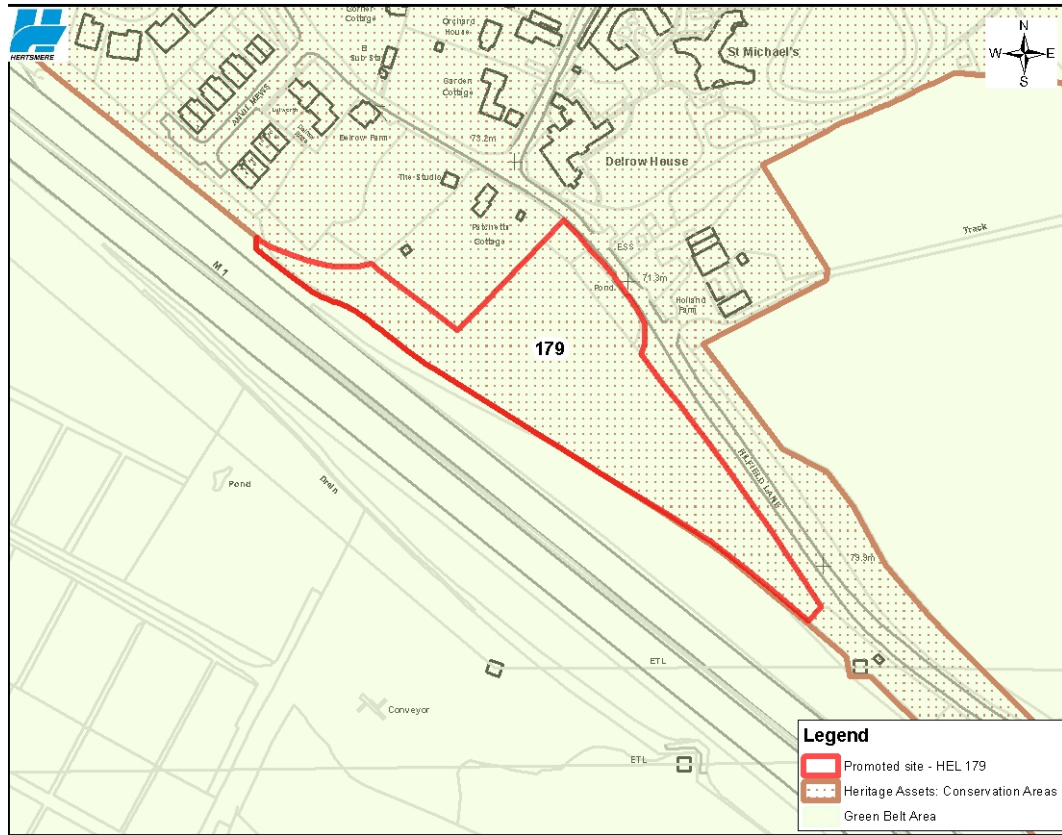
- Views of the key landmark buildings and landscapes such as the; Wrotham Park house and grounds and the estate chapel as well as the wooded area surrounding the hamlet should be conserved and enhanced.
- The wooded or well vegetated nature of the lanes of Bentley Heath should be maintained or enhanced.
- Designed views of Wrotham Park, short views of landmark buildings and views across the rolling open agricultural landscape should be conserved and enhanced.
- The gateway to Wrotham Park should be conserved as a focal point of the hamlet.
- The compact development pattern of the hamlet should be reflected in any future development.
- The enclosure created by woodland which integrates Bentley Heath into the rural setting should be conserved or enhanced.

5.9 Sites assessment

This section is presented in the following order:

- HEL179 – Hilfield Lane, Patchetts Green
- HEL219 and HEL252 – Pegmire Lane, Patchetts Green
- HEL345 – Aldenham Glebe, Roundbush Nursery, Round Bush
- HEL180 – Kemprow, between White House and Adelaide Lodge, High Cross
- HEL199 – Land at Church Lane, Aldenham
- HEL234 – Well Cottage (Ganwick Corner), Bentley Heath
- HEL509 – Little Simpsons, Letchmore Heath
- HEL343 – Land South of Letchmore Heath

5.10 HEL179 – Hilfield Lane, Patchetts Green



HEL179 – Hilfield Lane, Patchetts Green

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Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	The site is located to the southern edge of Patchetts Green and between Hilfield Lane and the M25, albeit somewhat detached from the main settlement of Patchetts Green particularly where the site tapers to the south east.	The site is adjacent to the edge of the settlement and has a greater connection to the settlement than the wider landscape due to the M25 giving a moderate sensitivity.
Boundary conditions and qualities	The site has a mature, well-wooded boundary character to both Hilfield Lane and the M25 boundary in particular, as part of the noise attenuation planting for the motorway.	The maturity and consistency of the boundaries with the rest of the settlement gives a high sensitivity.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site is effectively severed from the wider landscape by the M25 directly to the south and west, and therefore has little relationship to the wider landscape, although its pattern of irregular pasture field reflects the pattern of fields to the north and east of Patchetts Green. Due to a break in the boundary vegetation there is a visual connection to Patchetts	The small scale of the site reflects the field pattern and the view of an archetypal building gives a high sensitivity, however, the severance of the M25 lowers the sensitivity to moderate.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	<p>Cottage to the west of the site, which is a Grade II listed building.</p> <p>At the larger scale the site contributes to the separation of Patchetts Green from Elstree Substation.</p>	
Nature and extent of views	<p>From south of the site, views are limited due to the woodland buffer along the M1 which provides screening.</p> <p>Views from the north are also limited by the woodland belt along the boundary but short-range glimpsed views are possible from Hilfield Lane.</p> <p>Views from within the site are short range across the field culminating in a treelined boundary.</p> <p>There are tall vertical pylons visible above the treeline to the south which create a detracting focal point.</p>	<p>The limited views featuring urbanising pylons gives a low sensitivity.</p>

Overall landscape sensitivity

The site has a **moderate** landscape sensitivity. This is a result of the positive rural characteristics provided by the dense wooded boundaries, intimate scale of the field pattern and the detracting features; the segregation created by Hilfield Lane and the M1 with little relationship to the wider rural landscape. It also is influenced by the surrounding urbanising features of the M1, and views of the nearby pylons.

Guidance and recommendations

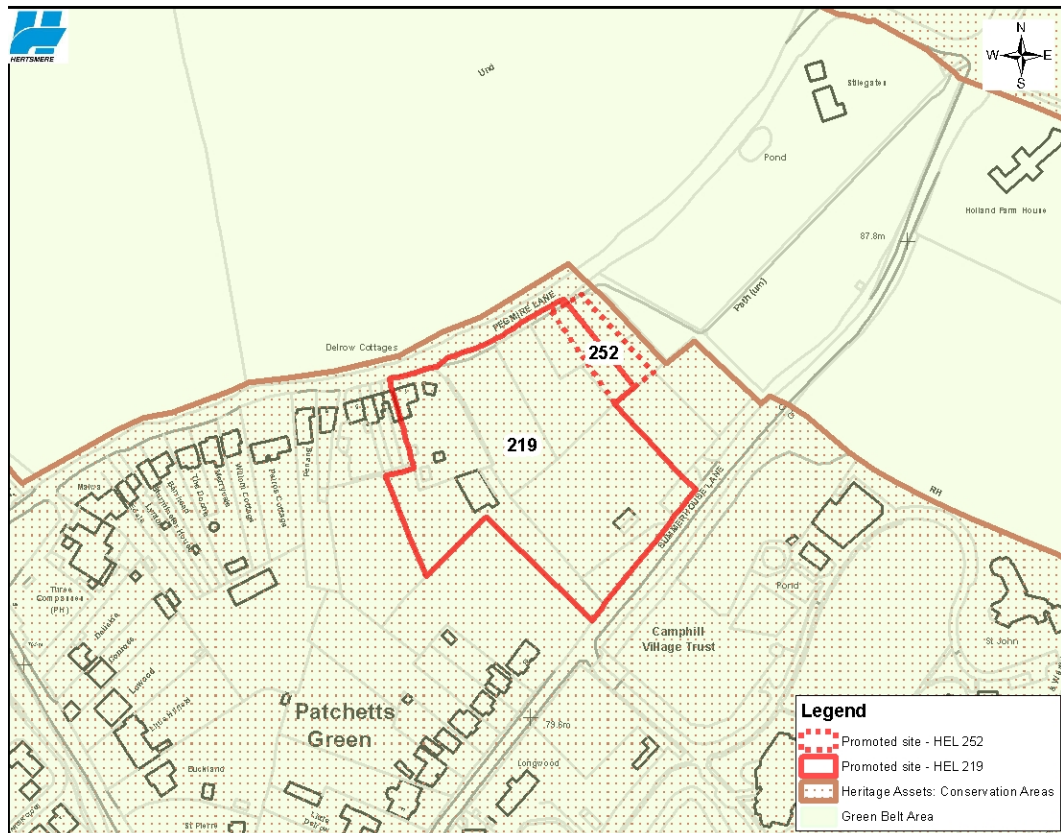
The site contributes to the setting of a Grade II listed building and to the separation of Patchetts Green and Elstree Substation adding to the openness of the village / Green Belt.

The site has a **low development potential** due to maintaining separation of Patchetts Green from to the Elstree Substation and the disconnect to the core of the settlement particularly where the site tapers to the south east.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The well wooded boundaries of the site should be conserved and enhanced.
- The setting of the Grade II Listed Patchetts Cottage should be conserved and enhanced.
- The remaining field pattern and boundaries that links the site to the wider agricultural landscape should be protected and enhanced.
- Mitigation for the urbanising influences south of the site should be considered.

5.11 HEL219 and HEL252 – Pegmire Lane, Patchetts Green



HEL219 and HEL252 – Pegmire Lane, Patchetts Green
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Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	HEL219 and HEL 252 are located within the northern-central part of the hamlet of Patchetts Green, occupying a pasture field with wooded boundaries between Pegmire Lane and Summerhouse Lane and featuring a Public Right of Way (PRoW) through the site.	The site sits between two of the key lanes of the settlement and is adjacent to the existing settlement envelope giving a high sensitivity.
Boundary conditions and qualities	The site is located within a wooded and low-density hamlet. The site’s boundaries are densely wooded with mature boundary vegetation, imparting a rural quality.	The boundary features reflect the wider boundary treatments of the settlement and contribute to the historic and characteristic lanes giving a high sensitivity.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site broadly reflects the immediate and wider landscape character of small pasture fields and paddocks, and of the small-scale fields in and immediately around the hamlet of Patchetts Green.	The clear connection with the surrounding and wider landscape gives a high sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Nature and extent of views	Views from the areas surrounding the site are very limited by the densely wooded boundaries and views from within the parcel are short range treelined views across the small field with some agricultural structures and areas of scrub.	The limited nature of the views gives a low sensitivity.

Overall landscape sensitivity

The landscape sensitivity of the site is **High**. This is due to the rural character of the pastoral field and wooded surroundings, and contribution of the boundary treatments to the setting and continuity of the historic lanes, which are characteristic of Patchetts Green.

Guidance and recommendations

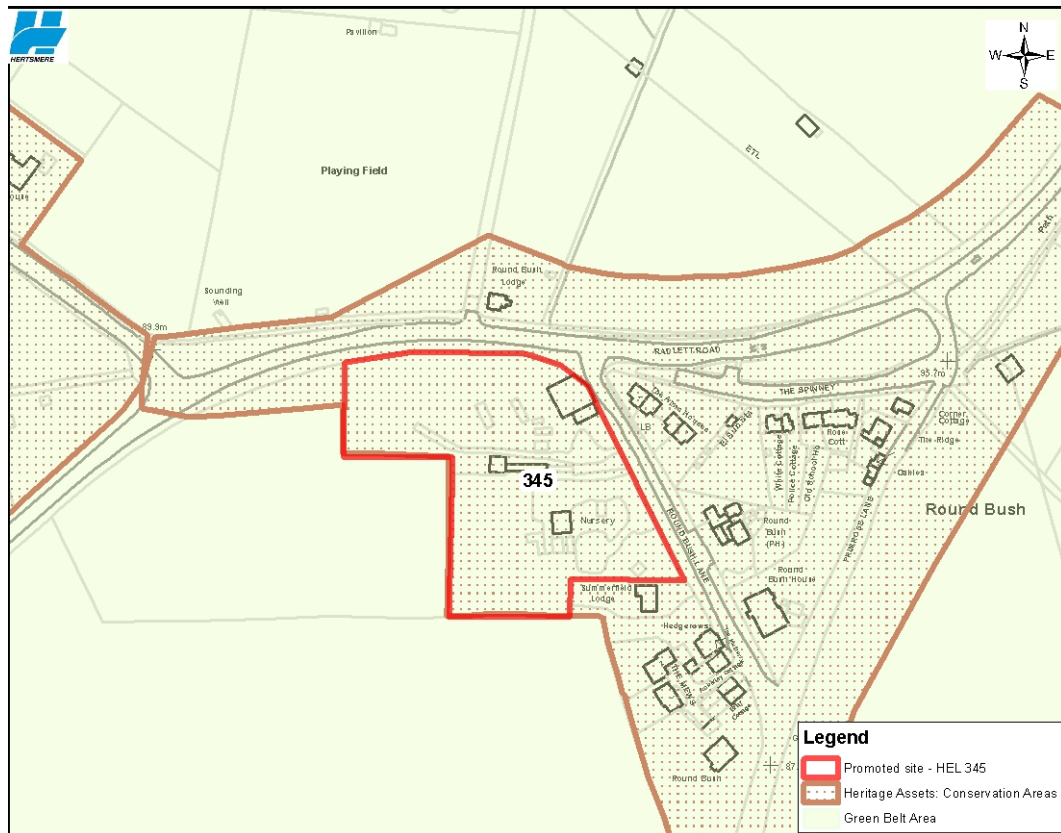
The site contributes strong continuity of boundary treatments and vegetative structure setting to the settlement adding to the openness of the village / Green Belt.

The site has a **low development potential** due to the relationship with the wider landscape and sensitivity of the site's vegetative boundaries.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The site's rural character and vegetated boundaries, which contribute to the setting of the settlement and the PRow should be conserved and enhanced.
- The low-density character of the existing hamlet should be maintained.
- The intimate scale and field pattern, which reflects the surrounding agricultural landscape, should be conserved.

5.12 HEL345 – Aldenham Glebe, Roundbush Nursery, Round Bush



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HEL345 – Aldenham Glebe, Roundbush Nursery, Round Bush

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Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	HEL345 is located on the western edge of Roundbush, lying on the western settlement boundary, alongside Roundbush Lane and its intersection with Radlett Road, covering the site of Roundbush Nursery.	The connection the main area of the settlement has high sensitivity, however, the site's shape is disproportionate to the existing settlement pattern which reduces the sensitivity to moderate.
Boundary conditions and qualities	The boundaries of the site are mostly formed by variable, outgrown hedgerows and mature trees, creating a well-wooded character to the edge of the settlement.	The moderately intact boundaries with some erosion due to lack of management gives a moderate sensitivity.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site is developed as a plant nursery with associated buildings and glasshouses and, as such, bears little relation to wider landscape character. The site features remnants of a small scale and intimate field pattern.	The sensitivity of the intact historic field pattern is reduced to moderate by the atypical land use.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Nature and extent of views	<p>Surrounding views into the site are very limited as a result of the densely wooded boundaries. Views from within the parcel are short range treelined views across the small field with some agricultural structures and areas of scrub.</p> <p>Glimpsed view of Aldenham Church spire from the site.</p>	

Overall landscape sensitivity

The site has an overall landscape sensitivity of **moderate**. The site has a high sensitivity as a result of the large, mature vegetation along the northern and eastern boundaries, which contribute to one of Roundbush's key gateways and the southern and western boundaries define part of the hamlet's settlement edge and its integration into the wider landscape. However, the detracting feature of Radlett Road and a degraded northern boundary and the limited intervisibility within the site reduce the sensitivity to moderate.

Guidance and recommendations

The site contributes a proportionally large undeveloped area and trees to the setting of Roundbush adding to the openness of the village / Green Belt.

The site has a **moderate development potential** due to a-typical land uses within close proximity and substantial vegetation creating low visual connection to the centre of Roundbush.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The mature trees and established vegetation along the site's boundaries, especially by the gateway to Roundbush from Radlett Road, should be conserved and enhanced.
- The well wooded character of the site should be conserved and enhanced.
- The intimate scale of the site should be conserved and enhanced.
- The buffer planting along Radlett Road, which contributes to the separation of the road from the rest of the village and should be maintained and enhanced.

5.13 HEL180 – Kemprow, between White House and Adelaide Lodge, High Cross



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HEL180 – Kemprow, between White House and Adelaide Lodge, High Cross

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Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	HEL180 is located on the northern side of the Radlett Road, at the easternmost edge of Kemprow and High Cross orientated away from the majority of development on Kemprow.	The proximity to the settlement suggests a moderate sensitivity. However, the sensitivity is reduced to low by the site’s orientation, directed away from much of the existing development pattern.
Boundary conditions and qualities	Boundaries are generally defined by outgrown hedgerows with trees, creating a high degree of screening to the site.	The in keeping but overgrown boundaries have a moderate sensitivity.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site comprises a small, relatively neglected pasture field with a stable block within it. It bears little relation to the wider landscape pattern, which is predominantly defined by enlarged arable fields. It is also severed from the wider landscape to the east by Raddlett Road.	The poor connectivity to the wider landscape gives a low sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
Nature and extent of views	Due to the relatively flat topography and the surrounding belts of vegetation there is little intervisibility with the site and much of its surroundings.	The limited views and visual connections results in a low sensitivity.

Overall landscape sensitivity

The site has a **low** landscape sensitivity. The site contributes a vegetated backdrop to the setting of Kemprow, which creates some sensitivity. However; a number of detracting attributes reduces the sensitivity to low. They include the site's limited intervisibility caused by the surrounding vegetation, the neglected character of the pastoral field, which does not reflect the wider landscape pattern or land use, and the fact that the site has little relationship with Kemprow hamlet, which largely faces west onto Kemprow road.

Guidance and recommendations

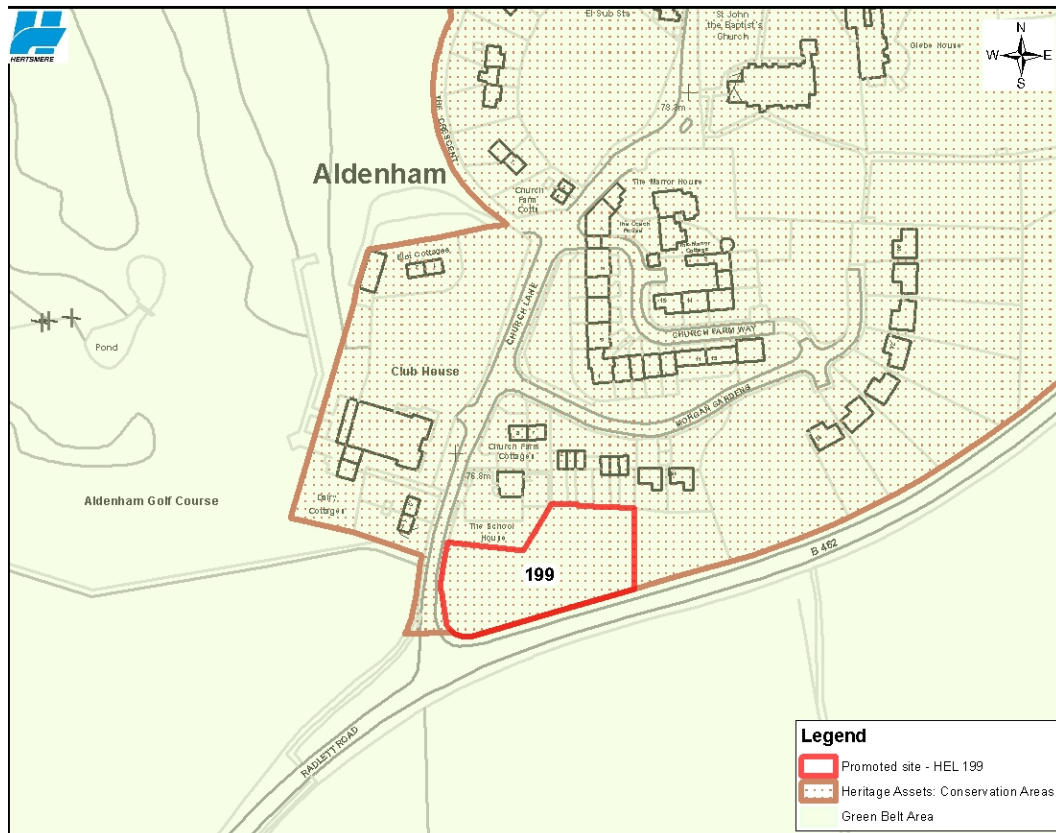
The site contributes to the loose linear structure of the Kemprow hamlet and vegetative structure and setting to the surrounding development adding to the openness of the village / Green Belt.

The site has a **low development potential** due to the contribution of the boundary planting and the orientation of the parcel away from the rest of Kemprow hamlet's settlement pattern.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The well-established vegetation of the site's boundaries; particularly the buffer planting to Radlett Road should be maintained and enhanced.
- The trees and hedgerows forming the setting and treelined skylines of Kemprow hamlet should be maintained and enhanced.

5.14 HEL199 – Land at Church Lane, Aldenham



HEL199 – Land at Church Lane, Aldenham

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Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	HEL199 occupies a small pasture field off Church Lane and directly to the south of the village of Aldenham and next to the gateway from Radlett Road.	The proximity of the site to a key gateway of Aldenham give a high sensitivity.
Boundary conditions and qualities	Site boundaries are largely defined by relatively dense hawthorn hedgerows, creating an enclosed character.	The well-established hedgerows are typical for the area and have a high sensitivity.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	As a slightly scrubby, overgrown pasture field, the site reflects the wider pattern of intimate, small scale fields and plots around the village of Aldenham, but not the wider agricultural landscape pattern beyond, which is defined mostly by large scale/eroded arable fields.	The retained historic field pattern has a high sensitivity but the limited connections to the wider landscape reduce the sensitivity to moderate.
Nature and extent of views	Views from within the site are generally limited due to the dense hedgerows along Radlett Road and Church Lane along with scattered trees within the parcel and adjacent back gardens. Streetlights on Radlett Road	The lack of clear views and glimpsed views of urbanising features reduce sensitivity to low.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	<p>are visible over the surrounding vegetation.</p> <p>There are localised glimpsed views of the pre-school building, neighbouring houses to the north and electricity pylons to the east of the site.</p>	

Overall landscape sensitivity

The site has a **moderate** landscape sensitivity. This is a result of the combination of the high sensitivity of the site's relationship to the settlement reduced to moderate by the limited intervisibility with the surrounding area, the slightly degraded, overgrown nature of the site and the lack of connection to the wider landscape as a result of Radlett Road which creates a break in character.

Guidance and recommendations

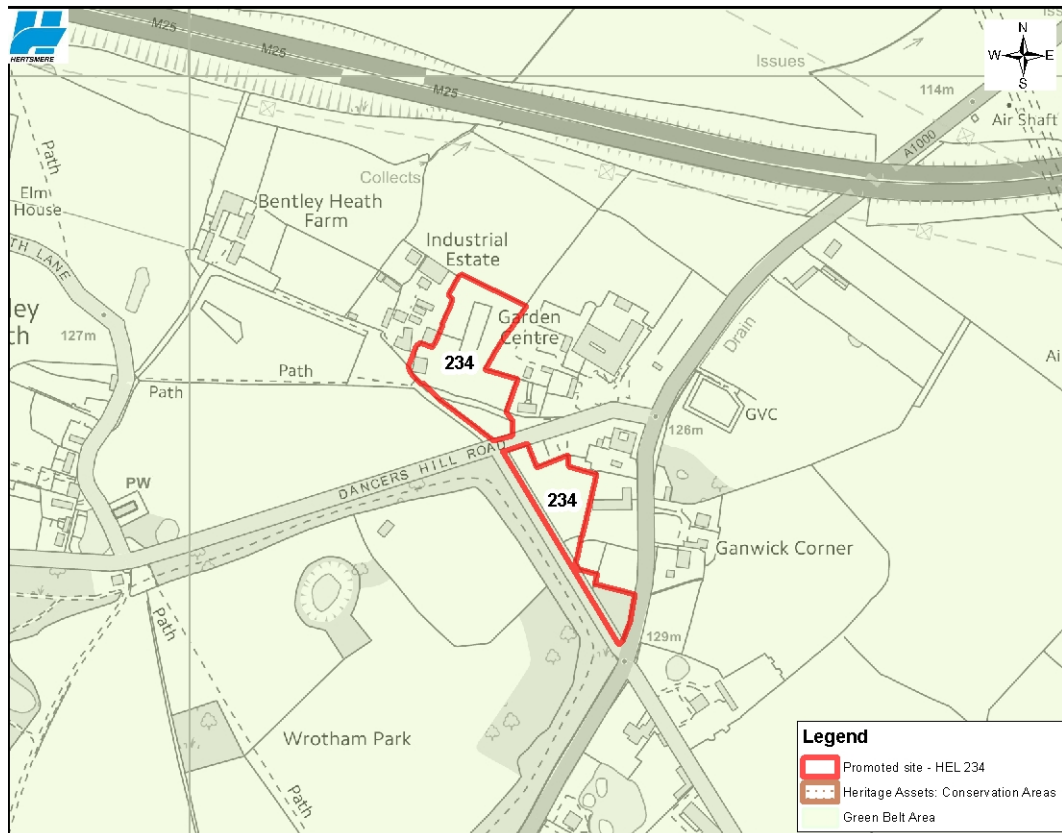
The site contributes to the setting of a rural lane and reduces the intervisibility of urbanising features of Radlett Road and the developed area of Aldenham adding to the openness of the village / Green Belt.

The site has a **low development potential** due to being separate from the rest of the nucleated areas of development of Aldenham and the contribution to the setting of the rural and undeveloped southern gateway into Aldenham.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The dense hedgerow along Radlett Road and Church Lane, which creates substantial buffer planting, plus the scattered trees that create a backdrop to the wider village of Aldenham should be maintained and enhanced.
- The intimate scale of the site should be conserved.

5.15 HEL234 – Well Cottage (Ganwick Corner), Bentley Heath



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HEL234 – Well Cottage, Bentley Heath

0 25 50 100 Meters
1:7,500

Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	The site occupies two plots either side of Dancers Hill Road east of the hamlet of Bentley Heath, immediately east of the parkland belt boundary of Wrotham Park.	Both areas of the site have a limited relationship to Bentley Heath. The site is more closely linked to Ganwick Corner.
Boundary conditions and qualities	The boundaries to both parts of the site are defined by mature trees, imparting a well wooded character, forming part of the parkland setting for Wrotham Park.	The boundary treatments reflecting the wider landscape gives a high sensitivity.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site reflects the immediate landscape character around the hamlet of Bentley Heath, which is defined by small to medium scale pasture fields bounded by hedgerows and mature trees.	The characteristic landscape elements gives a high sensitivity.
Nature and extent of views	Views from the site are largely short range and enclosed by the surrounding hedgerows and wooden panel fences or dwellings and garden trees. Within the views there are a few focal cedar trees reflecting the wider designed parkland	The focal points within the site offset detracting urbanising views giving a moderate sensitivity.

Element	Comment	Judgement
	landscape character; however, there are also glimpsed views of pylons east of the site and streetlights on Wagon Road west of the site.	

Overall landscape sensitivity

The landscape sensitivity of the site is **high**. This is as a result of the site reflecting the wider landscape character and forming the setting of the historic parkland of Wrotham Park.

Guidance and recommendations

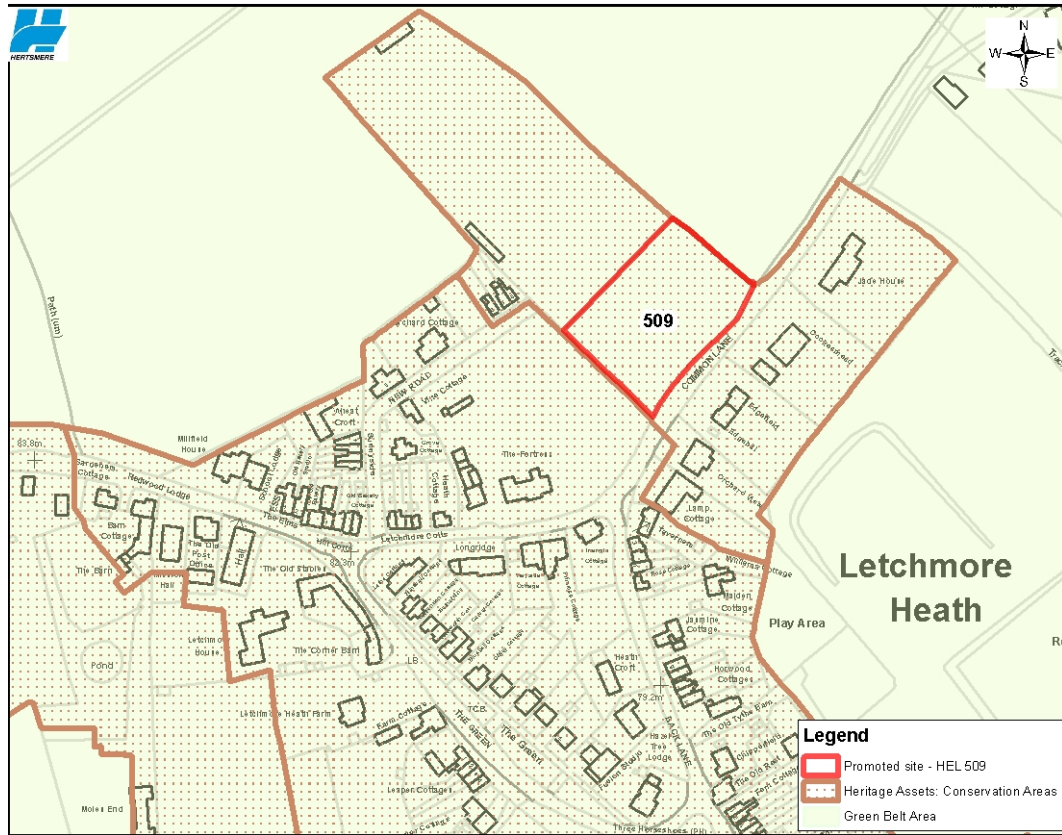
The site contributes characteristic vegetative structure adding to the openness of the village / Green Belt.

The site has a **low development potential** due to the proximity and connectivity to the historical Wrotham Park.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- Views from the historic Wrotham Park building and grounds should be conserved and enhanced.
- The mature woodland planting within and surrounding the site (particularly the species which are in keeping with the designed parkland character) should be maintained and enhanced to reflect the surrounding landscapes.
- Local views of characteristic cedar trees should be protected whilst views of nearby urbanising features, such as pylons or streetlights, should be screened.

5.16 HEL509 – Little Simpsons, Letchmore Heath



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HEL509 – Little Simpsons, Letchmore Heath

0 25 50 100 Meters

Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	<p>The site is located to the north east of Letchmore Heath within the Conservation Area. It is situated on the north side of Common lane, which is one of the sunken lanes and a rural entrance to the settlement. It is on the periphery of Letchmore Heath with large detached residential development opposite to the south and wider agricultural land to the north.</p> <p>The scale and shape of the site integrates with the settlement of Letchmore Heath. The vegetated and rural character of the site contributes to the wooded setting and character of Letchmore Heath</p>	<p>The location integrates closely with the settlement and forming part of a key gateway and providing a wooded character. This gives a high sensitivity.</p>
Boundary conditions and qualities	<p>The site has well vegetated boundaries on all sides with hedgerows and trees. The western boundary is bolstered by the back garden planting adjacent to it. The southern boundary along Common Lane has dense semi-mature vegetation, which also contributes to the enclosing canopy over the historic sunken lane.</p>	<p>The boundaries are intact and contribute to the setting of the historic lane giving a high sensitivity.</p>

Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site is very enclosed by its vegetated boundaries. The small scale and historic field pattern of the site does not reflect the adjacent agricultural fields, however the woodland block character matches similar wooded blocks in the wider landscape.	The site reflects the rural character of the wider landscape giving a high sensitivity.
Nature and extent of views	Views from within the parcel are short range treelined views across the vegetated field and areas of scrub. Similarly, views from the areas surrounding the site are very limited by the dense hedgerows and tree lined boundaries. The outer wooded southern edge also contributes to characteristic treelined and enclosed nature and views along the sunken Common Lane.	The limited nature of the views gives a low sensitivity.

Overall landscape sensitivity

The landscape sensitivity of the site is **High**. This is as a result of the contribution the site makes to the wooded setting of the wider settlement of Letchmore Heath and the adjacent historic lane which is a key gateway to the settlement.

Guidance and recommendations

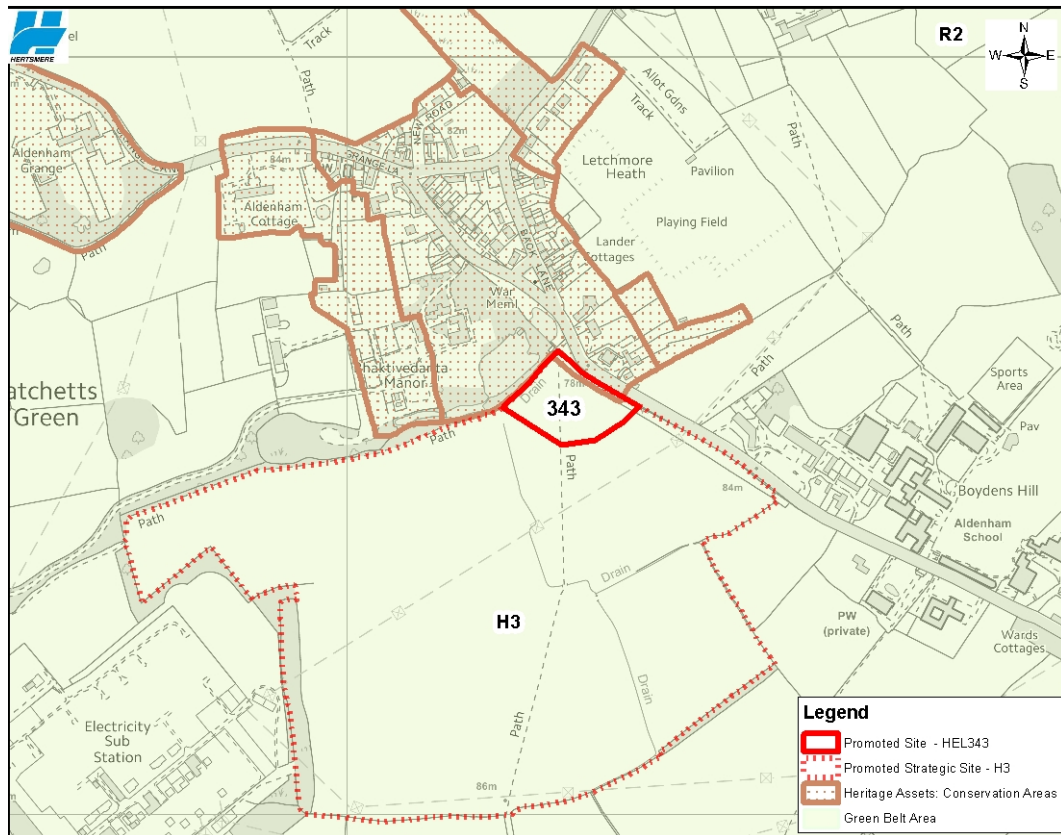
The wooded nature of the site boundaries integrates the Letchmore Heath into the wider rural landscape adding to the openness of the settlement within the Green Belt.

The site has a **low development potential** due to the relationship to the settlement and the Common Lane.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The wooded character of the site which contributes to the setting of Letchmore Heath and views from the wider landscape should be conserved and enhanced.
- The historic character and tree canopy of the sunken Common Lane should be conserved and enhanced.

5.17 HEL343 – Land South of Letchmore Heath



HEL343 – Land South of Letchmore Heath

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1:10,000
0 50 100 200 Meters

Element	Comment	Judgement
Relationship to settlement	<p>The site is located to the south of Letchmore Heath along Aldenham Road and outside but adjacent to the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The site is south of the village pond and close to the Bhaktivedanta Manor which breaks the settlement pattern and separates the site from the core of Letchmore Heath.</p> <p>On the opposite side of Aldenham Road are several large detached dwellings set back behind a wall and vegetation with little connection to the site.</p> <p>The north eastern edge along Aldenham Road forms part of a threshold into the settlement.</p>	<p>The site is not well integrated into the settlement pattern as it is separated by the woodland block surrounding the village pond and the large Bhaktivedanta Manor and grounds giving a low sensitivity. The proximity to the southern gateway to Letchmore Heath raises the sensitivity to moderate.</p>
Boundary conditions and qualities	<p>The boundaries are mixed. The north western boundary is lined by a dense woodland. The north eastern boundary is a broken, grown out hedgerow and mature trees. The southern boundaries are not marked by any physical feature in the landscape.</p>	<p>The wooded boundary has a high sensitivity and the broken hedgerow boundary with mature trees has a moderate sensitivity and the undefined</p>

Element	Comment	Judgement
		boundaries have a low sensitivity. Overall the site's boundaries have a low sensitivity as the open boundaries face onto the largest expanse of greenbelt land.
Relationship to wider landscape and reflection of wider landscape characteristics	The site is part of a larger field and a wider series of open agricultural fields with gently undulating landscape. The site includes two recreational Public Rights of Way. It has the same land use and character of the wider landscape.	The site has the same land use and character as the wider landscape giving a high sensitivity.
Nature and extent of views	The views are open over the undulating agricultural landscape. Views feature isolated or groups of large mature trees which reflect the lost hedgerows. A large number of pylons also interrupt the skyline in most views. The view extends to a wooded ridgeline to the south in an adjacent valley.	The open views of rural landscapes are of high sensitivity however the detracting pylons reduce the sensitivity to moderate.

Overall landscape sensitivity

The landscape sensitivity of the site is **moderate**. This is as a result of the combination of the site's low connectivity to the rest of Letchmore Heath with the strong connections to the wider rural landscape and the moderate sensitivity of views and mixed boundaries.

Guidance and recommendations

The site contributes to Letchmore Heath's rural setting and to a threshold into the village adding to the openness of the settlement.

The site has a **low development potential** due to being highly visible from Letchmore Heath's southern entrance and Public Rights of Way.

If this site was developed, the following principles should be incorporated into any scheme:

- The existing boundary treatments should be improved and new, in keeping boundaries capable of screening any development from the wider landscape should be included where no physical boundary exists.
- Views from the southern entrance to Letchmore heath and the Public Rights of Way should be conserved or enhanced.
- The development pattern of Letchmore Heath should be maintained or enhanced.
- Conserve or enhance the views across the undulating rural landscape whilst mitigating detrimental views of pylons where possible.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

This study provides an assessment of washed over villages and call for sites that have been identified for review to ensure the Council has robustly considered all growth options.

Washed Over Villages

The washed over villages have been assessed on whether they make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, in accordance with the NPPF Paragraph 140, and the assessment criteria defined in the study.

All of the washed over villages considered in this study were assessed to have a high or moderate sensitivity rating, as shown in Table 6.1. These villages are assessed as contributing to the openness of the Green Belt. As such, it is recommended that these villages retain their washed over village status.

Table 6.1 Washed Over Village Summary

Washed Over Village	Sensitivity Rating	Washed Over Village Status	Development Potential
Aldenham	High	Retain	Low
Roundbush	High	Retain	Low
Patchetts Green	High	Retain	Low
Letchmore Heath	High	Retain	Low
Ridge	High	Retain	Low
Kemprow/High Cross	Moderate	Retain	Low
Bentley Heath	High	Retain	Low

While some limited infilling may be appropriate in these villages (although it is noted that they are not recognised as key sites for infilling in the Council's current Local Plan) or where very special circumstances are determined, the overall development potential is considered low. If any development should be proposed in these washed over villages, (either through Local Plan allocations to meet local housing needs or windfall developments that are consistent with national policy), there are a number of landscape principles identified in the study, which should be considered for any scheme. This is considered essential to conserving the openness of the Green Belt in an area of high sensitivity.

Washed Over Village Sites

Seven of the eight sites considered in this study were assessed with a high or moderate sensitivity rating, as shown in Table 6.2. One site was considered to have low sensitivity. These sites were assessed as contributing to the openness of both the washed over villages and the wider Green Belt. Seven sites were considered to have low potential/suitability for development. Whilst the localised sites may have moderate or low sensitivities, the broader context of the wider settlement influence the potential/suitability for development through such factors

as; the established development patterns, settlement form and the site's contribution to maintaining separation from adjacent settlements or developments.

If development was to be considered on any of these sites, there are a number of landscape principles identified in the study, which should be incorporated into any scheme. These will be essential in conserving the openness of the washed over villages and the surrounding Green Belt.

Table 6.2 Washed Over Village Sites Summary

Site	Sensitivity	Development Potential
HEL179	Moderate	Low
HEL219 and HEL252	High	Low
HEL345	Moderate	Moderate
HEL180	Low	Low
HEL199	Moderate	Low
HEL234	High	Low
HEL509	High	Low
HEL343	Moderate	Low