

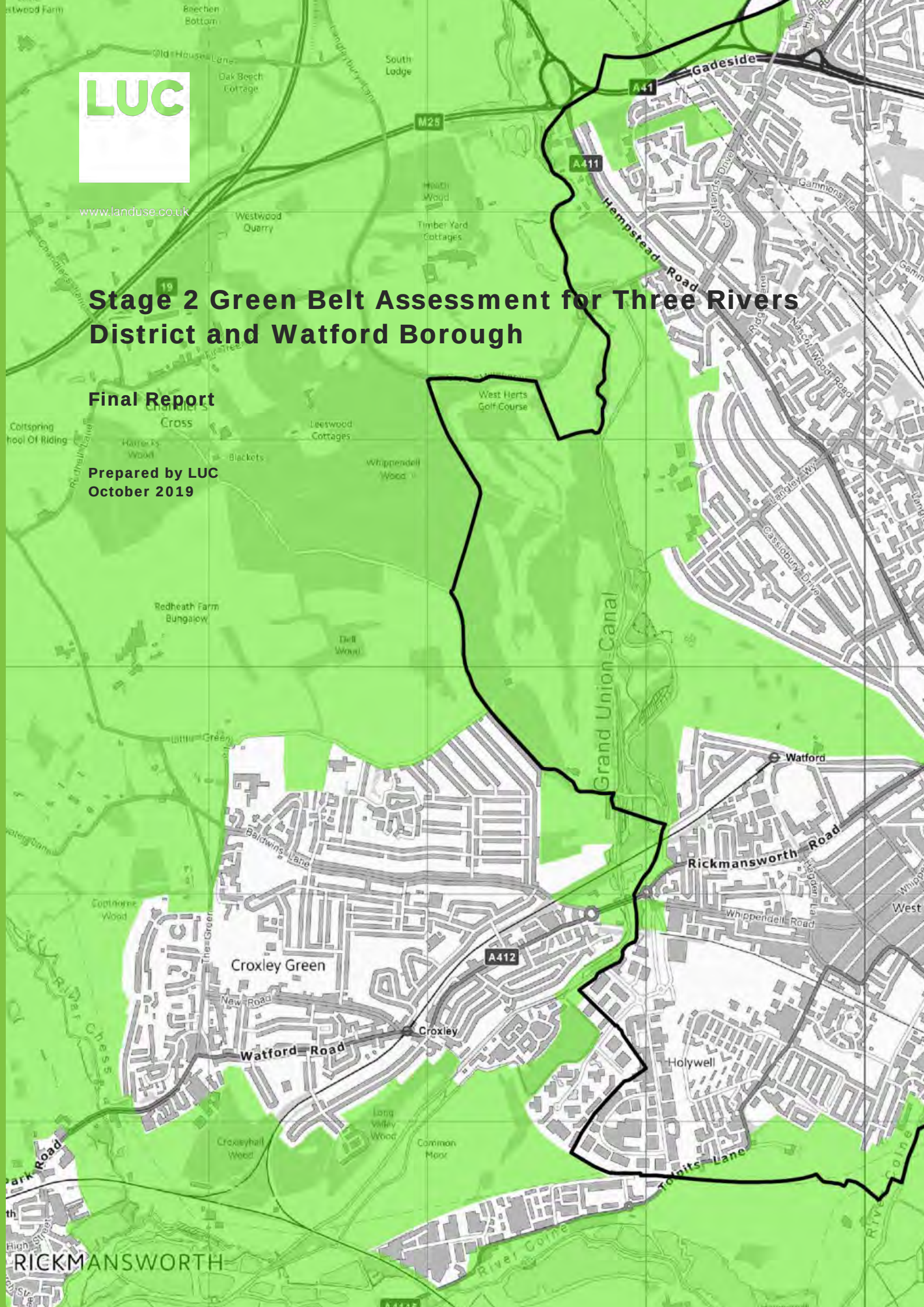


www.landuse.co.uk

Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment for Three Rivers District and Watford Borough

Final Report

Prepared by LUC
October 2019



Project Title: Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment for Three Rivers District and Watford Borough – Final Report

Client: Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council

Version	Date	Version Details	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
V1.0	05/08/2019	Draft Report	Alex Martin Richard Swann Sarah Young	Natalie Collins	Sarah Young
V2	03/09/2019	Draft Final Report	Alex Martin Richard Swann Sarah Young	Natalie Collins	Sarah Young
V3	17/10/2019	Final report	Alex Martin Richard Swann Sarah Young	Richard Swann	Sarah Young

Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment for Three Rivers District and Watford Borough

Final Report

Prepared by LUC
October 2019

Contents

Executive Summary	1
1 Introduction	3
Study aims and objectives	3
Duty to Cooperate engagement	4
Report authors	4
Report structure	4
2 Policy Context	7
Introduction	7
Origins of the Metropolitan and Hertfordshire Green Belt	7
Other Relevant Guidance and Case Law	11
Local Planning Policy	15
3 Methodology	21
Introduction	21
Stage 1: Scope and approach	21
Stage 2: Extent and subdivision of assessment area	23
Stage 2: Assessment Process	25
Stage 2 Step 1: Impact of release on contribution to each NPPF Green Belt purpose	26
Stage 2 Step 2: Impact on integrity of adjacent Green Belt and boundaries	36
Stage 2 Step 3: Assessing overall harm	37
Stage 2 Assessment Outputs	38
4 Summary of Findings	40
Introduction	40
Summary of Findings	40
Role of Green Belt Harm Assessment	44
5 Making Changes to the Green Belt	53
Introduction	53
Making Changes to the Green Belt	53
Mitigation to Reduce Harm to Green Belt	54
Beneficial Use of Green Belt	56
Conclusion	58
Appendix 1 - Detailed Stage 2 Harm Assessments	59
Abbots Langley	60
Batchworth	86
Bedmond	117
Chorleywood	140
Croxley Green	166
Hemel Hempstead	196
Kings Langley	204
Loudwater	217
Maple Cross	238
Northwood	266
Rickmansworth	297
South Oxhey	342
Watford East	365
Watford North	387
Watford South	414
Watford West	433

Executive Summary

Introduction

- i. LUC was commissioned by Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council to undertake an assessment of the Green Belt. The study will form an important piece of evidence for the emerging Three Rivers and Watford Local Plans. This report sets out the findings of the Stage 2 Green Belt assessment, which considers the relative value of land in terms of harm to the Green Belt purposes, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that would result from the release of designated land.

Study Scope

- ii. A Stage 1 Green Belt Study was undertaken in 2017 by Amec Foster Wheeler. This assessed the whole of the Green Belt in Three Rivers and Watford in terms of its contribution to the five purposes of the Green Belt, as set out in the NPPF. The Stage 1 study recognised that further, more specific analysis of Green Belt would be required due to the pressure for development to meet housing needs in Three Rivers and Watford.
- iii. The Stage 2 Green Belt study considered the extent to which the release of different areas of land affects the contribution to the Green Belt purposes, through both the loss of openness of the released land and the resulting impact that this could have on the adjacent Green Belt. This process involved an assessment of the *harm* to Green Belt purposes of releasing land for development to facilitate the expansion of inset settlements (whether within, or close to the District and Borough) or of the village of Bedmond (which was identified in the Stage 1 Study as having potential to be inset into the Green Belt).
- iv. The extent of the assessment area was determined incrementally through the analysis process, starting with all Green Belt land within Three Rivers and Watford adjacent to inset settlements or to Bedmond, extending out to boundary features beyond which release of land was considered to result in an increase in harm level. Where this increased harm level was rated less than *high*, land extending out to the next significant boundary feature was assessed as a separate land parcel.
- v. The Stage 2 assessment followed the following three key steps:
 - Step 1: Considered the impact on the contribution to the NPPF purposes.
 - Step 2: Assessed the potential impact of release on the integrity of the remaining Green Belt, including consideration of the strength of residual Green Belt boundaries.
 - Step 3: Assessed the overall Green Belt harm and any variations of harm within the 'assessment zone'.

Further details on the methodology used to assess the potential harm to the Green Belt purposes of releasing Green Belt land can be found in **Chapter 3**.

Findings

- vi. A total of 152 parcels were identified as part of the Stage 2 study, reflecting harm to Green belt purposes rated on a 7-point scale of *very high*, *high*, *moderate-high*, *moderate*, *low-moderate*, *low* and *very low*. Where there are notable variations in harm within a parcel, but no clear boundary to mark a distinction, commentary is provided regarding the potential to limit harm through a more limited release of land. For parcels beyond which harm was assessed as *high* or

very high, text to support this analysis is provided under the heading 'harm beyond outer boundary'.

- vii. Consideration of the *harm* to Green Belt that could result from the release of land for development is an essential part of establishing the exceptional circumstances for making alterations to Green Belt boundaries. However, there are other important factors that need to be considered, most notably sustainability and deliverability issues. Whilst the ideal would be to minimise harm to the Green Belt, it may be that the most sustainable locations for development will result in *high* or *very high* harm to the Green Belt. In each location where alterations to Green Belt boundaries are being considered, planning judgement is required to establish whether the sustainability benefits of Green Belt release and the associated development outweigh the harm to the Green Belt designation.
- viii. In light of this, this assessment of harm to Green Belt purposes does not draw conclusions as to where land should be released to accommodate development, but identifies the relative variations in the harm to the designation. **Table ES 1** sets out, for each harm rating level, the size of Green Belt land within the parcelled assessment area, and the percentage of the total parcelled area that this represents. The harm rating for release of any Green Belt land outside of this assessment area in association with expansion of inset settlements (including Bedmond if it were to be inset) would be at least *high*. No parcels were assessed to have the potential to cause *very low* harm to the Green Belt if released.

Table ES 1: Total area of land assessed at each harm rating

Harm Rating *	Total Area of Land (excluding absolute constraints)	
	Area (ha)	Percentage of Parcelled Green Belt
Very High	231.7	9.3
High	679.4	27.4
Moderate-High	790.7	31.8
Moderate	487.7	19.6
Low-Moderate	244.2	9.8
Low	49.5	2.0

*Note that where an area is assessed in the context of release from more than one settlement, and the resultant harm ratings are different, it is the lowest of the ratings that is reported in this table.

- ix. The findings of the assessment of harm are summarised in **Chapter 4** and detailed findings of the assessment of harm are included in **Appendix 1**.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 LUC was commissioned by Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council to undertake an assessment of the Green Belt. This report sets out the findings of the Stage 2 Green Belt assessment which identifies the harm to the Green Belt that would result from the release of land adjacent to the existing urban areas within the two authorities. The study will form an important piece of evidence for the emerging Three Rivers and Watford Local Plans.

Study aims and objectives

- 1.2 The overall aim of the study was to undertake an independent, robust and transparent assessment of the Green Belt within Three Rivers and Watford (illustrated on **Figure 1.1**). A Stage 1 Green Belt Study was undertaken in 2017 by Amec Foster Wheeler. This assessed the whole of the Green Belt in Three Rivers and Watford in terms of its contribution to the five purposes of the Green Belt, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), namely:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 1.3 The Stage 1 study recognised that further, more specific analysis of Green Belt would be required due to the pressure for development to meet housing needs in Three Rivers and Watford:
- “... conclusions drawn as part of the evaluation of the strategic contribution of the Green Belt will to some extent inevitably be different to conclusions reached on their localised purposes (for example in relation to specific settlements). Where necessary as part of more refined work, sub-parcels (for example down to the field scale) can be identified in order to help explore locally-specific issues and/or impacts.”*
- 1.4 The Stage 2 Study involved a more focussed assessment of the potential harm to the Green Belt purposes of releasing Green Belt land within Three Rivers and Watford to facilitate the expansion of inset settlements (whether within, or close to the District and Borough) or of the village of Bedmond (which was identified in the Stage 1 Study as having potential to be inset into the Green Belt). This more targetted approach is informed by the requirements of the NPPF and consideration of Local Plan Examination Inspectors’ reports and case law. Stage 1 has ensured that the Study is suitably comprehensive, i.e. that all Green Belt is considered, but Stage 2 provides more specific information on Green Belt harm, to be weighed up by the Councils alongside sustainability and deliverability considerations in order to make decisions regarding the potential release of Green Belt land.
- 1.5 The assessment of harm considers the extent to which the release of different areas of land reduces the contribution to the Green Belt purposes, through both the loss of openness of the released land and the resulting impact that this could have on the strength of the adjacent Green Belt. Ratings and supporting analysis are provided in relation to each assessed Green Belt purpose, and considered in combination to arrive at a single overall harm rating.
- 1.6 The extent of the assessment area was determined incrementally through the analysis process, starting with all Green Belt land within Three Rivers and Watford adjacent to inset settlements or to Bedmond, extending out to boundary features beyond which release of land was considered to result in an increase in harm level. Where this increased harm level was rated less than *high*, land extending out to the next significant boundary feature was assessed as a separate land parcel,

but where a boundary was judged to mark a change to *high* or *very high* harm this rating would apply to all land beyond that boundary, so no further parcel subdivision was required.

- 1.7 In identifying areas which would, if released, result in greater harm to Green Belt purposes, the assessment can, alongside wider analysis relating to other environmental/sustainability considerations (e.g. landscape sensitivity, traffic impact, provision of services), help to inform decisions regarding the relative merits of different locations for potential allocation of land to meet housing need, and any mitigation which might need to accompany it. This analysis of harm and mitigation is consistent with the latest case law on the matter, notably *Calverton Parish Council v Greater Nottingham Councils & others* (2015)¹, which found that planning judgements setting out the 'exceptional circumstances' for the amendment of Green Belt boundaries require consideration of the 'nature and extent' of harm to the Green Belt and 'the extent to which the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt may be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonable practicable extent'.

Duty to Cooperate engagement

- 1.8 The Green Belt is a strategic matter in terms of the requirements of Duty to Cooperate. Paragraph 156 of the NPPF sets out the strategic issues where cooperation might be appropriate, and includes a number of cross boundary issues that are closely linked to the Green Belt. A method statement setting out the proposed assessment approach for the Three Rivers and Watford Stage 2 Green Belt Study was circulated to the Councils' key stakeholders with whom the Councils' have a duty to cooperate². This included the following:
- Hertsmere Borough Council;
 - Dacorum Borough Council;
 - St Albans City and District;
 - Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council;
 - London Borough of Harrow;
 - London Borough of Hillingdon;
 - Chiltern District Council;
 - Hertfordshire County Council;
 - South Buckinghamshire District Council; and
 - Buckinghamshire County Council.
- 1.9 Stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft methodology. A response was received from Hertsmere Borough Council which has been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Report authors

- 1.10 The report has been prepared by LUC, which has advised developers and local authorities across the country on Green Belt issues, as well as undertaking numerous independent Green Belt studies at a range of scales. We have completed Green Belt Assessments or Reviews on behalf of over 40 Local Authorities throughout England.

Report structure

- 1.11 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

¹ <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2015/1078.html>

² Section 110 of the Localism Act (2011).

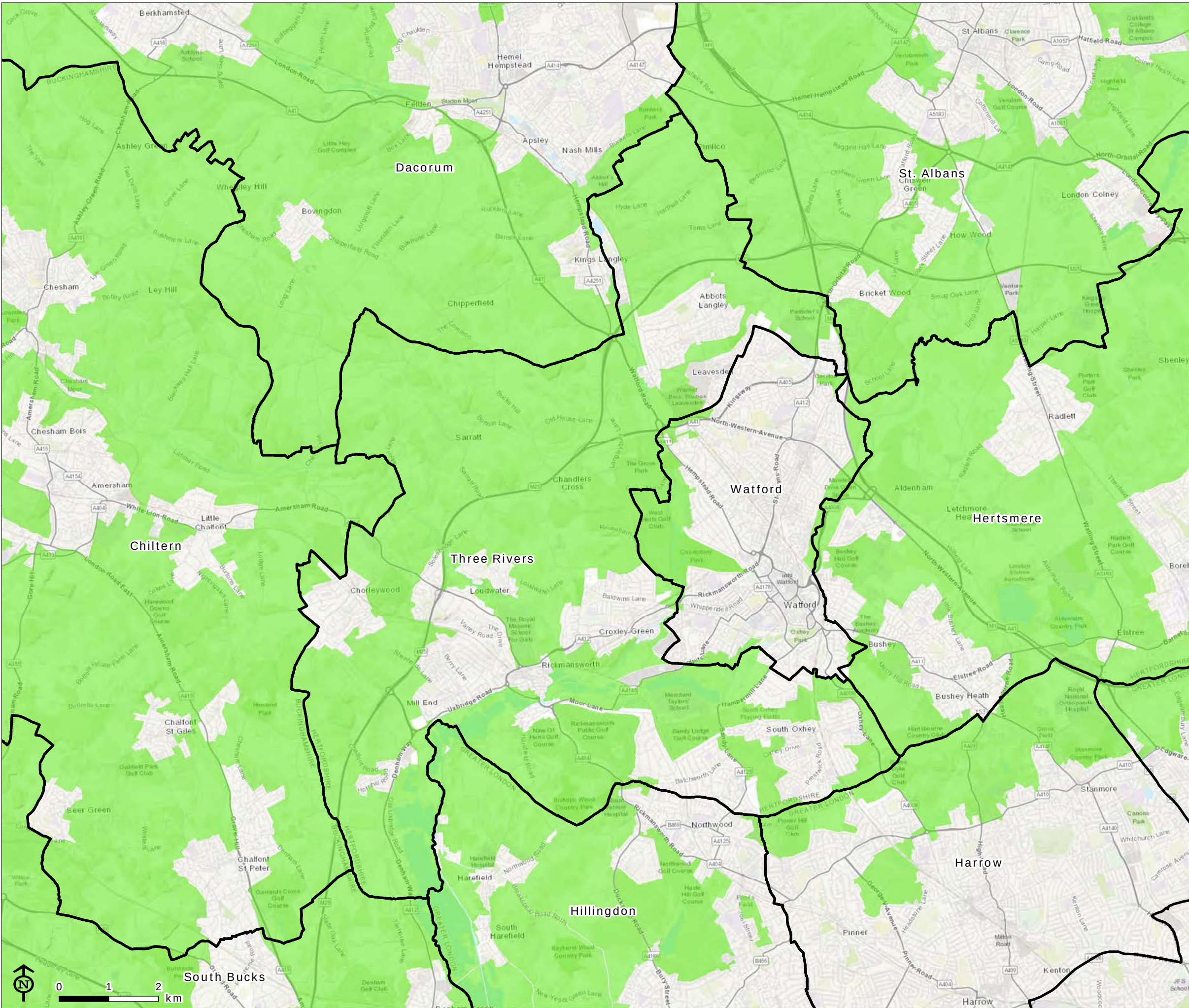
Chapter 2: sets out the background to the Stage 2 study and the policy context.

Chapter 3: outlines the assessment methodology.

Chapter 4: summarises the findings of the Stage 2 Green Belt assessment.

Chapter 5: sets out potential design principles for minimising harm to the Green Belt and other considerations relating to enhancing remaining Green Belt land.

1.12 **Appendix 1** – sets out the detailed findings of the Stage 2 Green Belt assessment



Three Rivers and Watford
Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 1.1
Green Belt Context

- District Boundary
- Green Belt

Map Scale @A3: 1:75,000



2 Policy Context

Introduction

- 2.1 This chapter summarises the origins of the local Green Belt and sets out National Green Belt policy, relevant guidance and case law and the local planning policy context.

Origins of the Metropolitan and Hertfordshire Green Belt

- 2.2 During the Second World War, the newly formed Ministry of Town and Country Planning commissioned Professor Patrick Abercrombie to prepare an advisory plan for the future growth of Greater London. The Ministry gave its formal approval of Abercrombie's Green Belt proposals and the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act allowed local authorities to include Green Belt proposals in their development plans, resulting in the designation of the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 2.3 Hertfordshire County Council initially designated the south of the county as Green Belt as part of the Hertfordshire County Development Plan approved in 1958. The Hertfordshire County Structure Plan in 1979 approved in principle the designation of a Green Belt as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt about 12 – 15 miles deep with limited extensions along the main radial transport corridors³. Approximately 55% of Hertfordshire is designated Green Belt (90,000ha)⁴.

Three Rivers District and Watford Borough Green Belt

- 2.4 The Green Belt within Three Rivers District and Watford Borough covers almost all of the land which is not part of an urban settlement (e.g. a town or large village). There are a number of smaller settlements which are included in the Green Belt (for example Sarrat, Bedmond, Heronsgate, West Hyde, Chandlers Cross and Belsize), along with isolated dwellings and buildings and land which is not open countryside but is undeveloped.
- 2.5 The District of Three Rivers and Borough of Watford lie on the edge of Greater London and their character, in particular Three Rivers, reflects the transition from more urban to more rural. The Green Belt itself moves from being more fragmented, lying between suburbs of outer London, to being more contiguous in nature as it covers areas of wider countryside.
- 2.6 Being on the edge of London, the Green Belt in Three Rivers and Watford varies in character and uses. Much of the land would be regarded as open countryside and is used for farming - arable and pasture. This is particularly apparent to the north and west as land becomes less built up and more open the further away from it London it becomes. Typical urban fringe uses – parks, golf courses and other recreational land, can be found on the outskirts of built up areas, in particular Watford. There are also woodland areas present, some reasonably extensive and dense, for example Lees Wood on the eastern edge of Three Rivers, and other smaller but still dense areas which are common to the north west. There are various areas of importance for biodiversity scattered around the District and Borough, including Local Nature Reserves (Chorleywood House Estate, Chorleywood Common, Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Stockers Lake, Croxley Common Moor, The Withey Beds, Batchworth Heath, Lairage Land, Oxhey Woods, Prestwick Road Meadows, Cassiobury Park, and Garston Park) and SSSIs (Sarratt Bottom, Whippendell Wood and Croxley Common Moor). The total area covered by Local Nature Reserves is 398.2 ha, and by SSSIs is 112.09 ha. Together these designations cover 6.6% of the Green Belt in Three Rivers and Watford.

³ Three Rivers and Watford Green Belt Review – Strategic Analysis FINAL, Amec Foster Wheeler

⁴ Three Rivers and Watford Green Belt Review – Strategic Analysis FINAL, Amec Foster Wheeler

National Green Belt Policy

- 2.7 The Metropolitan Green Belt as a standalone concept was first suggested by Raymond Unwin in 1933 as a 'green girdle'. In 1935 the London County Council put forward a scheme '*to provide a reserve supply of public open spaces and of recreational areas and to establish a Green Belt or girdle of open space lands, not necessarily continuous, but as readily accessible from the completely urbanised area of London as practicable*'. This arrangement was formalised by the 1938 Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act, under which 14,400 hectares of land around London were purchased by the London County Council and adjacent counties, either individually or jointly.
- 2.8 In 1955 the Government established (through Circular 42/55) the three main functions of the Green Belt as:
- Checking growth of large built-up areas;
 - Preventing neighbouring settlements from merging; and
 - Preserving the special character of towns.
- 2.9 Emphasis upon the strict control of development and the presumption against building in the Green Belt except in special circumstances was set out through further Government Green Belt guidance in 1962. The essential characteristic of Green Belts as permanent with boundaries only to be altered in exceptional circumstances was established through Circular 14/84.
- 2.10 In January 1988 PPG2 Green Belts (Planning Policy Guidance Note 2), subsequently replaced in 1995 and further amended in 2001, explicitly extended the original purposes of the Green Belt to add:
- to safeguard the surrounding countryside from further encroachment; and
 - to assist in urban regeneration (subsequently replaced in 1995 and further amended in 2001).
- 2.11 PPG2 was replaced through the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012⁵, revised and re-published in July 2018⁶ and in February 2019⁷, and this document currently provides national Green Belt policy. The current position of the Government in relation to the Green Belt, provided through the NPPF and PPG is set out below.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.12 Government policy on the Green Belt is set out in chapter 13 of the adopted National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁸. Paragraph 133 of the NPPF states that "*the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence*".
- 2.13 This is elaborated in NPPF Paragraph 134, which states that Green Belts should serve five purposes, as set out below.

The purposes of Green Belt

1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

⁵ Department of Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2.

⁶ Department of Communities and Local Government (2018) National Planning Policy Framework Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2.

⁷ Department of Communities and Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2.

⁸ Department of Communities and Local Government, 2018, National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733637/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf

3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 2.14 The NPPF emphasises in Paragraph 135 and 136 that local planning authorities should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for the Green Belt and settlement policy. It goes on to state that *"once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans."*
- 2.15 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF requires that the "strategic plan-making authority should have examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development" before concluding that the exceptional circumstances exist (Paragraph 137), specifically whether the strategy:
- *"makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;*
 - *optimises the density of development, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres, and other locations well served by public transport; and*
 - *has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground."*
- 2.16 Paragraph 138 of the NPPF indicates that "when drawing up or reviewing 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 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. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and / or is well served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land."⁹
- 2.17 Paragraph 139 of the NPPF suggests that Local Planning Authorities may wish to identify areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt to accommodate long-term development needs well beyond the plan period.
- 2.18 Current guidance therefore makes it clear that the Green Belt is a strategic planning tool designed primarily to prevent the spread of development and the coalescence of urban areas. To this end, land should be designated because of its position, rather than its landscape quality or recreational use. However, the NPPF states *"local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land"* (Paragraph 141).
- 2.19 It is important to note, however, that these positive roles should be sought for the Green Belt once designated. The lack of a positive role, or the poor condition of Green Belt land, does not necessarily undermine its fundamental role to prevent urban sprawl by being kept permanently open. Openness is not synonymous with landscape character or quality.

⁹ This NPPF requirement will be met as part of the wider Local Plan preparation process, although the findings of this review will form part of this.

- 2.20 Paragraph 143 and 144 state that “inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances... ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”
- 2.21 Paragraphs 145 sets out the types of development that are appropriate in the Green Belt:
- *“buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
 - *appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
 - *the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
 - *the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
 - *limited infilling in villages;*
 - *limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan; and*
 - *limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:*
 - *Not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.*
 - *Not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.”*
- 2.22 Paragraph 146 sets out other forms of development that are not inappropriate provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. These are:
- *“mineral extraction;*
 - *engineering operations;*
 - *local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;*
 - *the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;*
 - *material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation or for cemeteries or burial grounds); and*
 - *development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.”*
- 2.23 Neither the NPPF or the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provide any specific advice regarding a methodology for undertaking Green Belt reviews, and no reference is made to different scales of review. This lack of specific advice on the methodology of a Green Belt review has led to varying interpretations and approaches.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.24 The NPPF's Green Belt policies are supplemented by additional planning practice guidance. The guidance sets out some of the factors that can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of Green Belt land. The factors referenced are not presented as an exhaustive list, but rather a summary of some common considerations born out through specific case law judgements. The guidance states openness is capable of having

both spatial and visual aspects¹⁰. Other circumstances which have the potential to affect judgements on the impact of development on openness include the duration of development and its remediability to the equivalent, or an improved state of, openness, and the degree of activity likely to be generated by development, such as traffic.

- 2.25 The guidance also elaborates on Paragraph 138 of the NPPF which requires local planning authorities to set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land. The guidance endorses the preparation of supporting landscape, biodiversity or recreation evidence to identify appropriate compensatory improvements, including:
- *'new or enhanced green infrastructure;*
 - *woodland planting;*
 - *landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);*
 - *improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;*
 - *new or enhanced walking and cycle routes; and*
 - *improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.'*
- 2.26 Finally, the guidance offers some suggested considerations for securing the delivery of identified compensatory improvements – the need for early engagement with landowners and other interested parties to obtain the necessary local consents, establishing a detailed scope of works and identifying a means of funding their design, construction and maintenance through planning conditions, section 106 obligations and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Other Relevant Guidance and Case Law

Planning Advisory Service Guidance

- 2.27 Neither the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) nor National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides guidance on how to undertake Green Belt reviews. However, the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) have published a useful advice note that discusses some of the key issues associated with assessing the Green Belt.
- 2.28 The PAS Guidance¹¹ considers the way in which the five purposes of the Green Belt should be addressed, as follows:
- **Purpose 1:** To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas – this should consider the meaning of the term 'sprawl' and how this has changed from the 1930s when the Green Belt was conceived.
 - **Purpose 2:** To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another – assessment of this purpose will be different in each case and a 'scale rule' approach should be avoided. The identity of a settlement is not determined just by the distance to another settlement; instead the character of the place and the land between settlements must be acknowledged. Landscape Character Assessment is therefore a useful analytical tool to use in undertaking this purpose.
 - **Purpose 3:** To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment – the most useful approach for this purpose is to look at the difference between the urban fringe and open countryside. As all Green Belt has a role in achieving this purpose, it is difficult to apply this purpose and distinguish the contribution of different areas.

¹⁰ Two important Planning Appeal judgements (Heath & Hampstead Society v Camden LBC & Vlachos (2008) and Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & East Dorset District Council (2016)) define openness as having both a spatial aspect and a visual aspect. Further details are set out in Chapter 2 and in the case law section below.

¹¹ Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt, Planning Advisory Service (2015)

- **Purpose 4:** Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns – this applies to very few places within the country and very few settlements in practice. In most towns, there is already more recent development between the historic core and the countryside.
 - **Purpose 5:** To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land – the amount of land within urban areas that could be developed will already have been factored in before identifying Green Belt land. The value of various land parcels is unlikely to be distinguished by the application of this purpose.
- 2.29 It also states that the assessment of the performance of the Green Belt should be restricted to the Green Belt purposes and not consider other planning considerations, such as landscape, which should be considered in their own right as part of the appraisal and identification of sustainable patterns of development.
- 2.30 The guidance goes on to list the types of areas of land that might make a relatively limited contribution to the Green Belt, or which might be considered for development through a review of the Green Belt according to the five Green Belt purposes:
- land partially enclosed by development, i.e. where new development would effectively be 'infill' development;
 - land where development would be well contained by the landscape;
 - land where harm to the qualities that contributed to the distinct identity of separate settlements would be limited; and,
 - a strong boundary could be created with a clear distinction between 'town' and 'country'.
- 2.31 The Planning Advisory Service has since updated their 'Plan Making Question and Answer' advice with regard to the assessment of the Green Belt within Local Plans¹². The service advises that Green Belt Reviews should be considered in the context of its strategic role. This indicates that Green Belts should not necessarily be just reviewed for each authority, and could include a joint methodology.

Planning Inspectorate Local Plan Examination Reports

- 2.32 Since the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012, there have been several important Planning Inspectorate Local Plan Examination Reports which have informed Green Belt planning and by association Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) planning¹³. These include:
- The Inspector's preliminary conclusions (S Emerson) to Bath and North East Somerset Council (June 2012) highlighted the importance of having an *"up-to-date and comprehensive review of the Green Belt in the district is necessary to see whether all the land so designated fulfils the Green Belt purposes"*.
 - The Inspector's report (A Thickett) to Leeds City Council (September 2014) emphasised that Green Belt studies should be *"fair, comprehensive and consistent with the Core Strategy's aim of directing development to the most sustainable locations"*, i.e. Green Belt reviews should be 'comprehensive' rather than 'selective'.
 - The Inspector's interim views (S J Pratt) to Cheshire East Council (October 2014) and further interim views (December 2015) highlighted several flaws in the approach to the Council's Green Belt assessment:
 - Contribution to the Green Belt purpose were not the only factors used to inform the assessment, land ownership, availability and deliverability were also considered, weighting overall Green Belt judgements against the purposes of the designation.
 - The Green Belt was divided-up in to assessment parcels inconsistently: large areas were assessed in the same way as small sites and some areas of the Green Belt were not assessed.
 - Green Belt purposes 4 and 5 were not assessed.

¹² <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pm-q-a-green-belt#Q>: When should you carry out a Green Belt review?

¹³ Case notes referring to the NPPF that pre-date July 2018 make reference to the original March 2012 NPPF document.

- The Council's two stage Green Belt assessment update involving an initial assessment of large general areas followed by smaller parcels for the five Green Belt purposes, was subsequently approved by the Inspector. However, the Inspector emphasised the need for consistency and transparency: *"This is a complex process, which needs to be undertaken in a consistent and transparent manner using available and proportionate evidence, involving professional judgements; it was not simply a desk-based study, but one which involved many site visits by CEC's officers or consultants to confirm the assessments and judgements."*
- With regard to the assessment of Purpose 4 the Inspector commented that *"the assessment utilises a variety of historical evidence, which enables a full assessment of the smaller settlements; this could be criticised as being too detailed for a Green Belt assessment which focuses on the larger historic towns, but is not necessarily inappropriate or irrelevant"*.
- With regard to the assessment of Purpose 5 which focussed on the area of brownfield land within the settlement nearest to the Green Belt land under assessment, the Inspector found the approach to be *"consistent, transparent and proportionate."*
- The Inspector's interim findings (H Stephens) to Durham City Council (November 2014) clarified that assessments against the Green Belt purposes should form the basis of any justification for releasing land from the Green Belt, and in reviewing land against the purposes Green Belt studies should consider the reasons for a Green Belt's designation.
- The Inspectors' Letter (L Graham) to Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Councils (May 2015) emphasised that Green Belt studies should make clear *"how the assessment of 'importance to Green Belt' has been derived"* from assessments against the individual purposes of the Green Belt and highlighted the importance of revisions to Green Belt boundaries to *"take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, as required by Paragraph 85 of the NPPF [even if] such an exercise would be carried out through the SEA/SA process."*
- The Inspector's Letter (M Middleton) to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (December 2017) highlighted that the Council has supplied insufficient justification to not allocate sufficient housing development proposals in the Local Plan. The Council's primary source of justification was the Council's Green Belt review. The Inspector found the Phase 1 of the review was too strategic to draw out finer grained variations in Green Belt performance and Phase 2 of the review, although more detailed, failed to assess all potential development sites and did not examine all potentially suitable areas and did not assess the extent to which the Green Belt would be harmed by the loss of a parcel in part, in its entirety or in combination with other parcels. The Inspector noted the Green Belt review had incorrectly incorporated an examination of landscape character into the consideration of openness, and that openness *"should only be concerned about the absence of built development and other dominant urban influences"*. In addition, the Inspector noted that if the quantum of development required can't be met adjacent to urban areas, the Council should assess other locations that are large enough to accommodate a new settlement.
- The Inspector's report (D Smith) to the London Borough of Redbridge (January 2018) supported the Council's decision not to assess the Borough's Green Belt against Purpose 4 on the grounds that there are no historic towns in the Borough. The Inspector also noted that contribution to Purpose 5 had not been assessed because all brownfield sites with reasonable prospects of development had been identified. The Inspector concluded that this reasoning was *"flawed as a matter of principle because the aims of the Green Belt are long-term but as this purpose applies to most land it does not form a particularly useful means of evaluating sites"*.

Planning Appeal Decisions

2.33 Since the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012, there have been several important Planning Appeal decisions that have informed general interpretation of national Green Belt policy and by association MOL policy¹⁴. These include:

- *Heath & Hampstead Society v Camden LBC & Vlachos (2008)* concerned a proposal to demolish an existing residential building on Metropolitan Open Land and replace it with a new, larger building which represented a spatial intrusion upon the openness of the MOL but which did not intrude visually on that openness. The Inspector concluded that *“while it may not be possible to demonstrate harm by reason of visual intrusion as a result of an individual – possibly very modest – proposal, the cumulative effect of a number of such proposals, each very modest in itself, could be very damaging to the essential quality of openness of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land”*. Although the case related to previous policy in relation to the Green Belt as set out in Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG 2), this portion of the judgement was cited in *Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & East Dorset District Council* (see below) as relevant guidance in relation to the concept of openness of the Green Belt in the NPPF.
- *Calverton Parish Council v Greater Nottingham Councils & others (2015)* indicates that planning judgments setting out the ‘exceptional circumstances’ for the amendment of Green Belt boundaries require consideration of the ‘nature and extent of harm’ to the Green Belt and ‘the extent to which the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt may be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent’:

“the planning judgments involved in the ascertainment of exceptional circumstances in the context of both national policy and the positive obligation located in section 39(2) should, at least ideally, identify and then grapple with the following matters: (i) the acuteness/intensity of the objectively assessed need (matters of degree may be important); (ii) the inherent constraints on supply/availability of land prima facie suitable for sustainable development; (iii) (on the facts of this case) the consequent difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt; (iv) the nature and extent of the harm to this Green Belt (or those parts of it which would be lost if the boundaries were reviewed); and (v) the extent to which the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt may be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent.”
- *Timmins and Lymn Family Funeral Service v Gedling Borough Council and Westerleigh Group Limited (2015)* clarifies that any material change of use of land in the Green Belt generally (and the use of land as a cemetery in particular) should be regarded as inappropriate unless listed in Paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF.
- *Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & East Dorset District Council (2016)* was an appeal heard in the High Court relating to a previous appeal judgement in which a refusal for planning permission in the Green Belt by East Dorset District Council was upheld. The High Court appeal was dismissed, but the judgement concluded that:
 - *“openness is open-textured and a number of factors are capable of being relevant when it comes to applying it to the particular facts of a specific case. Prominent among these will be factors relevant to how built up the Green Belt is now and how built up it would be if redevelopment occurs...and factors relevant to the visual impact on the aspect of openness which the Green Belt presents”*
 - *“The question of visual impact is implicitly part of the concept of ‘openness of the Green Belt’ as a matter of the natural meaning of the language used in para. 89 of the NPPF... There is an important visual dimension to checking ‘the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas’ and the merging of neighbouring towns...openness of aspect is a characteristic quality of the countryside, and ‘safeguarding the countryside from encroachment’ includes preservation of that quality of openness. The preservation of*

¹⁴ Case notes referring to the NPPF that pre-date July 2018 make reference to the original March 2012 NPPF document.

‘the setting ... of historic towns’ obviously refers in a material way to their visual setting, for instance when seen from a distance across open fields.”

- *“The openness of the Green Belt has a spatial aspect as well as a visual aspect, and the absence of visual intrusion does not in itself mean that there is no impact on the openness of the Green Belt as a result of the location of a new or materially larger building there.”*
- Lee Valley Regional Park Authority v Epping Forest DC and Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd (2016) found that glasshouse development in the Green Belt is appropriate since it is a ‘building for agriculture’ under the first bullet of Paragraph 89 of the NPPF and therefore not capable of generating harm to the Green Belt designation.
- Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) and Oxton Farm v North Yorkshire County Council and Darrington Quarries Ltd (2018) involved a challenge to a planning permission for a 6 hectare quarry extension in the Green Belt. Although Paragraph 90 of the NPPF states that mineral extraction is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the Council failed to take into account visual impacts when considering whether the proposal would *“preserve the openness of the Green Belt”* as required in Paragraph 90 of the NPPF. Lord Justice Lindblom found that the council had limited its consideration of the effects of the proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt to spatial impact and nothing more, despite the fact that, on the council’s own assessment of the likely effects of the development on the landscape, visual impact on openness was *“quite obviously”* relevant to its effect on the openness of the Green Belt. Applying the findings of this case, appropriate development in the Green Belt cannot be contrary to either the first or third Green Belt purpose and should be excluded from the assessments as ‘urbanising features’ as it is cannot be *“urban sprawl”* and cannot have an *“urbanising influence”*.

Local Planning Policy

Three Rivers District Local Plan

- 2.34 The Three Rivers District Development Plan is formed of a number of documents which include:
- Development Management Policies Local Development Document (2013);
 - Site Allocations Local Development Document (2014);
 - Core Strategy (2011); and
 - Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 2.35 The Development Management Policies Document adopted in 2013, states, in policy DM2 that *“the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate with certain exceptions”*. These exceptions include: extensions (other than those disproportionate in size); replacement dwellings (as long as they meet a number of criteria in the policy); ancillary buildings (that meet the criteria set out in the policy); and re-use and conversion (that meet the criteria in the policy). Approval for new buildings (other than those specified in national policy and guidance) will not be given except in very special circumstances.
- 2.36 The Core Strategy, adopted in 2011 sets out how the District will plan for and deal with future development in Three Rivers for 15 years. Policy CP11 relates to the Green Belt and states:
- “The Council will:
- a) Maintain the general extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt in the District.
 - b) Where appropriate, make minor revisions through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document to the detailed Green Belt boundaries around the main urban area, to accommodate development needs, as detailed in the Spatial Strategy and Place Shaping Policies.
 - c) Retain ‘Major Developed Site in the Green Belt’ status for Maple Lodge Sewage Treatment Works.

- d) Review 'Major Developed Site in the Green Belt' status in relation to Leavesden Aerodrome, having regard to the important contribution the site is expected to make to meeting the needs for housing and employment.
- e) Encourage appropriate positive use of the Green Belt and measures to improved environmental quality.

There will be a general presumption against inappropriate development that would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt, or which would conflict with the purpose of including land within it."

- 2.37 The Council are currently preparing their new Local Plan which will provide the planning policies and proposals for future sustainable growth in the District up until 2036. Publication of the draft plan is anticipated for Autumn 2019, with adoption scheduled for late 2020. This Green Belt Study forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

Watford Borough Local Plan

- 2.38 The current Watford Borough Local Plan consists of a number of documents that together guide the strategic approach to growth in the Borough and how planning decisions will be made. These document include:

- The Core Strategy 2006 – 2031;
- Watford District Plan 2000 saved policies; and
- Supplementary Planning Documents.

- 2.39 The Watford Core Strategy was adopted in 2013 and sets out the approach to growth in the Borough up to 2031. Policy GI 2 in relation to the Green Belt states:

"The Council will:

- 1. Maintain the general extent of the metropolitan Green Belt in the borough.*
- 2. Encourage appropriate positive use of the Green Belt and measures to improve the environmental quality.*
- 3. Make minor revisions to correct existing anomalies and create defensible Green Belt boundaries on the site allocations document and accompanying proposals map.*

There will be a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are defined in Paragraphs 89-91 of the NPPF."

- 2.40 It is noted that the saved policies of the Watford District Plan do not include those regarding the Green Belt.
- 2.41 Watford Borough Council are currently preparing their new Local Plan and are aiming to publish their Preferred Options in late 2019 and the draft Local Plan in Spring 2020. This Green Belt Study forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

Neighbouring Green Belt Studies

- 2.42 A number of Green Belt studies have been completed in neighbouring local authority areas and summary of these is provided in **Table 2.1** below:

Table 2.1: Summary of Green Belt Studies in Neighbouring Authorities.

Authority	Summary of Green Belt Studies
Joint Green Belt Studies	
Green Belt Review: Purposes Assessment (2013), for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and	A Green Belt Review: Purposes Assessment (Part 1) was undertaken by SKM for multiple authorities including: Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in 2013. The purpose of the assessment was to provide advice on the role that each sub-area plays in fulfilling the fundamental aim of the Green Belt and the five purposes set out in the NPPF. The assessment comprised of five tasks: 1)

Authority	Summary of Green Belt Studies
District Council, and Welwyn Hatfield Council	a review of national and local policy 2) the identification of parcels 3) a desktop review and on-site inspection of Green Belt against NPPF purposes 4) a review of potential compensatory Green Belt, and 5) a review of the next steps. Task 3 regarded 'historic towns' as settlements or places with historic features identified in local policy or through conservation area or other historic designation(s). In addition, the review considered whether any further 'major developed sites' should be identified in Dacorum Borough only. Overall, the findings demonstrated that most Green Belt land within the study area exhibits high levels of openness and a clear distinction is evident between built-up land and the adjacent surrounding countryside.
Buckinghamshire Green Belt Assessment (2016) for: Aylesbury Vale District; Chiltern District, South Bucks District and Wycombe District.	A Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment was undertaken for the Buckinghamshire Authorities to form part of a shared evidence base for the respective local plan in each of the four local Buckinghamshire Districts and the Buckinghamshire Replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The purpose of the Green Belt report was to assess the strategic land parcels, 'General Areas', against the purposes of the Green Belt as defined in the NPPF. Within this assessment, Purpose 4 towns were compiled using the Buckinghamshire Authorities' Historic Towns Project and were supplemented as and when required by Conservation Area Assessments and Townscape Character Studies. Purpose 5 was omitted from the assessment on the grounds that there were no planned regeneration schemes being inhibited by Green Belt designations within the County. The assessment considered 157 Green Belt General Areas and 14 non-Green Belt General Areas. Of these, a small number were found to perform weakly as Green Belt and were therefore recommended for a more detailed assessment by the Buckinghamshire Authorities.
Individual Authority Green Belt Studies	
Green Belt Assessment, Stage 1 (2017) for Hertsmere Borough Council	The Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment was undertaken as part of the evidence base to inform the early Local Plan review. The assessment assesses the Hertsmere Green Belt against the five NPPF Green Belt purposes. The main aims of the Study were to: 1) analyse the existing Green Belt in the Study area and identify individual strategic areas for further analysis, b) review the role of each of the strategic areas against the aims and objectives of the NPPF and any local purposes that might be identified, c) score the strategic areas based on their contribution to these purposes, d) provide advice on existing and future policies applying to Green Belt in the study area, e) identify smaller land parcels within the strategic areas for potential Stage 2 assessment. With regard to NPPF Purpose 5, on the grounds that a distinction between the contribution that individual parcels would make to this purpose, and there being no planned regeneration schemes that were being inhibited by Green Belt designations this purpose was excluded from the assessment. The geographical areas of Bushey High Street Conservation Area and Radlett (South) Conservation Area were the only areas identified as being of relevance in relation to Purpose 4 of the assessment. Overall, the assessment found that the majority of the Green Belt in Hertsmere is performing an important role in terms of the NPPF purposes; however a small number of areas were identified for further consideration.
Green Belt Assessment (Stage 2) (2019) for Hertsmere Borough Council	The Stage 2 Assessment was designed to advance the Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment and will form part of the evidence base to support the review of the current Hertsmere Local Plan (2012-2027). The focus of the Stage 2 Assessment was to assess the parts of the Green Belt, which might contribute to 'five potential development approaches' identified in the Local Plan Issues and Options public consultation document if exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. These identified approaches were: a) redevelopment of urban brownfield sites, b) growth through new garden suburbs, c) supporting larger rural communities and growth of key villages, d) meeting the needs of other villages, and e) creating a new garden village. The areas for Green Belt Assessment were defined using the Council's emerging Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) together with further areas around potential growth settlements to supplement those

Authority	Summary of Green Belt Studies
	recorded in the HELAA. Overall, 72 sub-areas and 9 sub-areas within two promoted Garden Villages were identified for assessment. The study found that almost 38% of the sub-areas assessed continue to perform against one or more of the NPPF purposes strongly and nearly 49% of sub areas are considered to make an important contribution to the wider strategic Green Belt. 26 sub areas were considered to make a less important contribution to the wider Strategic Green Belt.
Green Belt Review Sites & Boundaries Study, for St Albans City and District (2014)	The Stage 2 Assessment provides a more detailed analysis of each of the eight strategic sub-areas in the study area defined in the Part 1 Study (2013), by: a) identifying potential sites within the strategic sub-areas for potential release for future development, b) estimating the potential development capacity of each site; and c) ranking the sites in terms of their suitability for Green Belt release. The methodological approach was sub-divided into a number of tasks which include: a review of contribution towards Green Belt Purposes and review of relevant planning history; assessment of environmental and historic constraints, integration and landscape appraisal/sensitivity; a boundary review and contribution to Green Belt purposes; assessment of developable areas; indicative development capacity and the evaluation of site suitability for potential Green Belt release and future development. The study identified 9 sites which were considered to be most suitable for potential Green Belt release and future development.
Stage 2 Green Belt Review (2014) and Addendum (2016) for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council	The Stage 2 assessment followed on from the joint local authority 'Purposes Assessment' undertaken in 2013 (see above). The Study assessed 67 Green Belt sites identified by the Borough's 2016 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), the GTLAA call for sites, and areas of Green Belt recommended for further assessment during the Stage 1 study. The Study explains the extent to which each site contributes to NPPF Purposes 1, 2, 3 and 4 and a local purpose: to maintain the existing settlement pattern. In accordance with Part 1 of the assessment, the Purpose 2 towns relate to 1st tier settlements towns, as defined in Welwyn Hatfield's settlement hierarchy. Purpose 4 'historic towns' are defined as 'settlements or places with historic features identified in local policy or through conservation area or other local designation(s)'. The assessment therefore considers conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments under Purpose 4. Purpose 5 was omitted from the Study on the grounds that there were was a limited supply of available or unallocated brownfield sites in the districts, therefore the Green Belt as a whole had fulfilled this purpose. The findings of the Part 2 Review found that the Green Belt continues to play an important role against the four national purposes and local purpose. The 2016 Addendum assessed an additional 10 sites identified through the 2016 Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.
Welwyn Hatfield Green Belt Study Stage 3 (2018)	LUC was appointed to undertake the Stage 3 assessment in response to concerns about the previous Stage 2 Study raised by the Inspector during the Borough's Local Plan Examination. The aims of the assessment were to: a) undertake a rigorous assessment of the Green Belt to establish which areas are 'most essential' to retain; and which areas, if developed, could have less harm on the Green Belt, b) to review existing 'washed over' settlements and consider the extent to which they contribute to the openness of the Green Belt, and c), to assess the contribution to the Green Belt purposes of all land within the Borough. The methodology considered all areas to make an even level of contribution to Purpose 5. The study did not consider Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments from the Purpose 4 assessment, by instead stating that only the historic town of Welwyn Garden City is relevant to Purpose 4. The study also made it clear that the Local Purpose does not contribute to the assessment of Green Belt harm. The study concluded that there were no areas of Green Belt that made a significant

Authority	Summary of Green Belt Studies
	contribution to purposes 1 and 4 and purpose 5 was not assessed. Three key areas made a significant contribution to purpose 2, between Welwyn Garden City and St Albans and Hatfield and St Albans. Virtually all of the wider Green Belt was assessed as making a strong contribution to purpose 3.
Stage 2 Green Belt Review and Landscape Appraisal (2016) for Dacorum Borough Council	The Stage 2 assessment provided a comprehensive Green Belt review and landscape appraisal of the Green Belt within Dacorum Borough Council. This review built on the findings of the Stage 1 Purposes Assessment. Following on from discussions with Dacorum Council, the review considered the Large Villages of Bovington, Kings Langley and Markyate within the Purpose 2 assessment. Furthermore, Stage 2 omitted Purposes 4 and 5 from the review on the grounds that there are no instances where historic towns/cores abut the Green Belt and that the amount of land within urban areas that could be developed is factored in before Green Belt land is identified. All of the sub areas examined were judged to meet one or more of the NPPF purposes, through the degree to which different parts of the Green Belt contribute to the individual purposes varies significantly.
Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment: Strategic Role of the Metropolitan Green Belt in Chiltern & South Bucks (2018)	The Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment forms part of the evidence base for the joint Local Plan. The Stage 2 report considered the Part 1 findings in greater detail to determine the appropriateness of any adjustments to Green Belt boundaries, whilst also considering other areas emerging through the local plan process. The objectives of the assessments were to: a) assess the Strategic Zones using a methodology consistent with the Stage 1 Assessment; b) consider how these SZs form part of a wider network; c) consider each SZ's sensitivity to change and d) consider what strategic role the Green Belt in the study area should have over the period to 2036, within the context of the NPPF. The Assessment found that it would be possible to identify a potential revised boundary that would meet NPPF requirements for 79 of the 200 overall areas. Of these 79 areas, 39 were judged to be performing no Green Belt purpose or performed weakly against one or more Green Belt purpose. The remaining 40 areas scored more strongly against one or more Green Belt purpose. Overall, it is not considered that exceptional circumstances apply to 12 of the areas included within the study.
Green Belt & Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt Assessment (2006), London Borough of Hillingdon	This Study was carried out prior to the 2012 NPPF, and did not review all designated Green Belt land. The assessment: a) reviewed sites examined in the previous UDP review; b) reviewed sites identified in the 2005 Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains Assessment 2005; and c) reviewed sites identified by officers that could not benefit from Green Belt designation, as well as sites within the Green Belt that do not meet the purposes of the Green Belt. Two sites were recommended to be upgraded to Major Developed Site in the Green Belt, all other sites were recommended to remain in the Green Belt.
Harrow London Borough Council	The London Borough of Harrow does not have any existing Green Belt studies. However, a Green Belt Management Strategy was prepared for the period 2006 – 2011 which provided a framework to guide the Borough's future decisions on the protection and management of the Green Belt.

- 2.43 Consideration of the approaches taken within these studies was taken into account in developing the methodology for this Stage 2 study.

South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan

- 2.44 Three Rivers District Council, Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Watford Borough Council and St Albans City & District Council, have begun work on a Joint Strategic Plan for the South West Hertfordshire Area. The plan will set the strategic framework and shared priorities of the councils, within which individual Local Plans can be prepared. The Joint Spatial Plan is in the early stages of preparation and details regarding the scope of the plan have yet to

be published, so it has no bearing on this Green Belt study. Green Belt will however be a consideration in the development of the Joint Strategic Plan.

3 Methodology

Introduction

- 3.1 This chapter sets out the methodology for the Stage 2 Green Belt assessment, which identifies the harm to the Green Belt that would result from the release of land adjacent to the existing urban areas within the two authorities. The following section firstly summarises the Stage 1 assessment scope and approach and then outlines the methodology for the Stage 2 assessment, which draws on the main findings of the Stage 1 Green Belt Study.

Stage 1: Scope and approach

- 3.2 The Approach and Methodology section of the Stage 1 Study, undertaken by Amec Foster Wheeler set out its scope as follows:

“This report is a strategic review of the extent to which the Green Belt within Three Rivers District and Watford Borough meets the purposes set by the NPPF, complemented by an exploration of the character and role of villages within the Green Belt, drawing conclusions on the suitability for the continued and potential in-setting of villages within the Green Belt, as required by Paragraph 86 of the NPPF.”

- 3.3 It went on to clarify that it was not a consideration of specific development proposals, and that whilst it made reference to potential for positive use of Green Belt land, it was only an initial assessment in this respect, and that further technical evidence may need to be gathered.

Contribution assessment

- 3.4 Using a subdivision of the District into a series of land parcels (based on distinct physical features, principally major roads) to organise the assessment, the Stage 1 Study drew out strategic variations in the contribution of Green Belt land to the Green Belt purposes as defined in the NPPF.
- 3.5 Each parcel was rated as making a *limited contribution*, a *contribution* or a *significant contribution* to each Green Belt purpose, and these findings were combined into an overall contribution rating which reflected professional judgement rather than the application of any specific formula or weighting. Five elements were identified as assessment considerations:
- Existing land use;
 - proximity and relationship to the built-up area;
 - degree of enclosure/openness;
 - distance and visual connection to historic urban centres/key urban areas; and
 - relationship to the countryside.
- 3.6 The Stage 1 Study also assessed the 'local role' of the Green Belt in *“preserving the setting and character of villages and other settlements”* by considering the relationship between smaller settlements and surrounding Green Belt, but this did not feed into the overall ratings for contribution, which was limited to consideration of the five 'national' Green Belt purposes.

Review of villages

- 3.7 The Stage 1 study carried out a review of washed-over Green Belt villages to establish whether, with reference to Paragraph 140 of the NPPF, any were sufficiently developed to potentially warrant exclusion from the Green Belt – i.e. insetting.

- 3.8 Three settlements were considered large enough for inclusion in the assessment – Heronsgate, Sarratt and Bedmond – with smaller hamlets and isolated development excluded. Heronsgate and Sarratt were judged to have sufficient openness to make a positive contribution to Green Belt purposes, but in the case of Bedmond it was concluded that:

“... the compact form, density and variable relationship with the Green Belt of Bedmond prompts a case for exploring a village envelope and inseting, should a case for additional development in and around the village be identified.”

Stage 2: Scope and overall approach

- 3.9 The Stage 2 study involved an assessment of the potential harm to the Green Belt associated with the release of specific areas of land. The harm assessment considers the extent to which the release of different areas of land would reduce contribution to Green Belt purposes, through both the loss of openness of the released land and the resulting impact that this could have on the strength of the adjacent Green Belt. Ratings and supporting analysis are provided in relation to each assessed Green Belt purpose, and considered in combination to arrive at a single overall harm rating.
- 3.10 The impact on Green Belt purposes of the release of land is not inherently related to the size of the area released, in that the contribution of land depends on its relationship with settlements (large built-up areas, neighbouring or historic towns) and countryside. However the release of a larger area clearly has more potential to weaken the Green Belt by extending into areas that have a greater distinction from urban edges, by diminishing settlement separation and by diminishing the extent to which remaining open land relates to the wider countryside. The analysis of harm as a progression of land release out from an inset settlement edge allows variations in this impact to be judged; something which cannot so readily be achieved when considering the overall contribution made by a predefined parcel of land.
- 3.11 There is an assumption in the assessment of harm that release of land would constitute loss of openness. It is recognised that specific development proposals may include the retention of undeveloped areas, and/or the implementation of landscaping measures – e.g. to create a stronger boundary – that could potentially reduce harm to Green Belt purposes. The study cannot take into account specific development proposals, which may be at varying degrees of development and certainty, but any factors which could potentially reduce harm in relation to an identified parcel were noted.
- 3.12 The desk-based assessment was supported by site visits to all the areas being assessed. This was important to ensure that the assessment was robust.

Local Purpose

- 3.13 The Stage 1 Study also assessed the ‘local role’ of the Green Belt in *“preserving the setting and character of villages and other settlements”*. In discussion with the Councils it was agreed that there was no requirement to assess this local role in further detail at Stage 2 as no weight can be attributed to this and it may cause confusion. The Inspector in the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination noted that ‘maintaining the settlement pattern is a local consideration’ and not one of the five Green Belt purposes.

Beneficial Use

- 3.14 The Stage 1 Study also briefly addressed opportunities for promoting positive use of the Green Belt. Again after discussions with the Councils it was decided that this is better addressed through separate studies and plans, such as Green Infrastructure and Open Space Studies and therefore this was not assessed as part of this Stage 2 Study.

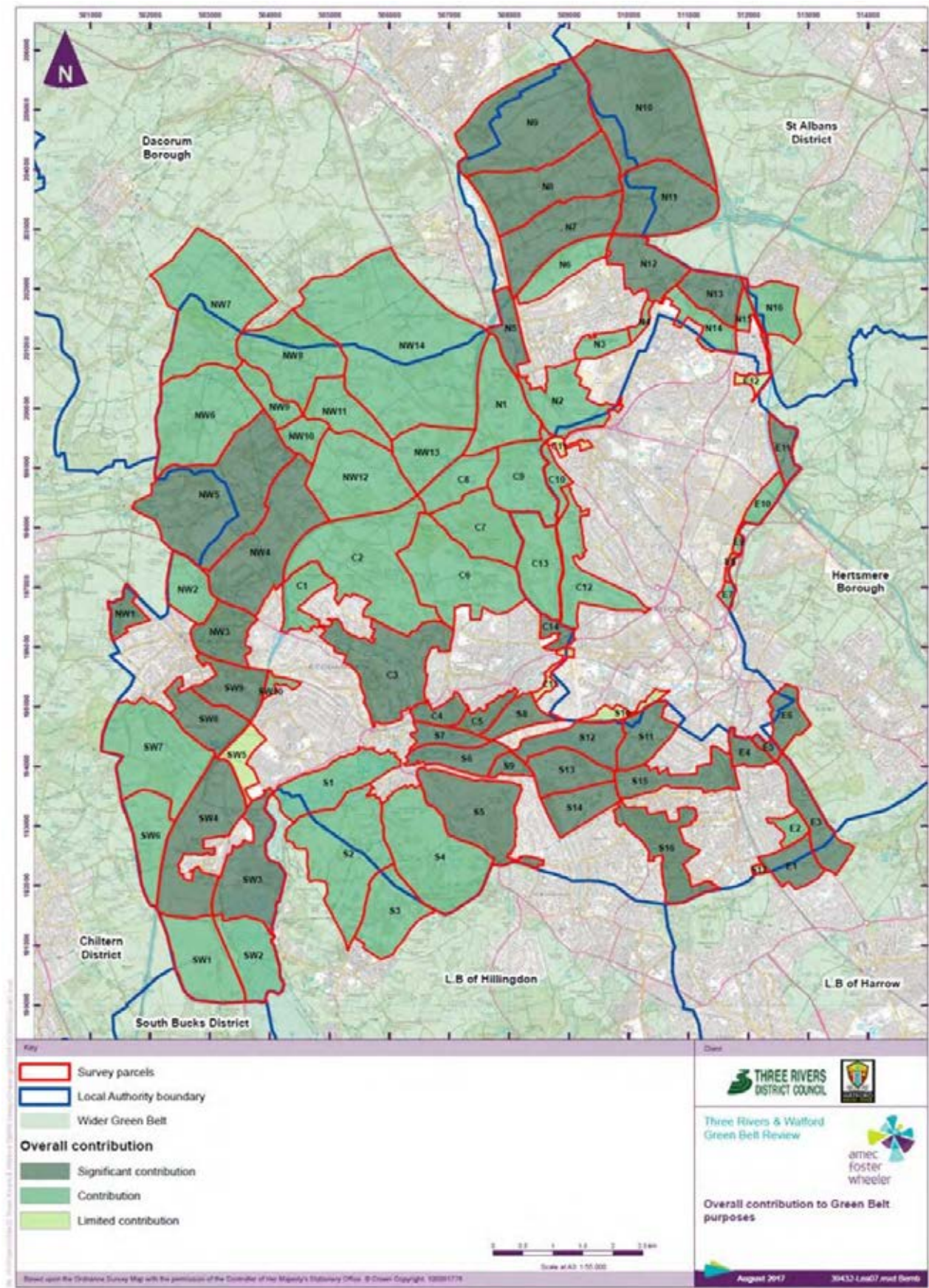
Stage 2: Extent and subdivision of assessment area

General extent

- 3.15 Having discounted, with the potential exception of Bedmond, the creation of any distinct new inset development areas, the Councils identified the need to assess all of the land adjacent to the urban edges of inset settlements within and bordering Three Rivers and Watford in order to assess the impact that settlement expansion could have on the purposes of the Green Belt. The inset settlements include:
- Watford (including Watford North, Watford South, Watford East and Watford West);
 - Rickmansworth (including Mill End);
 - Loudwater;
 - Abbots Langley;
 - Chorleywood;
 - Maple Cross;
 - Croxley Green;
 - Kings Langley;
 - South Oxhey / Carpenders Park;
 - Northwood (including Eastbury and Moor Park);
 - Batchworth; and
 - Hemel Hempstead.
- 3.16 As outlined in Chapter 2, a South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan is also being prepared and this will explore the potential for any new settlement locations. No assessment has therefore been undertaken in this study of land not adjacent to the urban areas.
- 3.17 The intention of the Stage 2 study was to extend the analysis outwards from inset edges as far as was necessary to capture the variations in contribution to the Green Belt purposes. The extent of the assessment area was therefore determined incrementally through the analysis process, starting with all Green Belt land within Three Rivers and Watford adjacent to inset settlements or to Bedmond, extending out to boundary features beyond which release of land was considered to result in an increase in harm level. Where this increased harm level was rated less than *high*, land extending out to the next significant boundary feature was assessed as a separate land parcel, but where a boundary was judged to mark a change to *high* or *very high* harm this rating would apply to all land beyond that boundary, so no further parcel subdivision was required.
- 3.18 Reference was also made to the location and extent of promoted development sites in the vicinity of each settlement. The Stage 2 study is not specifically an assessment of proposed developments, but it is recognised that where sites are present that, if released, would constitute expansion of an urban area, it made sense to incorporate the whole site within the study area.
- 3.19 **Figure 3.1** is taken from the Stage 1 report prepared by Amec Foster Wheeler and shows the results of the Stage 1 strategic review of the Green Belt purposes. This is a map of the overall contribution to the five Green Belt purposes. As can be seen six areas were considered to have a limited contribution to all of the Green Belt purposes. These are all located on the edge of inset settlements (Watford, South Oxhey, Mill End and Croxley Green) and have been included in the Stage 2 assessment of harm.
- 3.20 Land in neighbouring districts and boroughs was considered in the assessment where it was necessary to determine, as part of the harm assessment process, the potential impact that could result from release of adjacent land within Three Rivers or Watford. In two instances, immediately south of Hemel Hempstead and at the south western corner of Bricket Wood, it was necessary to consider harm resulting from release of Green Belt land in a neighbouring authority area (Dacorum and St Albans Respectively) in order to assess harm for parcels of land in Three Rivers, as these areas would need to be released in order for land in Three Rivers to be developed as part of an expansion of Hemel Hempstead or Bricket Wood. Land in Dacorum and St Albans

was not assessed as separate parcels but is referenced in the analysis for the relevant parcels defined within Three Rivers: HH1, HH2 and WN10.

Figure 3.1: Map from Stage 1 report showing overall contribution to Green Belt purposes



- 3.21 The limited gaps between inset areas means that, other than where inset urban areas span the local authority boundaries, the assessment areas around each settlement merge. Structuring the analysis around expansion of urban edges facilitated consideration of such gaps between settlements in terms of expansion of either settlement, to identify whether differences in the relationship between settlement and countryside mean that the harm associated with expansion of one might be different to that associated with expansion of the other.

Subdivision

- 3.22 Within the assessment area around each settlement, land was in the first instance subdivided into parcels by boundaries used to define the Stage 1 parcels. In some cases this resulted in whole Stage 1 parcels being assessed within parcels at Stage 2, but in other cases only partial Stage 1 parcels were included.
- 3.23 The analysis of land within each Stage 1 parcel identified any variations in three factors that are considered to contribute to the strength of Green Belt land:
- its *openness* - i.e. absence of urbanising development;
 - the extent to which it is *contained* by urbanising influences - e.g. other development;
 - the degree of *distinction* between the Green Belt and the inset urban edge – i.e. considering the extent of any physical distinction, whether associated with the boundary between the two or the landform and/or land use within the open area.
- 3.24 Within the Stage 1 parcels or part-parcels, land was divided as necessary into Stage 2 parcels to reflect assessed variations in harm to Green Belt purposes.

Exclusions

- 3.25 All of the parcels identified for consideration at Stage 2 were overlaid with a set of 'absolute' environmental constraints – i.e. areas within which the Council would not permit development. These include the following:
- Scheduled Monuments;
 - Registered Parks and Gardens;
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - Local Nature Reserves;
 - Ancient Woodland;
 - Common land; and
 - Flood Zone 3b.
- 3.26 It was agreed after discussions with the Councils, that Local Wildlife Sites should not be treated as an absolute constraint.
- 3.27 The Stage 2 harm assessment did not rate these areas on the basis that, whether or not defined as Green Belt, they would not be developed. Excluding such designations from detailed assessment at Stage 2 is consistent with recent Inspectors' comments. For example the Inspector in the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination advocated the exclusion of selected designations from detailed assessment. This approach has also been endorsed by the Planning Officers Society.
- 3.28 It is important to note that although these constrained areas were not assessed for harm, any function they may perform as areas of open land and/or as boundary features – which may well have a bearing on the assessment of harm that would be caused from the release of adjacent unconstrained Green Belt land – were taken into consideration.

Stage 2: Assessment Process

- 3.29 The Stage 2 assessment followed the following three key steps:

- Step 1: Considered the impact on the contribution to the NPPF purposes.
- Step 2: Assessed the potential impact of release on the integrity of the remaining Green Belt, including consideration of the strength of residual Green Belt boundaries.
- Step 3: Assessed the overall Green Belt harm and any variations of harm within the 'assessment zone'.

3.30 These are explained in more detail below:

Stage 2 Step 1: Impact of release on contribution to each NPPF Green Belt purpose

- 3.31 The strength of the Green Belt land that would be lost if released needs to be considered alongside the relationships between settlement and countryside relevant to each purpose, to determine the extent of impact – i.e. the relationship the parcel in question has with large built-up areas (Purpose 1), neighbouring towns (Purpose 2) and countryside (Purpose 3).
- 3.32 Within each identified parcel at Stage 2, a rating was given for impact on contribution to each of these three purposes, on a five-point scale of *significant* / *relatively-significant* / *moderate* / *relatively limited* / *limited or no impact*.
- 3.33 A summary of how the Stage 2 Study considered the issue of openness and permanence and the impact on the contribution to each of the NPPF purposes is set out below.

Openness and permanence

- 3.34 As noted in **Chapter 2**, the NPPF identifies openness as an 'essential characteristic' of the Green Belt, rather than a function or purpose. Openness is therefore seen as a key element in the assessment of all Green Belt purposes. Land that lacks openness will play less of a role in preventing sprawl, separating towns, preventing countryside encroachment, providing a setting to a historic town or assisting in urban regeneration.
- 3.35 Two important Planning Appeal judgements (Heath & Hampstead Society v Camden LBC & Vlachos (2008) and Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & East Dorset District Council (2016)) define openness as having both a spatial aspect and a visual aspect.
- 3.36 **Spatial openness** as a characteristic can be considered in terms of the scale and density of built development. The location, extent and form of new development in the Green Belt can, in isolation or in combination, compromise/harm the openness of the Green Belt¹⁵. Similarly, the location, extent and form of existing development affects the degree to which Green Belt land can be considered to be open rather than an extension of a built-up area in its own right. However, not all built development is considered to affect openness. The NPPF lists in Paragraph 145a number of types of buildings that are 'not inappropriate' within the Green Belt. As a matter of law, development such as agriculture and forestry which is appropriate in the Green Belt and is not required to 'preserve the openness' of the Green Belt cannot be considered to impinge on its openness¹⁶.
- 3.37 **Visual openness** is important in so far as it relates to the purposes of the Green Belt. In certain places there is an important visual dimension to checking 'the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas' (Purpose 1), and preventing 'neighbouring towns merging into one another' (Purpose 2); openness of aspect is a characteristic quality of the countryside, therefore 'safeguarding the countryside from encroachment' (Purpose 3) includes preservation of openness; and preservation of 'the setting...of historic towns' (Purpose 4) includes visual setting¹⁷. For example, a range of natural and man-made features – topography, vegetation, buildings and linear features such as roads and railways – can contribute to or compromise the visual openness of the Green Belt. A

¹⁵ This point is made in the judgement in Heath & Hampstead Society v London Borough of Camden (2008), see Appendix 1.

¹⁶ Lee Valley Regional Park Authority v Epping Forest DC and Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd (2016), see Appendix 1.

¹⁷ This point is made in the judgement in Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & East Dorset District Council (2016).

key distinction however is that while vegetation or landform can provide visual enclosure to development that lessens its visual impact, this does not diminish the *spatial openness* of the Green Belt.

- 3.38 As noted by the Inspector to the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan Examination (2017) (see **Chapter 2**) openness is not concerned about the character of the landscape, but instead relates to the '**absence of built development and other dominant urban influences**'.
- 3.39 With regard to the other 'essential characteristic' of permanence, Green Belt is a permanent planning designation. Therefore, it is recognised that there are benefits in retaining or establishing Green Belt boundaries which are clearly defined, readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

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

- 3.40 It is possible to argue that all Green Belt prevents the unrestricted sprawl of large built up urban areas, because that is its principal purpose as a strategic planning designation. However, the Study requires the definition of variations in the extent to which land performs this purpose. This requires an area-based assessment against this strategic purpose.
- 3.41 The PAS guidance states in relation to Purpose 1:
- “The terminology of ‘sprawl’ comes from the 1930s when Green Belt was conceived. Has this term changed in meaning since then? For example, is development that is planned positively through a local plan, and well designed with good masterplanning, sprawl?”
- 3.42 The guidance emphasises the variable nature of the term ‘sprawl’ and questions whether positively planned development constitutes ‘sprawl’. The RTPI Research Briefing No. 9 (2015) on Urban Form and Sustainability is also not definitive on the meaning of sprawl:
- “As an urban form, sprawl has been described as the opposite of the desirable compact city, with high density, centralised development and a mixture of functions. However, what is considered to be sprawl ranges along a continuum of more compact to completely dispersed development. A variety of urban forms have been covered by the term ‘urban sprawl’, ranging from contiguous suburban growth, linear patterns of strip development, leapfrog and scattered development.”
- 3.43 Whilst definitions of sprawl vary, the implication of the terminology is that planned development may not contravene this purpose. However, in assessing the contribution land makes to preventing sprawl in a strategic Green Belt study, no assumptions about the form of possible future development can be made, so the role a land area plays will be dependent on its relationship with a large built-up area.
- 3.44 The definition of ‘large built-up area’ clearly will also have a bearing on contribution of land to Purpose 1. There is no standard definition for this, and no definition provided in the NPPF. Green Belt studies in different locations have ranged from considering the large built-up area as just the principal settlement around which the Green Belt was defined (i.e. London in the case of the Metropolitan Green Belt) to considering all inset settlement to be large built-up areas.

Overview of Stage 1 Approach

- 3.45 The Stage 1 study listed Rickmansworth, Chorleywood, Northwood, Croxley Green and Watford within (or part within) the study authorities, and Hemel Hempstead and Bushey beyond it, as large built-up areas relevant to the assessment.
- 3.46 The principal function of the Metropolitan Green Belt is to check the sprawl of the large built up area of Greater London and those settlements listed above, whilst they all retain separate settlement identities and some degree of physical separation by open land, are all also almost contiguous in terms of linkage along principal routes.
- 3.47 The Green Belt in Three Rivers and Watford appears to be effectively managing the pressures for outer London suburbs and towns to expand north and west towards open countryside, which is illustrated by the compact urban form and the transition into open land. As identified in the Stage 1 report the Green Belt land around the northern and western edges of Watford, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth and Chorleywood all make at least a *contribution* to Purpose 1.

Stage 2 Approach

- 3.48 The Stage 2 study remained consistent with the Stage 1 study in terms of its identification of settlements considered to form part of the 'large built up area' - i.e. Rickmansworth, Chorleywood, Northwood, Croxley Green, Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Bushey. There are however some settlements such as Loudwater, South Oxhey etc. that are close enough to more contiguous urban development within the settlements outlined above to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London.
- 3.49 The role land plays in preventing sprawl is dependent on the extent of existing development that has occurred, the extent of urban containment and its relationship with existing large built-up area(s). Assumptions about the extent and form of future development which have not been permitted cannot be made. Sprawl includes any built structure that has an impact on openness and/or has an urbanising influence. It does not include development which is classed as appropriate development or not inappropriate development in the Green Belt (as defined in paras 143-147 of the NPPF¹⁸).
- 3.50 To contribute to Purpose 1, land must lie adjacent to, or in close proximity to, a large built-up area, and must retain a degree of openness that distinguishes it from the urban area. Land that has a stronger relationship with a large built-up area than with open land, whether due to the presence of, or containment by, existing development, the dominance of adjacent urban development, or the strength of physical separation from the wider countryside, makes a weaker contribution to this purpose and therefore development will have a less significant impact on this purpose. Vice versa, land which is adjacent to the urban edge but which, as a result of its openness and relationship with countryside, is distinct from it makes a stronger contribution and hence development will have a more significant impact on Purpose 1. Development on land which is more clearly associated with a settlement that is not a large built-up area will not have an impact on the contribution to Purpose 1.
- 3.51 A summary of the approach that was used to assess the potential impact on the contribution to Purpose 1 is set out below:

Purpose 1: Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	
Significant impact on contribution	Development would constitute significant sprawl as the land is close to the large built-up area, contains no or very limited urban development, is not itself contained by any urban development, and has strong distinction from the inset settlement edge.
Relatively significant impact on contribution	Development would constitute relatively significant sprawl as the land is close to the large built-up area and contains very limited urban development and has a strong sense of openness. It relates more strongly to the wider countryside.
Moderate impact on contribution	Development would constitute moderate sprawl as the land is close to the large built-up area, contains limited urban sprawl and has a relatively strong sense of openness. It may relate to both the settlement and the wider countryside or have a degree of separation from both.
Relatively limited impact on contribution	Development would have relatively limited impact on the contribution to Purpose 1 as the land is close to the large built-up area and already contains urban sprawl compromising the sense of openness, or it relates more strongly to the urban area than to the wider countryside.

¹⁸ This is set out in case law where the Court of Appeal addressed the proper interpretation of Green Belt policy in R (Lee Valley Regional Park Authority) v Epping Forest DC [2016] EWCA Civ 404. Applying the findings of this case, appropriate development in the Green Belt cannot be contrary to either the first or third Green Belt purpose and should be excluded from the assessments as 'urbanising features' as it is cannot be "urban sprawl" and cannot have an "urbanising influence".

Limited or No impact on contribution	Development would have limited or no impact on the contribution to Purpose 1 as: - the land is close to the large built-up area but is already fully urbanised; - or the land is not close enough for there to be any potential for urban sprawl from the large built up area to occur within the parcel.
--	---

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another

- 3.52 The concept of what constitutes a 'town' has been widely interpreted in different Green Belt studies, ranging from settlements classified as towns in Local Plan settlement hierarchies to all urban areas inset from the Green Belt regardless of size.
- 3.53 Regardless of whether a particular settlement is large enough to realistically be considered a town, it can be acknowledged that smaller settlements may lie in between larger ones, such that loss of separation between them may in turn have a significant impact on the overall separation between larger 'towns'.
- 3.54 The concept of 'merging' is clearer, but assessing the extent which land between towns contributes to preventing this is less so, but it is generally acknowledged that the role land plays in preventing the merging of towns is more than a product of the size of the gap between them. Assessments therefore usually consider both the physical and visual role that Green Belt land plays in preventing the merging of settlements.
- 3.55 This accords with PAS guidance which is commonly referenced in Green Belt studies and states that distance alone should not be used to assess the extent to which the Green Belt prevents neighbouring towns from merging into one another. The PAS guidance also refers to settlement character and the character of land in between as being relevant considerations when looking at retaining separate identities.

Overview of Stage 1 Approach

- 3.56 The Stage 1 study identified the following as 'neighbouring towns':
- Watford and Hemel Hempstead;
 - Watford and St Albans;
 - Watford and Rickmansworth;
 - Rickmansworth and Northwood;
 - Watford and Northwood;
 - Watford and Pinner;
 - Watford and Bushey; and
 - Watford and Radlett.
- 3.57 The majority of land forming gaps between these settlements was found to make a *significant contribution* to Purpose 2, reflecting the limited separation between urban areas on this Metropolitan fringe. The assessment findings also suggest that Chorleywood has been treated as a town, although it was not listed as such in the Stage 1 report, and that narrow gaps associated with smaller settlements, such as Maple Cross and Abbots Langley, were been considered to make a *contribution* to Purpose 2.

Stage 2 Approach

- 3.58 Land that is juxtaposed between towns makes a contribution to this purpose, and the stronger the relationship between the towns – the more fragile the gap – the stronger the contribution of any intervening open land. Physical proximity is the initial consideration, but land that lacks a strong sense of openness, due to the extent of existing development that has occurred, makes a weaker contribution. This includes land that has a stronger relationship with an urban area than with countryside, due to extent of containment by development, dominance of development within an adjacent inset area, or containment by physical landscape elements. However, where settlements are very close, a judgement is also made as to whether their proximity is such that the remaining open land does not play a critical role in maintaining a distinction between the two towns, i.e. the characteristics of the open land relate more to the urban areas themselves than to the open land in between. Where this is the case, the contribution to Purpose 2 may be reduced.
- 3.59 The Stage 2 study remained consistent with the Stage 1 study in terms of its identification of settlements considered relevant to the assessment of gaps between neighbouring towns. The following settlements were therefore considered as 'neighbouring towns':
- Watford and Hemel Hempstead;
 - Watford and St Albans;
 - Watford and Rickmansworth;
 - Rickmansworth and Northwood;
 - Watford and Northwood;
 - Watford and Pinner;
 - Watford and Bushey; and
 - Watford and Radlett.
- 3.60 In addition it is recognised that towns which are further apart may nonetheless have limited separation, particularly along connecting roads, due to the presence of smaller intervening inset areas. Thus the Purpose 2 assessment considered the role of Croxley Green and Abbots Langley in limiting separation between Watford and Rickmansworth and Hemel respectively, the role of land around Chorleywood in the gap between Rickmansworth and Amersham (a gap also narrowed by the inset settlement at Little Chalfont) and the role of land around Maple Cross in the gap between Rickmansworth and Chalfont St Peter / Gerrards Cross.
- 3.61 Both built and natural landscape elements can act to either decrease or increase perceived separation, for example intervisibility, a direct connecting road or rail link or a shared landform may decrease perceived separation, whereas a separating feature such as a woodland block or hill may increase the perception of separation.
- 3.62 A summary of the approach that was used to assess the potential impact on the contribution to Purpose 2 is set out below:

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging	
Significant impact on contribution	Development would have a significant impact on the contribution to Purpose 2 as it would result in physical or visual coalescence of towns, or would leave a negligible physical gap with no physical elements to preserve separation.
Relatively significant impact on contribution	Development would have a relatively significant impact on the contribution to Purpose 2 as it would result in a significant narrowing of the visual or physical gap between towns with no physical elements to preserve separation.

Moderate impact on contribution	Development would have a moderate impact on the contribution to Purpose 2 as: - it would result in significant narrowing of the physical gap, but physical feature(s) would preserve a sense of separation; or - it would result in a moderate narrowing of the physical gap, but with no physical feature(s) to preserve separation.
Relatively limited impact on contribution	Development would have a relatively limited impact on the contribution to Purpose 2 as: - it would result in a very limited narrowing of the visual or physical gap with no physical feature(s) to preserve separation; or - it would result in a moderate narrowing of the physical gap, but with physical feature(s) to preserve separation.
Limited or No impact on contribution	Development would have limited or no impact on the contribution to Purpose 2 as: - the land is not located within a gap between towns; or - the land plays no role, or a very limited role in maintaining the separation between towns due to the presence of significant separating features and/or significant distances between the towns; or - the land plays no significant role due to the extent of development; or - the land forms a gap that is too narrow to create any clear distinction between towns (i.e. a sense of leaving one and arriving in another).

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 3.63 The third Green Belt purpose focuses on the role of the Green Belt in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- 3.64 PAS guidance presumes that all Green Belt does this to some degree, but suggests that:
- “The most useful approach is to look at the difference between urban fringe – land under the influence of the urban area - and open countryside, and to favour the latter in determining which land to try and keep open, taking into account the types of edges and boundaries that can be achieved.”
- 3.65 Determining the extent to which Green Belt land is influenced by the urban area requires some consideration of the use of land and the extent of its containment by development, but caution is needed when considering what land uses diminish Green Belt openness and diminish the extent to which land can be considered to constitute ‘countryside’.
- 3.66 Paragraph 145 and 146 of the NPPF and associated case law provides guidance on what land uses and features are considered to be ‘appropriate’ development in the Green Belt (see **Chapter 2**). Appropriate development within the Green Belt cannot, according to case law¹⁹, be considered to have an urbanising influence and therefore harm Green Belt purposes.
- 3.67 It is also important not to stray from assessment of the Green Belt purposes into assessment of landscape character, sensitivity or value; whilst Green Belt land may be valuable in these respects it is not a requirement or purpose of the designation to provide such qualities.

¹⁹ This is set out in case law where the Court of Appeal addressed the proper interpretation of Green Belt policy in R (Lee Valley Regional Park Authority) v Epping Forest DC [2016] EWCA Civ 404.

Overview Stage 1 Approach

- 3.68 This purpose was assessed at Stage 1 in terms of the role of the parcel in maintaining a sense of openness. The majority of the Green Belt land within Three Rivers and Watford was considered to make a *contribution* to this purpose as it is open and undeveloped.
- 3.69 The Stage 1 Study identified areas which make a *significant contribution* where there was evidence of actual or potential pressure for change. These areas are located between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, between Croxley Green and Rickmansworth, between Rickmansworth and Chorleywood, between Rickmansworth and Northwood, and in the vicinity of Sarratt.

Stage 2 Approach

- 3.70 In keeping with the Stage 1 Study, the Stage 2 harm assessment took into account the impact of existing washed-over development, containing inset development and the potential for boundaries to limit harm to the wider countryside.
- 3.71 However, the Stage 2 study gave consideration to the nature of 'appropriate development' and the extent to which different land uses can be considered urbanising. Development deemed to be 'appropriate' within the Green Belt (as defined in the closed lists within Paragraphs 145 and 146 of the NPPF) cannot be considered to constitute an urban land use, or an urban influence in the countryside. However, what is deemed to be appropriate development in the NPPF has to be carefully considered as developments such as the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments are only considered appropriate as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 3.72 Caution has therefore been exercised in the application of what is defined as an appropriate use. It is not possible within a Strategic Green Belt study to review each form of development within the Green Belt and ascertain whether it was permitted as appropriate development or not, unless it is clear cut for example buildings for agriculture and forestry are deemed to be appropriate development regardless of whether they preserve the openness or conflict with the GB purposes. For other land uses such as outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments, a considered view has been taken on the extent to which the proposed land use has affected the GB purposes, for example by affecting openness, or encroaching on the perception of countryside ie the sense of distinction between the urban area and countryside.
- 3.73 The contribution land makes to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment can be considered in terms of the extent to which land displays the characteristics of countryside, i.e. an absence of built or otherwise urbanising use; the extent to which land physically relates to the adjacent settlement and to the wider countryside (i.e. its distinction from the urban area or the wider countryside); and its containment.
- 3.74 Physical landscape elements (or a lack of them), may strengthen or weaken the relationship between settlement and adjacent countryside, but there needs to be significant urban influence from adjacent land, and a degree of physical landscape containment to limit contribution to this purpose. Intervisibility between open land and an urban area is not in itself enough to constitute a significant urban influence. The urban area would need to be a dominating influence either through:
- i) the scale of development; or
 - ii) the degree of containment of the open land by development.
- 3.75 In addition, the presence of landscape elements (e.g. landform or woodland) that strongly contain an area, and consequently separate it from the wider countryside, may give land a strong relationship with a visible urban area even if buildings are not particularly dominant.
- 3.76 It is important to maintain a distinction between contribution to Purpose 3 and contribution to landscape/visual character. For example, land that displays a strong landscape character in terms of a sense of tranquillity, good management practices or high scenic value, or which has public recreational value, may have high sensitivity from a landscape/visual point of view. However the same land in Green Belt terms may well make as equal contribution to Purpose 3 as land at the urban edge which retains its openness and a relationship with the wider countryside.

- 3.77 A summary of the approach that was used to assess the potential impact on the contribution to Purpose 3 is set out below:

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	
Significant impact on contribution	Development would have a significant impact on the contribution to Purpose 3 as the land contains the characteristics of open countryside (i.e. an absence of built or otherwise urbanising uses in Green Belt terms), is not itself contained by any urban development and has strong distinction from the inset settlement edge.
Relatively significant impact on contribution	Development would have a relatively significant impact on the contribution to Purpose 3 as the land contains the characteristics of open countryside. It relates more strongly to the wider countryside than the settlement and has very limited urbanising development.
Moderate impact on contribution	Development would have a moderate impact on the contribution to Purpose 3 as: - the land contains the characteristics of open countryside and has limited urbanising development. The parcel relates to both the settlement and the wider countryside or has a degree of separation from both; or - the land relates more strongly to the wider countryside than to the settlement, but openness is compromised by urbanising development within it.
Relatively limited impact on contribution	Development would have a relatively limited impact on the contribution to Purpose 3 as the land has very limited characteristics of open countryside and has urbanising development that compromises openness. The parcel relates more strongly to the settlement than to the wider countryside.
Limited or No impact on contribution	Development would have limited or no impact on the contribution to Purpose 3 as: - the land contains urbanising development of a scale, density or form that significantly compromises openness; or - the land is too influenced and contained by urban development to retain any relationship with the wider countryside.

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

- 3.78 The fourth Green Belt purpose focuses on the role of the Green Belt in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. The purpose makes specific reference to 'historic towns' not individual historical assets or smaller settlements such as villages and hamlets, but Green Belt studies have offered a range of interpretations, with a common approach being to consider the relationship with designated Conservation Areas regardless of their location.
- 3.79 An extract from Hansard in 1988 clarifies which historic settlements in England were considered 'historic towns' in the context of the Green Belt purposes. The Secretary of State for the Environment clarified in answer to a parliamentary question that the purpose of preserving the special character of historic towns is especially relevant to the Green Belts of York, Chester, Bath, Oxford and Cambridge²⁰. Durham has since been added to this list.
- 3.80 This is supported by the PAS guidance which states: that *"This purpose is generally accepted as relating to very few settlements in practice."*

²⁰ Hansard HC Deb 08 November 1988 vol 140 c148W 148W; referenced in Historic England (2018) Response to the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan – Green Belt Review – Stage 3

Overview of Stage 1 Approach

- 3.81 The Stage 1 study stated that *“there are no historic towns within, or adjacent to, the study area”*, but went on to apply analysis in what was termed a ‘local context’ by considering the relationship between Green Belt land and designated Conservation Areas.
- 3.82 By this measure three areas were judged to make a *significant contribution* to Purpose 4: the adjacent golf courses at Moor Park and Rickmansworth, land at Leavesden Country Park, Chorleywood Common and woodland to the south of Watford Heath. Many other parcels of land located adjacent or close to Conservation Areas were considered to make a *contribution* to their settings.

Stage 2 Approach

- 3.83 Clearly there are historic aspects to towns and smaller settlements within the study area, but the important aspect in terms of contribution to this purpose is that there needs to be a significant relationship between Green Belt land and historic aspects of a settlement’s setting, such that some degree of special character results.
- 3.84 Rickmansworth has a historic core with a range of building styles and materials, nationally listed buildings and three Conservation Areas. However, while the historic core remains, this is now surrounded by the railway to the north, ‘A’ roads and suburban housing which limit the historic core’s relationship with the wider Green Belt. Other than the role the Rivers Chess and Colne, and the Grand Union Canal played in regards to the industry of the town, and currently play in the physical constraint of southern expansion, the conservation area appraisals do not mention any important views, or linkages with the surrounding countryside.
- 3.85 Watford contains a number of heritage assets and ten Conservation Areas which reflect the historic development of the town, but suburban housing and industrial uses surround the historic core and limit the town’s relationship with the surrounding Green Belt. The Civic Core Conservation Area lies near Cassiobury Park, which lies within the Green Belt and retains some historic elements, but the relationship between the town centre with the park is now limited by the A412 Rickmansworth Road and newer suburban housing, known as ‘Metroland’ housing which followed the Metropolitan line out from London and led to areas of large houses with large gardens.
- 3.86 Much of the setting for the Grove Mill Lane Conservation Area is provided by the sweeping landscape of the historic Grove Estate²¹ – now a hotel and golf course, within the Green Belt. However, this small Conservation Area lies on the outskirts of the town and it is considered that its relationship with the neighbouring Green Belt does not convey ‘special character’ to Watford as a historic town.
- 3.87 Although the Stage 2 assessment provides a more granular assessment than the Stage 1 study, its focus is still with potential harm to the ‘national’ Green Belt purposes. What is termed the ‘local context’ is considered to be more appropriately the concern of landscape or cultural heritage sensitivity assessments, and Conservation Area designations themselves can identify significant relationships with open land that would inform such sensitivity assessments, or indeed can be defined to encompass open land and thereby aid its protection. Therefore the Stage 2 study did not identify any historic towns which can be considered relevant in to the assessment of this Green Belt purpose.

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

- 3.88 Most Green Belt studies do not assess individual Green Belt land parcels against Purpose 5, and either do not rate them or rate them all equally, on the grounds that it is difficult to support arguments that one parcel of Green Belt land makes a higher contribution to encouraging re-use of urban land than another. The PAS guidance states:

“...it must be the case that the amount of land within urban areas that could be developed will already have been factored in before identifying Green Belt land. If Green Belt

²¹ https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1324/grove_mill_conservation_area_character_appraisal_january_2017

achieves this purpose, all Green Belt does to the same extent and hence the value of various land parcels is unlikely to be distinguished by the application of this purpose."

- 3.89 In other words, it is highly unlikely that development pressures operate at a sufficiently localised level to draw out meaningful judgements on the relative contribution of discrete parcels of Green Belt land to Purpose 5.
- 3.90 However, the examination reports of some planning Inspectors, e.g. Cheshire East Council's Local Plan (2014), have highlighted the importance of assessing all five Green Belt purposes, giving each purpose equal weighting. It is also important to consider local circumstances in relation to brownfield land, before concluding whether all land should be rated equally against Purpose 5.
- 3.91 Since the publication of the PAS Guidance and Cheshire East Local Plan Examination Report, the Housing and Planning Act (May 2016) received Royal Assent and the Town and Country Planning Regulations were subsequently updated. Regulation 3 (2017) requires local planning authorities in England to prepare, maintain and publish a 'Brownfield Land Register' of previously developed (brownfield) land appropriate for residential development. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities prepare an assessment of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development – a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). Together, these evidence bases provide an accurate and up-to-date area of available brownfield land within individual authority areas.

Overview of Stage 1 Approach

- 3.92 The Stage 1 study posed the following question for each assessment area:
- "Does the parcel act in concert with adjacent parcels to encourage urban regeneration, either generally or more specifically?"*
- 3.93 It concluded:
- "The potential contribution to urban regeneration of the Green Belt is difficult to determine with any certainty. The general buoyancy of the land market means that there are no extensive areas of brownfield land awaiting regeneration onto which Green Belt designation could focus development activity, meaning that there can only be an assumed locally-focused contribution, and the contribution by parcel is limited (and generalised) across the two authorities."*
- 3.94 For all parcels it therefore gave a *limited contribution* rating; however the study conclusions did suggest potential at the local scale for land to play a role in encouraging regeneration of specific parts of the larger built-up areas.

Stage 2 Approach

- 3.95 The Borough of Watford's latest brownfield register (December 2018)²² contains a record of only 2.15 ha of brownfield land which is suitable and available for housing development within the urbanised area of the Borough and the Council has recorded an average of 94% of development occurring on brownfield land in the last ten years. The District of Three Rivers' latest brownfield register (December 2018)²³ contains a record of 53.4 ha of brownfield land which is suitable and available for housing development within the urbanised areas of the District (although it is noted that the above does not include brownfield land which may be suitable for employment and other uses).
- 3.96 The adopted Three Rivers Core Strategy²⁴ states that there will not be sufficient housing capacity within existing urban areas towards the middle and end of the Plan period, but that there is the potential to meet housing targets from sites both within urban areas and on the edge of urban areas. 75% of the total housing development was envisaged to be in the existing urban area while 25% would need to fall within the Green Belt. It is noted that during the Core Strategy period (2001 – 2026) the housing target was 180 dwellings per year. Once the new Local Plan is adopted this will rise to 620 dwellings per year.

²² https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1950/watford_brownfield_land_register

²³ <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/brownfield-land-register>

²⁴ <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/core-strategy>

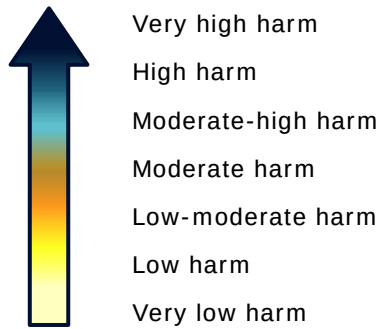
- 3.97 The Watford Core Strategy (2006 - 2031) identified enough capacity to meet their housing targets throughout the plan period. Policy HS1 steers this towards previously developed land. The updated housing targets for Watford require delivery of approximately 790 dwellings per annum compared to 260 identified in the Core Strategy.
- 3.98 When assessing contribution to the first four Green Belt purposes, it is the characteristics of an area of land and its relationship with settlement and countryside that affect its role. For Purpose 5 however, it is the extent to which brownfield land is used to meet development need that is of primary relevance when judging the extent to which the Green Belt contributes. The extent of development on brownfield land in Watford over the last decade suggests that the Green Belt has played a role in encouraging urban regeneration, but looking forward the very low figure for remaining brownfield land suitable for housing (2.15ha) indicates that there is little scope for future development to be accommodated on these sites.. Although there is more brownfield land in Three Rivers, the housing need figures indicate that significantly more land will be needed if the latest housing targets are to be met. Councils are required by NPPF Paragraph 137 to utilise brownfield sites before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify releasing Green Belt land, but the fact that available brownfield land will not be capable of meeting housing need suggests that in the future Green Belt land will not make a significant contribution to Purpose 5.
- 3.99 The extent to which Green Belt land would, if released, be capable of redirecting development away from brownfield sites, will in theory vary spatially, but there is no evidence that development pressures operate at a sufficiently localised level for variations in contribution to be identified within Watford and Three Rivers. Therefore the contribution of all Green Belt within Watford and Three Rivers is considered to be *limited*, and the Stage 2 study does not undertake any further assessment in relation to Purpose 5.

Stage 2 Step 2: Impact on integrity of adjacent Green Belt and boundaries

- 3.100 Once an assessment was undertaken of the potential impact to the contribution to the NPPF purposes, the nature of any boundary features was considered. This determined the extent to which adjacent land would incur loss of integrity through increased *containment* and/or loss of *distinction* between development and open land.
- 3.101 If the new Green Belt boundary results in a less distinct boundary between settlement and countryside, the Green Belt release under assessment is likely to weaken the wider Green Belt. However, even if a strong alternative boundary can be defined, there is potential for the remaining Green Belt to be weaker, due to increased containment. However in some locations it may be possible for a clearer Green Belt boundary to be defined – e.g. through use of a feature that marks a stronger, or more widely consistent, distinction between an urban area and countryside.
- 3.102 A rating was given for impact on integrity of adjacent Green Belt, using a four-point scale of: *significant / moderate / minor / no or negligible*. A significant impact would occur where the release of land would significantly increase the containment of adjacent land that plays a stronger role in relation to the Green Belt purposes and release would result in a significantly weaker distinction between the inset settlement and the Green Belt ie change from a strong Green Belt boundary to a weaker, or more convoluted boundary. A negligible or no impact would occur where release would not lead to the containment of any adjacent land, or would contain Green Belt land that plays a weaker role in relation to the Green Belt purposes and release would result in no significant change in strength of distinction between the inset settlement and the Green Belt, or may even result in a clearer or more consistent Green Belt boundary.
- 3.103 The extent of this impact is limited by the strength of adjacent Green Belt – e.g. the increased containment of land that is already largely contained by development will constitute less of an impact than the containment of land that has a stronger relationship with the wider countryside.

Stage 2 Step 3: Assessing overall harm

3.104 Green Belt harm is rated using a seven-point scale ranging from *very high* to *very low* harm²⁵:



3.105 The harm judgement combines steps 1 and 2, considering on the one hand the impact of release in terms of loss of that land's contribution to Green Belt purposes and on the other the impact of release on the remaining Green Belt, to arrive at an overall judgement. **Figure 3.2** provides an indication as to how the loss of contribution to the Green Belt purposes (x axis) and the strength of the boundary and impact on adjacent Green Belt (y axis) influence the overall harm of Green Belt release. However **professional judgement** is required in each individual case to consider how much weight to attach to each contributing element.

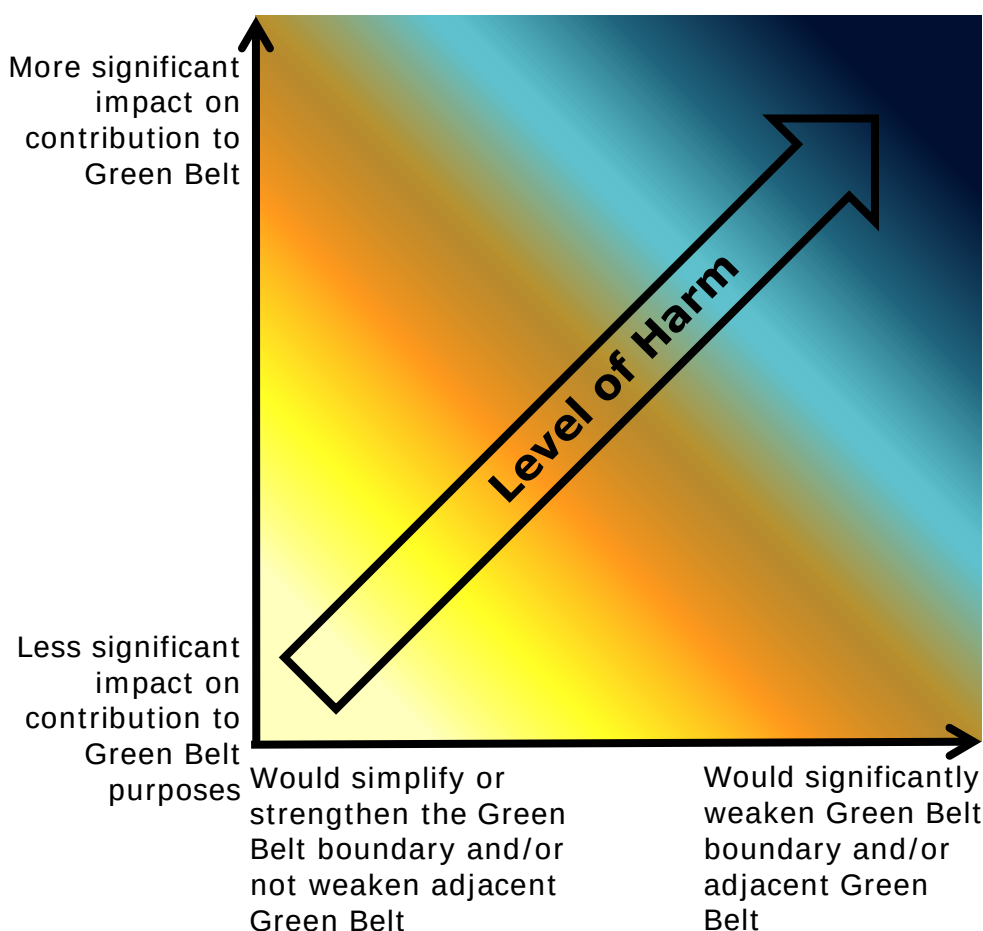
3.106 For example:

- Where release of land has a significant impact on contribution to multiple Green Belt purposes, or a very significant impact on a single purpose, and where its release would weaken the adjacent Green Belt (for example by leaving a narrow gap between towns), harm is likely to be **very high**.
- Where release of land has a significant impact on contribution to one of the Green Belt purposes, and where its release would partially weaken adjacent Green Belt (for example by increasing its containment by urban areas), harm is likely to be **high**.
- Where release of land has a moderately significant impact on the contribution to one of the Green Belt purposes and a less significant impact on others, but where its release would significantly weaken the adjacent Green Belt (for example by isolating an area of Green Belt that makes a stronger contribution), harm is likely to be **moderate-high**.
- Where release of land has a moderately significant impact on the contribution to two of the Green Belt purposes and a less significant impact on the contribution to the others, but where its release would partially weaken the adjacent Green Belt (for example by increasing containment of adjacent open land, or by creating a less consistent boundary line), harm is likely to be **moderate**.
- Where release of land has a relatively significant impact on the contribution to one of the Green Belt purposes, but where its release would create a simplified, more consistent boundary and would not weaken the adjacent Green Belt, harm is likely to be **low-moderate**.
- Where release of land has a relatively limited impact on the contribution to one of the Green Belt purposes and limited impact on the contribution to the others, and its release would not weaken the Green Belt boundary or the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land, harm is likely to be **low**.
- Where release of land has limited or no impact on the contribution to all Green Belt purposes, and its release would not weaken the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land, or would create a more consistent boundary better reflecting the distinction between urban settlement and countryside, harm is likely to be **very low** (*No parcels were assessed to have the potential to cause very low harm to the Green Belt if released*).

²⁵ No parcels were assessed to have the potential to cause very low harm to the Green Belt if released.

- 3.107 Clear and detailed justification is provided for all ratings (see **Appendix 1**) given in relation to how the overall judgement of Green Belt harm has been reached.
- 3.108 In some instances potential to release a smaller part of a parcel with less harm than release of the parcel as a whole was identified, but clear boundary features to define such an area were lacking. Any such cases are noted within the analysis.
- 3.109 If Green Belt harm from release of a parcel adjacent to the existing settlement edge was assessed at less than *high*, consideration was given as to harm associated with the release of land further from the settlement edge. If an area in which harm would still be less than *high* was identified, this was defined as a separate parcel; however if the settlement-edge parcel's outer boundary was found to mark a transition to *high* or *very high* harm the analysis to support this judgement is presented under the heading 'harm beyond outer boundary' rather than through definition of a new parcel.

Figure 3.2 Guidelines for rating harm on the basis of contribution to Green Belt purposes and impact of release on adjacent Green Belt



Stage 2 Assessment Outputs

- 3.110 The assessments are grouped by settlement (subdivided in the case of Watford) (see **Appendix 1**). Each grouping has:
- An OS map showing the location of the settlement within the area;
 - An OS map showing the Stage 2 assessment zone parcels around the settlement and any areas of absolute constraint. Each parcel is coded with reference to the settlement – e.g. CH1, CH2, etc for land around Chorleywood;

- An OS map showing the Stage 2 assessment zone parcels around the settlement, with colour-shaded variations showing the harm rating between parcels, and any areas of absolute constraint; and
- A table listing the parcels around the settlement and the assessed potential harm to Green Belt purposes from release of each parcel.

3.111 For each parcel associated with the settlement there is:

- An aerial view showing the parcel boundary;
- An OS map showing the parcel boundary and any development constraints;
- Photo(s) of the parcel;
- Description of the parcel, including its boundaries and relationship with inset settlements and the wider Green Belt;
- Rating and supporting text assessing impact of release on contribution to the Green Belt Purposes 1-5 within the parcel;
- An analysis of the potential impact of release on the strength of adjacent Green Belt land and Green Belt boundaries;
- Rating and supporting text assessing the overall harm to the Green Belt purposes of release of the parcel, considering loss of contribution of the area released and impact on the strength of adjacent Green Belt land;
- Comment on potential for a more limited release of land within the parcel to limit harm to the Green Belt purposes; and
- Commentary justifying why harm resulting from release of land beyond the outer boundary of the parcel would be at least high (only provided for parcels forming the outside of the assessed area where the harm rating for the parcel is less than high).

4 Summary of Findings

Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter sets out the findings of the assessment of Green Belt harm.
- 4.2 As outlined in **Chapter 3**, the assessment of harm included the following steps:
- Step 1: Considered the impact on the contribution to the NPPF purposes.
 - Step 2: Assessed the potential impact of release on the integrity of the remaining Green Belt, including consideration of the strength of residual Green Belt boundaries.
 - Step 3: Assessed the overall Green Belt harm and any variations of harm within the 'assessment zone'.

Summary of Findings

- 4.3 The findings of the assessment of harm are summarised by settlement and parcel in **Table 4.1**. In addition, **Figure 4.1a-d** show the parcels and absolute constraints to development and **Figure 4.2a-d** show the potential degree of harm that would result if the parcels were released.
- 4.4 Detailed findings of the assessment of harm are included in **Appendix 1**, organised by settlement. In some cases a parcel may lie adjacent to two settlements. In this case an assessment of the same parcel has been included under both settlements eg LW2 and RW17 but the assessments assume development out from the respective settlement being considered.

Table 4.1: Green Belt assessment of harm ratings

Settlement	Parcel	Harm Rating
Abbots Langley	AL1	Moderate-High
	AL2	Moderate
	AL3	Moderate-High
	AL4	Moderate
	AL5	Low-Moderate
	AL6	Moderate
	AL7	Moderate-High
	AL8	Moderate-High
	AL9	High
	AL10	Very high
Batchworth	BW1	Moderate
	BW2	Moderate-High
	BW3	Low-Moderate
	BW4	Moderate-High
	BW5	Moderate-High
	BW6	High
	BW7	Moderate-High
	BW8	Low-Moderate
	BW9	Moderate

Settlement	Parcel	Harm Rating
	BW10	Moderate-High
Bedmond	BM1	Low
	BM2	Low-Moderate
	BM3	Moderate
	BM4	Low
	BM5	Moderate-High
	BM6	Moderate
	BM7	Moderate-High
	BM8	Moderate-High
	BM9	High
Chorleywood	CH1	Moderate-High
	CH2	Moderate
	CH3	Moderate-High
	CH4	Low
	CH5	Low-Moderate
	CH6	Moderate-High
	CH7	High
	CH8	Very High
	CH9	Moderate
Croxley Green	CG1	Moderate
	CG2	High
	CG3	Low-Moderate
	CG4	High
	CG5	Moderate
	CG6	Moderate
	CG7	High
	CG8	Moderate-High
	CG9	High
	CG10	Moderate
	CG11	High
	CG12	High
Hemel Hempstead	HH1	Very High
	HH2	Very High
Kings Langley	KL1	High
	KL2	Moderate-High
	KL3	High
	KL4	Moderate-High
	KL5	Moderate
Loudwater	LW1	Moderate-High
	LW2	Moderate
	LW3	High
	LW4	Moderate
	LW5	High
	LW6	Low-Moderate

Settlement	Parcel	Harm Rating
	LW7	High
	LW8	Moderate
	LW9	Low-Moderate
Maple Cross	MC1	Moderate
	MC2	Low-Moderate
	MC3	Low-Moderate
	MC4	Moderate
	MC5	Moderate-High
	MC6	Low-Moderate
	MC7	Moderate-High
	MC8	Low
	MC9	Moderate
	MC10	High
	MC11	Low-Moderate
Northwood	ND1	Moderate
	ND2	Moderate
	ND3	Moderate
	ND4	Moderate-High
	ND5	Moderate
	ND6	Moderate-High
	ND7	High
	ND8	Moderate
	ND9	Low-Moderate
	ND10	Moderate
	ND11	Moderate-High
	ND12	Moderate-High
Rickmansworth	RW1	Moderate
	RW2	Low-Moderate
	RW3	Low-Moderate
	RW4	Low-Moderate
	RW5	Moderate
	RW6	Low
	RW7	Moderate-High
	RW8	Moderate
	RW9	Low-Moderate
	RW10	Low-Moderate
	RW11	High
	RW12	Moderate
	RW13	High
	RW14	Moderate
	RW15	Moderate
	RW16	Moderate-High
	RW17	Moderate
	RW18	Low-Moderate

Settlement	Parcel	Harm Rating
South Oxhey	SO1	High
	SO2	High
	SO3	Very High
	SO4	Moderate
	SO5	Low-Moderate
	SO6	Very High
	SO7	Low-Moderate
	SO8	Low
	SO9	Low-Moderate
Watford East	WE1	Low
	WE2	Very High
	WE3	Low-Moderate
	WE4	Low-Moderate
	WE5	High
	WE6	Moderate-High
	WE7	Moderate-High
	WE8	Low-Moderate
	WE9	High
Watford North	WN1	Moderate
	WN2	Low-Moderate
	WN3	Moderate
	WN4	Moderate
	WN5	Low-Moderate
	WN6	Moderate-High
	WN7	Low-Moderate
	WN8	Moderate-High
	WN9	Moderate
	WN10	Moderate
Watford South	WS1	Moderate-High
	WS2	Low-Moderate
	WS3	High
	WS4	Low-Moderate
	WS5	Moderate-High
	WS6	High
	WS7	Moderate
Watford West	WW1	Moderate
	WW2	Moderate-High
	WW3	Moderate
	WW4	Moderate-High
	WW5	Moderate
	WW6	Low-Moderate
	WW7	Low
	WW8	Moderate-High
	WW9	Moderate

Settlement	Parcel	Harm Rating
	WW10	Moderate-High
	WW11	Moderate-High

- 4.5 **Table 4.2** summarises the area of land within assessed parcels that falls within each category of harm (excluding any identified absolute constraints). . The harm rating for release of any Green Belt land outside of this assessment area in association with expansion of inset settlements (or Bedmond) would be at least 'high'.

Table 4.2: Total area of land assessed at each harm rating

Harm Rating*	Total Area of Land (excluding constraints)	
	Area (ha)	Percentage of Parcelled Green Belt
Very High	231.7	9.3
High	679.4	27.4
Moderate-High	790.7	31.8
Moderate	487.7	19.6
Low-Moderate	244.2	9.8
Low	49.5	2.0

*Note that where an area is assessed in the context of release from more than one settlement, and the resultant harm ratings are different, it is the lowest of the ratings that is reported in this table.

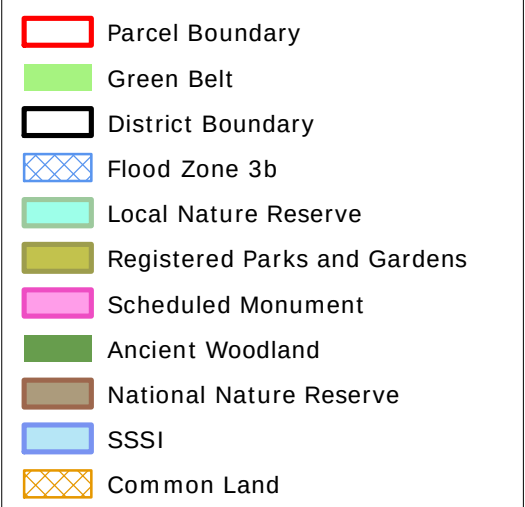
Role of Green Belt Harm Assessment

- 4.6 As outlined above, consideration of the *harm* to the Green Belt that could result from the release of land for development is an essential part of establishing the exceptional circumstances for making alterations to Green Belt boundaries. However, there are other important factors that need to be considered, most notably sustainability and deliverability issues. Whilst the ideal would be to minimise harm to the Green Belt, it may be that the most sustainable locations for development will result in *high* or *very high* harm to the Green Belt.
- 4.7 In each location where alterations to Green Belt boundaries are being considered, planning judgement is required to establish whether the sustainability benefits of Green Belt release and the associated development outweigh the harm to the Green Belt designation. In light of this, this assessment of harm to the Green Belt purposes does not draw conclusions as to where land should be released to accommodate development, but identifies the relative variations in the harm to the designation.
- 4.8 The Study does not assess the cumulative impact of the release of multiple parcels on the Green Belt as a whole. That lies outside the scope of this Study as there are numerous permutations of the parcels that could be considered for release.

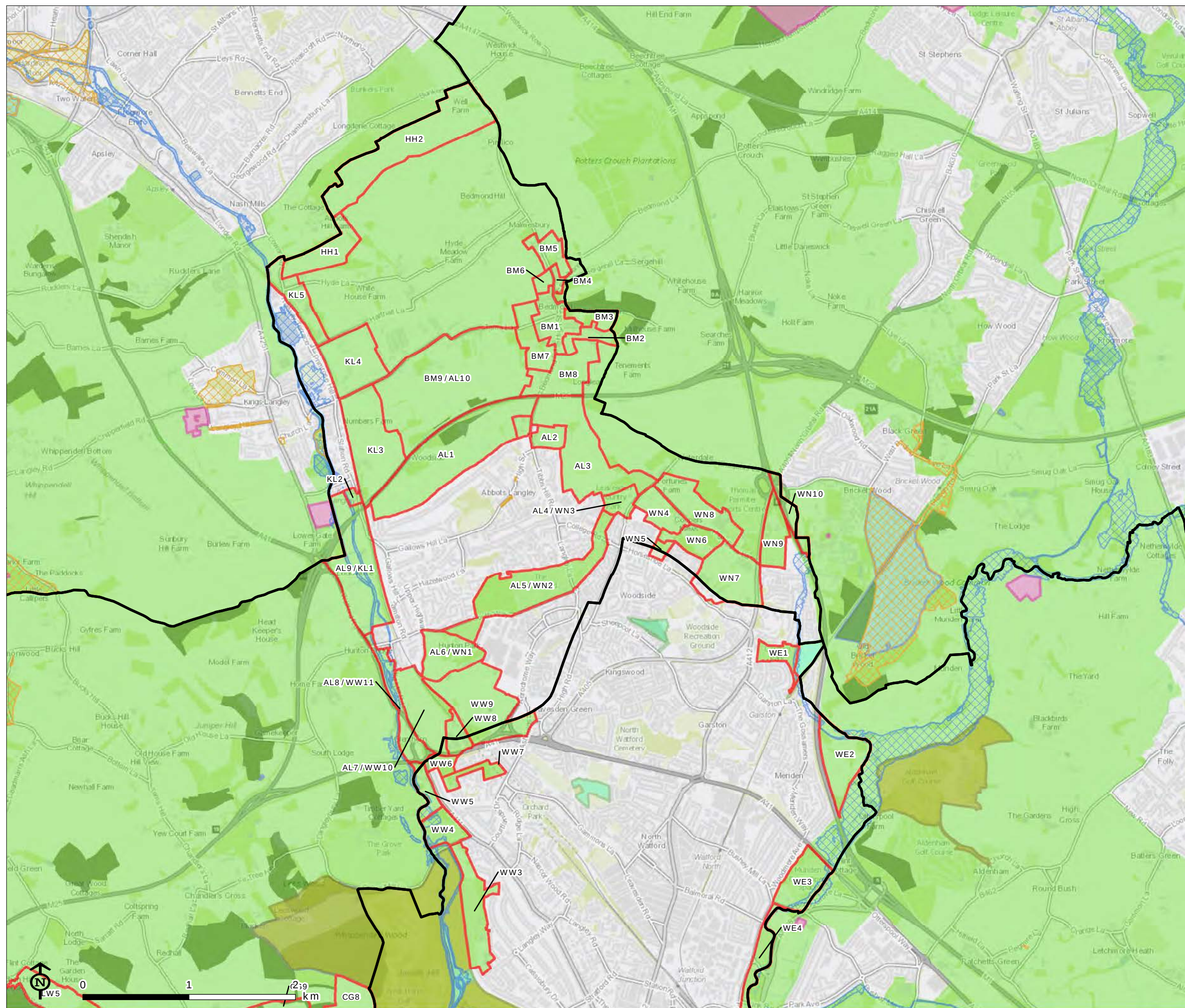
Three Rivers District
Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 4.1a

Assessment parcels and absolute constraints (N)



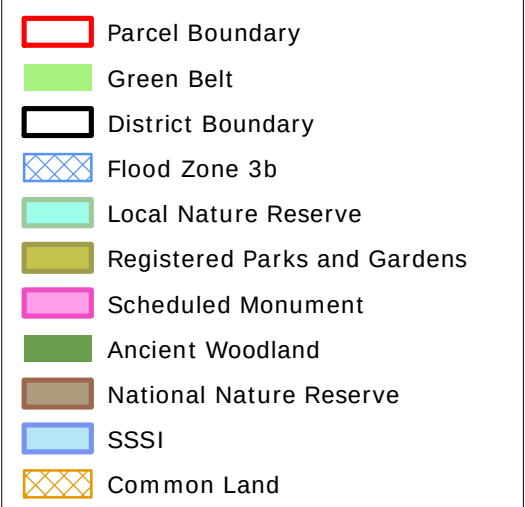
Map Scale @A3: 1:35,000



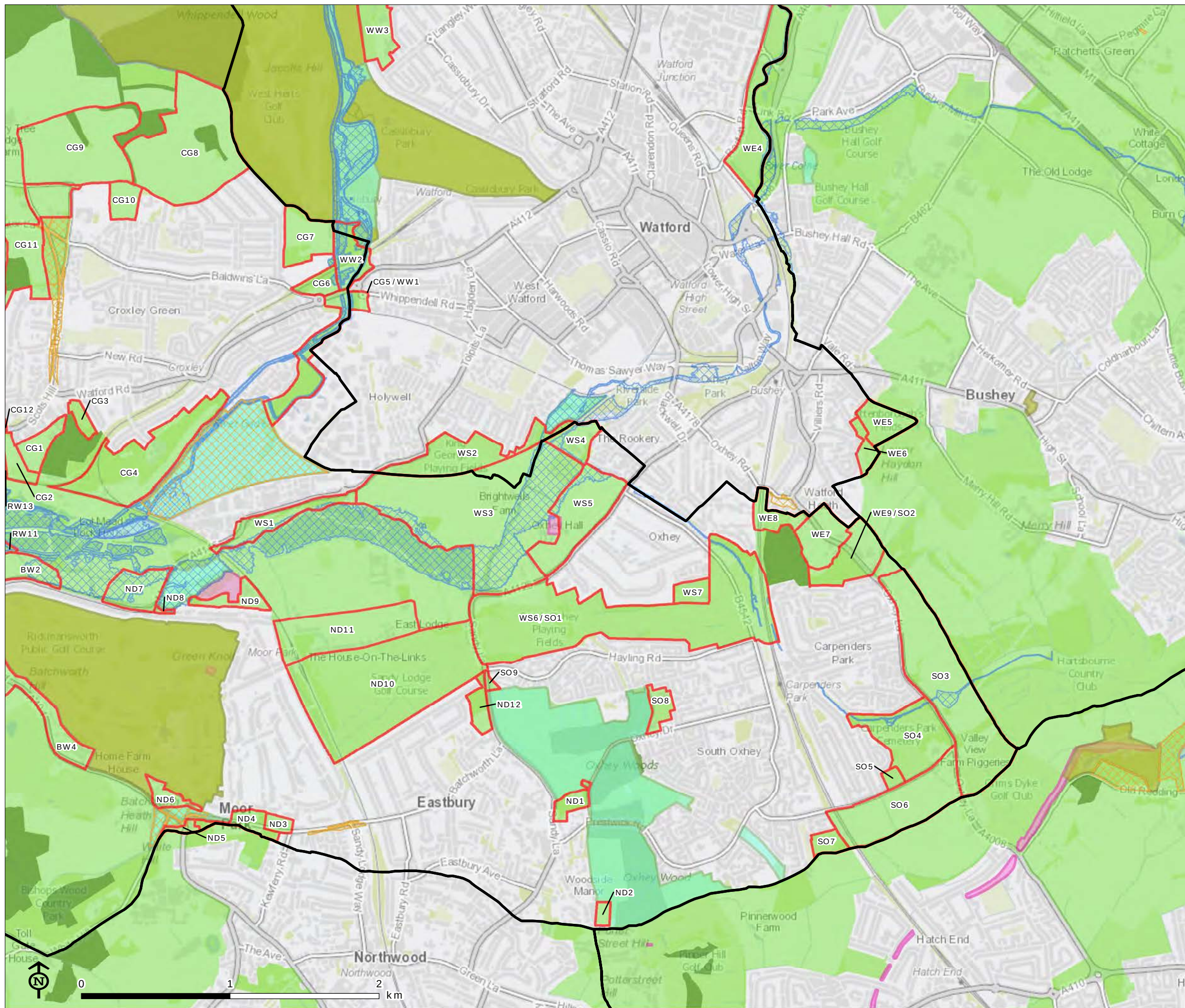
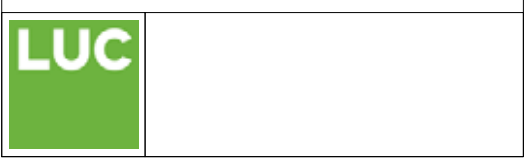
Three Rivers District
Green Belt Review Stage 2

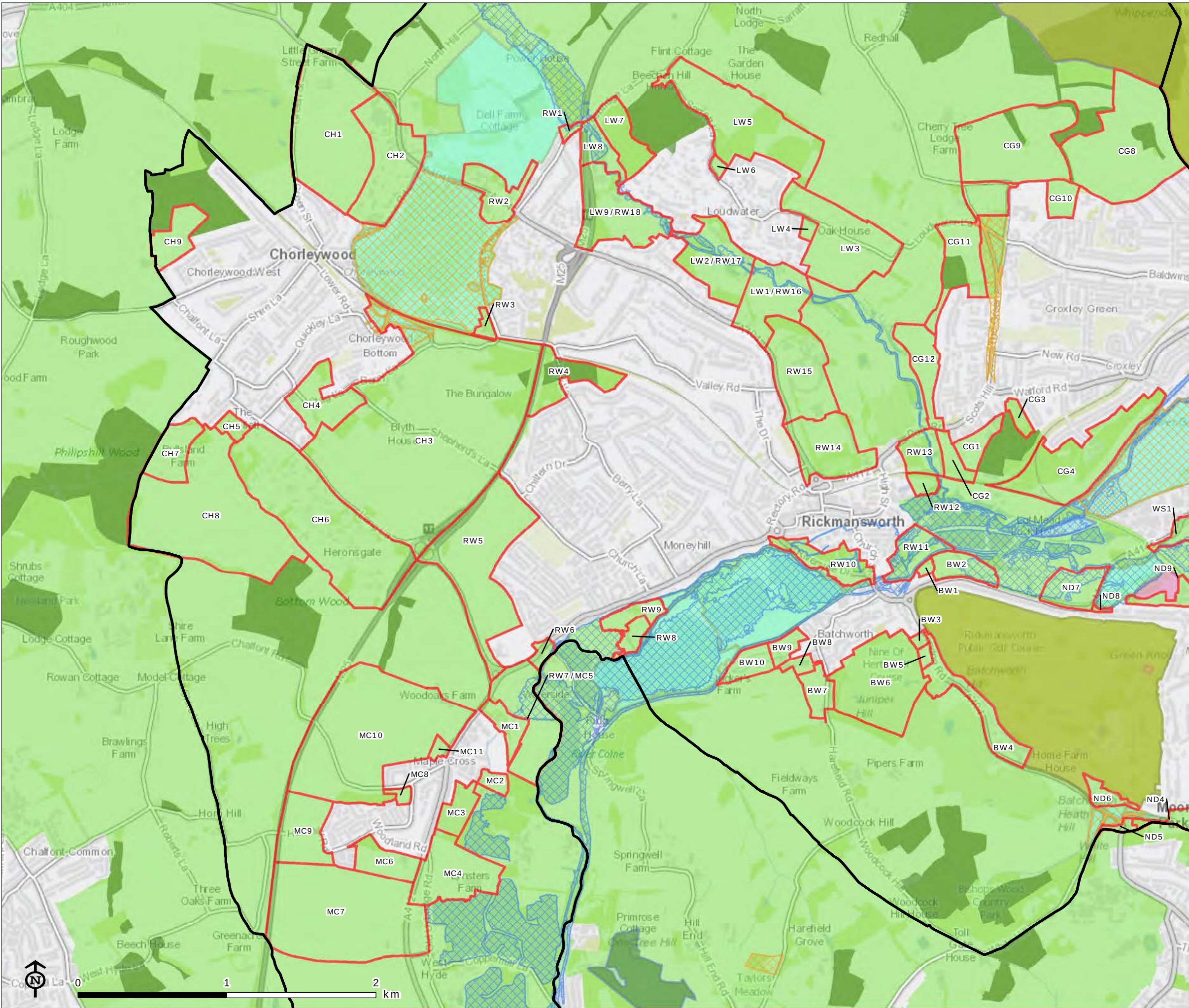
Figure 4.1b

Assessment parcels and absolute constraints (SE)



Map Scale @A3: 1:25,000





Three Rivers District
Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 4.1c

Assessment parcels and absolute constraints (SW)

- Parcel Boundary
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land

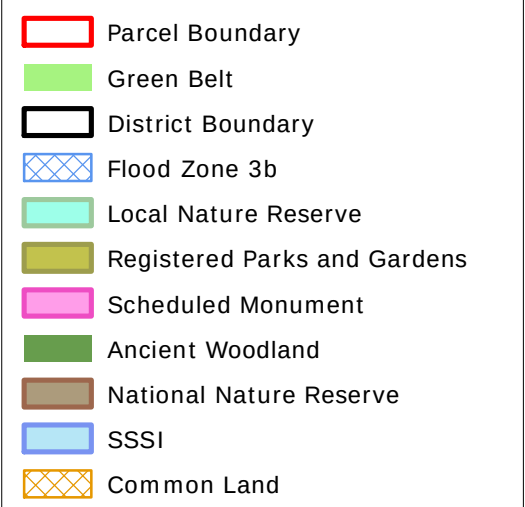
Map Scale @A3: 1:25,000



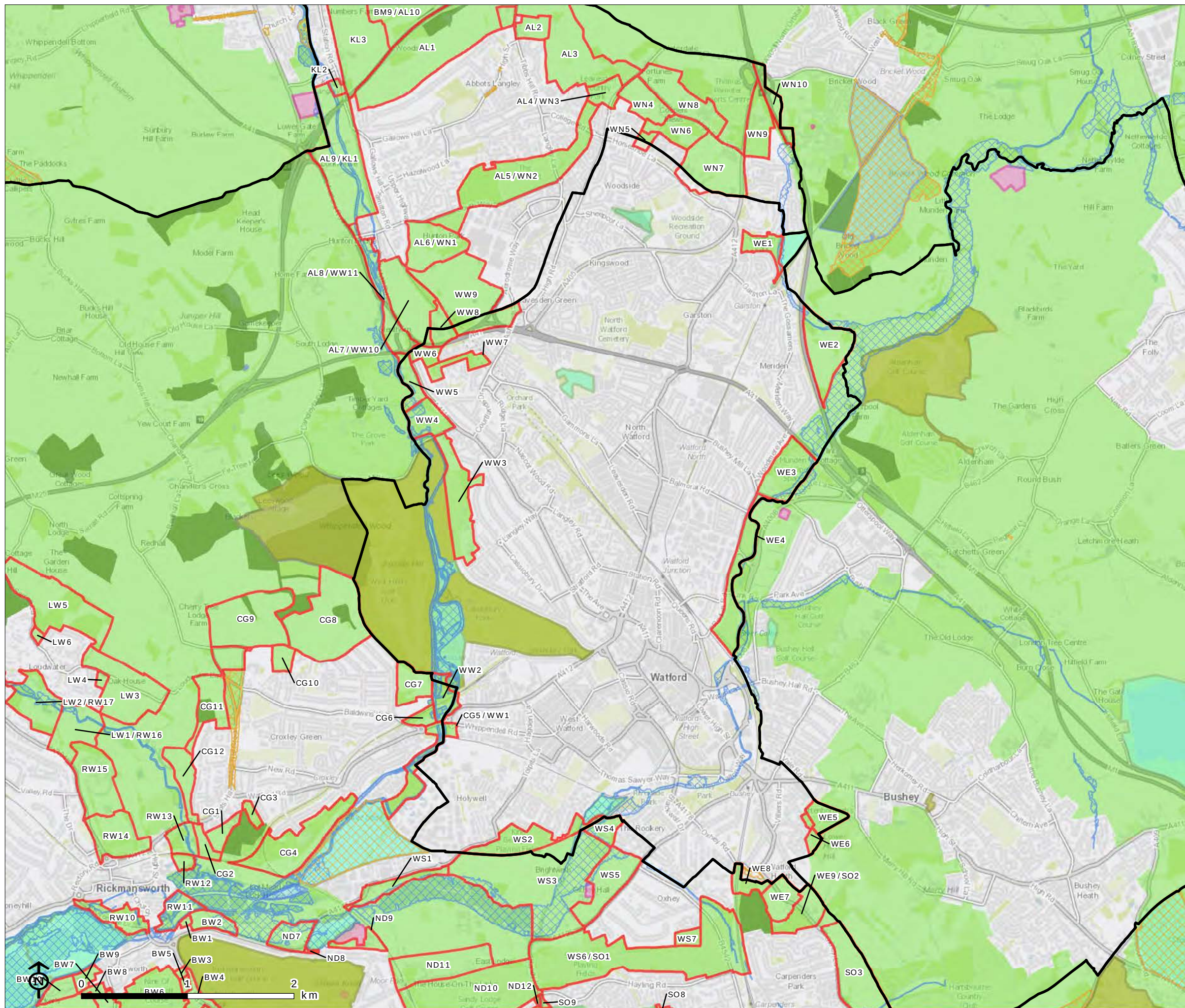
Three Rivers District
Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 4.1d

Assessment parcels and absolute constraints (Watford)

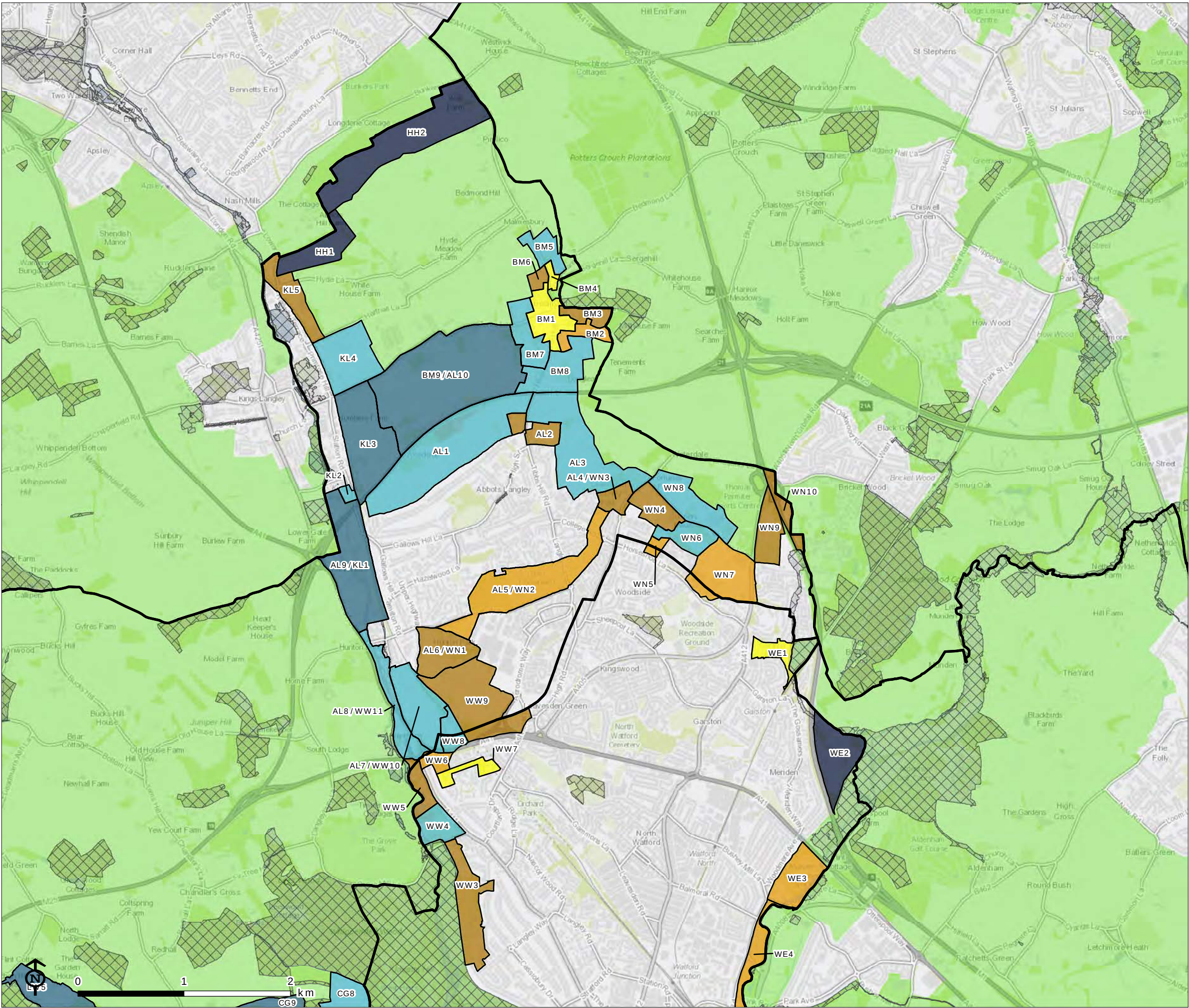


Map Scale @A3: 1:35,000



Three Rivers and Watford
Green Belt Review Stage 2

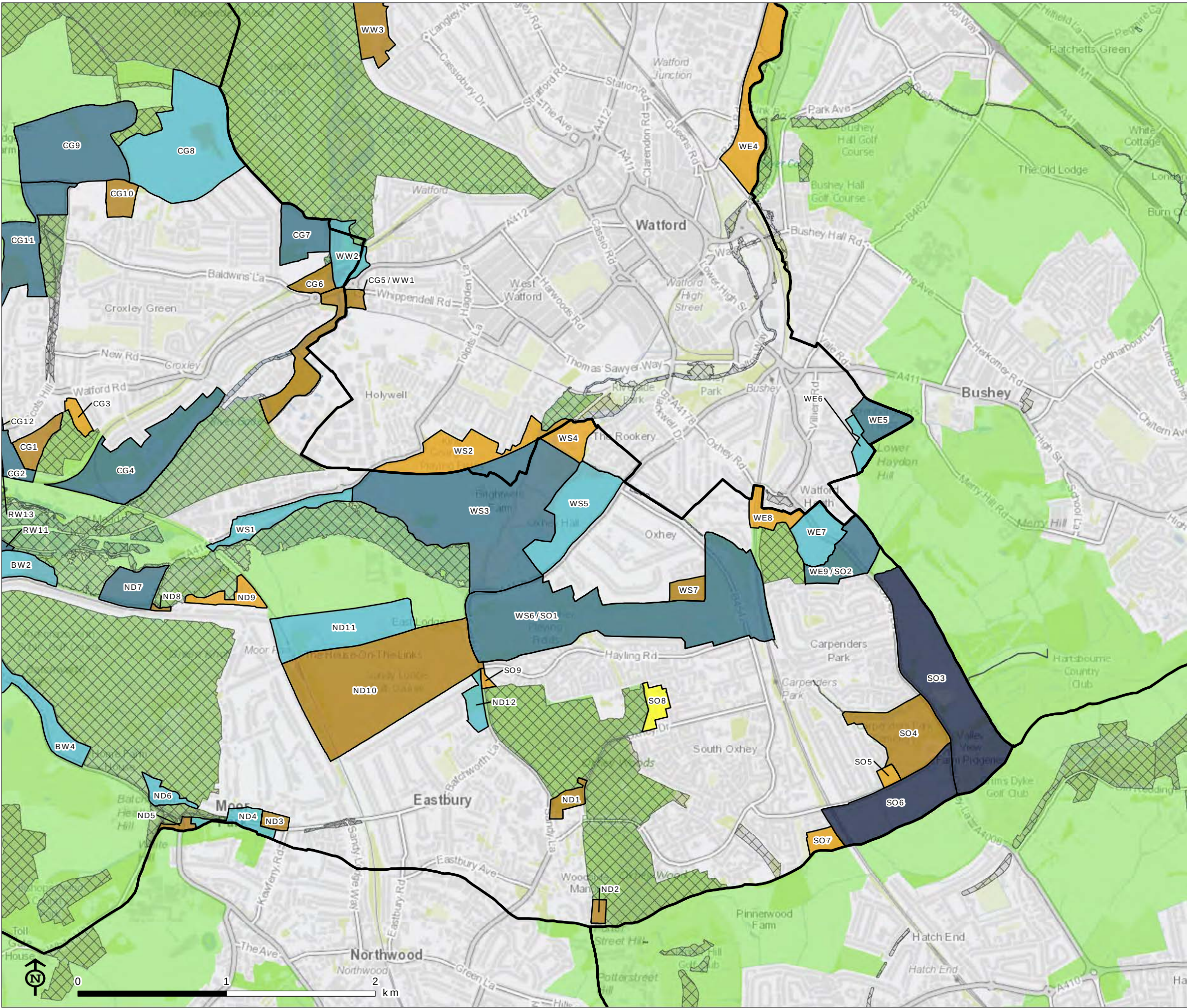
Figure 4.2a
Green Belt Harm Overview (N)



- District Boundary
- Green Belt
- Absolute Constraints
- Parcel Harm
 - Very High
 - High
 - Moderate High
 - Moderate
 - Low Moderate
 - Low

Map Scale @A3: 1:35,000





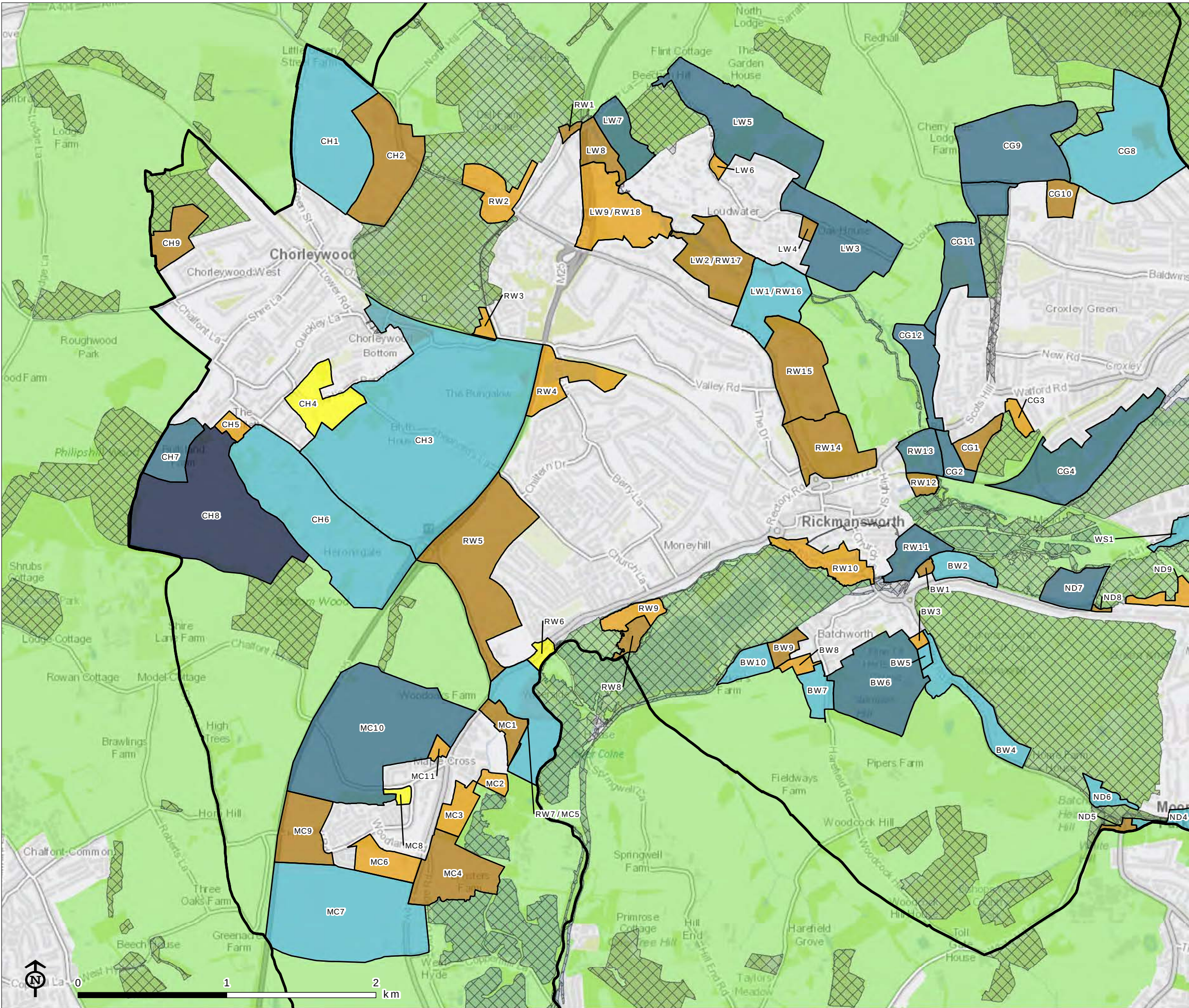
Three Rivers and Watford
Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 4.2b
Green Belt Harm Overview (SE)

- District Boundary
- Green Belt
- Absolute Constraints
- Parcel Harm
 - Very High
 - High
 - Moderate High
 - Moderate
 - Low Moderate
 - Low

Map Scale @A3: 1:25,000





Three Rivers and Watford
Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 4.2c
Green Belt Harm Overview (SW)

- District Boundary
- Green Belt
- Absolute Constraints
- Parcel Harm
 - Very High
 - High
 - Moderate High
 - Moderate
 - Low Moderate
 - Low

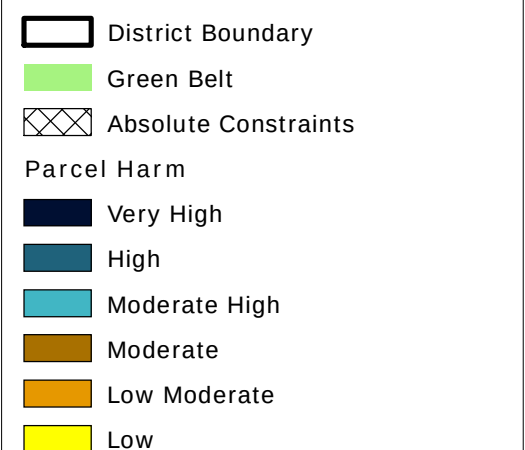
Map Scale @A3: 1:25,000



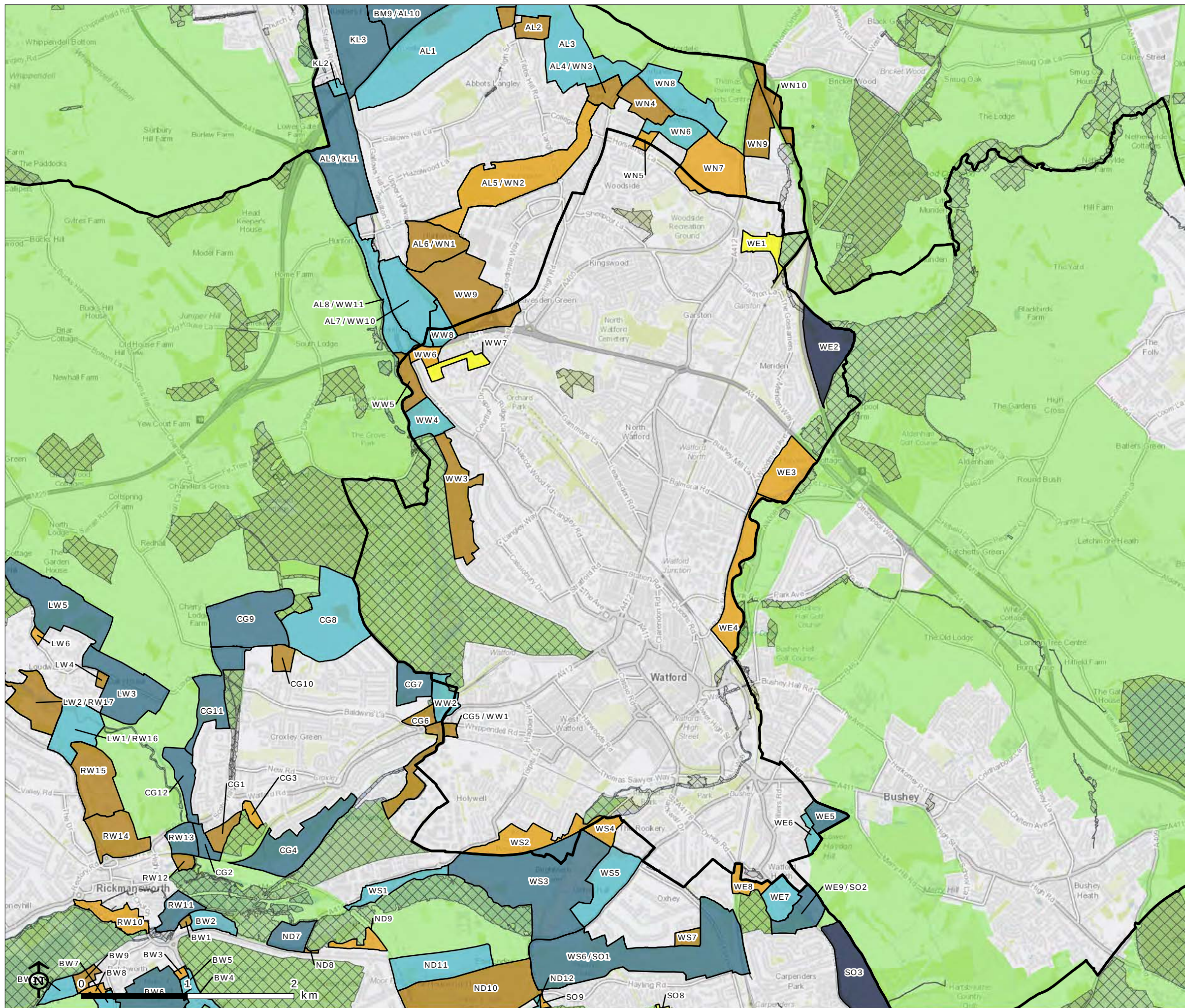
Three Rivers and Watford Green Belt Review Stage 2

Figure 4.2d

Green Belt Harm Overview (Watford)



Map Scale @A3: 1:35,000



5 Making Changes to the Green Belt

Introduction

- 5.1 The following chapter sets out the key steps that the Councils should consider if there is an identified need to release land from the Green Belt. The chapter also sets out potential mitigation measures that could be applied to reduce the potential harm to the Green Belt, if land is released. This is followed by a discussion of the potential opportunities for enhancing the beneficial use of the Green Belt (in line with Paragraph 141 of the NPPF). However, it should be noted that this Chapter does not contain an exhaustive list of potential mitigation measures or enhancement opportunities. It is therefore recommended that mitigation and enhancement are carefully considered when more detailed information about proposed developments is available.

Making Changes to the Green Belt

- 5.2 The NPPF requires changes to the Green Belt to be made through the Development Plan process. If such changes are made, the process should include demonstration of exceptional circumstances, including consideration of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, i.e. planning for economic growth, housing need, health and wellbeing, accessibility and biodiversity, cultural heritage and climate change resilience.
- 5.3 A common interpretation of the policy position is that, where necessitated by development requirements, plans should identify the most sustainable locations for growth. This policy position should be maintained unless outweighed by adverse effects on the overall integrity of the Green Belt according to an assessment of the whole of the Green Belt based around the five purposes²⁶. In other words, the relatively poor performance of the land against Green Belt purposes is not, of itself, an exceptional circumstance that would justify release of the land from the Green Belt. Conversely, higher performing Green Belt may be appropriate for release where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated.
- 5.4 Before concluding that 'exceptional circumstances' exist to justify changes to the Green Belt, Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that local authorities should demonstrate that all other 'reasonable options' for meeting its identified need for development have been considered. In particular local authorities need to consider whether their strategy:
- 1) makes effective use of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;
 - 2) optimises the density of development in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and
 - 3) explores whether other authorities can help to meet some of the identified development requirement.
- 5.5 Should the Councils decide to release land from the Green Belt, careful consideration also needs to be given to the form of the amended Green Belt boundaries. As set out in Para 139 of the NPPF:
- "When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:*
- *ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;*
 - *not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;*

²⁶ Planning Advisor Service (2015) Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt. Available at: www.local.gov.uk/pas/pas-support/councillor-development/planning-doorstep-big-issues.

- *where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;*
- *make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development;*
- *be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and*
- *define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent."*

Mitigation to Reduce Harm to Green Belt

The concept of mitigation

- 5.6 One of the factors weighed up in the judgement of harm resulting from the release of a Green Belt area, is the impact that the loss of openness would have on other Green Belt land. This is assessed by considering how neighbouring land would rate in terms of its contribution to Green Belt purposes were the area in question to be urbanised i.e. would its contribution be weakened? In many cases this is a key factor in the judgement: a site might in itself be small but its development could represent a more significant change than its physical area might suggest if, for example, it resulted in the breaching of a strong boundary feature, or an increase in the built containment of adjacent land.
- 5.7 There is the potential to reduce harm to the remaining Green Belt by implementing measures which will affect the relationship between the remaining Green Belt land and urban areas. Measures which increase the contribution that land is judged to make to Green Belt purposes, offsetting to some degree the predicted reduction in contribution, could strengthen the case for release of a particular area. However, any release of Green Belt land will still require 'exceptional circumstances' to be demonstrated.
- 5.8 Mitigation could apply either to land being released or land being retained as Green Belt. There is an overlap between the latter and the concept of beneficial use of Green Belt land as set out in the NPPF, in that mitigation can also present an opportunity to enhance beneficial use.

Mitigation themes

- 5.9 The extent to which harm can be mitigated will vary from site to site, but potential measures can be considered under different themes. The Green Belt purposes are considered to relate to the relationship between the land area in question, developed land, and the countryside. This relationship is influenced by: the location of the area; the extent of openness within it; and the role of landscape/physical elements, including boundary features (in either separating the area from, or connecting it to) built-up areas and the wider countryside.
- 5.10 **Table 5.1** below lists some mitigation measures that could be considered as part of the planning and development process. Which mitigation measures are the most appropriate will vary, depending on local circumstances.

Table 5.1: Potential measures to mitigate harm to Green Belt

Mitigation measure	Benefits	Considerations
Use landscaping to help integrate a new Green Belt boundary with the existing edge, aiming to maximise consistency over a longer distance.	Maintaining sense of separation between urban and open land.	A boundary that is relatively homogeneous over a relatively long distance, such as a main road, is likely to be stronger than one which has more variation. Landscaping works can help to minimise the impact of 'breaches'

Mitigation measure	Benefits	Considerations
		in such boundaries.
Strengthen boundary at weak points – e.g. where ‘breached’ by roads	Reducing opportunities for sprawl.	The use of buildings and landscaping can create strong ‘gateways’ to strengthen settlement-edge function.
Define Green Belt edge using a strong, natural element which forms a visual barrier – e.g. a woodland belt.	Reducing perception of urbanisation, and may also screen residents from intrusive landscape elements within the Green Belt (e.g. major roads).	Boundaries that create visual and movement barriers can potentially have detrimental effects on the character of the enclosed urban areas and the amenity of residents.
Create a transition from urban to rural, using built density, height, materials and landscaping to create a more permeable edge.	Reducing perception of urbanisation.	This may however have implications in terms of reducing housing yield.
Consider ownership and management of landscape elements which contribute to Green Belt purposes.	Ensuring permanence of Green Belt.	Trees and hedgerows require management to maintain their value in Green Belt terms, and the visual screening value that can be attributed to them is more limited if they are under private control (e.g. within back gardens).
Enhance visual openness within the Green Belt.	Increasing perception of countryside.	Although openness in a Green Belt sense does not correspond directly to visual openness, a stronger visual relationship between countryside areas, whether directly adjacent or separated by other landscape elements, can increase the extent to which an area is perceived as relating to the wider countryside.
Enhance access within the Green Belt.	Increasing perception of countryside.	Uses of the countryside that permit an appreciation of it as a connected area with valued characteristics can counter urbanising influences – e.g. enhancement of connectivity of rights of way to avoiding truncation by major roads, or provision of access along the Green Belt boundary to strengthen its role.

Mitigation measure	Benefits	Considerations
Improve management practices to enhance countryside character.	Increasing strength of countryside character.	Landscape character assessment can help to identify valued characteristics that should be retained and where possible strengthened, and intrusive elements that should be diminished and where possible removed.
Design and locate buildings, landscaping and green spaces to minimise intrusion on settlement settings.	Maintaining perceived settlement separation by minimising the extent to which new development intrudes on the settings of other settlements.	Analysis of settlement settings, including consideration of viewpoints and visual receptors, can identify key locations where maintenance of openness and retention of landscape features would have the most benefit.
Maintain/create separation between existing washed-over settlement and new inset settlement.	Minimising urbanising influences that could weaken the justification for retaining the washed-over settlement's status.	Ensure that the gap is sufficiently wide to maintain a sense of separation.
Design road infrastructure to limit perception of increased urbanisation associated with new development.	Reducing perception of urbanisation.	Increased levels of 'activity' can increase the perception of urbanisation.
Use sustainable drainage features to define/enhance separation between settlement and countryside.	Strengthening separation between urban and open land.	Need to determine if local topography and ground conditions are suitable.

Beneficial Use of Green Belt

- 5.11 The purposes of the Green Belt do not make any reference to the quality or use of land falling within the designation, but Paragraph 141 of the NPPF, states that:
- “Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.”*
- 5.12 Furthermore, Paragraph 138 of the NPPF states that where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should “set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land”. This could be achieved through legal agreements in conjunction with the release of land and planning consent for development, or through strategic enhancement initiatives e.g. creation of community woodland.
- 5.13 The NPPF suggests different types of beneficial use. They relate principally to the environmental quality of the land, but can also, through strengthening boundary/buffer roles and affecting landscape and visual character, affect the contribution of land to Green Belt purposes.

- 5.14 The updated Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) also endorses the preparation of supporting landscape, biodiversity or recreation evidence to identify appropriate compensatory improvements, including:
- 'new or enhanced green infrastructure;
 - woodland planting;
 - landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);
 - improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;
 - new or enhanced walking and cycle routes; and
 - improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.'

Potential opportunities to enhance use

- 5.15 Some of the mitigation measures listed in the previous section which relate to Green Belt land can also be considered beneficial uses, but there is broader scope for introducing or enhancing uses of Green Belt land that (by adding to its value) will strengthen the case for that land's future protection, regardless of whether it is classified as Green Belt. Some examples are provided in **Table 5.2** below.
- 5.16 Beneficial uses could be achieved through planning conditions, section 106 obligations and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy. The PPG stresses the need for early engagement with landowners and other interested parties to obtain the necessary local consents, establishing a detailed scope of works and identifying a means of funding their design, construction and maintenance.

Table 5.2: Potential beneficial uses of Green Belt

Beneficial use	Considerations
Improving access	Enhancing the coverage and condition of the rights of way network and increasing open space provision.
Providing locations for outdoor sport	Some outdoor sports can represent an urbanising influence; an emphasis on activities which do not require formal facilities is less likely to harm Green Belt purposes.
Landscape and visual enhancement	Using landscape character assessment as guidance, intrusive elements can be reduced and positive characteristics reinforced.
Increasing biodiversity	Most Green Belt land has potential for increased biodiversity value – e.g. the management of hedgerows and agricultural field margins, and provision of habitat connectivity, planting of woodland. There may also be opportunities to link enhancements with requirements to deliver 'biodiversity net gain' associated with development proposals.
Improving damaged and derelict land	Giving land a functional, economic value is a key aspect in avoiding damage and dereliction through lack of positive management, but this needs to be achieved with minimum harm to characteristics/qualities which help it contribute to Green Belt purposes.

- 5.17 It is noted however, that Local Authorities may still be able to protect features such as open spaces, leisure facilities, burial grounds and nature conservation sites through other policy approaches/designations.

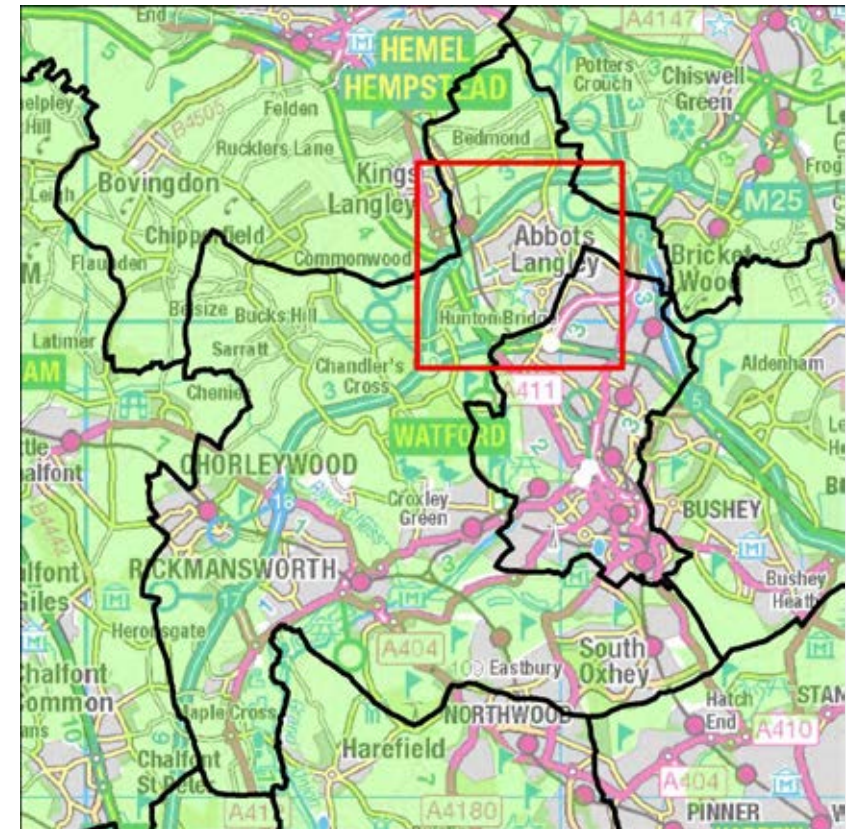
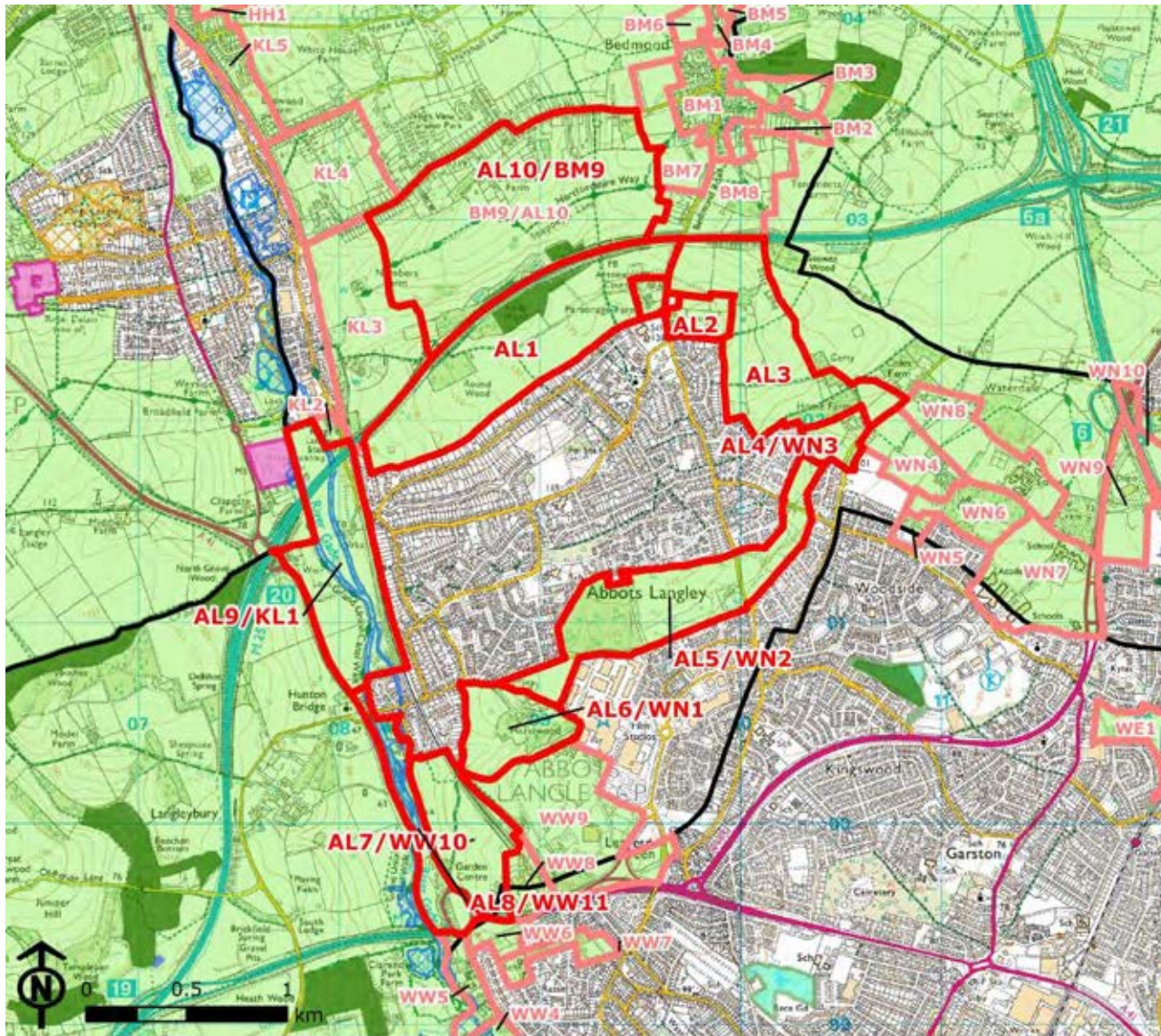
Conclusion

- 5.18 This Stage 2 Study has assessed the *harm* to Green Belt purposes of releasing land for development at the settlement-edges to facilitate the expansion of inset settlements. The findings of this study will form an important piece of evidence for the emerging Three Rivers and Watford Local Plans.
- 5.19 However, as outline above there are other important factors that need to be considered when establishing exceptional circumstances for making alterations to Green Belt boundaries, most notably sustainability and viability issues. Whilst the ideal would be to minimise harm to the Green Belt, it may be that the most sustainable locations for development will result in *high* or *very high* harm to the Green Belt.
- 5.20 In each location where alterations to Green Belt boundaries are being considered, planning judgement is required to establish whether the sustainability benefits of Green Belt release and the associated development outweigh the harm to the Green Belt designation. In addition, consideration will also need to be given to potential measures to mitigate harm to the Green Belt, as well as potential opportunities to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt. It is noted that many potential enhancement opportunities may relate to land which is in private ownership and therefore careful consideration will need to be given to how and if these opportunities can be delivered.
- 5.21 Should the Councils decide to release land from the Green Belt, it is suggested that outline policy guidance or masterplans could be prepared as part of, or following on from the Local Plan process. Masterplans could draw on the findings of the Green Belt Study and any detailed site-based Green Belt assessment work to indicate precise development areas, new permanent Green Belt boundaries (existing or new features) and appropriate considerations for the layout and design of new developments and opportunities to enhance beneficial use. Such an approach, together with specific policies for the development of the land, would help to minimise harm to the remaining Green Belt.

Appendix 1 - Detailed Stage 2 Harm Assessments

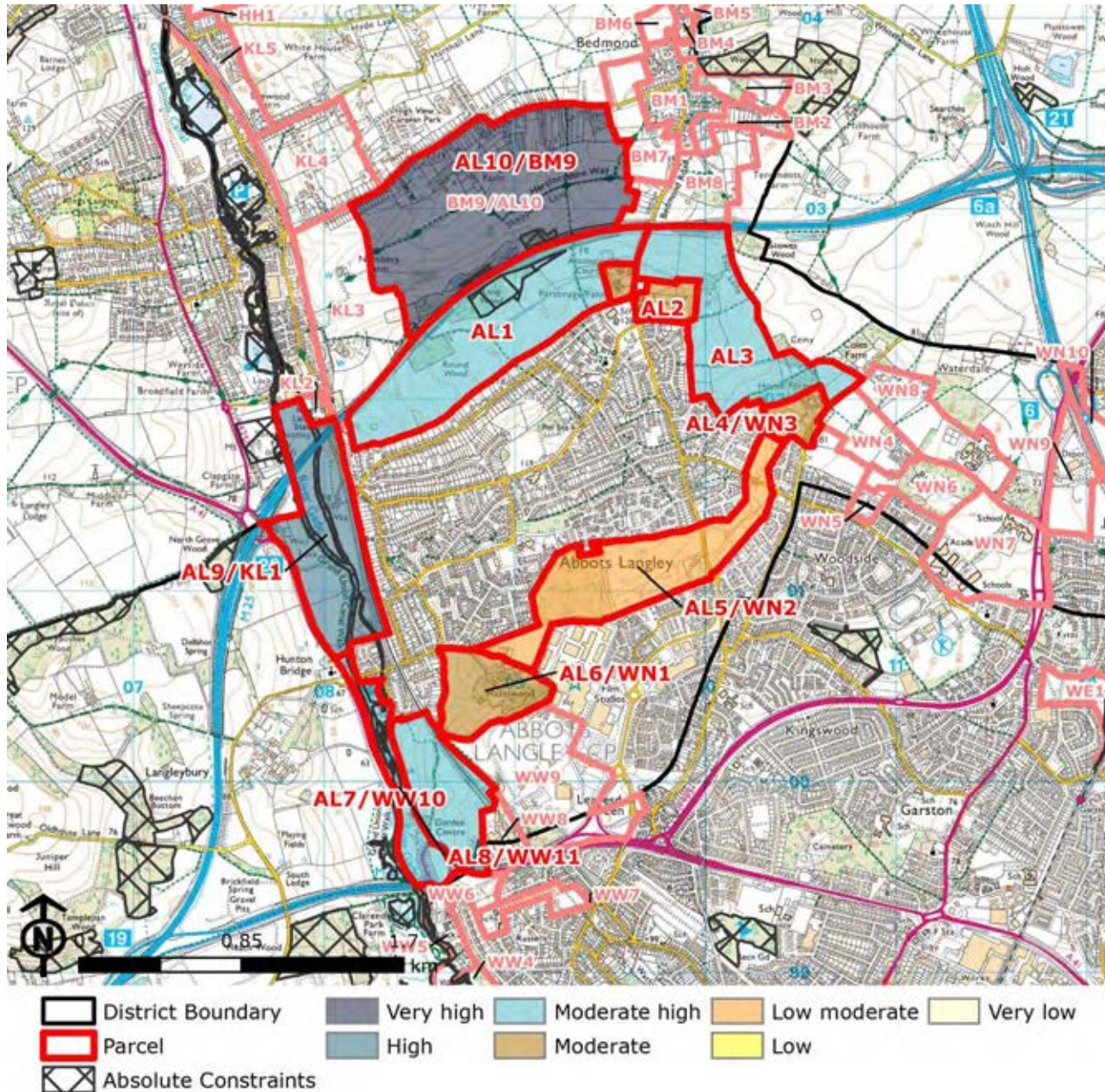
Abbots Langley

Abbots Langley



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Abbots Langley



Parcel

AL1
AL2
AL3
AL4/WN3
AL5/WN2
AL6/WN1
AL7/WW10
AL8/WW11
AL9/KL1
AL10/BM9

Harm Score

Moderate high

Moderate

Moderate high

Moderate

Low moderate

Moderate

Moderate high

Moderate high

High

Very high

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Abbots Langley

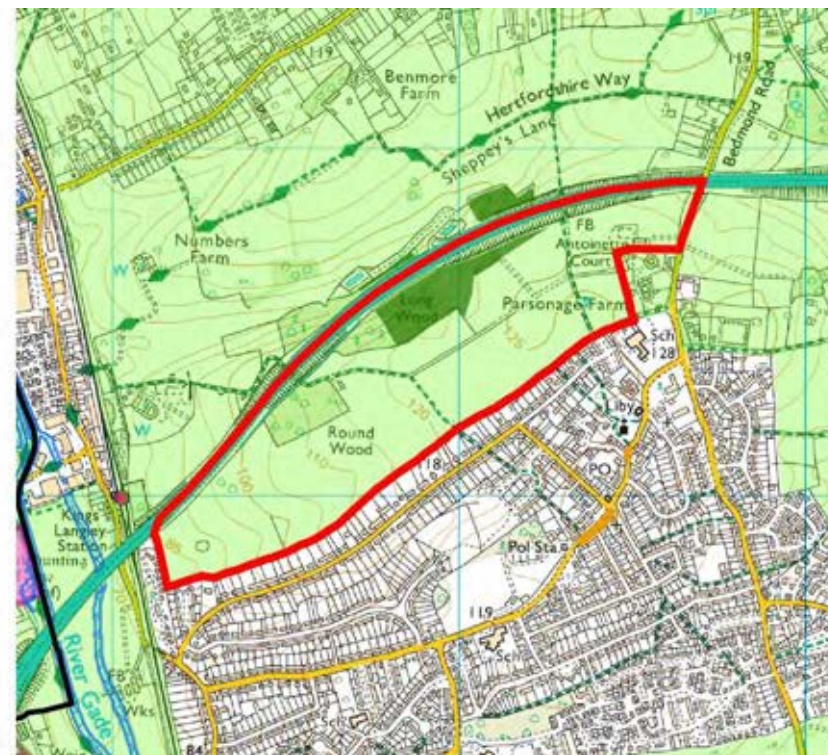
Parcel AL1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.55 1.1 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View from Bedmond Road north west through the parcel



Right image

View from Bedmond Road towards Woodside Farm within the parcel



Abbots Langley

Parcel AL1

Description

Open arable farmland and woodland blocks lying between the northern inset settlement edge of Abbots Langley and the M25, which provides the boundary with the wider Green Belt to the north. To the south, large well treed residential gardens form the inset settlement edge.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge of Abbots Langley which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. It has strong openness and well-treed back gardens provide some distinction from the urban edge, giving it a relatively significant role in preventing urban sprawl. The presence of the motorway and woodland has a containing effect that limits this role to a degree.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel lies in the gap between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, however the M25 remains as a significant separating feature to the north and the land making the strongest contribution to the gap lies further to the north.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel contains no urbanising influences and is open. However the containment provided by the M25 increases the land's association with the urban edge.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Due to the presence of the M25, development here would not increase containment of adjacent Green Belt, with the exception of the weaker performing, partially developed Green Belt lying to the east (along Dairy Way). Release would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing sprawl and encroachment on countryside and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a negligible impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Abbots Langley

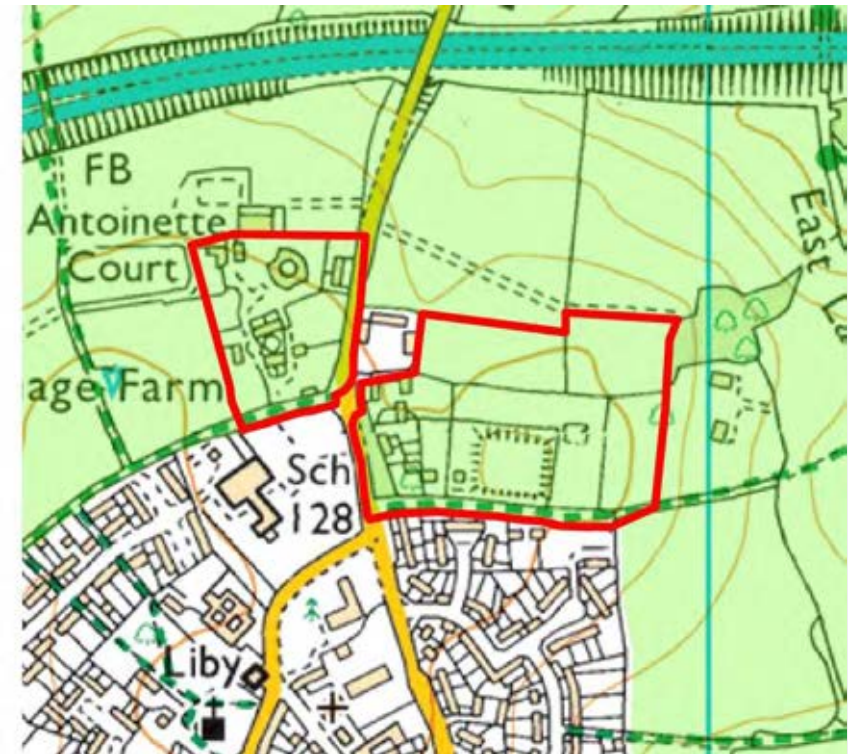
Parcel AL2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View along Love Lane which forms the southern boundary of the parcel

Right image

View towards the underground reservoir in the eastern corner of the parcel



Abbots Langley

Parcel AL2

Description

Fields and low density washed over residential development either side of Bedmond Road on the northern inset settlement edge of Abbots Langley. Both sides are partially developed with low density dwellings, interspersed with areas of open land and clusters of trees. The parcel is bisected north-south by Bedmond Road. Small residential roads and a thick treeline form the inset settlement edge to the south and reasonably well treed field boundaries define the edge with the wider Green Belt.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge of Abbots Langley which forms part of the Greater London large built up area. Despite the low density development, its character is distinct from the urban area, with tree cover providing distinction along the urban edge. There is a limited degree of containment of the land by the surrounding settlement edges.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The land lies in the gap between Abbots Langley and Hemel Hempstead, which in turn contributes to the gap between the towns of Hemel Hempstead and Watford. However, the extent of existing development within the parcel limits its role in preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The low density development within the parcel compromises the sense of openness to a degree and the parcel is partly contained by the urban edge which does have some impact on the countryside character and the extent to which release of the parcel would be perceived as encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would have a negligible impact on the integrity of surrounding Green Belt land. It would have no significant impact on boundary strength, but would increase the containment of land to the north between the urban edge and the M25 motorway.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and a moderate impact on the prevention of sprawl. The release would lead to only a negligible impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Abbots Langley

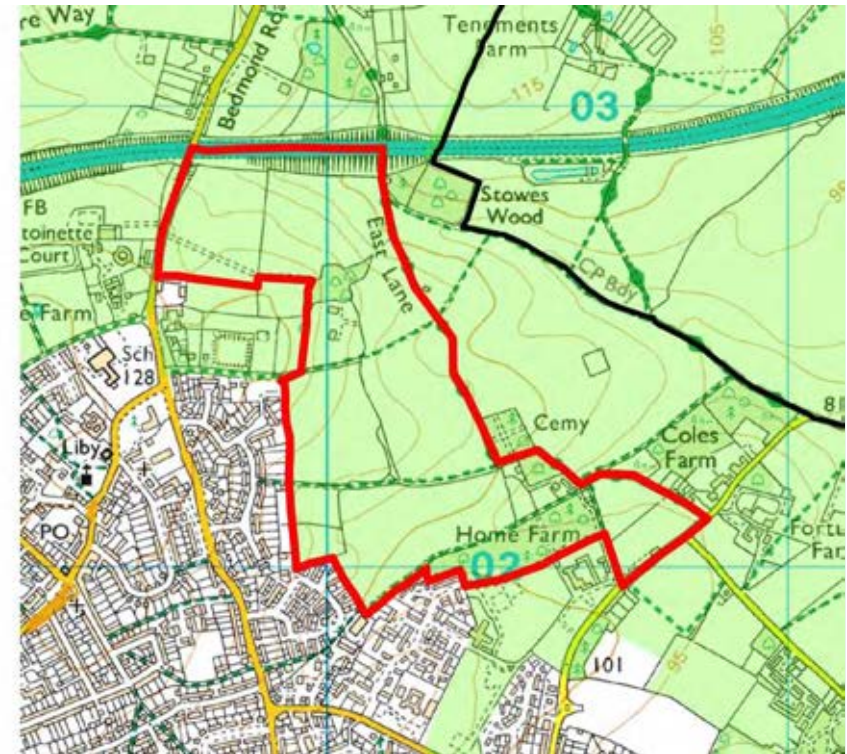
Parcel AL3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.4 0.8 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the footpath within the southern half of the parcel north across the parcel



Right image

View from the footpath within the southern half of the parcel south across the parcel

Abbots Langley

Parcel AL3

Description

Open farmland, a woodland block and a small cluster of agricultural buildings lying between the north eastern edge of Abbots Langley and the M25 motorway. The gardens of inset residential dwellings and a patchy treeline form the boundary with the inset settlement edge to the west and south west. The M25 provides a strong boundary between the parcel and the wider Green Belt to the north, the boundary with the Green Belt to the east is formed by the tree-lined East Lane and Woodside Road forms a boundary to the south.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel is adjacent to the urban edge of Abbots Langley which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. It is generally uncontained by urbanising uses but has limited distinction from the urban edge.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The intervening settlements of Bricket Wood and Chiswell Green narrow the Green Belt gap between Watford and St Albans, but this parcel forms a peripheral part of that gap, with the urban edges to the east having weaker separation.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is free of urbanising influences and is uncontained countryside with a strong connection to open countryside beyond. There is a lack of distinction with the urban edge but no distinction from the wider countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

There would be no significant change in boundary strength as a result of the release of this parcel, and there would be no containment of surrounding Green Belt land. The release of this land would have a negligible impact on the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and sprawl from the large built up area. The release would constitute only a negligible impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the east of the parcel is further separated from the urban edge, and therefore makes a significant contribution to preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. Crossing beyond East Lane would create a weaker boundary. Harm from extending the inset settlement further east would therefore be high.

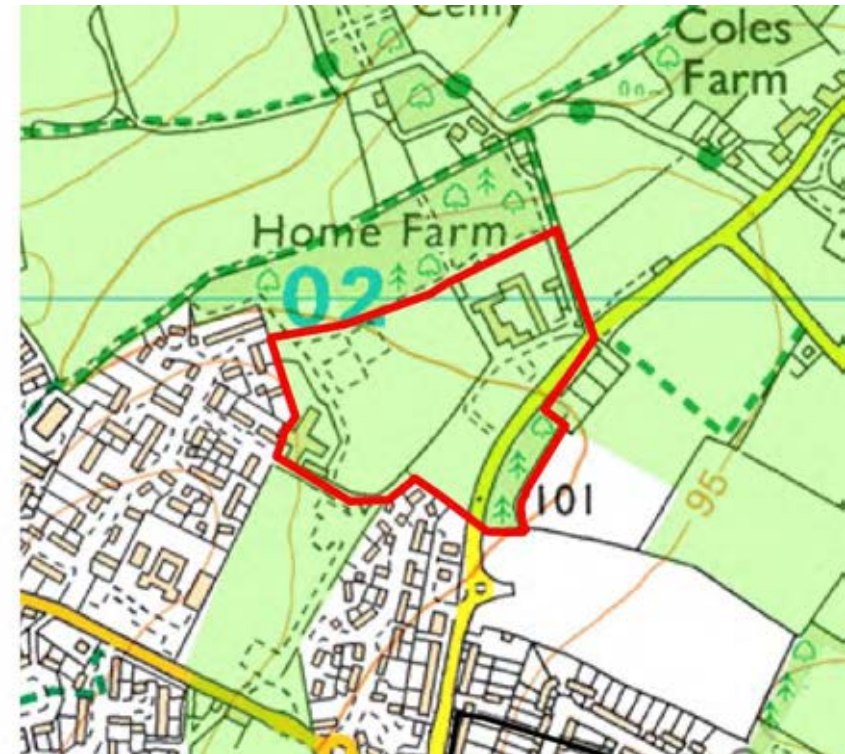
Abbots Langley Parcel AL4/WN3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View into Warren Court Hospital

Right image

View along the northern boundary of the parcel



Abbots Langley

Parcel AL4/WN3

Description

Open fields, sports facilities and healthcare facilities (Warren Court) with scattered trees, lying in the gap between Leavesden (contiguous with Watford) and Abbots Langley. The boundary with the inset edge of Abbots Langley is formed by the edges of residential dwellings. A woodland block provides clear distinction with the wider Green Belt to the north, while to the east, the boundary is formed by a tree belt.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel lies adjacent to the edge of Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford) which form part of the large built up area. It is only partially developed with a healthcare complex, leaving significant areas of open land. It has a connection with the wider countryside to the east but a weak sense of distinction from the urban edge.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel lies in the gap between Watford and Abbots Langley, which also contributes to the gap between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead. However the narrowness of the existing gap to the east, and the lack of visual separation, limit the role of this parcel.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel is partially developed with a healthcare complex, but there remain significant areas of open land and a connection with the wider countryside. However the weak distinction with the settlement edge creates some association with the adjacent urban area, and there is a degree of containment by the surrounding tree cover.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would effectively merge the settlements of Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford), which would also contain land to the east. However the gap is already weak.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on preventing sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. Its release would constitute only a minor weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

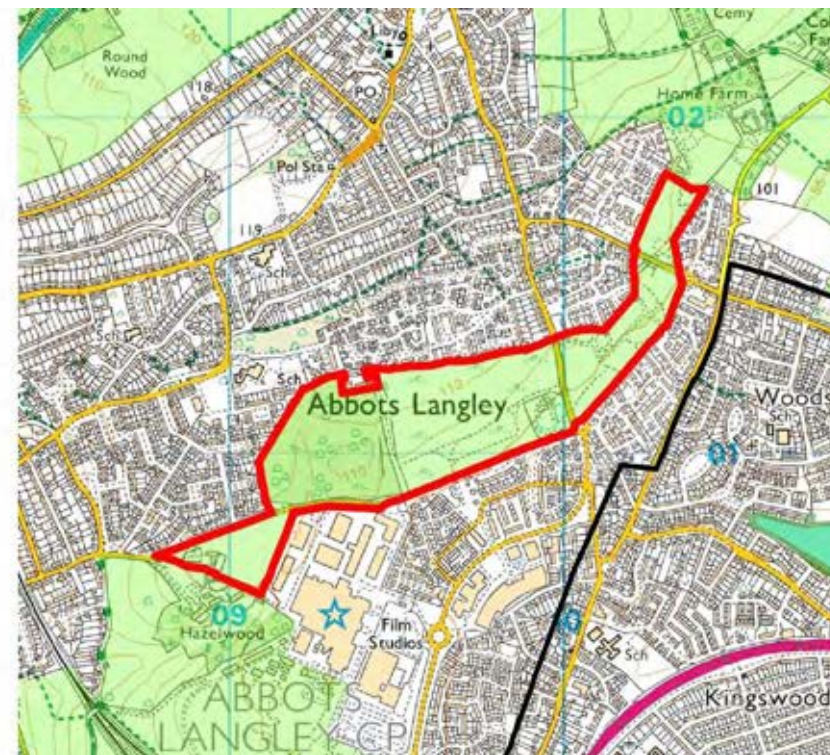
Abbots Langley Parcel AL5/WN2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.55 1.1 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View from Langley Lane east through the parcel



Right image

View from South Way south across South Way Playing Fields



Abbots Langley Parcel AL5/WN2

Description

A belt of land lying in the gap between Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford) and bisected north-west by Langley Lane. To the west of Langley Lane, the land use consists of open fields, playing fields and facilities, a play area and a very small cluster of industrial units. To the east, a narrower strip of land comprises of recreational areas within Leavesden Country Park and further east a community building (the YMCA) and associated hardstanding. The inset edge of Leavesden is largely formed of residential gardens, with a stretch to the south west bound by South Way Road. The boundary to the north east, with the Green Belt beyond, does not have any distinct boundary feature, while Essex Lane forms a boundary with the Green Belt to the south west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edges of Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford) which form part of the large built up area. The extent of urban containment to the north and south limits the extent to which development here would be considered sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel forms the gap between Watford and Abbots Langley and in turn contributes to the gap between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead. However the narrowness of the existing gap and lack of visual separation between the settlements limits the role of this parcel to purpose 2.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

The parcel contains only minimal urbanising influences and therefore retains strong openness, however the strong association with adjacent urban areas limits the extent to which development would be considered encroachment on countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would effectively merge the settlements of Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford), however the gap is already weak. The release would not affect the perceived separation to the west along the River Gade Valley and would have no impact on wider countryside. The relatively well wooded boundary to the south west (beyond Essex Lane) would form a distinct boundary with surrounding open countryside.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively limited impact on all Green Belt purposes, and its release would constitute only a minor weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be low-moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

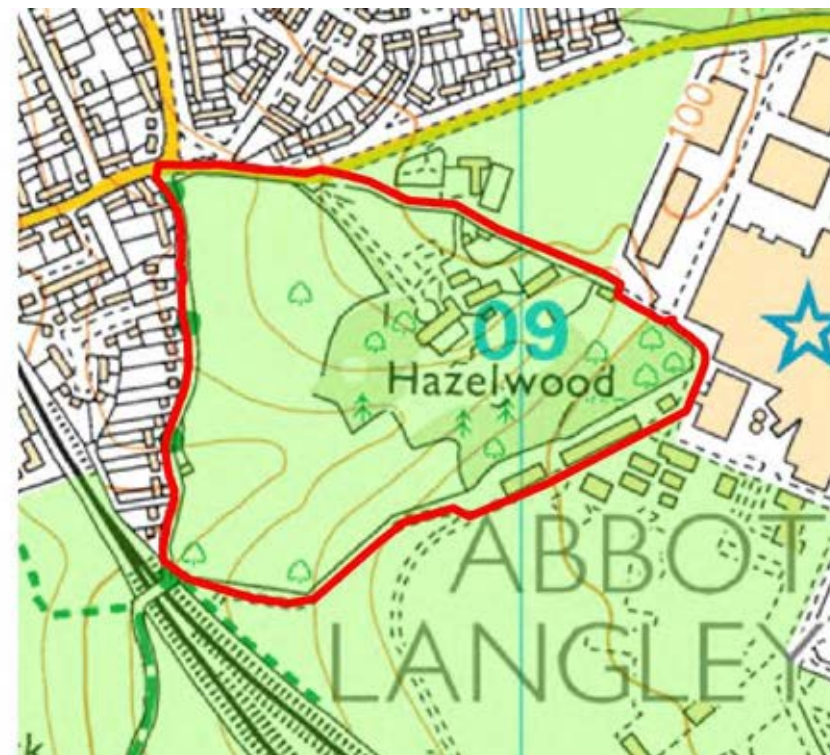
Abbots Langley Parcel AL6/WN1



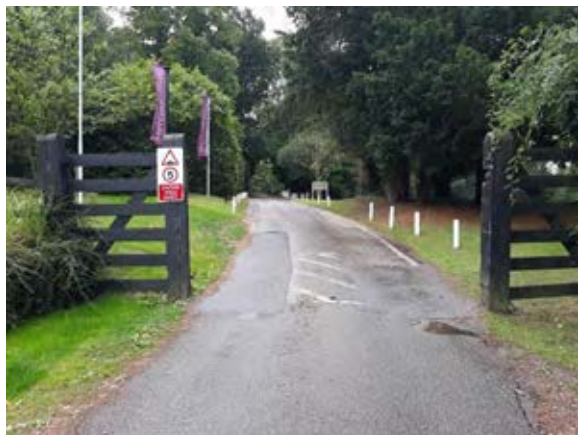
- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Hunton Bridge Hill towards Hunton Park Hotel

Right image

View from Hunton Bridge Hill south through the parcel



Abbots Langley

Parcel AL6/WN1

Description

Open fields, woodland and the Mercure Hunton Park Hotel development, lying between Abbots Langley and Leavesden Film Studios (contiguous with Watford). The boundary of the inset edge of Abbots Langley is formed by residential roads and a thick treeline. A further thick treeline separates the parcel from the washed over playing fields to the north, while a track forms a boundary with the Green Belt to the south, used as the studio backlot. To the east lies the inset urban edge of Leavesdon film studios, which creates some urban containment.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel is adjacent to the urban edge of Abbots Langley which forms part of the large built up area of Greater London. There are some urbanising influences within the parcel due to the presence of the hotel complex and this has separation from the inset edges. The land is partially contained by urban development, however an area of woodland in the south east corner creates some distinction from the adjacent film studio development.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel lies in the gap between Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford), which in turn contributes to the gap between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, which is fragile along the valley floor. However the narrowness of the existing gap to the north east, and the lack of visual separation, limits the role of this parcel in preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel contains only minimal development. Development to the north, west and east has a containing effect, but the land has some separation from the urban edges due to woodland and tree belts.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would effectively remove the gap between Abbots Langley and Leavesden, however the existing gap is already weak. The railway would form a clear new Green Belt boundary to the west, beyond which there is a steeper slope down toward the River Gade, resulting in only a minor impact on surrounding land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. Its release would constitute a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel. Any partial release of the area would weaken the remaining open land.

Abbots Langley

Parcel AL6/WN1

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the south of the parcel has been assessed in relation to the expansion of Watford West, as parcel WW9.

Abbots Langley

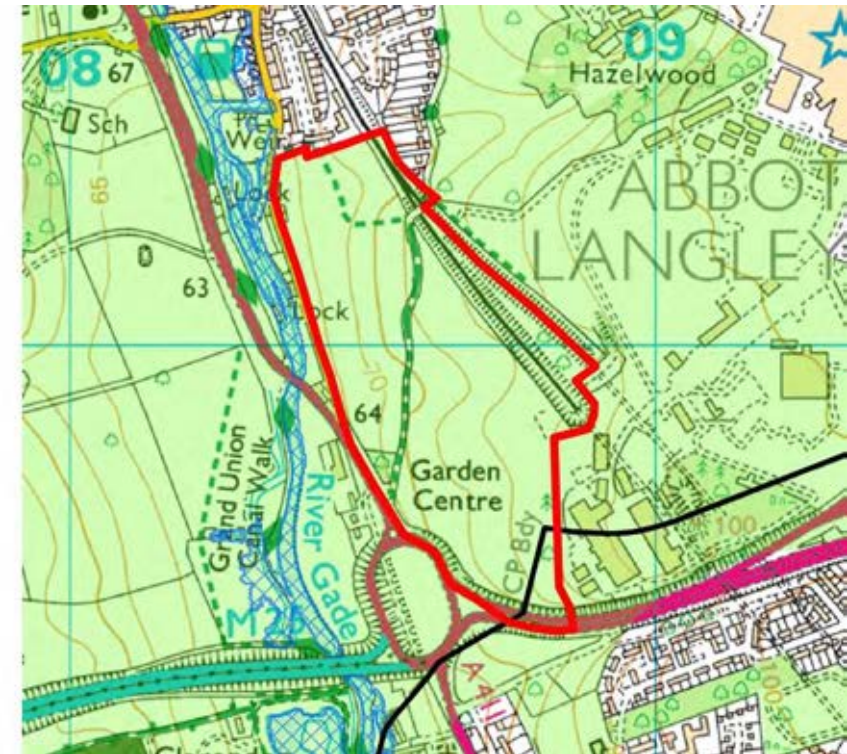
Parcel AL7/WW10



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.3 0.6 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the centre of the parcel east



Right image

View from the centre of the parcel west

Abbots Langley

Parcel AL7/WW10

Description

Open farmland lying on the south western edge of the inset settlement of Abbots Langley, in the gap between the railway line and the A41/River Chess, which provide clear boundaries with the wider Green Belt to the east and west respectively. The parcel is bound to the south by road infrastructure of the Hunton Bridge Roundabout. The boundary with the edge of the inset settlement to the north is formed partly by the railway tracks and partly by residential gardens.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel is adjacent to the urban edge of Abbots Langley which forms part of the large built up area. The parcel is free of urbanising influences. Development to the north and south has some containing influence, but is offset by the association with the valley landform, which together with the railway and the A41 creates some separation.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel lies between the settlements of Abbots Langley and Leavesden (contiguous with Watford), which in turn contributes to the gap between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead, which is fragile along the valley floor. The narrowness of the existing gap to the north east limits the role of this parcel, however there is some perception of openness from the valley floor roads.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is free of urbanising influences, contributing to its openness. Development to the north and south has some containing influence, but is offset by its association with the valley landform. The latter creates a stronger relationship with the wider countryside, and in addition the railway and A41 create a sense of separation from urbanising influences.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

The release of this land would have a negligible impact on the integrity of surrounding Green Belt land, given the area's existing containment and that the western boundary would be consistent with existing inset edges to the north and south. It is recognised that the release of the entire parcel would remove the gap between Abbots Langley and Watford, although the impact of this is limited by the fragile nature of the existing separation to the north east.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would constitute a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel. Any partial release of the area would weaken the remaining open land.

Abbots Langley

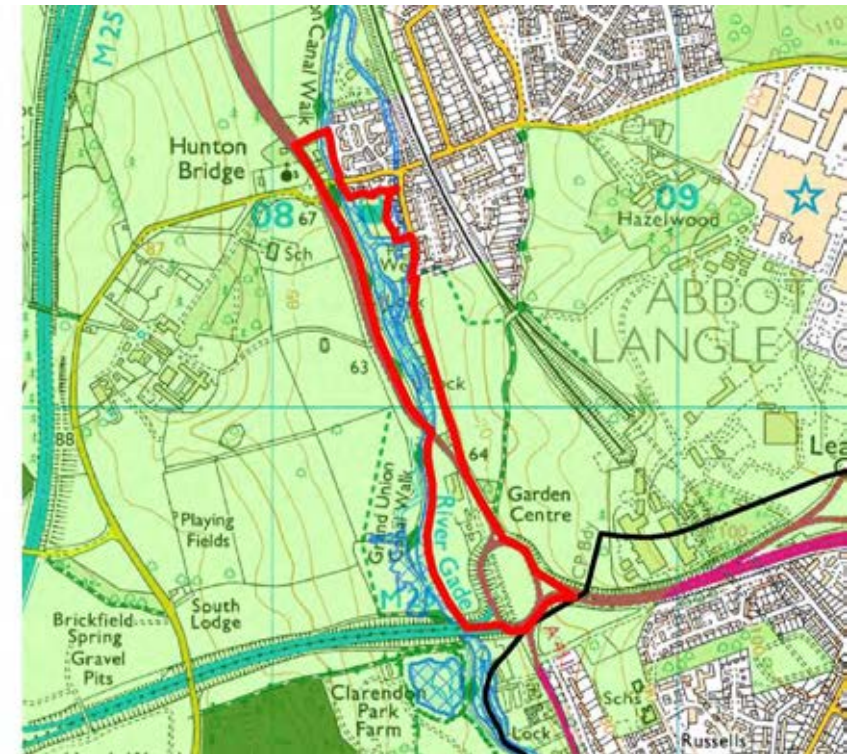
Parcel AL8/WW11



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.45 0.9 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View from Hempstead Road towards the Aquatics Centre in the Parcel



Right image

View from below the A41 Roundabout north through the parcel



Abbots Langley

Parcel AL8/WW11

Description

A strip of land following the route of the River Gade to the west of the inset settlement edge of Abbots Langley. The parcel is bound to the west by a combination of the river channel and the A41 and to the east by the more minor Old Mill Road. Land uses along the river include low density dwellings and large gardens, small scale industrial uses, retail units and clusters of trees. The parcel also includes the Hunton Bridge Roundabout on its southern boundary.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel is in part adjacent to the urban edge of the Greater London large built up area, however its relationship with the inset areas is weak. The parcel contains considerable urbanising development, which limits its contribution to preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The existing development within the parcel has some impact on the perception of a gap between Watford and Abbots Langley when seen from the main connecting road. However open land on the valley sides outside of the parcel plays a more significant role in this perceived separation.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel is partially developed, but is separated from the inset edges. The role of tree cover, and its association with the valley landform to the west, also limit the influence of built development on the parcel.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

The release of this land would not weaken the boundary with surrounding Green Belt land, which would subsequently be bound to the west by the A41 and river channel. However it should be noted that the release would also remove the Green Belt gap between Abbots Langley and Watford and contain open land to the east, weakening the justification for the latter to retain its Green Belt status. This in turn would affect the existing settlement gap, however the extent of existing development and visual links across the valley would limit the impact of this.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, but only a relatively low impact on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would constitute a moderate impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate high.

Potential to limit harm

A partial release, which maintained some connectivity with Green Belt land to the west but still increased the containment of land to the east, would limit the harm to moderate; a smaller release that does not extend further south than the urban edge of Hunton Bridge would further limit this harm to low moderate.

Abbots Langley

Parcel AL8/WW11

Harm beyond outer boundary

Any expansion across the valley-floor canal, river and A41 would constitute a significant change in settlement extents, encroaching on the western side of the River Gade valley and breaching a consistent inset boundary to Watford and Abbots Langley. Despite the containment provided by the M25 further west, the area is strongly distinguished from inset settlements to the east. Such a release would constitute high harm.

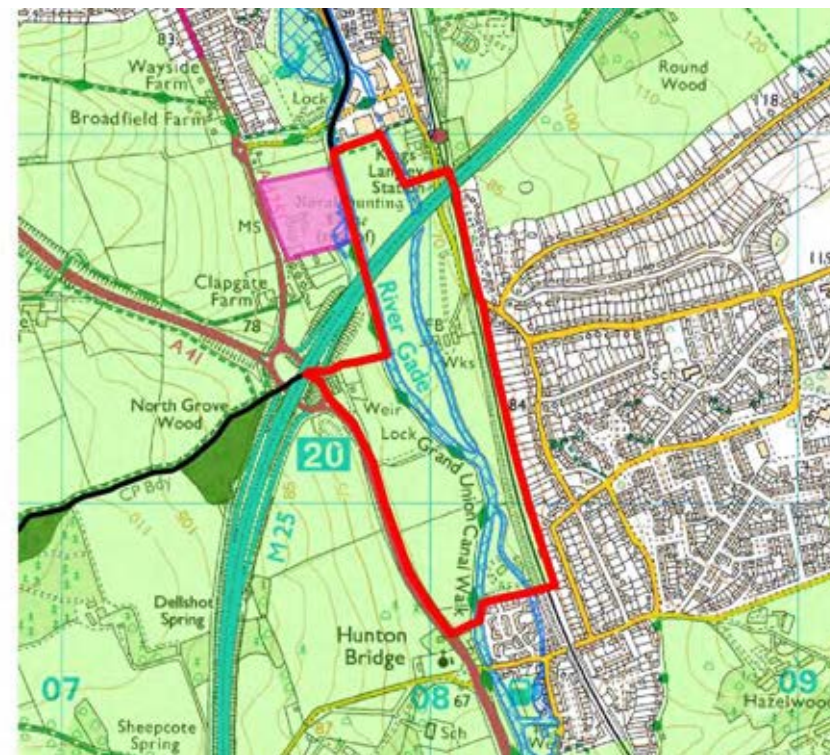
Abbots Langley Parcel AL9/KL1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.5 1 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the footpath along the northern edge of the parcel, south towards the motorway and the canal

Abbots Langley

Parcel AL9/KL1

Description

Open fields, tree clusters, small-scale industrial uses and a single dwelling lying on both sides of the River Gade, on the western edge of Abbots Langley. The parcel is strongly bound to the east and west, by the railway line and A41 respectively, and the parcel is traversed in the north by the M25 motorway.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel is adjacent to the urban edge of the Greater London large built up area and contains only minimal urbanising uses, giving it relatively strong openness. It is clearly separated from the inset edge to the east but is more weakly distinguished in the south from the edge of the settlement of Hunton Bridge. The A41 also creates a sense of containment from the open countryside to the west.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

The parcel lies in the gap between Abbots Langley and Kings Langley, which constitutes the largest gap existing between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, as perceived along valley floor routes and the M25. In the north, the parcel also breaches the separating feature of the M25.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel has only limited urbanising influences and a strong separation from the inset edge to the east, but has a weaker distinction in the south from the edge of the settlement of Hunton Bridge, which weakens the sense of openness. The containment by main roads also limits the open character of the parcel.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

The current urban edge of Abbots Langley is strongly distinguished by the railway line and associated tree cover, however releasing this land would also lead to a clear and distinct boundary to the west provided by the A41. It should also be noted that the settlement of Hunton Bridge already breaches the boundary provided by the railway line, limiting the harm of release on surrounding Green Belt land. A partial release may benefit from the equally strong boundary of the river channel.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a relatively strong impact on preventing urban sprawl, encroachment on the countryside and the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would constitute a minor weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

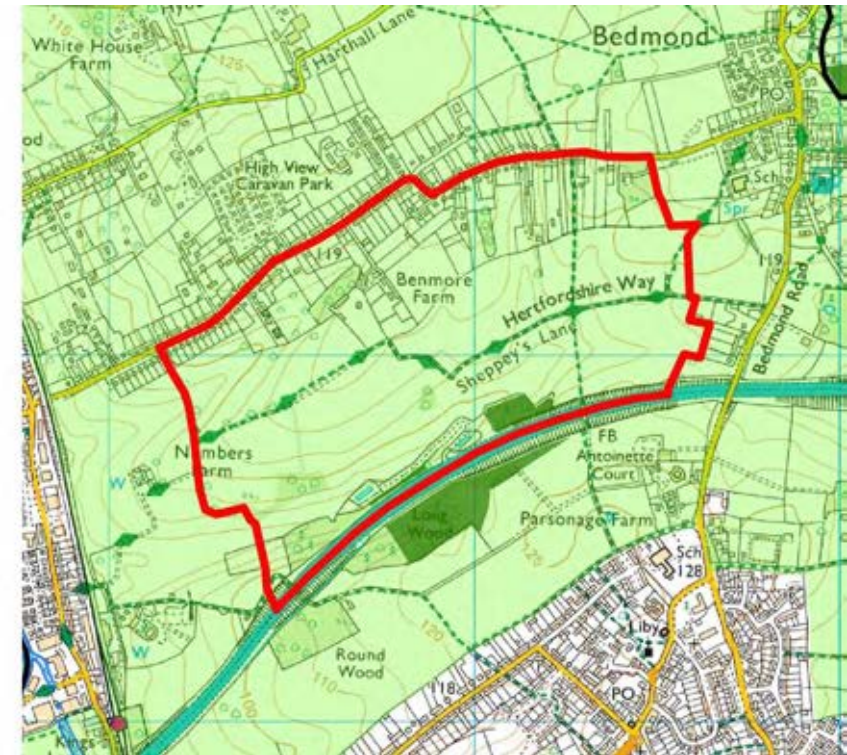
Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Abbots Langley Parcel AL10/BM9



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Abbots Langley

Parcel AL10/BM9

Description

Farmland, together with several small blocks of woodland and scrub, situated to the north of the M25 and south of Tom's Lane. There is washed-over linear development along Tom's Lane. Land to the west, adjacent to the inset edge of Kings Langley, is assessed as parcel KL5 and land to the east, adjacent to the village of Bedmond, is assessed as BM7 and BM8. The Green Belt adjacent to Abbots Langley is assessed as parcel AL1, so this assessment considers the additional harm of releasing land out from Abbots Langley beyond AL1.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

Abbots Langley to the south and Kings Langley to the east have very little separation, and Abbots Langley likewise has very little separation from North Watford and in turn the wider large built-up area of Greater London. There is insufficient separation for development in the parcel not to be associated with the large built-up area, and strong separating features – the railway line and valley side to the west and the M25 to the south – increase the extent to which development here would constitute sprawl, but urbanising development along Tom's Lane has some containing influence.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel lies in the gap between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, but the presence of existing linear development to the north along Tom's Lane, and of a more sizeable open area to the north of that, limit the role of the parcel in maintaining the separation of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

Aside from the developed strip along Tom's Lane the land is open and undeveloped, and landform and strong boundary features (the railway and the M25) create distinction from urban edges. Urbanising influences create a degree of containment in a wider context, but the area is large enough to constitute countryside and therefore to play a significant role in preventing encroachment.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Significant

Release of land out from Abbots Langley would have a significant impact in terms of containment of remaining open land to the north of the motorway between Kings Langley, Tom's Lane and Bedmond. The M25 is a significant feature that would form a clearer Green Belt boundary than either Tom's Lane or any boundaries to the south.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Very high

Release of the parcel as an expansion of Abbots Langley beyond parcel AL1 would have a significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside, a relatively significant impact on checking urban sprawl and a moderate impact on preventing the merger of towns. Its release would result in a weaker Green Belt boundary than that which would be formed by the M25, and would weaken the integrity of any remaining open land between Kings Langley, Tom's Lane and Bedmond. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be very high.

Abbots Langley

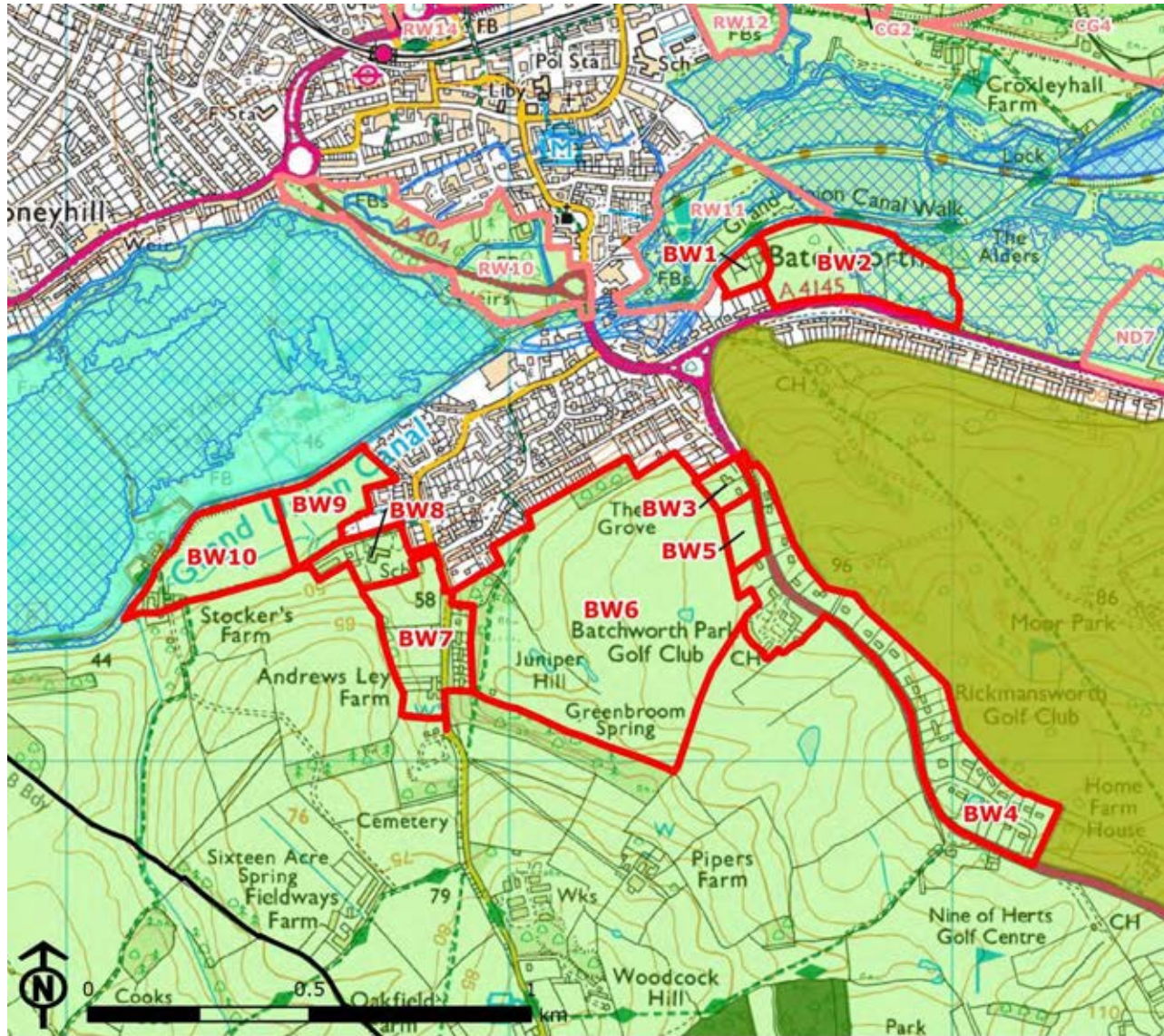
Parcel AL10/BM9

Potential to limit harm

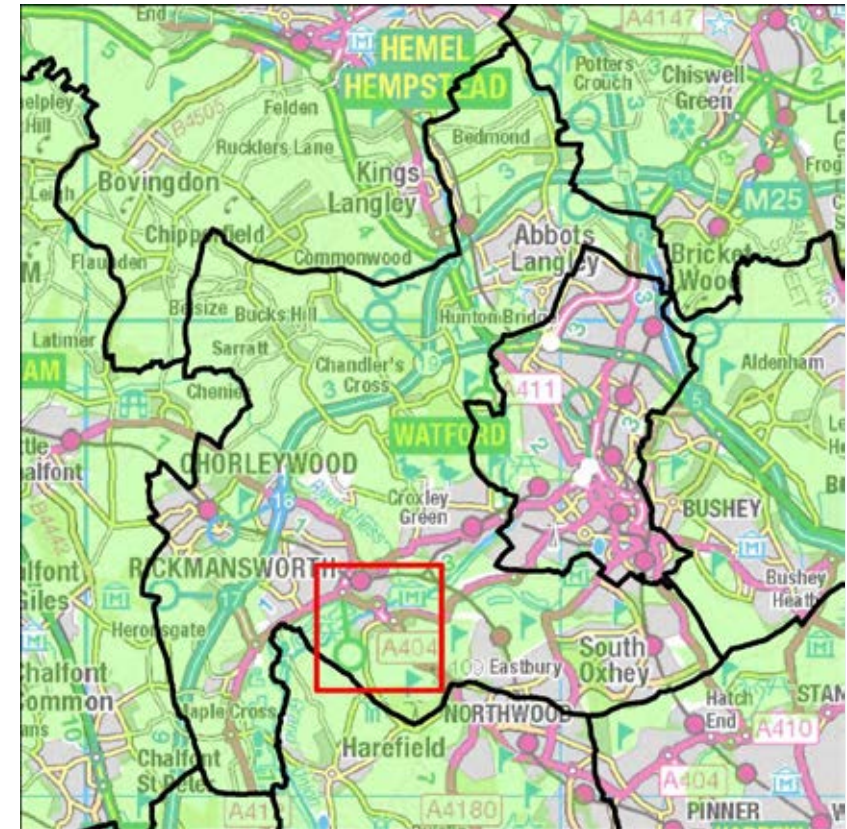
There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Batchworth

Batchworth

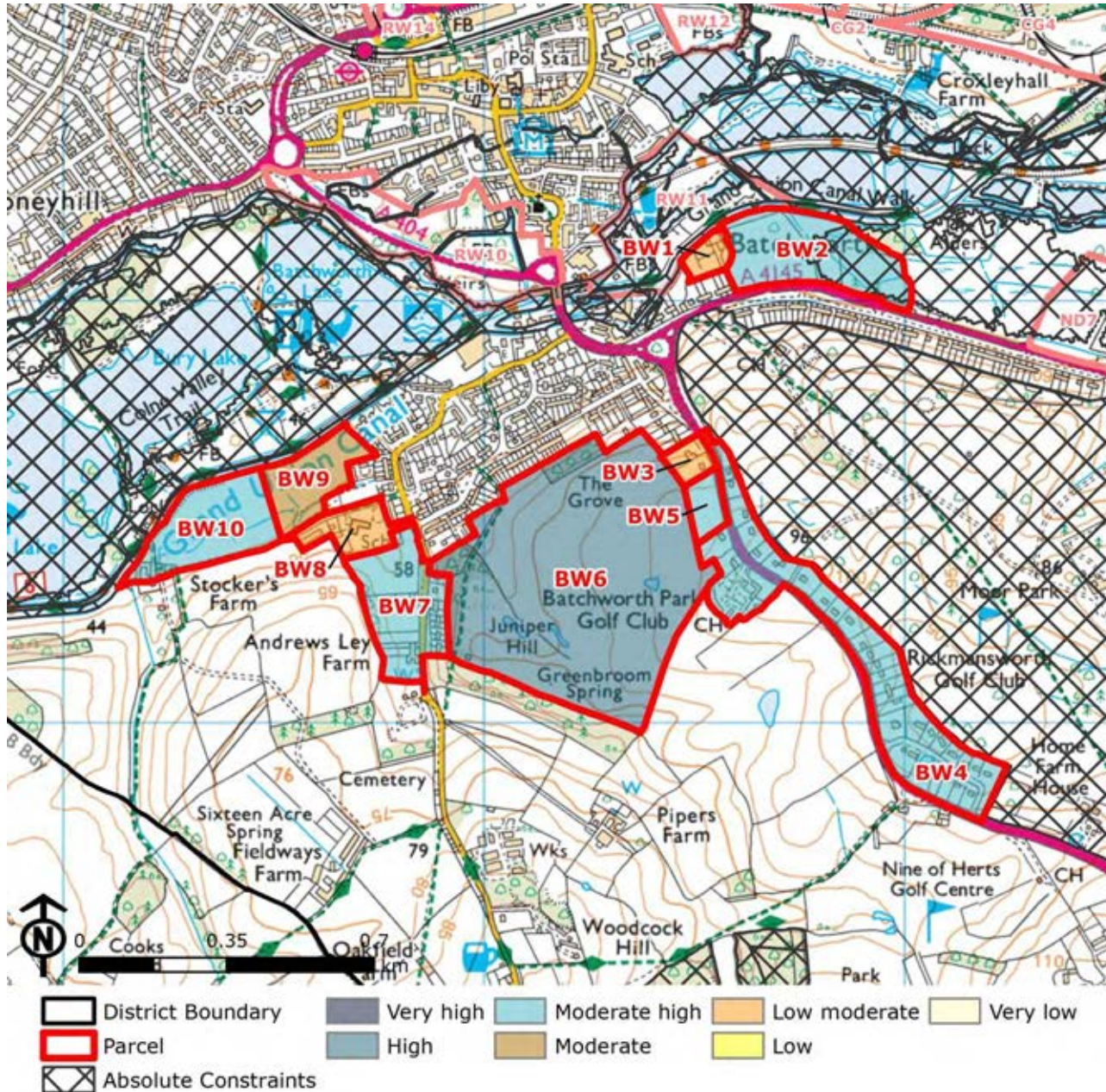


- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Parcel | Flood Zone 3b | Scheduled Monument | SSSI |
| Green Belt | Local Nature Reserve | Ancient Woodland | Common Land |
| District Boundary | Registered Parks and Gardens | National Nature Reserve | |



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Batchworth



Parcel

BW1
BW2
BW3
BW4
BW5
BW6
BW7
BW8
BW9
BW10

Harm Score

Moderate

Moderate high

Low moderate

Moderate high

Moderate high

High

Moderate high

Low moderate

Moderate

Moderate high

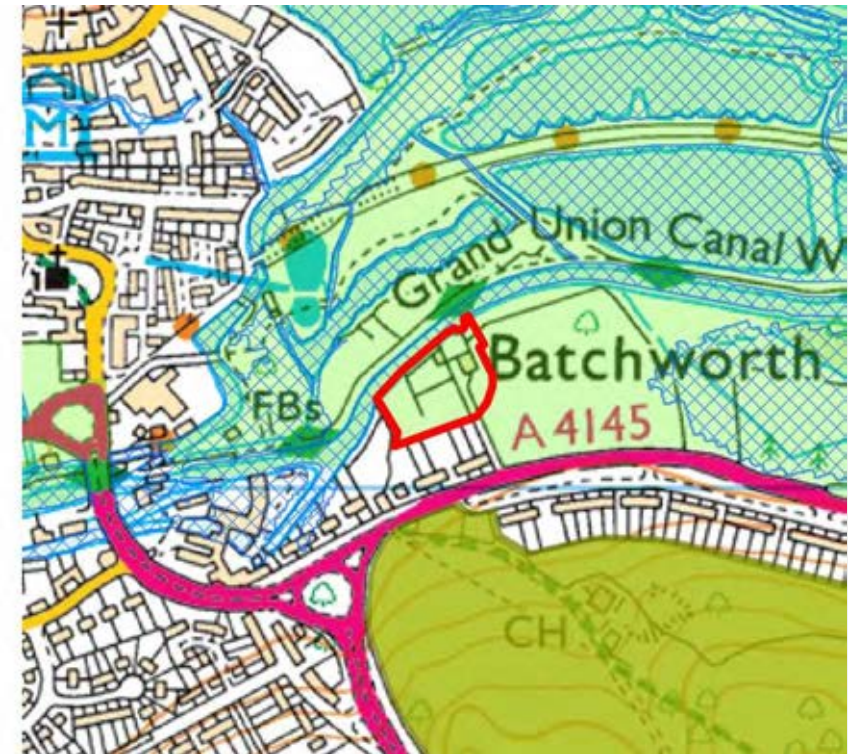
Batchworth Parcel BW1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4
km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north through the parcel along the moorings access road

Batchworth Parcel BW1

Description

Open field and Hampton Hall Mooring with associated building and car park, located on the north eastern edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. Gardens mark the inset settlement edge with Batchworth to the south and west. The parcel directly adjoins a field within the wider Green Belt to the west and the Grand Union Canal marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the north.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north at Rickmansworth to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Whilst the parcel is largely open in the west, it has a close association with the inset settlement edge, which contains the parcel to the south and west. The land is contained by the existing Hampton Hall Mooring with associated building and car park in the east, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

Release of land would result in the narrowing of the gap between Batchworth and Rickmansworth but Batchworth is not treated as a town with regard to Purpose 2. Development of the parcel would lead to potential perception of narrowing the gap between Rickmansworth/Batchworth and Northwood, although there is existing connectivity between the towns and existing development within the parcel, which limits the extent to which development would be perceived as narrowing the gap between the towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

Whilst the parcel is largely open in the west, it has a close association with the inset settlement edge, which contains the parcel to the south and west, and the land is contained by the existing Hampton Hall Mooring with associated building and car park in the east, limiting the extent to which its release would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to the containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the north, however the presence of the Grand Union Canal would limit this impact. It would not lead to creation of a weaker Green Belt boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a low-moderate impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Batchworth Parcel BW1

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the north of the parcel has been assessed in relation to the expansion of Rickmansworth as parcel RW11.

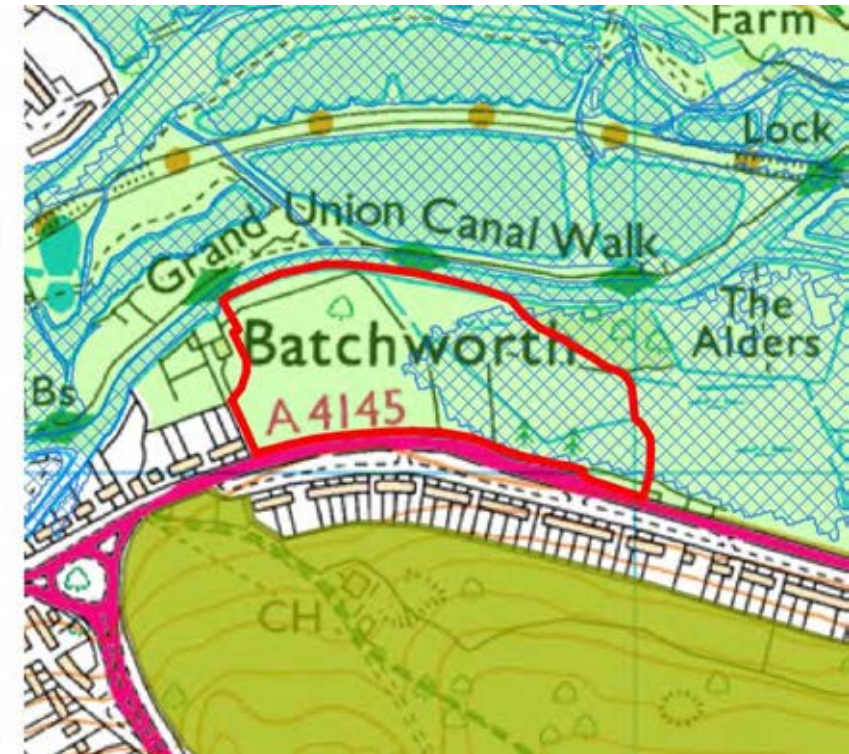
Batchworth Parcel BW2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



Left image

View from Moor Lane north east across the parcel



Right image

View from Moor Lane east across the parcel

Batchworth Parcel BW2

Description

Open fields divided by a treeline, located on the north eastern edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. Much of the eastern half of the parcel is constrained by floodplain and a garage building is located in the south. The parcel directly adjoins residential development within the inset settlement of Batchworth to the southwest and the A4745 and a woodland band mark the edge within the line of inset houses along Moor Lane to the south. The Grand Union Canal marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the north and a dwelling, tree line and woodland block within floodplain mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Whilst the parcel has some association with inset development, which contains the parcel to the south and southwest, and the parcel is contained by the existing Hampton Hall Mooring with associated building and car park to the northwest, the parcel is open and the A4745 and a woodland band provide distinction from inset development to the south.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

Release of land could result in the potential perception of narrowing the gap between Batchworth and Rickmansworth but Batchworth is not treated as a town with regard to Purpose 2. Development of the parcel would lead to potential perception of narrowing the gap between Rickmansworth/Batchworth and Northwood, although there is existing connectivity between the towns, which limits the extent to which development would be perceived as narrowing the gap between the towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

Whilst the parcel has some association with inset development, which contains the parcel to the south and southwest, and the parcel is contained by the existing Hampton Hall Mooring with associated building and car park to the northwest, the parcel is open and the A4745 and a woodland band provide distinction from inset development to the south.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to the containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the north, however the presence of the Grand Union Canal would limit this impact. The treeline to the east and canal to the north would form clear boundaries and would not lead to creation of a weaker Green Belt boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Moderate-High.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Batchworth Parcel BW2

Harm beyond outer boundary

Floodplain forms a broad buffer to development to the east of the parcel. Any development to the east of this would be associated with Northwood and has been assessed as parcel ND7.

Batchworth Parcel BW3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north through the parcel along the A404 towards the urban edge of Batchworth

Batchworth Parcel BW3

Description

Two loosely dispersed large dwellings and associated gardens and a sports court, located on the south eastern edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. The parcel directly adjoins residential development within the inset settlement of Batchworth to the north. The tree-lined A404 with Moor Park Registered Park and Garden beyond and the tree-lined garden boundary mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east and south respectively. The parcel directly adjoins Batchworth Park Golf Club golf course within the wider Green Belt to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is partially open and, due to the presence of the dwellings occupying the parcel, the parcel is strongly associated with the adjoining inset development to the north, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel is located between the towns of Rickmansworth and Northwood, however due to the presence of development within the parcel, the parcel makes limited-no contribution to preventing their merging.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

The parcel is partially open and, due to the presence of the dwellings occupying the parcel, the parcel is strongly associated with the adjoining inset development to the north, limiting the extent to which its release would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

As the west of the parcel is largely open, release of the parcel could cause a minor increase in containment of Green Belt land to the west, however the revised Green Belt boundary would mark a clearer distinction between settlement and countryside.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively limited impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and low/negligible impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Low-Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

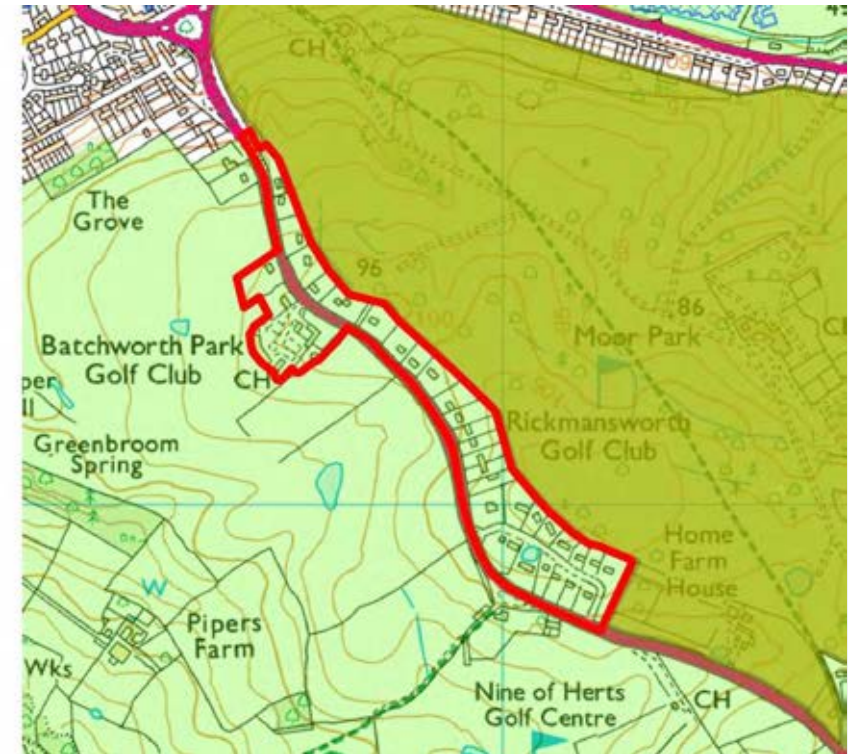
Batchworth Parcel BW4



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.35 0.7 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View to the eastern side of London Road



Batchworth

Parcel BW4

Description

Dispersed large dwellings, woodland clusters and Batchworth Park Golf Club with associated buildings and car park, extending up rising land linearly from the south eastern edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. The north of the parcel directly adjoins the inset settlement of Batchworth, but the A404 and woodland separate the parcel from the residential development within the settlement. Treelines along the rear of gardens mark the edge with the wider Green Belt within Moor Park Registered Park and Garden to the north and east. The tree-lined A404 marks much of the edge of the parcel with the wider Green Belt within Batchworth Park Golf Club golf course to the west. Individual washed over dwellings also adjoin the A404 to the south and northwest. Batchworth Park Golf Club with associated buildings and car park and two dwellings to the north of this are located to the west of the A404. A combination of golf club buildings and tree lines mark the edge of the parcel with the wider Green Belt to the west in the location.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north at Rickmansworth to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is partially open and the tree cover to the west of the A404, open field to the west of the A404 (north of Batchworth Park Golf Club) and the sloping nature of the parcel extending up rising land linearly from the edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth creates distinction from the settlement, which is located on lower ground. The linear parcel is largely uncontained and potentially denser development within it would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel is located between the towns of Rickmansworth and Northwood and its release would diminish the settlement gap between these towns, however the presence of existing development within the parcel and limits the impact of this.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is partially open and the tree cover to the west of the A404, open field to the west of the A404 (north of Batchworth Park Golf Club) and the sloping nature of the parcel extending up rising land linearly from the edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth creates distinction from the settlement, which is located on lower ground. The linear parcel is largely uncontained and potentially denser development within it would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

Due to the existing development within parcel BW3 to the northwest of the parcel, adjoining the south of the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, it is assumed that Parcel BW3 would be released in conjunction with BW4. Potentially denser development within the parcels could cause some increase in containment of land to the west and east, including that within parcel BW5. Release of the parcels would also cause a significant lengthening and less well defined Green Belt boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Due to the existing development within parcel BW3 to the northwest of the parcel, adjoining the south of the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, it is assumed that Parcel BW3 would be released in conjunction with BW4. Release of the parcels would have a relatively significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a relatively limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a moderate impact on the adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing the parcels would be Moderate-High.

Batchworth

Parcel BW4

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel. Notable variations in harm within the parcel. Any partial release would still have some containing impact and leave an indistinct boundary between settlement and countryside.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Moor Park Registered Park and Garden to the north and east forms a buffer to development to the north and east of the parcel. Land to the south of this and the A404 bounding the south and west of the parcel is a significant distance from the inset settlement edge and makes a significant contribution to checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a moderate contribution to preventing the merging of towns. Any release of this land would weaken adjacent Green Belt land and the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this would be high.

Batchworth Parcel BW5



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



Left image

View south through the parcel along the A404

Batchworth

Parcel BW5

Description

Open grassland field, located close to but not adjacent to the inset settlement of Batchworth. Two washed-over loosely dispersed large dwellings located within Parcel BW3 adjoining the north of the parcel provide separation between the parcel and the inset settlement edge of Batchworth. The A404 and washed-over loosely dispersed large dwellings beyond mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east and a tree line and washed-over loosely dispersed large dwellings beyond mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the south. The parcel directly adjoins Batchworth Park Golf Club golf course within the wider Green Belt to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open and undeveloped, with a limited separation from the inset settlement edge of Batchworth. However, the loosely dispersed large dwellings to the north, south and east create a degree of containment, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel is located between the towns of Rickmansworth and Northwood and its release would diminish the settlement gap between these towns, however its limited containment by dispersed large dwellings to the north, south and east, the presence of existing washed-over development along the A404, and the existing connectivity between the towns along the A4145 limits the impact of this.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is open and undeveloped, with a limited separation from the inset settlement edge of Batchworth. Dispersed large dwellings to the north, south and east create only a limited sense of containment. Release of the parcel would lead to encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

Due to the existing development within parcel BW3 to the north of the parcel, adjoining the south of the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, it is assumed that Parcel BW3 would be released in conjunction with BW5. Release of the parcels would increase containment of Green Belt land to the west and could create a weaker distinction between inset settlement and countryside due to the presence of washed-over development to the south and east of the parcel.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Due to the existing development within parcel BW3 to the north of the parcel, adjoining the south of the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, it is assumed that Parcel BW3 would be released in conjunction with BW5. Release of the parcels would have a relatively significant impact on countryside encroachment, a moderate impact on checking sprawl and a relatively limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a moderate impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing the parcels would be Moderate-High.

Batchworth Parcel BW5

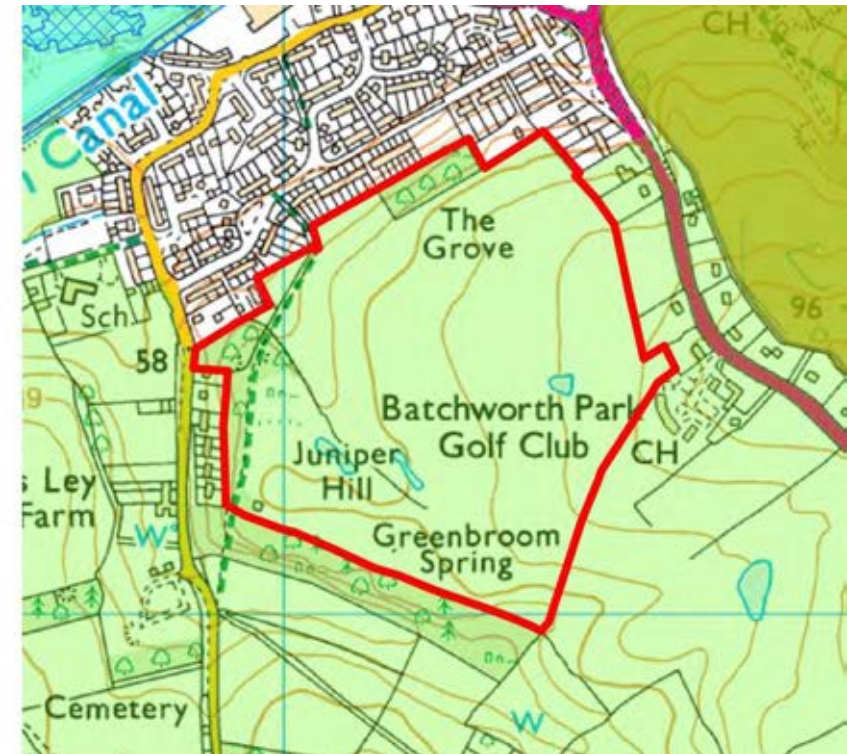
Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Batchworth Parcel BW6



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the north western edge of the parcel south along the western edge of the parcel

Right image

View from the western edge of the parcel east across the parcel



Batchworth

Parcel BW6

Description

The northern part of Batchworth Park Golf Club golf course sloping up from the southern edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. With the exception of a woodland block providing some separation, the north of the parcel directly adjoins residential development on the inset settlement edge of Batchworth. Tree lined washed-over dispersed large dwellings and Batchworth Park Golf Club, with the A404 and washed-over dispersed large dwellings beyond, mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east. A woodland band and woodland band and washed over residential dwellings beyond, mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the south and west respectively. The parcel directly adjoins the remainder of Batchworth Park Golf Club golf course within the wider Green Belt to the southeast.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open and any containment from washed-over development to the east and west is predominantly limited by the presence of woodland and tree lines. The sloping nature of the parcel extending up rising land from the edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth creates distinction from the settlement, which is located on lower ground. Development would therefore be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel is located between the towns of Rickmansworth and Northwood and its release would diminish the settlement gap between these towns, however the presence of existing washed-over development along the A404 and the existing connectivity between the towns along the A4145 limits the impact of this.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel is open and any containment from washed-over development to the east and west is predominantly limited by the presence of woodland and tree lines. The sloping nature of the parcel extending up rising land from the edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth creates distinction from the settlement, which is located on lower ground. Therefore, release of the parcel would lead to significant encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

The existing containment of the parcel by woodland and existing development limits the extent to which release of the parcel would increase containment of the wider Green Belt to the east, west and south. Although the edge of the plateau marks the south eastern edge of the parcel, there are no defined features to form a Green Belt boundary on the ground.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on the adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be High.

Batchworth Parcel BW6

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

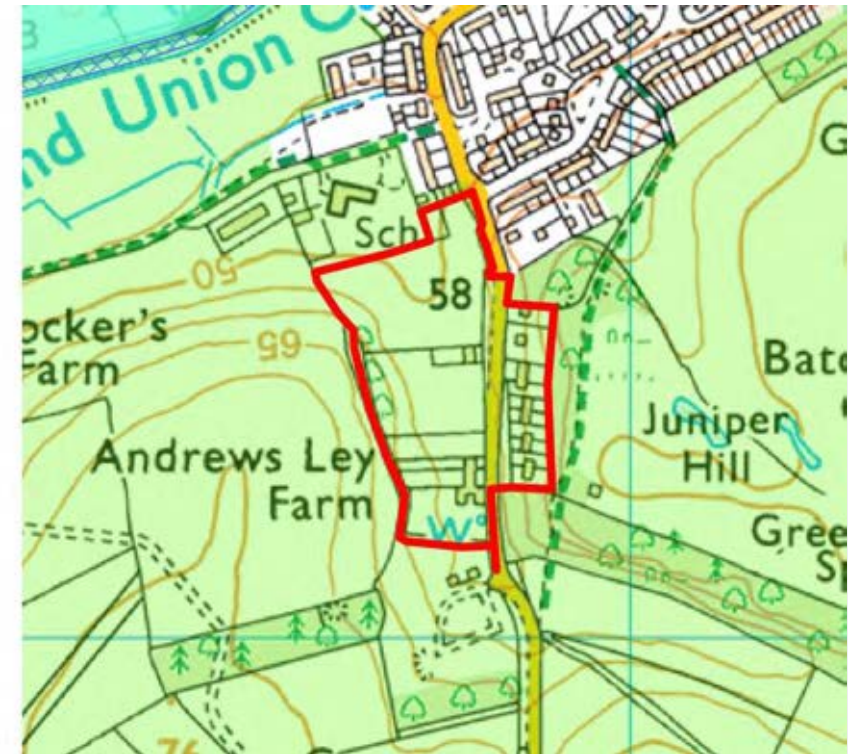
Batchworth Parcel BW7



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



Left image

View south through the parcel along Harefield Road



Right image

View north through the parcel along Harefield Road

Batchworth

Parcel BW7

Description

Open fields, a line of residential dwellings along the east of Harefield Road, and individual dwellings and a farmhouse B&B along the west of Harefield Road, located on the south western edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. The largely tree-lined Harefield Road marks the edge with the residential development within the inset settlement of Batchworth to the northeast. Woodland marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east and southeast of the parcel and treelines mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the south and sloping up to the west. Hedgerow with washed-over residential dwellings and a school beyond marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the northwest.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Although washed-over development to the north of the parcel and in the south and east of the parcel has some minor containing influence, the parcel is predominantly open and a tree block creates some distinction from the inset settlement edge of Batchworth along Harefield Road. Therefore, development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

Although washed-over development to the north of the parcel and in the south and east of the parcel has some minor containing influence, the parcel is predominantly open and a tree block creates some distinction from the inset settlement edge of Batchworth along Harefield Road. Therefore, release of the parcel would lead to encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

The existing development to the north and in the south and east of the parcel, woodland band to the east of the parcel and sloping land to the west of the parcel limits the extent to which release of the parcel would increase containment of the wider Green Belt. In addition, the bounding tree cover would form a relatively strong distinction between the settlement and countryside.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a limited/no impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel. Release and potentially denser development within the east and south of the parcel would increase containment of open land within the west of the parcel and therefore the harm from release of these parts of the parcel would remain moderate-high.

Batchworth Parcel BW7

Harm beyond outer boundary

Boundary vegetation and sloping land form a buffer to development to the west of the parcel. This land makes a significant contribution to checking sprawl and countryside encroachment . Any release of this land would weaken adjacent Green Belt land and the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this would be high.

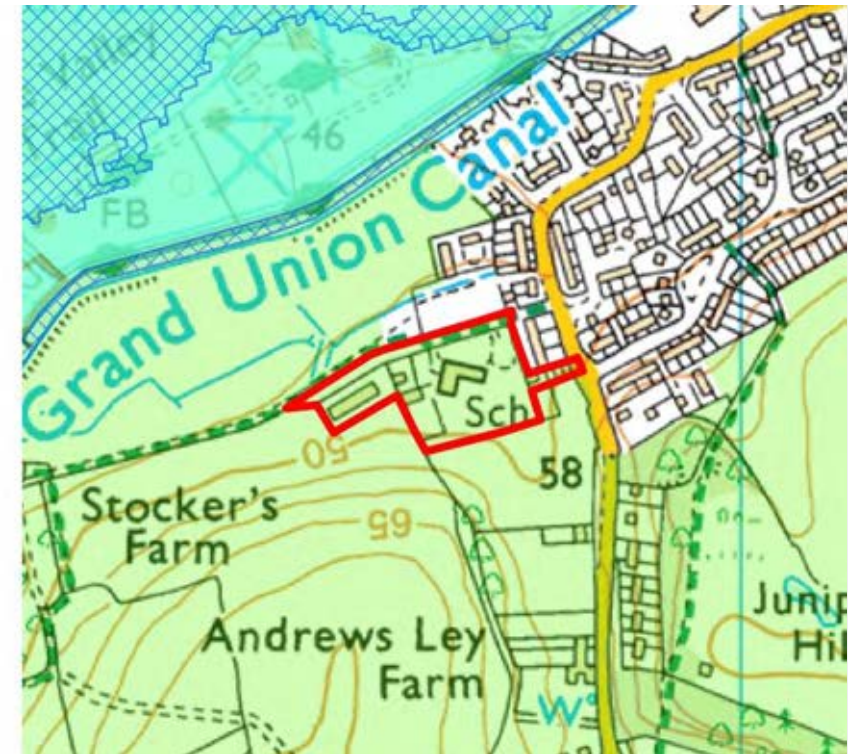
Batchworth Parcel BW8



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



Left image

View into the primary school located in the eastern half of the parcel



Right image

View of the old Thames Water building located in the western half of the parcel



Batchworth Parcel BW8

Description

St Mary's C Of E Primary School, with associated buildings, sports courts, playground and playing fields, a water pumping station, and two dwellings located on the western edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. The parcel directly adjoins residential development and an industrial work yard with associated buildings within the settlement edge of Batchworth to the east and north respectively. Tree lines mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the south and northeast, and the parcel directly adjoins open fields within the wider Green Belt to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. As the parcel is partially contained by development within the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, it has a close association with the inset settlement. In addition the parcel contains existing development. Therefore, the extent to which release of the parcel would be considered sprawl of the large built up area is limited.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

As the parcel is partially contained by development within the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, it has a close association with the inset settlement. In addition the parcel contains existing development. Therefore, the extent to which release of the parcel would be considered countryside encroachment is limited.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would result in no significant change to the strength of the Green Belt boundary and due to the containment of the parcel and existing development within it, release of the parcel would only lead to a limited increase in the containment of adjacent open land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a limited/no impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on the adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Low-Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Batchworth Parcel BW8

Harm beyond outer boundary

Rising landform creates distinction between the parcel and open land to the west which makes a significant contribution to checking sprawl and countryside encroachment . Any release of this land would weaken adjacent Green Belt land and the harm of releasing this would be high.

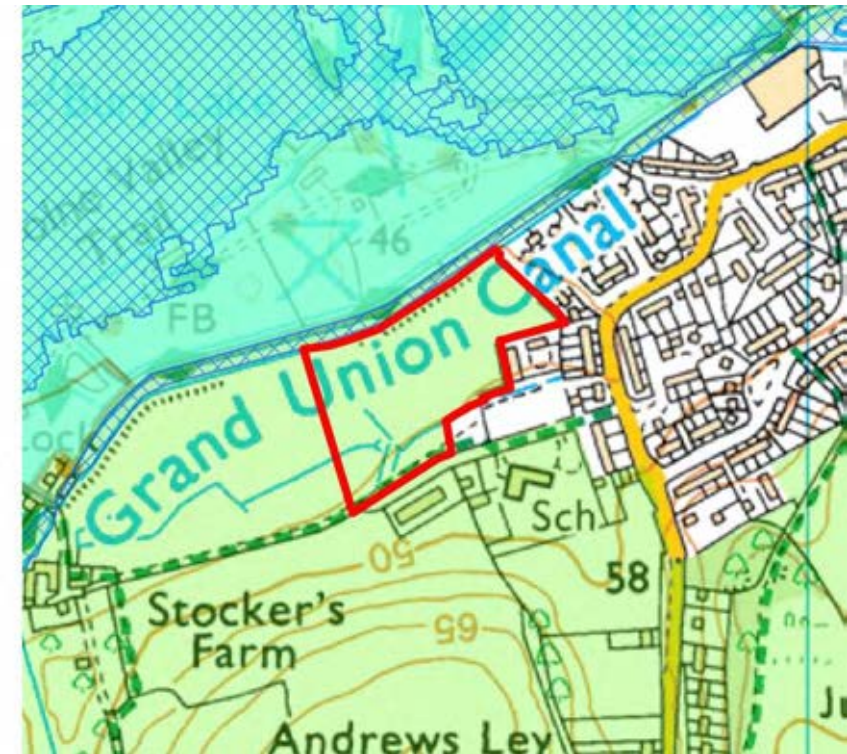
Batchworth Parcel BW9



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



Left image

view north east across the parcel towards the canal and the urban edge of Batchworth

Batchworth Parcel BW9

Description

Part of open grassland on the western edge of the inset settlement of Batchworth. The parcel directly adjoins residential development and an industrial work yard with associated buildings within the settlement edge of Batchworth to the east and southeast. The Grand Union Canal marks the edge of the parcel to the north, with Rickmansworth Aquadrome Local Nature Reserve beyond. A treeline and water pumping station marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the south. The parcel directly adjoins open grassland within the wider Green Belt to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north at Rickmansworth to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Although the parcel is open, it is contained on two sides by existing development and is closely associated with the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

Although the parcel is open, it is contained on two sides by existing development and is closely associated with the inset settlement edge of Batchworth, limiting the extent to which development would be considered as countryside encroachment.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

The canal, associated hedgerows and constrained land within the Local Nature Reserve to the north of the parcel would form a strong Green Belt boundary, although there is no defined boundary to the west of the parcel. The existing containment of the parcel by development to the south and west and the presence of the canal bounding the north of the parcel limits the extent to which release of the parcel would cause containment of the wider Green Belt.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a limited/no impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Low-Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

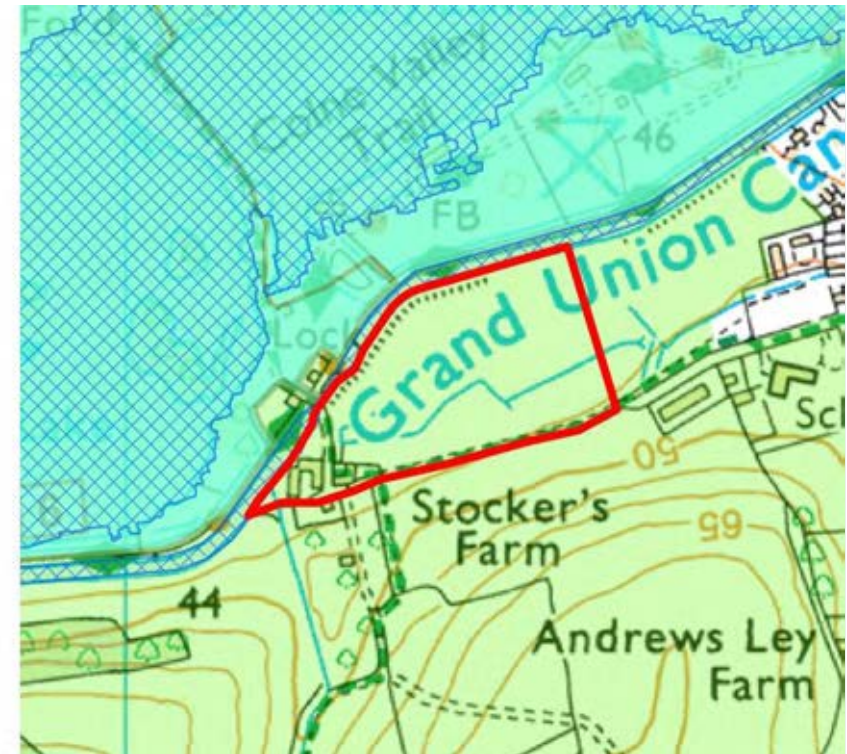
Batchworth Parcel BW10



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the central track north across the northern half of the parcel towards the canal and nature reserve

Batchworth

Parcel BW10

Description

A farmstead and part of open grassland located close to but not adjacent to the west of the inset settlement edge of Batchworth. It is assumed that the parcel would be released in conjunction with the remainder of the open grassland within parcel BW9 to the east as an extension of Batchworth. There is no separating feature between the parcels and parcel BW9 adjoins residential development and an industrial work yard with associated buildings within the settlement edge of Batchworth to the east and southeast. The Grand Union Canal marks the edge with Rickmansworth Aquadrome Local Nature Reserve within the wider Green Belt to the north and northwest. A farm track and part of the farmstead marks the edge with the wider Green Belt sloping up to the south.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

Batchworth is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the north at Rickmansworth to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcels are open and with the exception of land within BW9, the open grassland is largely uncontained. Development would therefore be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is open and is largely uncontained. Development would therefore be considered as encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

The canal to the north and northwest of the parcel and sloping land to the south of the parcel limits the extent to which release of the parcel would increase containment of the wider Green Belt and release of the parcels would not create a weaker Green Belt boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

It is assumed that the parcel would be released in conjunction with parcel BW9 to the east as an extension of Batchworth. Release of the parcels would have a relatively significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and limited/no impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing the parcels would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Batchworth

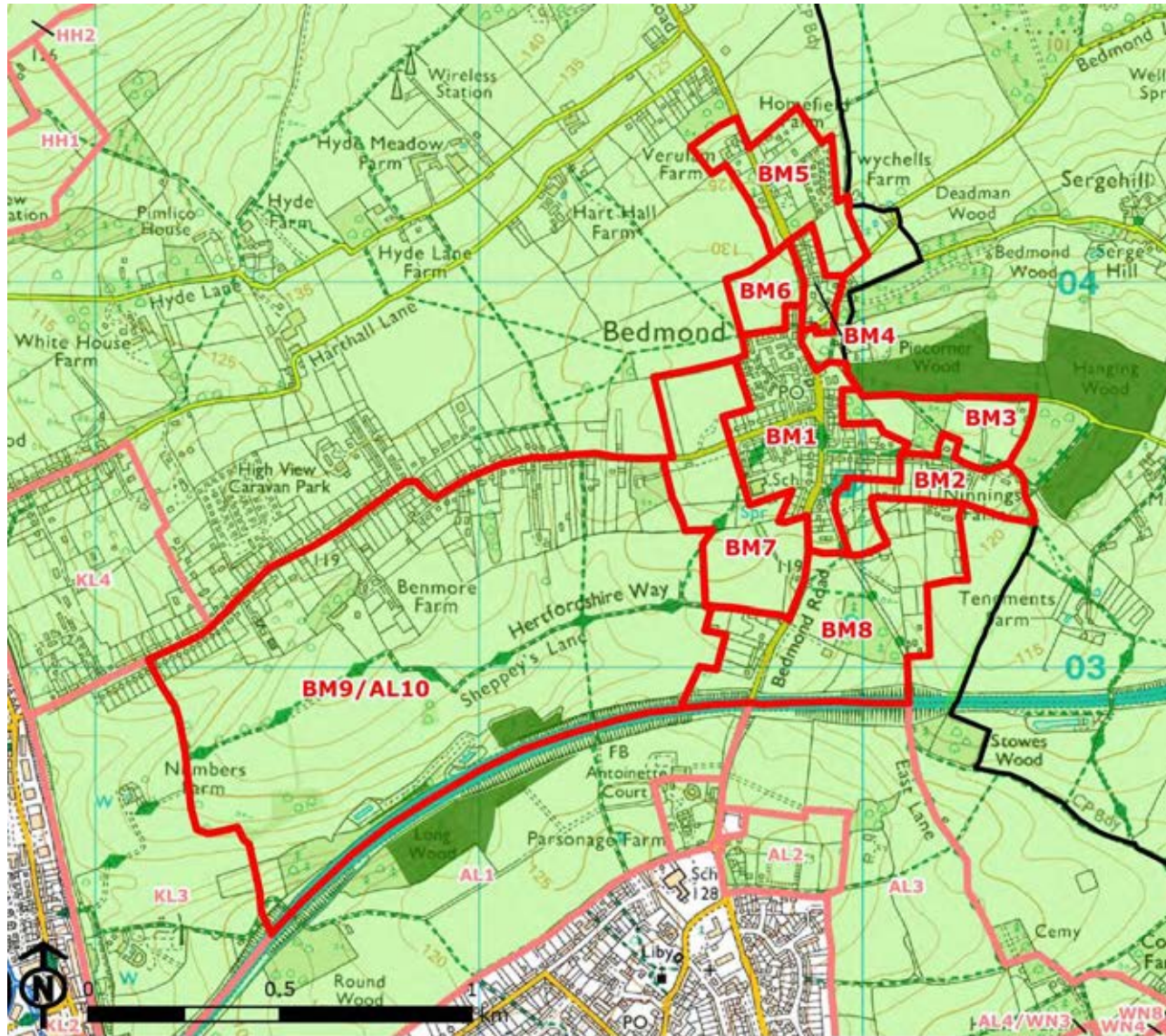
Parcel BW10

Harm beyond outer boundary

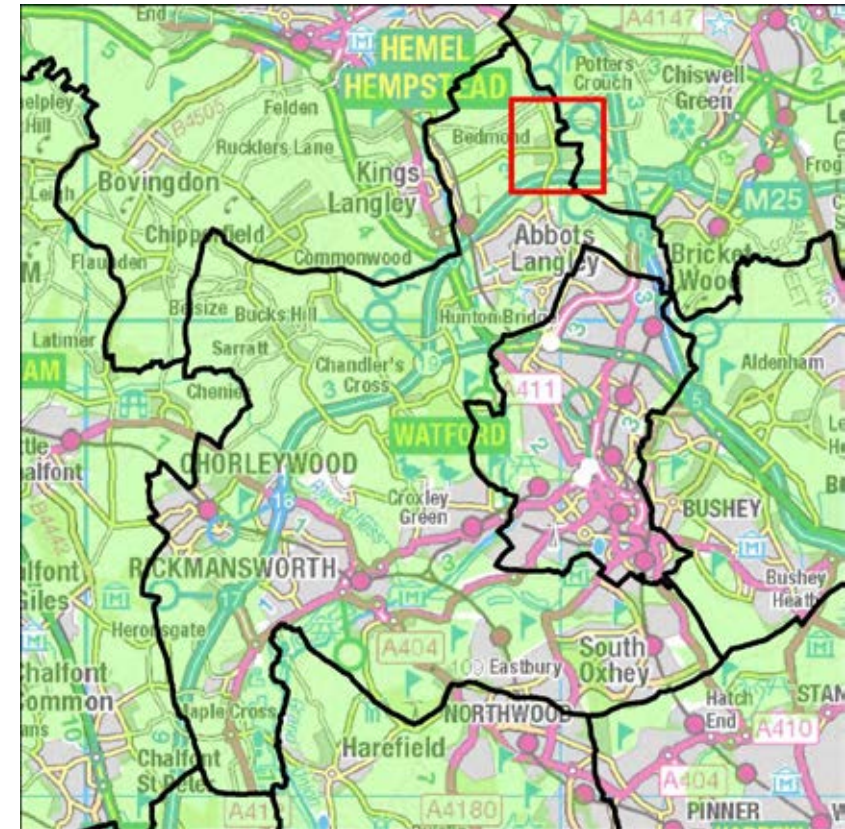
Rickmansworth Aquadrome Local Nature Reserve to the north and northwest of the parcel forms a buffer to development. Any development to the northwest of this would be associated with Rickmansworth and is constrained by absolute constraints. Sloping land forms a buffer to development to the south of the parcel. This land makes a significant contribution to checking sprawl and countryside encroachment. Any release of this land would weaken adjacent Green Belt land and the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this would be high.

Bedmond

Bedmond

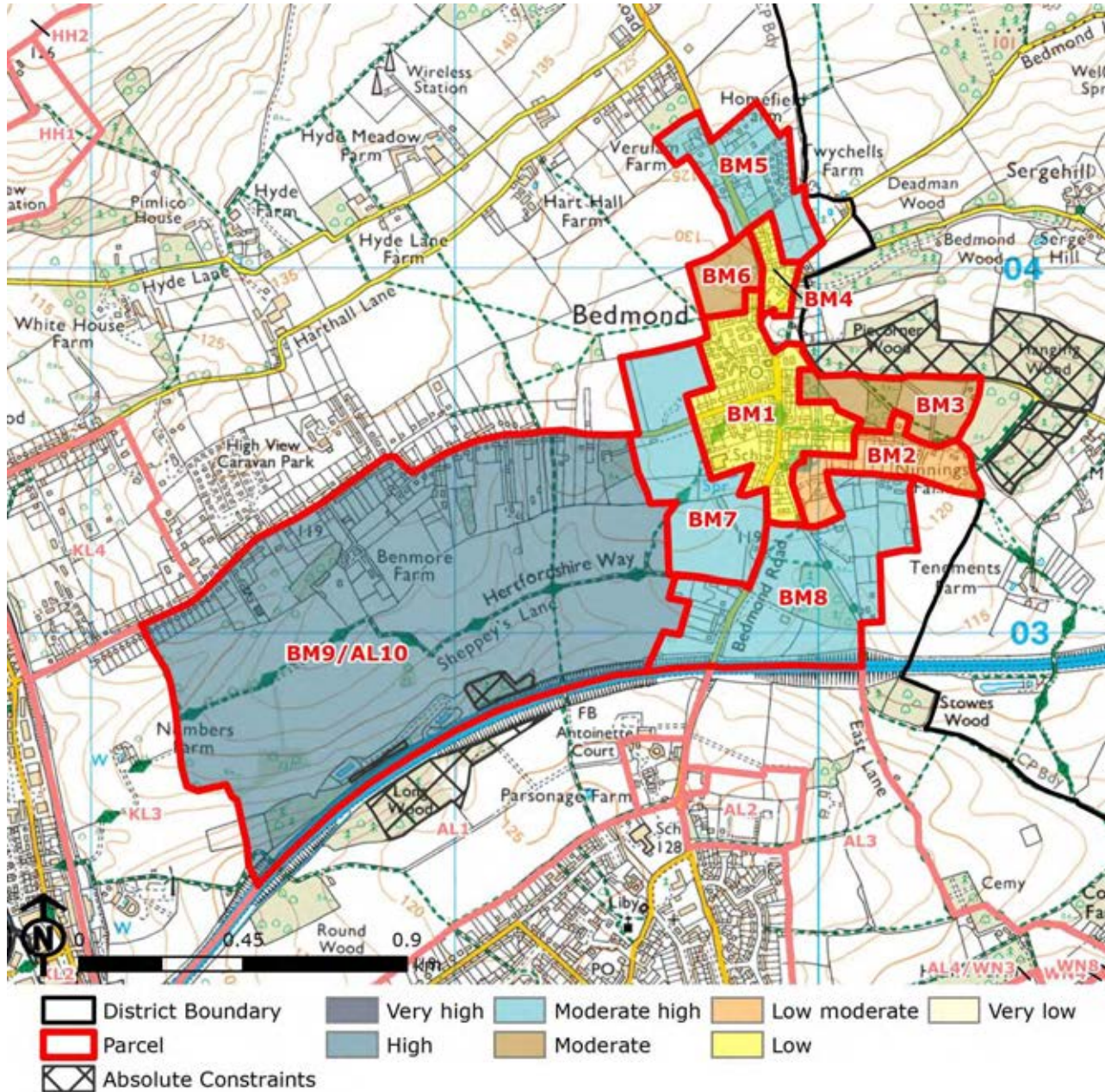


- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Parcel | Flood Zone 3b | Scheduled Monument | SSSI |
| Green Belt | Local Nature Reserve | Ancient Woodland | Common Land |
| District Boundary | Registered Parks and Gardens | National Nature Reserve | |



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Bedmond



Parcel

BM1

BM2

BM3

BM4

BM5

BM6

BM7

BM8

BM9/AL10

Harm Score

Low

Low moderate

Moderate

Low

Moderate high

Moderate

Moderate high

Moderate high

High

Bedmond Parcel BM1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.25 0.5 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north along the High Street



Right image

View north along the High Street

Bedmond Parcel BM1

Description

Existing washed over village of Bedmond, which if released would constitute a new inset settlement. The parcel is almost fully developed with medium-density housing and local roads. Open space is limited to a playing field associated with Bedmond Academy.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

The parcel is already fully developed so the parcel plays no role in preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

Bedmond is an intervening settlement between the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead, however the extent of existing development within the parcel and its distance from Hemel Hempstead means the parcel plays no role in preventing the merging of these two settlements.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Limited – No contribution

The extent of existing urbanising development within the parcel compromises any sense of openness.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Given the extent of existing development within the parcel, its release would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low

Release of the parcel would have a negligible impact on all Green Belt purposes and a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land. Land within the parcel does not have an open character, and does not therefore contribute to the openness of The Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel - i.e. insetting it from the Green Belt - would be low.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Bedmond Parcel BM2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View of the housing within the parcel



Right image

View of the housing within the parcel

Bedmond Parcel BM2

Description

Partially developed land on the eastern edge of the washed over village of Bedmond. Development comprises of a medium-density housing development with large rear gardens along Bell Lane. The gardens are relatively well-treed, and open space in the west of the parcel consists of open fields and a kennel development. The parcel is bound to the west by the minor road of East Lane, but elsewhere the boundary is weakly defined by residential gardens and field boundaries.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies adjacent to Bedmond which does not form part of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies between the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead as part of the intervening settlement of Bedmond. However the distance north to Hemel Hempstead is too significant for this land to play any role in preventing their merger.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

The parcel contains only limited urban development in the form of medium-density housing. However the lack of distinction from urbanising uses within Bedmond, and the containment provided by tree cover, mean that the land has a relatively strong association with the urban edge rather than the open countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would some containment of the field between Bell Lane and Millhouse Lane to the north, leading to some limited weakening of adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively limited impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be low-moderate. There would be limited change to the strength of the Green Belt boundary.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the east of BM2 lies within St Albans District. Release of land to the south would breach a well-treed boundary, contiguous with ancient woodland to the east, introducing development into open farmland which makes a significant contribution to preventing encroachment on countryside. There are no existing boundary features to the south before the M25. Harm from release of land beyond the parcel's outer boundary would therefore be high.

Bedmond Parcel BM3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Bell Lane north through the eastern half of the parcel



Right image

View from Bell Lane north east through the eastern half of the parcel

Bedmond Parcel BM3

Description

Woodland block, open fields and paddocks, with an isolated dwelling in the north east corner, lying on the eastern edge of the washed over village of Bedmond. The boundary with the urban edge to the west and the boundaries with open countryside to the east and north are all relatively well defined by protected ancient woodland or other tree cover, while the southern boundary is more weakly defined in places by residential gardens.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies adjacent to Bedmond which does not form part of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies between the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead as part of the intervening settlement of Bedmond. However the distance north to Hemel Hempstead is too significant for this land to play any role in preventing their merging.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate-Relatively significant

The parcel contains minimal urbanising influences and thus significant openness. The ancient woodland within the parcel provides strong connectivity to the surrounding wooded landscape, strengthening the connection with open countryside beyond.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would result in distinct and consistent revised Green Belt boundaries, which would be bound by the edge of a woodland block, and would thus not cause significant containment or weakening of any adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate-significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and only a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the east of BM3 lies within St Albans District.

Bedmond Parcel BM4



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image
View of the church within the parcel

Bedmond Parcel BM4

Description

Fully developed land on Church Hill, on the northern route into the washed over village of Bedmond. Church Hill bounds the parcel to the west and small woodland blocks provide boundaries to the north and south. To the east, the boundary with open land beyond is more weakly defined by tree-defined residential gardens. Whilst the parcel is almost fully developed, it has been identified as separate parcel because tree cover creates slight distinction from core of village and so could form a potential inset edge.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies adjacent to Bedmond which does not form part of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The extent of existing development within the parcel limits the parcel's role in preventing the merger of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Limited – No contribution

The extent of existing residential development within the parcel significantly compromises openness.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Given that the land in the parcel is already developed, its release would cause negligible harm to any adjacent open land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low

Release of the parcel would have a negligible impact on contribution to all Green Belt purposes and only a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be low.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Woodland creates a strong boundary to the south and east of the developed area, maintaining strong distinction from urbanising development for the open countryside beyond. It makes a significant contribution to preventing countryside encroachment and its loss would result in a weaker Green Belt boundary. Harm would be high.

Bedmond Parcel BM5



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View along Bedmond Road in the centre of the parcel

Bedmond Parcel BM5

Description

Park home development, associated hardstanding, clusters of dwellings and open fields on the northern edge of the washed over village of Bedmond. The parcel is bisected north-south by Bedmond Road. To the east and north, tree cover provides relatively strong distinction from the open countryside beyond, but to the west the boundary is less distinct and lies along a tree-lined field boundary.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies adjacent to Bedmond which does not form part of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The extent of existing development (particularly in the north of the parcel) and the relatively long distance north to Hemel Hempstead, limit its role in preventing the merger of the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The park home development limits openness within the parcel to a certain extent, however the land to the rear of houses on Church Hill is more open. Tree cover creates relatively strong distinction from the settlement edge.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would not have a significant impact on Green Belt boundary strength, but it would cause some containment of adjacent land to the south of St Albans Lane and west of Church Hill. It is assumed that any release would be in conjunction with the release of BM4 and BM1.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on the preventing encroachment on the countryside and a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Releasing land beyond the outer boundaries of the parcel would breach the relatively strong boundaries provided by tree cover, reducing distinction between the inset settlement and visually open countryside beyond, which makes a significant contribution to preventing encroachment on the countryside. Harm would therefore be high.

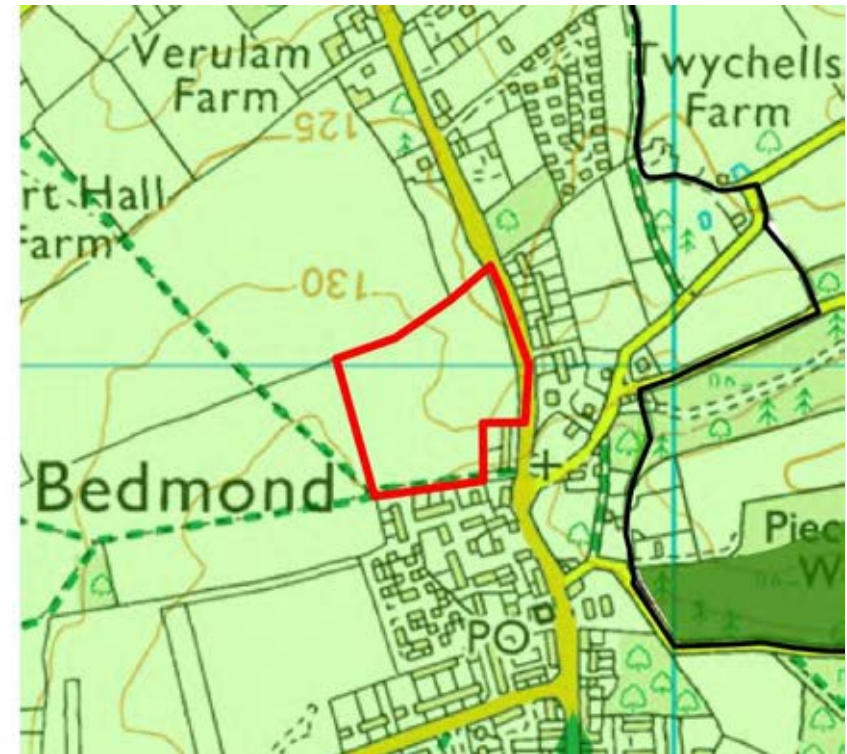
Bedmond Parcel BM6



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north across the parcel



Right image

View north west across the parcel

Bedmond Parcel BM6

Description

Open field on the northern edge of the washed over village of Bedmond. Bound to the east by Church Hill Road, to the south by residential gardens and elsewhere by sparsely treed field boundaries.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies adjacent to Bedmond which does not form part of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies between the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead as part of the intervening settlement of Bedmond. However the distance north to the edge of Hemel Hempstead means that this land makes a negligible contribution to preserving the gap between the two.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is free of urbanising influences and has a strong relationship with open countryside, however the land is only weakly distinguished from the settlement edge to the south by residential gardens.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Release of the parcel would not lead to the containment of adjacent land but and would not lead to a weakening of the Green Belt boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on the preventing encroachment on the countryside and a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land beyond the outer boundary is undeveloped countryside that makes a significant contribution to safeguarding against encroachment on countryside. Land to the west also contributes to preventing coalescence between Bedmond urban sprawl extending out from Kings Langley along Tom's Lane. Expansion beyond the parcel would weaken the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land, so harm resulting from release would be high.

Bedmond Parcel BM7



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, IGN, GeoEye, CNES/Airbus

- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.25 0.5 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View north across the parcel



Right image

View north across the parcel



Bedmond Parcel BM7

Description

Open land, woodland blocks, isolated dwellings and playing fields associated with Bedmond Academy, lying on the western edge of the washed over village of Bedmond. The parcel is bound in part to the east by Bedmond Road; to the south by the more minor Sheppey's Lane; and to the east, woodland blocks provide partial well defined boundaries. Elsewhere the boundaries are largely more weakly defined, either by residential gardens or by field boundaries. The parcel is bisected east-west by Tom's Lane.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel has relatively strong openness due to minimal urbanising uses, despite relatively weak distinction from the urban edge. While Bedmond itself is not part of the large built up area, the land here plays an important role in separating the urbanising uses to the east from the linear sprawl along Tom's Lane to the west, which links Bedmond with the nearby settlement of Kings Langley.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies between the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead as part of the intervening settlement of Bedmond. However the distance north to Hemel Hempstead is too significant for this land to play any role in preventing their merger.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel contains minimal urbanising uses and has a relatively strong relationship with open countryside beyond. However the degree of containment of the land by tree cover, combined with the weak distinction with the urban edge, compromises this openness to a limited degree.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would lead to some containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the south, however the revised Green Belt boundaries would be no weaker than the existing ones.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and on preventing encroachment on the countryside and only a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Limiting further release westwards to areas already developed would not increase harm; however the land lying north and south of the linear development along Tom's Lane has strong openness, making a significant contribution to safeguarding against countryside encroachment, and a role in preventing sprawl. Releasing these areas would also weaken Green Belt boundaries and increase the containment of adjacent Green Belt land, so harm would be high.

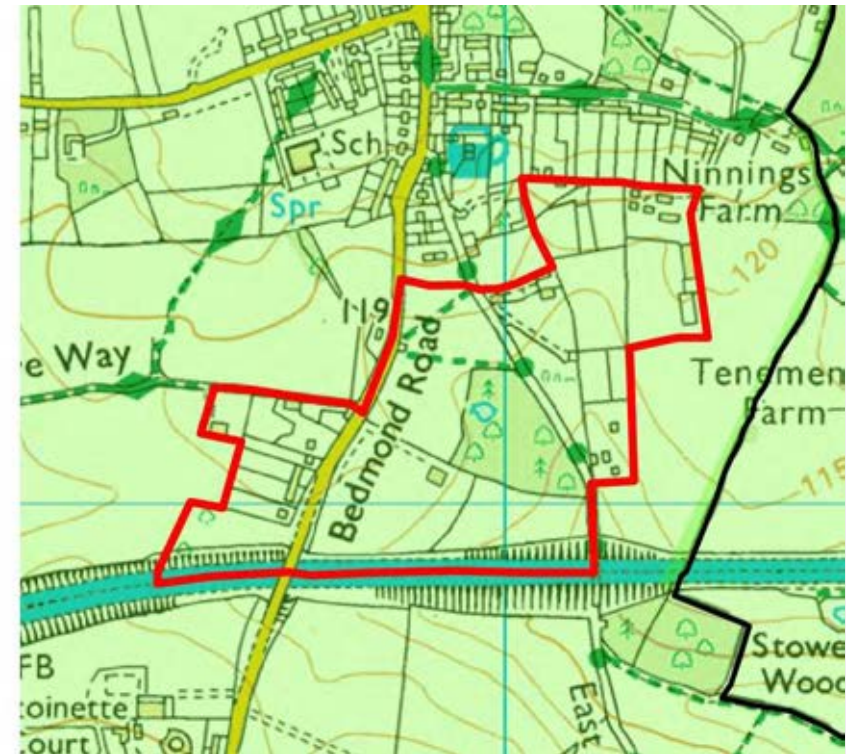
Bedmond Parcel BM8



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.25 0.5 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north through the parcel along Bedmond Road

Right image

View from Bedmond Road east through the parcel



Bedmond Parcel BM8

Description

Open fields, woodland block and agricultural buildings lying to the south of the washed over village of Bedmond. The M25 motorway provides a strong and distinct boundary to the south; the minor Bedmond Road provides the boundary to the west; and elsewhere the parcel is lined by tree-lined field boundaries and residential gardens.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel is adjacent to the settlement edge of Bedmond, has strong openness, and is somewhat distinguished from urbanising uses by tree cover. While Bedmond is not part of the large built up area, this release would reduce the gap between Bedmond and Abbots Langley to the south, which does form part of the large built up area, and therefore the parcel does make some contribution to preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies between the neighbouring towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead, as part of the intervening settlement of Bedmond. However the significant distance north to Hemel Hempstead give it a negligible role in preventing their merger.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is free of urbanising uses and has strong openness. However it is also contained from the surrounding open countryside to some degree by the adjacent development (south of Sheppey's Lane), the woodland block within the parcel, and the M25 motorway to the south.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

The release of this land would result in a revised Green Belt boundary along the M25 which, while a strong separating feature, allows intervisibility across it to the south due to the valley landform. However result would also lead to some containment and weakening of adjacent Green Belt land to the south.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside, a moderate impact on preventing urban sprawl, and only a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Bedmond Parcel BM8

Harm beyond outer boundary

Any release of land beyond the parcel's outer boundary to the east would encroach on land which has stronger openness, a stronger relationship with the open countryside, and is not contained to the same degree by the M25 or other features, leading to high harm.

Bedmond

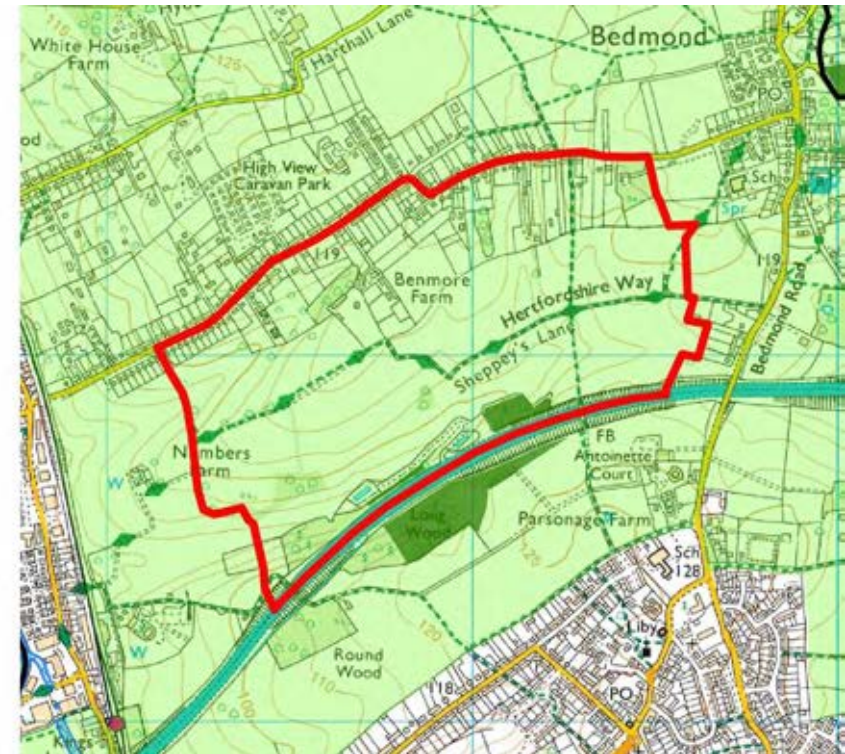
Parcel BM9/AL10



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.5 1 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Bedmond

Parcel BM9/AL10

Description

Farmland, together with several small blocks of woodland and scrub, situated to the north of the M25 and south of Tom's Lane. There is washed-over linear development along Tom's Lane. The Green Belt adjacent to Bedmond, is assessed as BM7 and BM8, so this assessment considers the additional harm of releasing land out from Bedmond beyond those parcels. Land to the west, adjacent to the inset edge of Kings Langley, is assessed as parcel KL5.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

While Bedmond itself is not part of the large built up area, the land here plays an important role in separating the urbanising uses to the east from the linear sprawl along Tom's Lane to the north, which links Bedmond with the nearby settlement of Kings Langley to the east. Kings Langley and Abbots Langley to the south have very little separation, and Abbots Langley likewise has very little separation from North Watford and in turn the wider large built-up area of Greater London. There is insufficient separation for development in the parcel not to be associated with the large built-up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel lies in the gap between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, but the presence of existing linear development to the north along Tom's Lane, and of a more sizeable open area to the north of that, limit the role of the parcel in maintaining the separation of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

Aside from the developed strip along Tom's Lane the land is open and undeveloped. Scrub vegetation to the north of the Sheppey's Lane track creates separation from the fields closer to Bedmond, and the landform to the south and west of Sheppey's Lane falls away into a valley that has significant distinction from the landform closer to the village. Urbanising influences create a degree of containment in a wider context, but the area is large enough to constitute countryside and therefore to play a significant role in preventing encroachment.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

Release of land out from Bedmond would increase containment of remaining open land to the west, between the motorway, Tom's Lane and Kings Langley, although open land to the south of the M25 would retain separation from Abbots Langley. There are no clear boundary features in this area, so the block of scrub on the eastern edge of the parcel would constitute a stronger boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel as an expansion of Bedmond beyond parcels BM7 and/or BM8 would have a significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside, a relatively significant impact on checking urban sprawl and a moderate impact on preventing the merger of towns. Its release would weaken the integrity of any remaining open land between Kings Langley, Tom's Lane and Bedmond. A lessening of the distinction between Bedmond and development along Tom's Lane would weaken the justification for retaining the latter's Green Belt status. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Bedmond

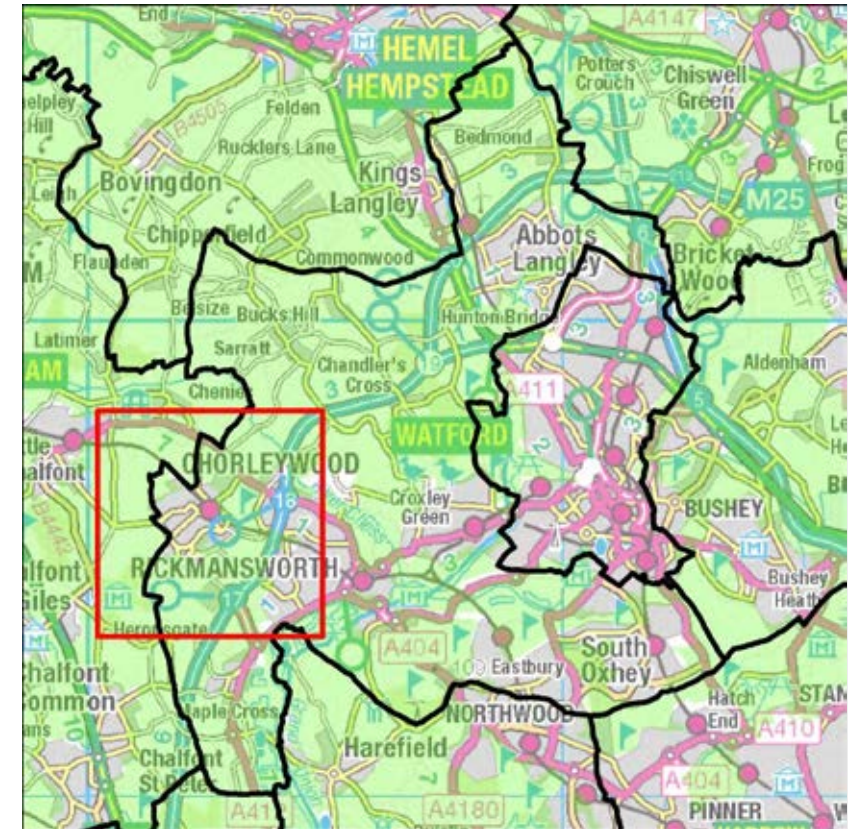
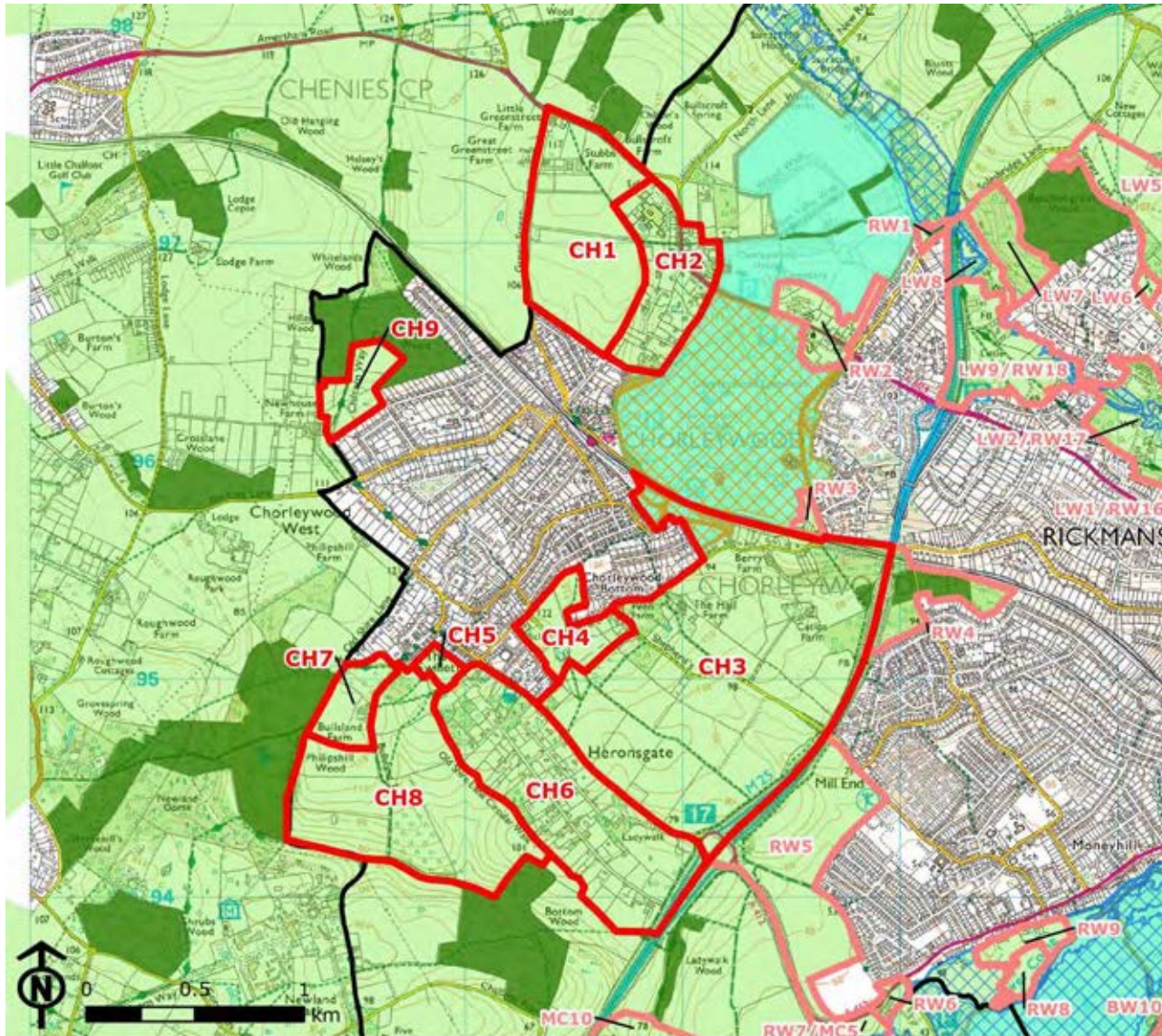
Parcel BM9/AL10

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

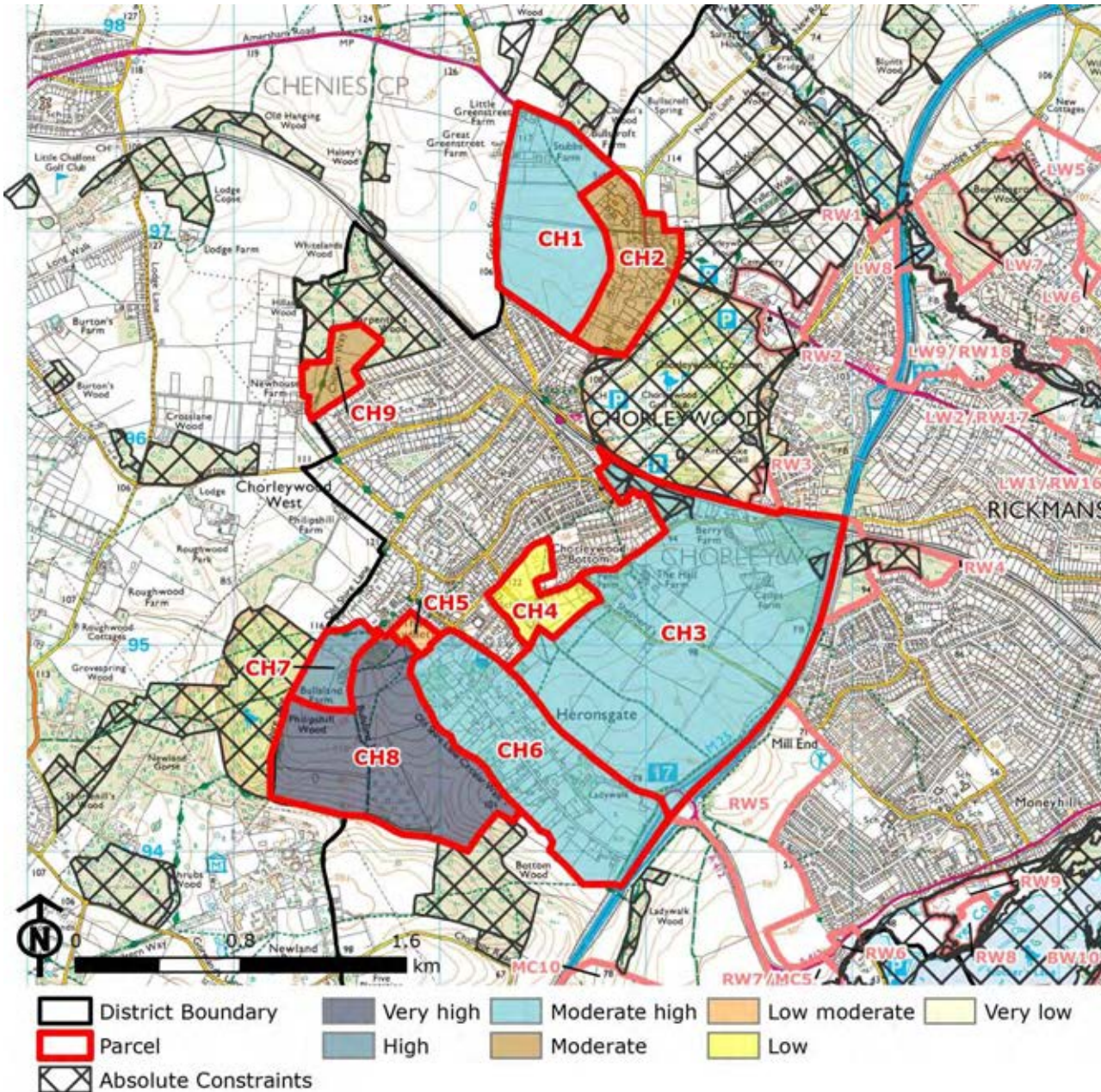
Chorleywood

Chorleywood



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Chorleywood



Parcel

CH1
CH2
CH3
CH4
CH5
CH6
CH7
CH8
CH9

Harm Score

Moderate high
Moderate
Moderate high
Low
Low moderate
Moderate high
High
Very high
Moderate

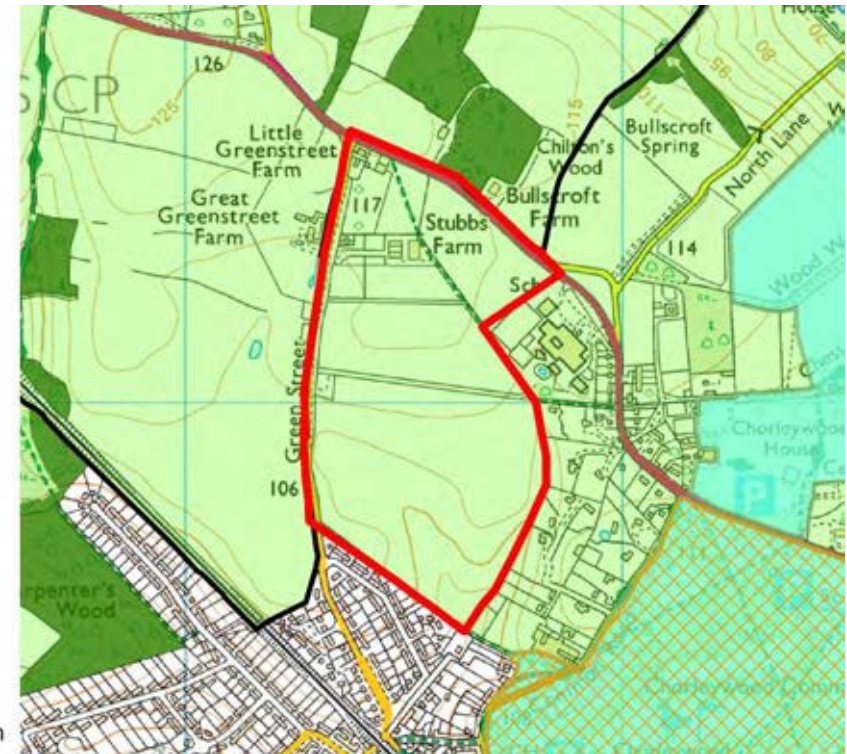
Chorleywood Parcel CH1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.45 0.9 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

Looking north through the parcel from the inset edge of Chorleywood



Right image

Looking north through the parcel towards the washed over residential development

Chorleywood

Parcel CH1

Description

Open fields to the north of Chorleywood including, adjacent to the A404, the playing fields of St Clement Danes School. A small washed-over housing development at what was formerly Stubbs Farm constitutes a limited urbanising influence. Some of the buildings at Little Green Street Farm are in commercial use, but the farmstead form is retained and there is not any significant urbanising influence as a result. The parcel is bordered by the inset settlement to the south and washed over development to the east which provides a limited amount of containment. The land slopes down slightly towards the inset urban edge which is formed of a hedgerow to residential gardens. Green Street provides a boundary to the wider Green Belt to the west and the A404 provides a boundary to the north. To the east there is low-density washed-over residential development, with houses set in large, well-treed plots. To the north of this, the buildings of St Clement Danes School represent more visible development.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The washed-over development to the east has some limited containing influence, and there is no significant distinction between the urban area and the parcel, but this area is largely open land rising away from the settlement edge. Therefore development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham. Limited northward development would have little impact on the east-west separation between the towns, but development visible from the A404, which connects the towns, would be perceived as having a greater impact on the gap.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

Whilst there is some urbanising development present in the parcel, and some containing influence from the school and, to a lesser extent, dwellings to the east, the land retains a significant sense of openness. Development would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would increase containment of the area of Green Belt to the west of Green Street, although the road would form a clear boundary, and the A404 would constitute a relatively strong boundary to the north.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on the prevention of encroachment on countryside, and a moderate impact on prevention of sprawl of the large built-up area and the merger of towns. It would increase containment of Green Belt land to the west. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel is moderate-high.

Chorleywood

Parcel CH1

Potential to limit harm

Limiting any release to lower ground closer to the inset settlement edge, so as to avoid perception of increased development from the A404, would limit impact on the separation of towns.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Any development to the north of the parcel would cross the A404, which currently provides a strong boundary feature to Green Belt land that makes a strong contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Therefore harm resulting from its release would be high.

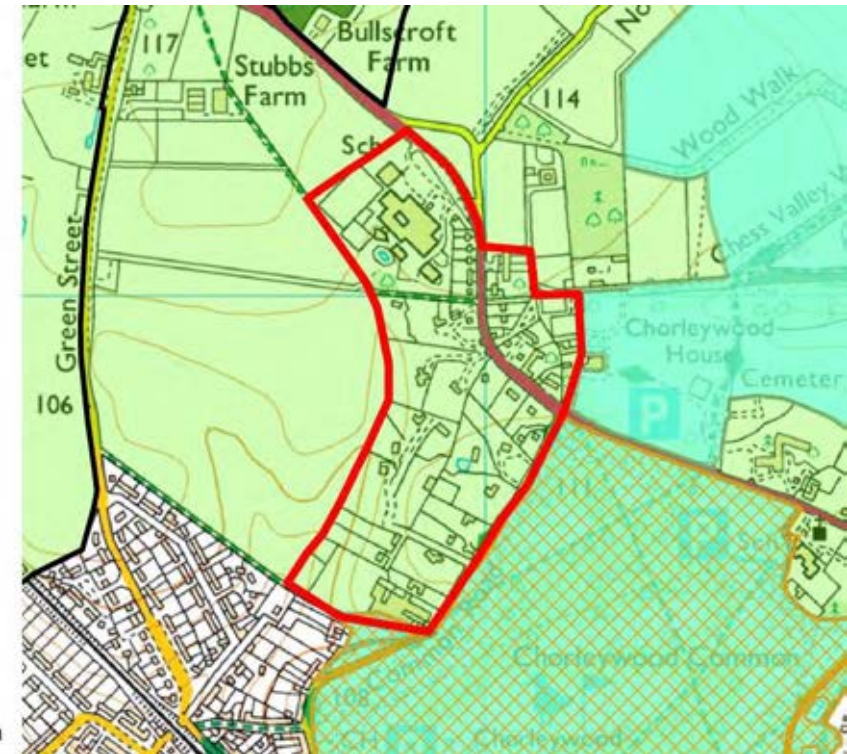
Chorleywood Parcel CH2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.35 0.7 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

Looking west into the parcel from Chenies Road

Right image

view along the eastern edge of the parcel along Common Road



Chorleywood

Parcel CH2

Description

Low density residential development off Common Road, between the inset edge of Chorleywood and the A404, with St Clement Danes School to the north. A tree line marks the inset settlement edge, beyond which the land rises to the north and east. To the east, Common Road marks the parcel edge and the boundary of Chorleywood Common Local Nature Reserve, and the A404 forms a clear boundary to the north of this, although there is also washed-over development across the main road. The buildings of St Clement Danes School define the northern edge of the parcel (the playing fields are assessed as part of CH1) and garden boundary hedgerows and tree cover separate the parcel from open fields to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Existing washed-over development within the parcel limits the extent to which its release would constitute increased sprawl of the large built up area, but the housing is low density with extensive tree cover and so retains a sense of distinction from most of the inset urban area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham. However, the extent of washed over development within the parcel and along Rickmansworth Road means that the impact on the gap of releasing the parcel would be limited.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel contains development in the form of residential dwellings and a secondary school, limiting the extent to which release would constitute encroachment on the countryside. However, the parcel retains sufficient openness from built development, particularly in terms of its tree cover, to retain a relationship with adjacent countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

The constraint associated with the Local Nature Reserve designation, and the clear boundary formed by the A404, would prevent significant impact on Green Belt to the east and north. However release of the parcel would increase containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the west, which makes a stronger contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt and would become enclosed on two sides by inset development.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on the prevention of countryside encroachment, and it would weaken the integrity of Green Belt land to the west. Therefore the harm to the Green Belt of releasing the parcel is assessed as moderate.

Chorleywood

Parcel CH2

Potential to limit harm

Maintaining boundary vegetation would help to limit the harm associated with any intensification of development associated with release of land in this parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Any development to the north of the parcel would cross the A404, which currently provides a strong boundary feature to Green Belt land that makes a strong contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Therefore harm resulting from its release would be high.

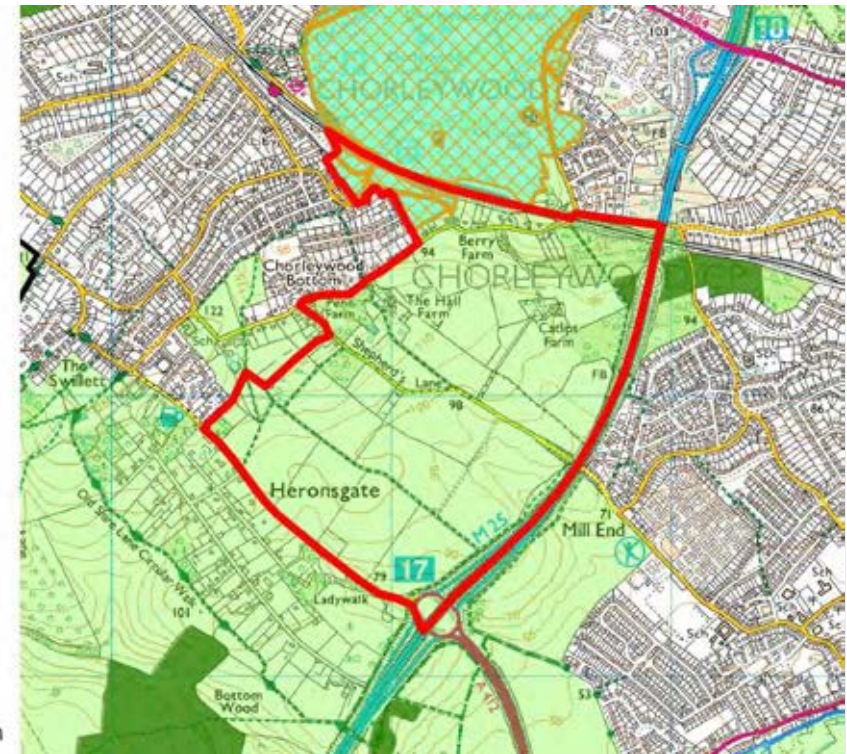
Chorleywood Parcel CH3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.7 1.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View east from the public footpath across the eastern half of the parcel

Right image

View over the south western side of the parcel



Chorleywood Parcel CH3

Description

Open farmland with several blocks of woodland, lying between the inset settlements of Chorleywood and Rickmansworth. There is some washed over residential development along Berry Lane in the northern part of the parcel, immediately adjoining and similar in character to inset dwellings further west along the same road, but otherwise the only other buildings present are those associated with farmsteads. Woodland blocks, and trees within gardens, create a soft urban edge that doesn't impinge on the open character of the parcel. A Local Nature Reserve designation abuts the inset edge to the north of Berry Lane, with the railway line forming the rest of the parcel boundary. To the east the M25 abuts part of the inset edge of Rickmansworth, although there is also some open land between the motorway and the settlement edge to either side of this. To the south, washed-over residential development at Heronsgate creates separation between this area and the wider Green Belt.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel contains little urbanising development and, although it abuts inset development at Chorleywood and Rickmansworth and washed-over development at Heronsgate, it is a large enough area to lack any significant sense of containment. Tree cover limits intervisibility with built development. Release would therefore be considered significant sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham. This parcel is open and uncontained and forms the gap between Rickmansworth and Chorleywood, therefore its loss would diminish perception of the gap between Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The land has no urbanising development or urban-associated uses, lacks any significant sense of containment, and has some distinction from the inset edges of Chorleywood. Therefore, development would constitute significant encroachment on countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Constraint provided by Chorleywood Common Local Nature Reserve to the north, and separation from the wider Green Belt to the south by washed-over development at Heronsgate and by the M25, mean that release of the parcel would not have any adverse impact on the integrity of the wider Green Belt.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would constitute a significant impact on contribution to the Green Belt purposes, but lack of impact on the wider Green Belt means that harm from its release would be limited to moderate-high.

Chorleywood

Parcel CH3

Potential to limit harm

An area alongside the inset western edge of the parcel, to the north west of West Clayton Business Centre, has a significant slope which creates a degree of distinction from the larger part of the parcel to the south. A release of settlement-edge land on lower ground, that avoided visual impact on the wider parcel, would result in moderate harm. The associated release of adjacent land along Berry Lane with washed-over residential development would not increase this level of harm.

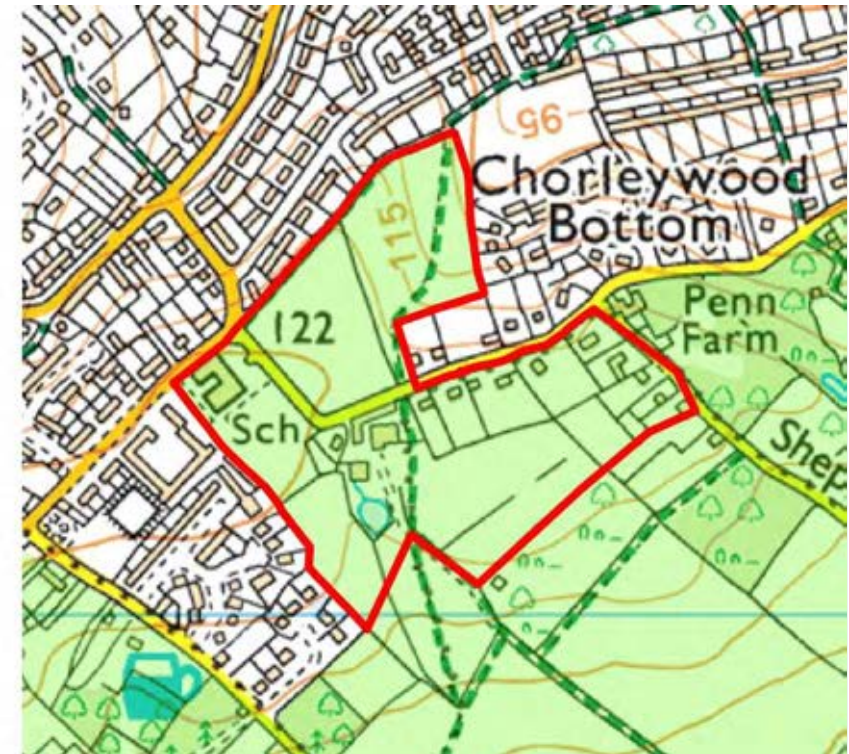
Chorleywood Parcel CH4



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View south through the parcel from the farm off Stag Lane

Right image

View across the north eastern corner of the parcel towards the inset edge of Chorleywood



Chorleywood

Parcel CH4

Description

Open fields, farm buildings, Chorleywood Primary School and some washed over development adjacent to the urban edge of the inset settlement of Chorleywood. The parcel is bordered by the gardens of inset residential properties to the north, east and west, which creates urban containment. Woodland blocks create separation from adjacent Green Belt land to the south.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Limited – No contribution

Urbanising development in and around the sub-area, and tree cover to create distinction from the wider Green belt, limit the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built-up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont/Amersham. However, the close relationship between this area and the inset edge of Chorleywood, and the extent to which woodland contains it from adjacent Green Belt land, means that its release would not be perceived as narrowing the gap between Chorleywood and Rickmansworth.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Limited – No contribution

There is open land within the sub-area, but its close association with the settlement form and the extent of visual containment from the wider countryside limit the extent to which development would constitute encroachment on countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

The woodland blocks on the southern edge of the parcel would form a clearer distinction between settlement and countryside, and would not increase containment of adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low

Release of the parcel would have a limited impact on Green Belt purposes and would not weaken adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel is low.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Chorleywood Parcel CH5



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View west across the parcel along the public footpath

Right image

View east across the parcel



Chorleywood

Parcel CH5

Description

A playing field, play area and allotments adjacent to the settlement edge of Chorleywood at The Swillett. There is no built development. Bordered by the gardens of inset residential properties on two sides, which creates some containment. Trees along the outer edges of the parcel (together with a nearby woodland block), and the downhill slope of the land, create some distinction from the adjacent Green Belt, which is open fields to the south west and low density residential development set in well-treed surrounds to the south east.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London, but the close association between this parcel and the urban fringe limits the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham. However, the extent to which this area is contained by inset development means that its release would not be perceived as narrowing the settlement gap.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel contains no built development, but its uses and its containment on two sides give it a strong association with the urban area.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Release of the parcel would not have any significant impact on the adjacent Green Belt. Strong tree cover limits its relationship with land off Heronsgate Road, and the parcel edge vegetation together with a woodland block at the head of a valley landform create distinction from open Green Belt fields to either side of Bullsland Lane.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on the prevention of countryside encroachment, but it is sufficiently contained by landscape elements to avoid adverse impact on the wider Green Belt. Therefore release of this parcel would result in low-moderate harm to the Green Belt.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Chorleywood Parcel CH6



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus

- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.45 0.9 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View into the horses paddocks in the south eastern corner of the parcel

Right image

View from the lanes within the parcel



Chorleywood

Parcel CH6

Description

Land to the south of Heronsgate Road / Long Lane, extending out from the inset edge of Chorleywood down to Junction 17 of the M25. The area is largely comprised of washed-over residential development in the form of large, detached dwellings and their grounds, including several blocks of woodland and a larger field, divided into paddocks, adjacent to the motorway. The number of dwellings, and their layout off from estate roads, gives the area some urban characteristics but the extent of open space and tree cover means that it also retains some countryside character. A belt of trees extending across Long Lane creates some distinction from the urban edge. The parcel adjoins open Green Belt fields on all other sides.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Landform and land cover distinction between the parcel and the inset area mean that intensified development resulting from Green Belt release would constitute sprawl, but existing development within the parcel limits the extent to which its contribution would be affected.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham. However, the extent of washed over development within the parcel and the strength of the motorway as a boundary feature to the south east means that the impact of releasing the parcel on narrowing the gap between Rickmansworth and Chorleywood would be limited.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel contains development which has some urbanising influence, but has sufficient open space to retain a relationship with adjacent countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

Release this clearly defined area would not represent any weakening of the Green Belt boundary, but it would increase containment of open land to the north.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on the prevention of urban sprawl and countryside encroachment and it would weaken the integrity of Green Belt land to the north. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel is therefore moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

Release of land at the western end of the parcel, abutting the inset edge of Chorleywood, would not increase containment of the Green Belt to the NE of Heronsgate. The extent of tree cover here does create a strong settlement edge, but there would be potential to release a smaller area of land, retaining wooded boundaries, with a moderate level of harm.

Chorleywood

Parcel CH6

Harm beyond outer boundary

To the south of Heronsgate there is a strong valley landform, much of it wooded, that is very distinct from the settled area. This land is open and uncontained and makes a strong contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Release of land would weaken the Green Belt boundary and the integrity of the same valley to the west, so harm would be very high.

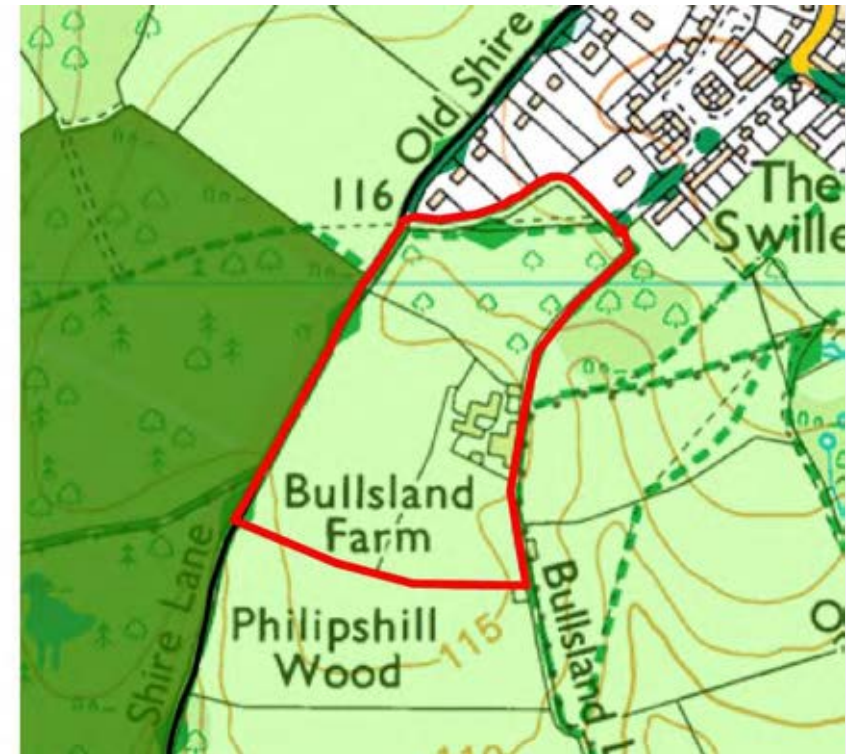
Chorleywood Parcel CH7



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Bullsland Lane west into the parcel

Right image

View from Piggy Lane south into the parcel



Chorleywood

Parcel CH7

Description

Flat, open fields to the south of the inset settlement edge along Old Shire Lane, to the west of Bullsland Lane. The only development is the buildings of Bullsland Farm, which have no urbanising influence. Trees along and close to Old Shire Lane create a strong settlement edge, and the parcel abuts the extensive Philipshill Wood (an ancient woodland) to the west and further farmland to the south and east, all of which slope away relatively strongly from the plateau on which this parcel is located.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open and undeveloped, with no sense of containment from the wider Green Belt. Therefore release of the parcel would constitute significant urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, and land to the south of it does not contribute significantly to the gaps between any towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel contains no urbanising development and has a strong relationship with the adjacent Green Belt. Tree cover along the inset settlement edge limits its relationship with the urban area.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would result in weaker Green Belt boundary, but there is sufficient distinction between this plateau area and the valley sides to the south and east, and the woodland to the west, to limit harm to the wider Green Belt.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on the prevention of sprawl and countryside encroachment, and would result in a weaker Green Belt boundary. Harm to the Green Belt resulting from its release would be high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

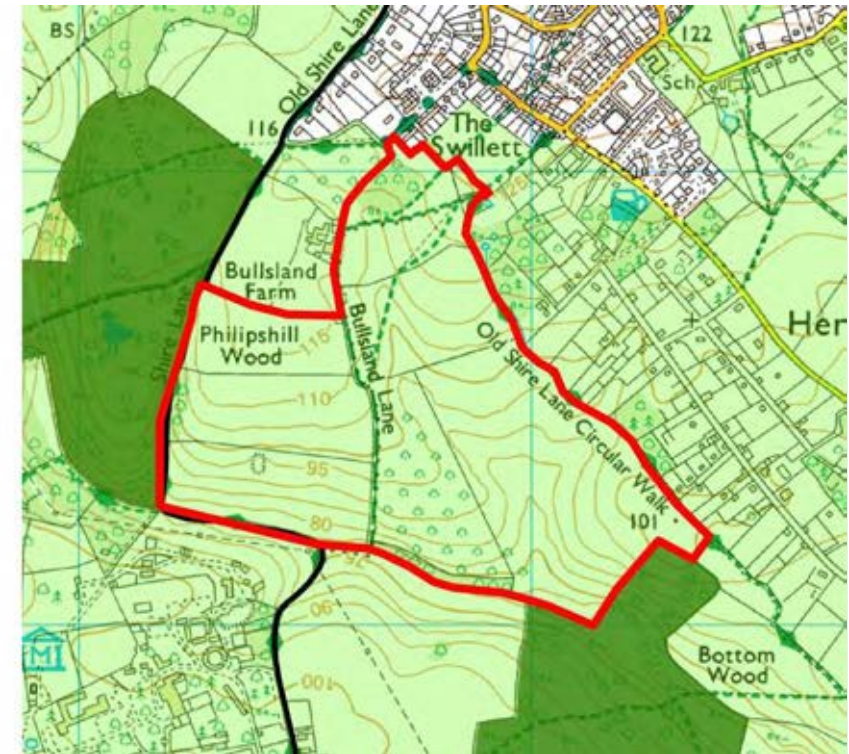
Chorleywood Parcel CH8



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.4 0.8 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View south across the parcel towards the farm buildings



Right image

View south east across the parcel

Chorleywood

Parcel CH8

Description

Farmland sloping relatively steeply downhill southwards from the inset settlement edge, and to the south of the plateau on which the buildings of Bullsland Farm are located (parcel CH7). Tree cover along edges of Green Belt playing fields and allotments at The Swillett, and a woodland block just to the south, create strong separation from the inset edge of Chorleywood. There is no built development in the parcel, which is bordered to the west by Philipshill Wood and to the east by the well-treed surrounds of washed-over dwellings at Heronsgate.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open and undeveloped, with no sense of containment from the wider Green Belt. Therefore release of the parcel would constitute significant urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, and land to the south of it does not contribute significantly to the gaps between any towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel contains no urbanising development and has a strong relationship with the adjacent Green Belt. Tree cover along the inset settlement edge and the significant slope down from it significantly limit the parcel's relationship with the urban area.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Significant

Release of any of this sloping land would constitute a significant change in the settlement extent and form of Chorleywood, weakening the Green Belt boundary and harming the integrity of adjacent open land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Very high

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on the prevention of sprawl and countryside encroachment, and would result in a weaker Green Belt boundary and the spread of urban influence into an area that is currently very distinct from the inset settlement. Harm to the Green Belt resulting from its release would be very high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

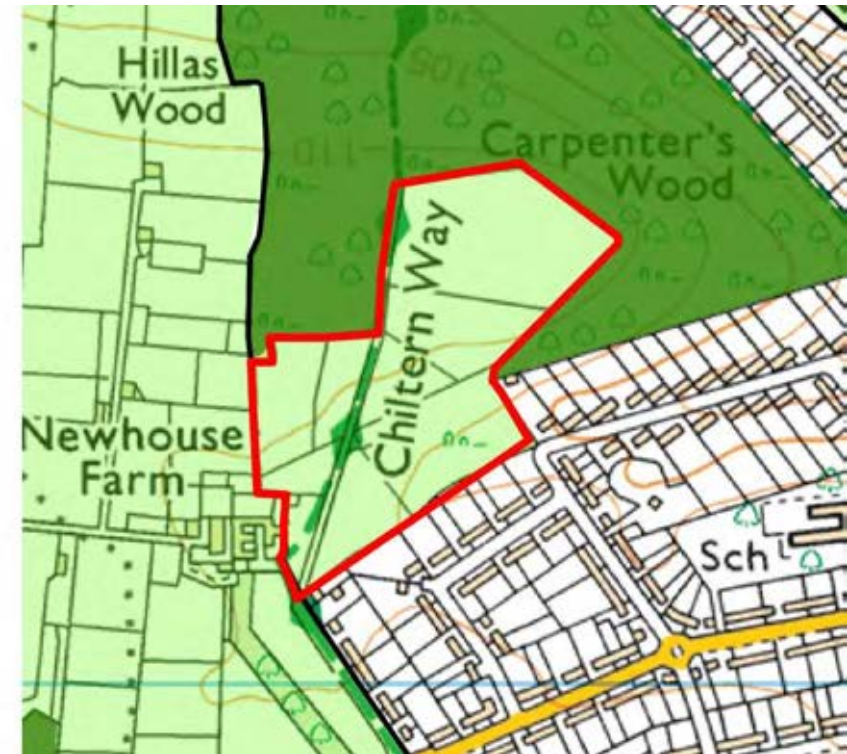
Chorleywood Parcel CH9



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View north east through the parcel along the public footpath



Right image

View south across the parcel towards the inset edge of Chorleywood



Chorleywood Parcel CH9

Description

Undeveloped fields on the north western edge of Chorleywood, contained between the inset settlement edge and Carpenter's Wood, an ancient woodland. There is no significant distinction between the inset settlement edge – residential gardens along St Peters Way and Farm Road – and the parcel, but Carpenter's Wood contains it on three sides. A hedgerow and the buildings of Newhouse Farm define the western edge of the parcel, but do not represent any separation from the wider countryside.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Chorleywood is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the east to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. This is open countryside, but the extent to which development here would be considered sprawl is limited by the absence of a strong settlement edge boundary and by the parcel's containment by ancient woodland to the north and east.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

Although Chorleywood is not considered to be a town, open space around it contributes to the overall gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Little Chalfont / Amersham. However this area is too contained by woodland to play any significant role in this respect.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel lacks separation from the inset settlement, but is nonetheless open and lacking in urbanising influences. Development would therefore constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

The ancient woodland constitutes a strong containing feature that would prevent harm to the Green belt to the north. The hedgerow linking the western edge of Carpenter's Wood to the farm buildings, and from there to the inset edge on Farm Road, would form a clear boundary to the west that would be no weaker than the existing inset edge and would not increase containment of any other Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would constitute a relatively significant encroachment on countryside, but would have little impact on the wider Green Belt. Harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel is assessed as moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Chorleywood

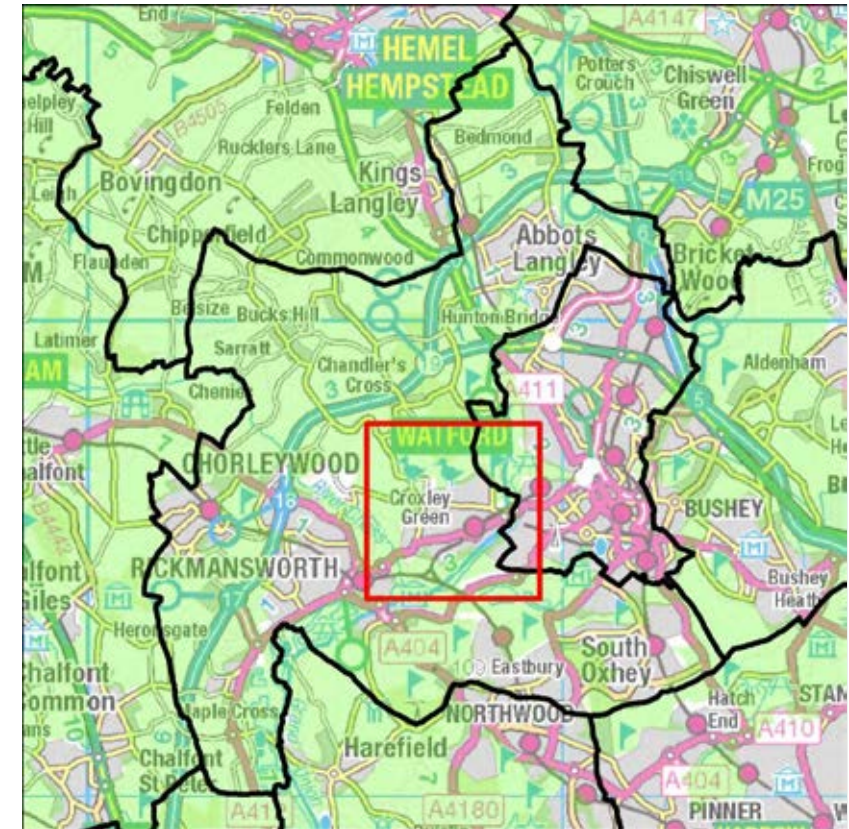
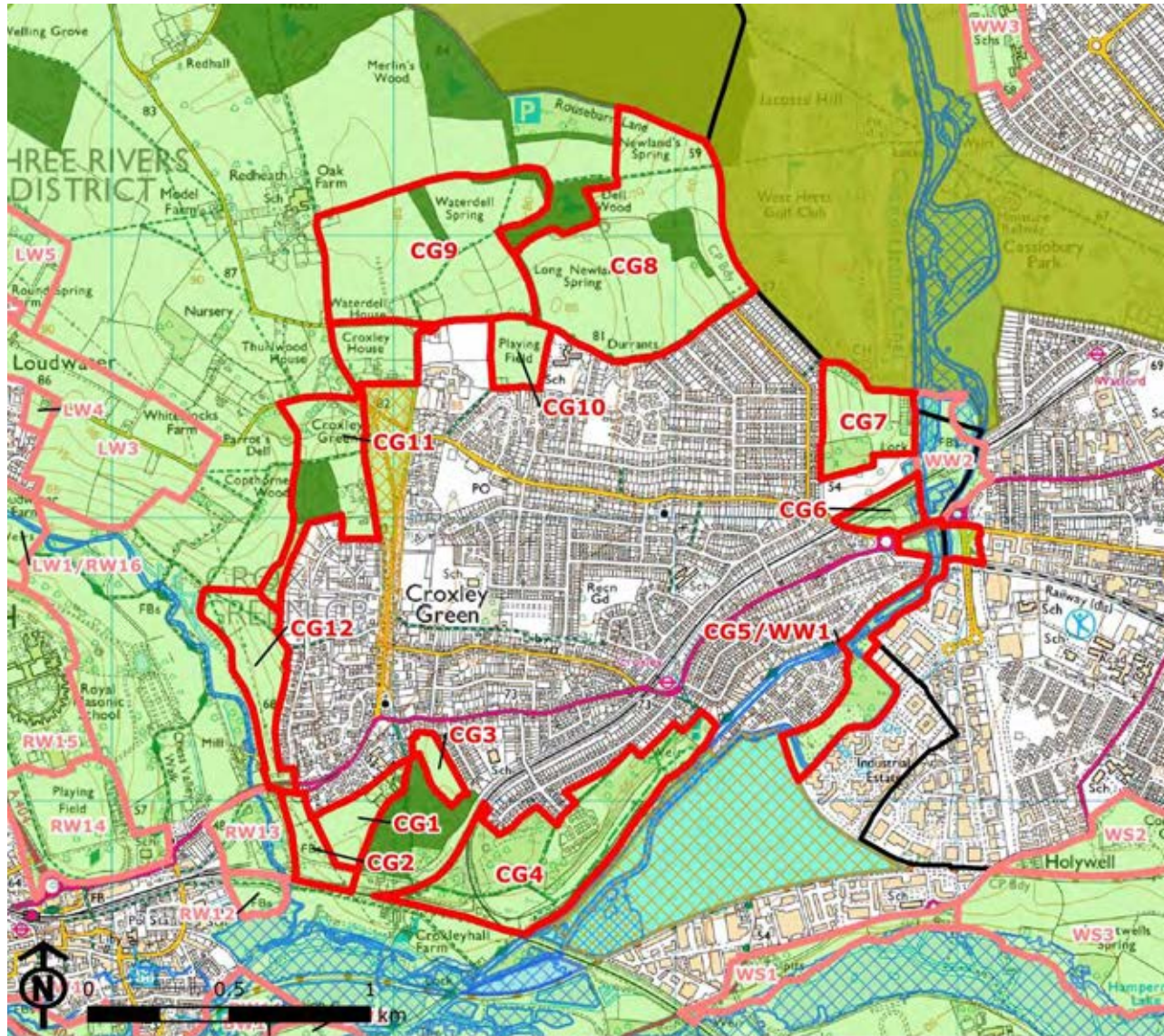
Parcel CH9

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the north and east of the site is constrained woodland and so there is no potential for development. Part of Carpenter's Wood adjacent to the railway line is not designated ancient woodland, and so does not have any absolute constraint to development, but it has a strong relationship with the rest of the woodland and is separated from the inset settlement edge on Whitelands Avenue by a belt of ancient woodland. This means that any development here would be isolated from inset development and would represent a weakening of the Green Belt boundary, resulting in high harm to Green Belt purposes. Land to the west crosses the administrative boundary into Chiltern District.

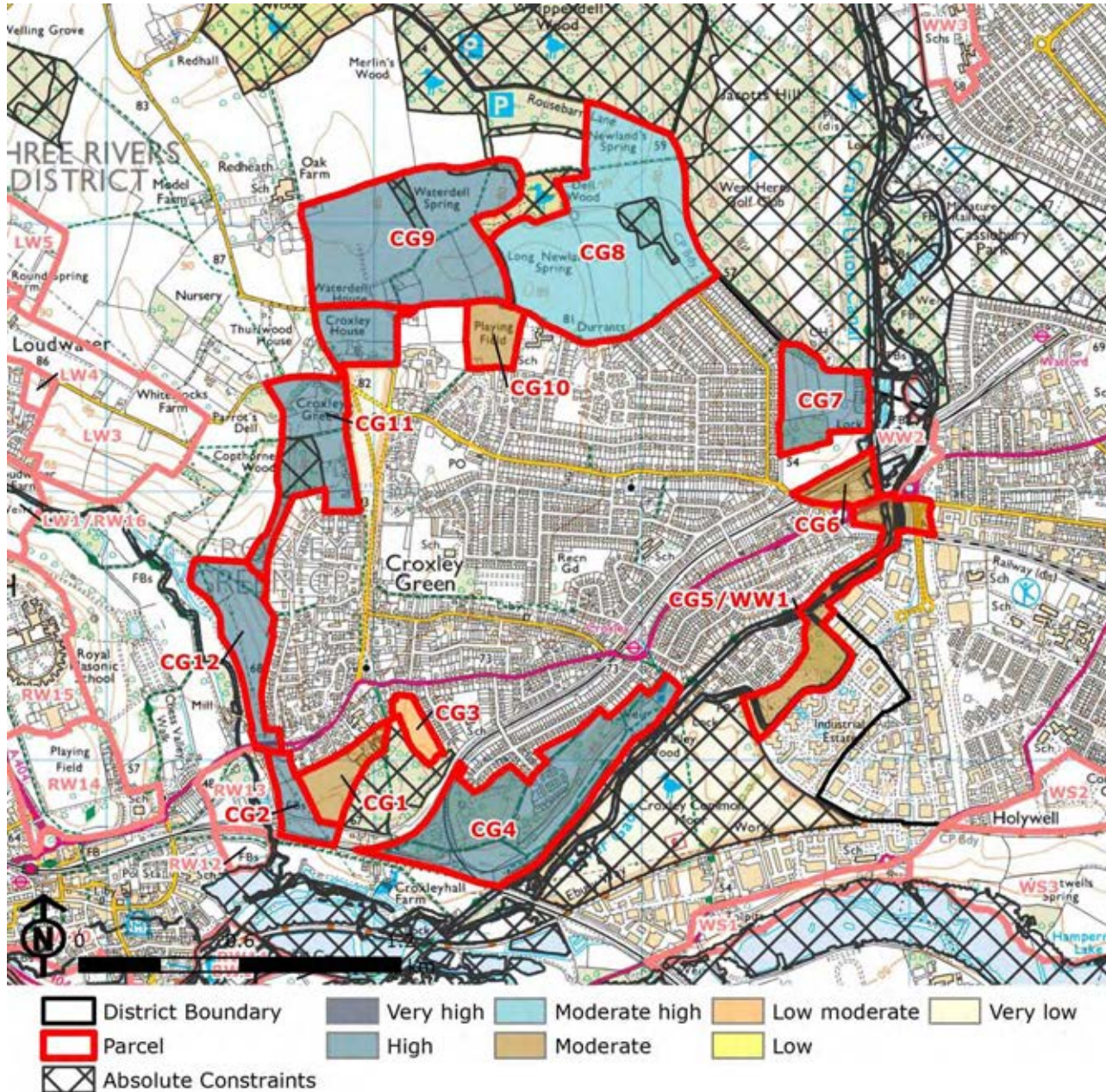
Croxley Green

Croxley Green



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Croxley Green



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Parcel

CG1
CG2
CG3
CG4
CG5/WW1
CG6
CG7
CG8
CG9
CG10
CG11
CG12

Harm Score

Moderate

High

Low moderate

High

Moderate

Moderate

High

Moderate high

High

Moderate

High

High

Croxley Green Parcel CG1

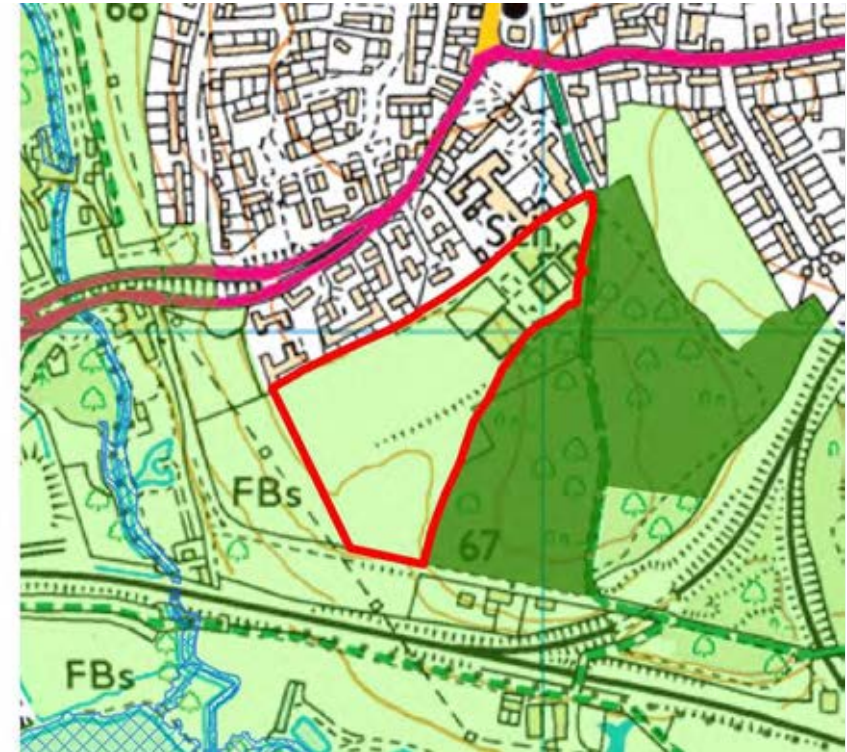


Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus

- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View into the school from the footpath along the eastern edge of the parcel



Right image

View into the school from the footpath along the eastern edge of the parcel



Croxley Green

Parcel CG1

Description

The parcel includes playing fields, tennis courts, a tree cluster and educational/sports centre buildings associated with Rickmansworth School, lying to the south of the inset settlement of Croxley Green. The parcel is bordered to the north by the gardens of inset residential dwellings and is contained from the wider Green Belt to the east and south east by a woodland block.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel is adjacent to Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. The parcel is contained by the settlement edge to the north and east, limiting the extent to which development would be considered as sprawl of the large built up area, but is more open toward the west and south.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

Although Croxley Green is not considered a town, the open space around contributes to maintaining the gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Watford. The parcel does form part of the narrow gap between Croxley Green and Rickmansworth, however existing development already extends as far west as this parcel and the flat character of the landform limits the potential to which release of the site would be perceived as reducing the gap between the two towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is contained and influenced to a certain extent by urbanising uses in the surrounding settlement and the school buildings in the north eastern parts of the parcel. However from more open areas there is some visual connection across the valley to the south to the wider Green Belt.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would not lead to the containment of adjacent Green Belt land, limiting the harm to wider Green Belt. In addition, release would result in a Green Belt boundary to the west along the ridge crest and to the southeast along woodland, that would be no weaker than the existing urban edge.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and a moderate impact on preventing sprawl and other merger of neighbouring towns. Release would also not weaken the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Croxley Green

Parcel CG1

Harm beyond outer boundary

The Croxleyhall Wood ancient woodland lies to the east, constraining development.

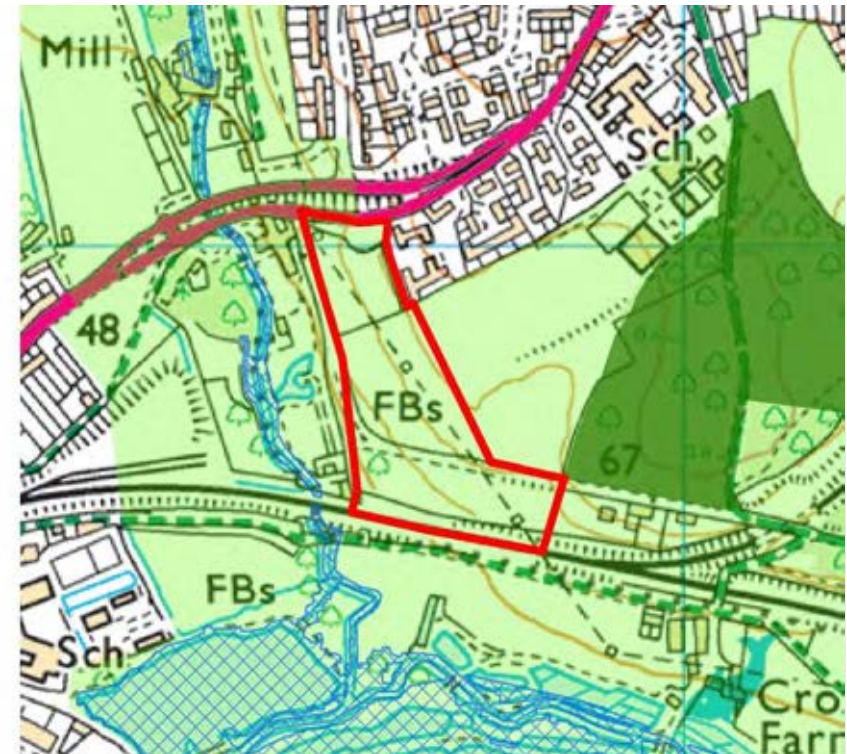
Croxley Green Parcel CG2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View along Lavrock Lane south along parcel

Right image

View from Lavrock Lane into the eastern half of the parcel



Croxley Green

Parcel CG2

Description

Open fields and allotments located adjacent to the southern edge of the inset settlement of Croxley Green, the boundary of which is formed by a tree line. To the south the railway line forms a clear boundary with the wider Green Belt. To the north by the A412 Watford Road also forms a clear boundary as does woodland to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel is adjacent to Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London, and sloping ground of the Chess River Valley creates some distinction from the settlement edge of Croxley Green. A limited area of washed over development creates some degree of containment to the west.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

Although Croxley Green is not considered a town, the open space around contributes to maintaining the gap between the towns of Rickmansworth and Watford. The parcel does form part of the narrow gap between Croxley Green and Rickmansworth. The River Chess Valley is the remaining separating feature preventing the merging of the two settlements, however most of the gap lies to the west of the river.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is free of significant urbanising uses, and its valley side location creates separation from the inset edge and a sense of openness toward the south.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would result in a strong and distinct boundary with surrounding Green Belt land, which would lie along the railway line to the south, and with Lavrock Lane providing some distinction to the west. However developing this land would weaken the settlement gap, creating some degree of impact on the surrounding Green Belt by containing the existing gap. It would also lead to the greater containment of Green Belt land to the east (Parcel CG1).

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing urban sprawl, preventing the merger of neighbouring towns and preventing encroachment on the countryside. The release would also have a minor weakening effect on the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

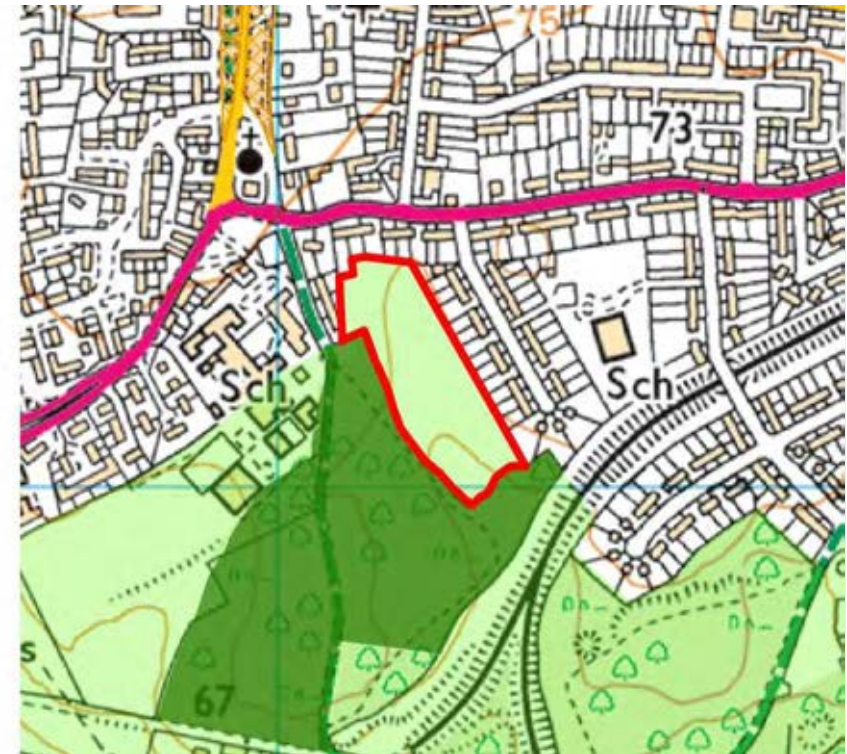
Croxley Green Parcel CG3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View south east across the allotments in the northern half of the parcel



Right image

view south east across the playing fields in the southern half of the parcel



Croxley Green

Parcel CG3

Description

Allotments, a playing field and area of woodland adjacent to the inset settlement edge of Croxley Green, which contains the parcel to the north and east. The rear of residential dwellings forms the settlement boundary while a woodland block provides a clear boundary with the Green Belt to the south and west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel is adjacent to Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. While the land itself is free of urbanising uses, its significant containment by woodland and the settlement edges that surround it create a strong association with the urban area. This association is strengthened by the lack of distinction from the urban edge on its boundaries.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel is too contained by the existing settlement form to make any contribution to preventing the merger of the towns of Rickmansworth and Watford. There is also existing development in Croxley Green further to the west of the parcel.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

Despite the open nature of the land itself, there is urban containment and uses associated with the urban settlement. It should be noted that the small wooded area within the south of the parcel makes a greater contribution to openness (relatively significant), given its association with the surrounding woodland.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would leave a block of constrained ancient woodland forming a strong and distinct boundary with the adjacent land, leading to no significant impact on the integrity of surrounding Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and on the prevention of sprawl. The release would also not weaken the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land and would result in a strong boundary formed by ancient woodland. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be low-moderate. However it should be noted that due to its association with the surrounding woodland, the loss of any woodland within the south of the parcel would increase this harm to moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Croxley Green

Parcel CG3

Harm beyond outer boundary

The ancient woodland of Croxleyhall Wood contains the parcel, forming a constraint to development.

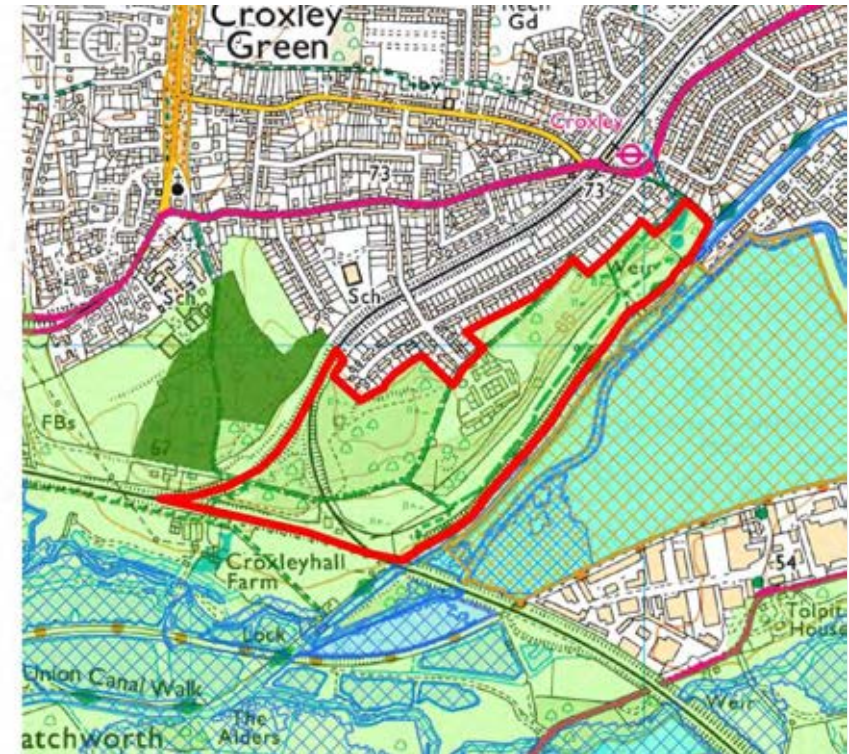
Croxley Green Parcel CG4



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.4 0.8 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north east through the parcel alongside the allotments and woodland



Right image

View south into the housing estate within the parcel

Croxley Green

Parcel CG4

Description

Woodland dissected by footpaths and a small washed over housing development on Imperial Way/Woodland Chase. Parcel lies between the inset settlement edge of Croxley Green and the Grand Union Canal, beyond which is Croxley Common Moor Nature Reserve. The boundary with the inset settlement to the north is formed by residential gardens, while the boundary with the wider Green Belt to the west is defined by a railway line. A small stretch of railway line also runs across the south west corner of the parcel.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

The parcel is adjacent to Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. Woodland within the parcel creates a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge. Together with the presence of the canal, it serves as a strong barrier to sprawl into the open Green Belt land beyond the river to the south and east.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

The parcel forms some of the gap between Croxley Green and Rickmansworth, while Croxley Green is not considered to be a town, the open space around it contributes to maintaining the gap between Rickmansworth and Watford. While the open, constrained land south of the canal/River Gade will prevent coalescence, the tree cover within this parcel remains important in maintaining visual separation between the two.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

Aside from the existing housing development along Imperial Way/Woodland Chase (which makes no contribution to Green Belt openness), the woodland in the remainder of the parcel is distinct from the adjacent settlement and there is open Green Belt land to the south and east.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would create a strong boundary marked by the canal and the railway line as strong features, however it would lead to the containment of Green Belt land to the south and east, leading to some (limited) impact on adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on preventing sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, and a relatively significant impact on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would also have a minor impact on the adjacent Green Belt through a degree of containment. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

There is some limited scope to release land (although would require some woodland clearance) adjacent to the inset edge and develop land without significantly affecting the screening role of tree cover, resulting in only moderate-high harm.

Croxley Green

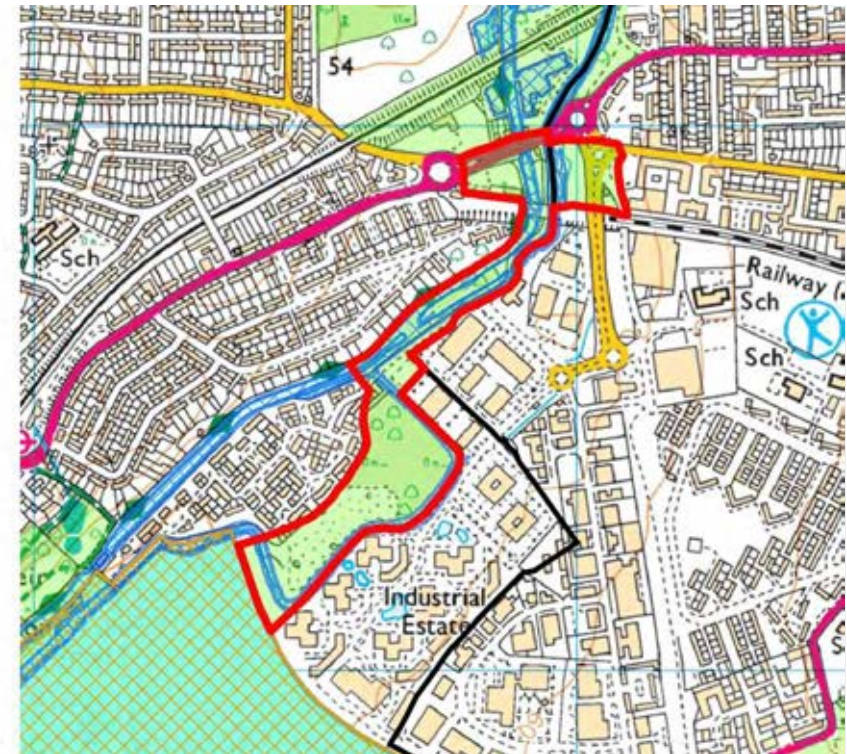
Parcel CG5/WW1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.35 0.7 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the A412 bridge along the canal south into the parcel

Right image

View across the river, north into the parcel from Hatters Lane



Croxley Green

Parcel CG5/WW1

Description

A strip of woodland, Cassiobridge play area, a small area of the Croxley Park Industrial Estate car park, and an area of land enclosed by Ascot Road, form a strip of Green Belt land between the inset urban edges of Croxley Green to the west and Watford to the east. The boundary of the inset urban edge of Croxley Green is formed of the Grand Union Canal and tree belts. The presence of woodland within the parcel creates distinction between it and the urban area. The A412 Rickmansworth Road forms the boundary with the wider Green Belt to the north, while to the south this is formed by a strip of Woodland and Croxley Common Moor Local Nature Reserve. It is noted that the car park area and the area to the east of Ascot Road make little contribution to Green Belt purposes.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel lies adjacent to the edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London and the tree cover creates some distinction from the urbanising influences, however the strength of containment by the existing urban area limits its contribution to preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

This parcel lies in narrow the gap between Croxley Green and Watford, which plays an important role in maintaining the gap between Watford and Rickmansworth. However while the gap is narrow, the density of tree cover and the strong barrier provided by the river play a role in maintaining a physical and visual sense of separation.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel is relatively free of significant urbanising uses, other than in small isolated areas. The density of tree cover does create some distinction from the urban area and the river creates connection with the wider countryside, however the extent of containment by the existing urban area limits the openness to a degree.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land, due to the extent of its urban containment which limits the impact it can have on surrounding land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing the merger of neighbouring towns, and a moderate impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. Release of the parcel would however have a negligible impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Croxley Green Parcel CG6



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View of the office building within the parcel

Croxley Green

Parcel CG6

Description

The parcel comprises woodland, an open grassed area, an office building and car park and a couple of washed over dwellings located adjacent to the inset urban edge of Croxley Green. The boundary is formed by the A412 to the south and east, and the railway tracks and woodland to the north. The presence of the inset settlement on three sides results in urban containment. The Grand Union Canal forms a clear boundary with the area of Green Belt to the east.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

The parcel is adjacent to the edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. The trees within the parcel and the A412 create some distinction from the urban edge of Croxley Green, however the degree of urbanising influences (due to housing and office development within the parcel) compromise openness. In addition, urban containment to the north and the influence of the main road to the south limits the parcel's contribution to preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

This parcel lies in the narrow the gap between Croxley Green and Watford, which plays an important role in maintaining the gap between Watford and Rickmansworth. However the existing development within the parcel and the containment by tree cover limit its role in preventing the merging of these towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

Both the urbanising influences of the existing development within the parcel, and the containment between the railway line to the north and the major road to the south, limit any sense of openness. However the openness to the canal to the east contributes to Purpose 3.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would have some impact on adjacent Green Belt land, given the weakening of the remaining gap between Croxley Green and Watford, however this is a limited impact given the extent of urban containment.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on preventing the merger of neighbouring towns, but only a relatively low impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. The release would also have a minor impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

Retaining the trees alongside the canal may help retain the perception of a settlement gap between Croxley Green and neighbouring Watford.

Harm beyond outer boundary

Land to the east of the parcel has been assessed in relation to the expansion of Watford as parcel WW2.

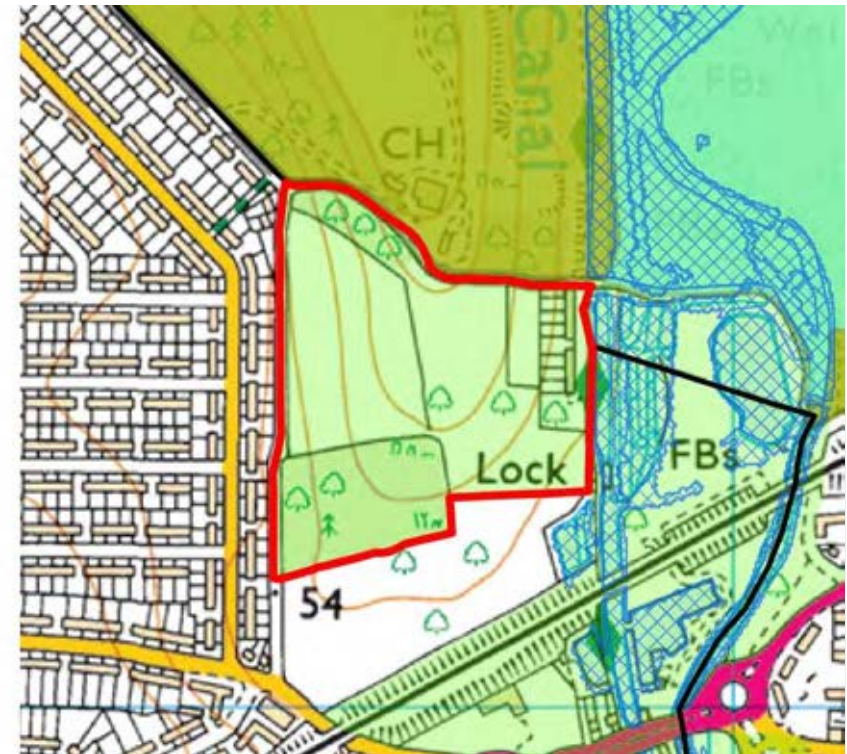
Croxley Green Parcel CG7



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Lodge End east into the parcel

Croxley Green

Parcel CG7

Description

Elevated fields, clusters of trees and group of canal-side residential dwellings (along Gade Bank) lying adjacent to the eastern inset edge of Croxley Green and between Croxley Green and Watford. Lodge End Road and a treeline forms the inset settlement edge with Croxley Green to the west, while to the south this is formed by field boundaries. The Grand Union Canal forms a boundary to the east, while a strip of woodland provides a boundary to the north, which is formed of Cassiobury Park Registered Park and Garden.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel is adjacent to the edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. While the constrained land (at the golf course) to the north and the inset area to the south already limit the potential for sprawl here, the elevated landform and woodland block within the parcel create a sense of distinction from the inset settlement and contribute to preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

This parcel lies in narrow the gap between Croxley Green and Watford, which plays an important role in maintaining the gap between Watford and Rickmansworth. The high ground here is important in maintaining the physical and visual separation between the two settlements.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel has only limited urbanising influences in the form of the group of canal-side dwellings, which are contained from the rest of the parcel by tree cover, limiting their impact. The parcel is contained by constrained land to the north and the inset area to the south, however the woodland block to the south creates distinction with the urban edge, increasing the extent to which release of the site would be perceived as encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would have some impact on adjacent Green Belt because development on this higher ground would weaken the remaining settlement gap between Croxley Green and Watford. However the impact on the wider Green Belt would be limited given the extent of urban containment of the parcel.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing urban sprawl, encroachment on the countryside and the merging of neighbouring towns. However its release would have only a minor impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

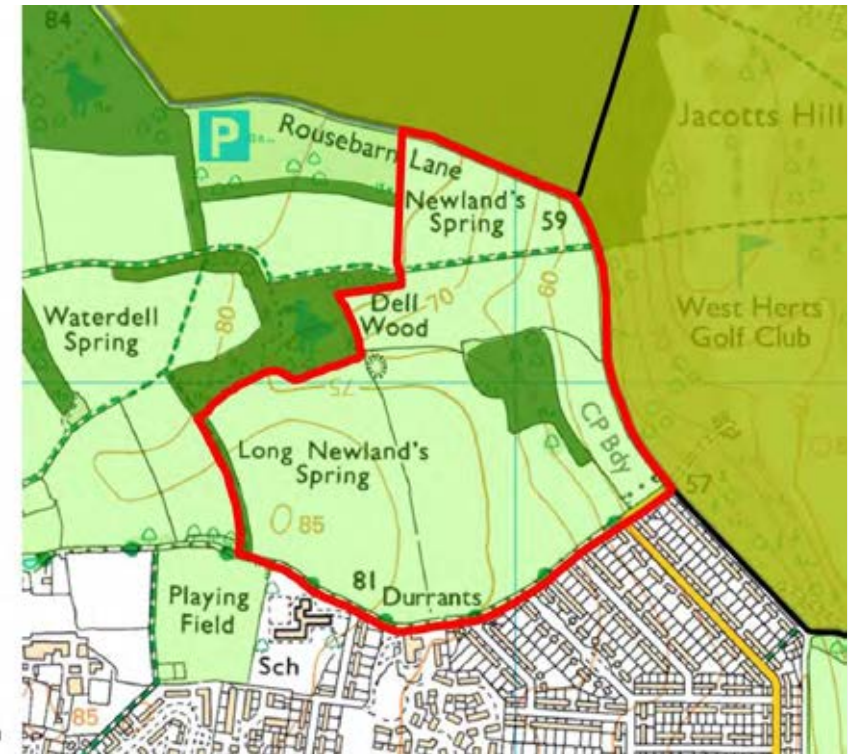
Croxley Green Parcel CG8



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.35 0.7 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View from Little Green Lane north through the parcel



Right image

View from Little Green Lane north through the parcel



Croxley Green

Parcel CG8

Description

Arable farmland and a woodland block on the northern edge of the inset settlement of Croxley Green. The parcel is bound to the east and north by a woodland belt within Cassiobury Registered Park and Garden, and to the west by a thick tree belt which is designated ancient woodland. To the south, the residential Little Green Lane, forms the boundary with the inset settlement edge of Croxley Green.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

The parcel is adjacent to the edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. The boundary with the urban edge (along Little Green Lane) provides some distinction from urbanising uses, giving the parcel a significant role in preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie in the gap between neighbouring towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel has no urbanising influences and is uncontained countryside, giving it strong sense of openness. Little Green Lane creates some distinction from the inset edge but only to a minor extent.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would have negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land because the surrounding registered parkland and ancient woodland constraints mean there would be no significant increase in the containment of adjacent Green Belt land, nor any weakening of the boundary with the urban edge.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. However its release would have only a negligible impact on the adjacent Green Belt due to its containment by Cassiobury Registered Park and Garden and ancient woodland. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Croxley Green

Parcel CG8

Harm beyond outer boundary

Whippendell Wood forms a significant area of constraint preventing development to the east and north. To the west, ancient woodland borders most of the parcel, creating a strong boundary beyond which any development would constitute high harm.

Croxley Green Parcel CG9



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north through the parcel from Little Green Lane

Croxley Green

Parcel CG9

Description

Arable and pastoral farmland with cluster of agricultural buildings, adjacent to the inset edge of Croxley Green, the boundary of which is formed by a field edge. Separated from the wider Green Belt to the east by a woodland block, designated as ancient woodland and to the north, west and south west more by a mixture of tree lined field boundaries and minor roads (Finchers Avenue/Little Green Lane).

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

The parcel lies adjacent to the edge of the large built up area of Greater London and is uncontained countryside. Little Green Lane creates some limited distinction from the inset edge, giving it a significant role in preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie in a gap between neighbouring towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel has no urbanising influences and is uncontained countryside, giving it strong openness. Little Green Lane creates some distinction from the inset edge but only to a minor extent.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would have some impact on adjacent Green Belt land because the land to the east is not contained by woodland. The release would have minimal impact on the strength of the boundary with surrounding Green Belt.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and preventing encroachment on the countryside. Release would have a minor impact on the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Croxley Green Parcel CG10



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View north through the parcel from Manor Way

Croxley Green

Parcel CG10

Description

A small field adjacent to the northern edge of the inset settlement of Croxley Green. The inset settlement contains the parcel to the south, east and west with settlement boundaries formed by tree lines. To the north, Little Green Lane forms a boundary with the wider Green Belt.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

The parcel is adjacent to the edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. However it is contained on three sides by the inset settlement edge, which limits its role in preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie in the gap between neighbouring towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel contains no urbanising influences, and well-treed hedgerows create some separation from the inset settlement edges, contributing to its openness. However the openness is compromised by its containment on three sides, which limits its connection with the open countryside beyond.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Releasing this land would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt land, because the resulting boundary would be consistent with the existing urban edges to the north, and the release would not increase the containment of any adjacent land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside. The release would however have a negligible impact on the integrity of the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

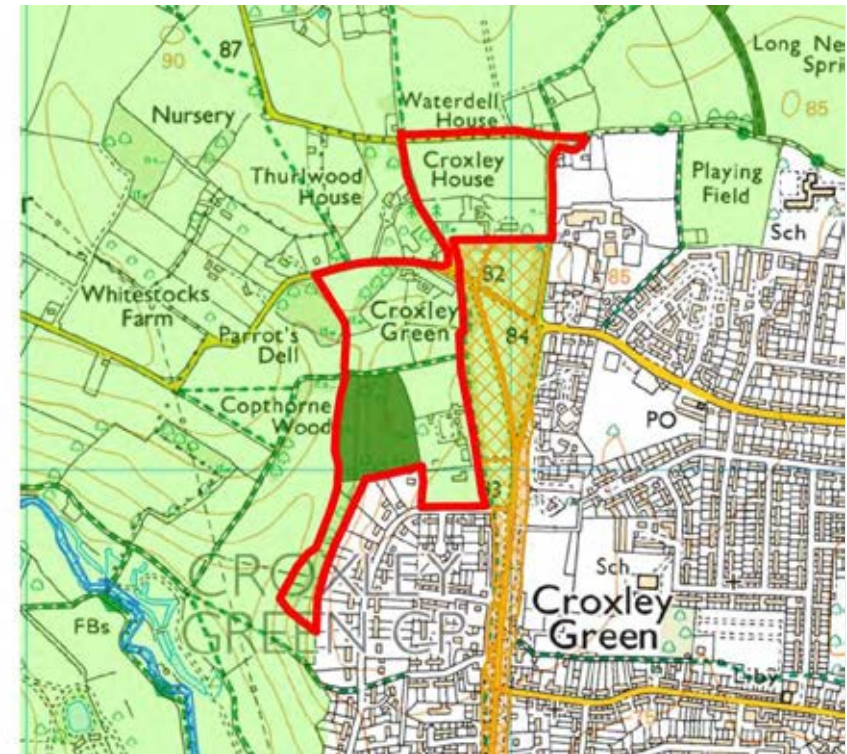
Croxley Green Parcel CG11



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.4 0.8 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View along a public footpath west through the parcel



Right image

View from the eastern boundary of the parcel towards the woodland / washed over dwelling at the southern end



Croxley Green

Parcel CG11

Description

Copthorne Wood (including an area of designated ancient woodland) is located in the southern half of the parcel with open fields and clusters of large dwellings and gardens within the northern half. The parcel is adjacent to the inset settlement edge of Croxley Green with the boundary formed by the woodland belt backing on to residential gardens to the south and Little Green Lane to the east. Loudwater Lane forms a boundary with the wider Green Belt to the north, to the east this is formed by the woodland / a tree belt and to the west a tree line separates the parcel from The Green, which is Green Belt but is highly unlikely to ever be developed and provides some separation from the urban edge.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

The parcel lies adjacent to the edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London and has strong openness. Its association with the inset settlement edge to the east is limited by The Green and by well-treed boundaries. Existing development within the parcel is very low density and is not urban in character.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel lies in the gap between the neighbouring towns of Croxley Green and Loudwater, which in turn have little separation from Watford and Rickmansworth. However the woodland blocks on the western boundary form a strong separating element that limits the risk of merging.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel has limited urbanising influences in the form of the low density housing, and retains a rural character. It is separated from surrounding urbanising influences by the presence of The Green and the woodland blocks.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would have some impact on the integrity of adjacent Green Belt land given that 'The Green', as constrained land, currently forms a strong boundary to the east and development beyond this would increase its containment. To the west, the woodlands provide strong containment, limiting the impact on the wider Green Belt.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, but only a relatively low impact on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. The release would have only a minor impact on the integrity of the adjacent Green Belt. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

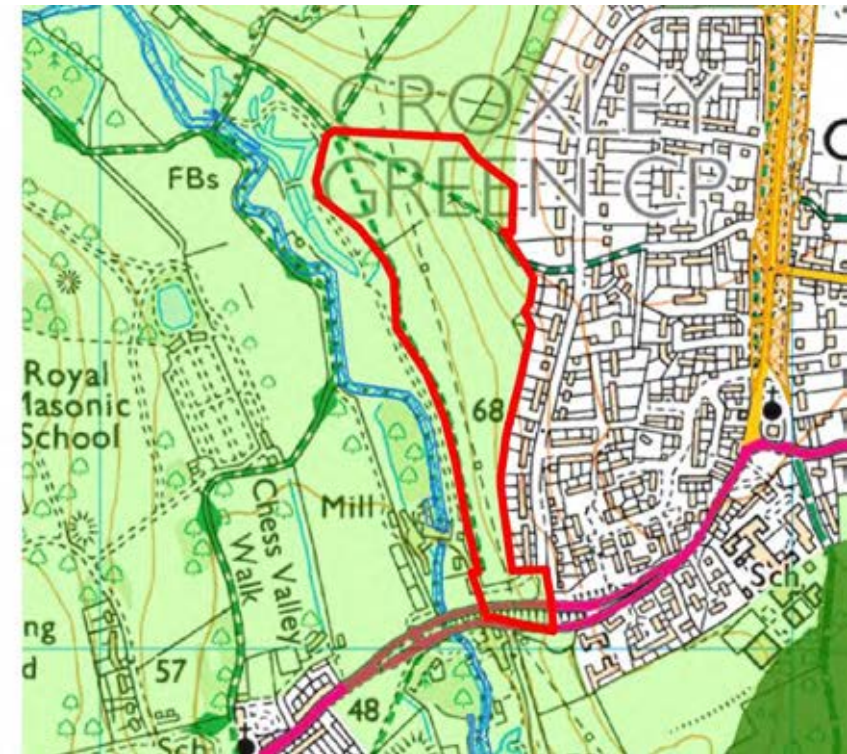
Potential to limit harm

Release of the field to the north of The Green could potentially result in only moderate-high harm if strong tree cover to the north of 'The Green' is preserved, and if any visibility of new development from 'The Green' (that might limit the sense of containment) is avoided. Any release of land to the west of the parcel would breach a belt of strong tree cover. Existing development in this area is very low density and has very limited urbanising influence, and therefore lacks association with the urban area. As such, harm from releasing this land would be high.

Croxley Green Parcel CG12



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View from a footpath south across the parcel



Right image

View from within the southern half of the parcel, between the urban edge of Croxley Green and the River Chess



Croxley Green

Parcel CG12

Description

Arable fields located on the western edge of the inset settlement of Croxley Green, sloping down toward the River Chess. The inset settlement edge to the east is formed by residential gardens, while the River Chess and associated tree cover forms a clear boundary with the wider Green Belt to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge of Croxley Green which is contiguous with the large built up area of Greater London. Despite backing onto residential gardens, the sloping land down to the River Chess (which forms part of the wider Green Belt valley) provides some distinction from the inset edge and therefore the land makes a significant contribution to preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

The parcel lies in the gap between Croxley Green and Rickmansworth. The Chess Valley is the remaining separating feature between the two, and in turn forms almost all of the gap between Rickmansworth and Watford. Nevertheless the majority of the gap lies to the west of the River Chess.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel contains minimal urbanising influences (limited to one dwelling on Scots Mill Lane), giving it strong openness. The distinction from the inset edge provided by the sloping land down to the River Chess also contributes to this sense of openness.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

The riverside land that would provide the new boundary with the urban edge is stronger than the existing residential gardens, and the sloping land means that it does not visually contain the land. However there would be some containing impact given that the gap with neighbouring Rickmansworth would be narrowed.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

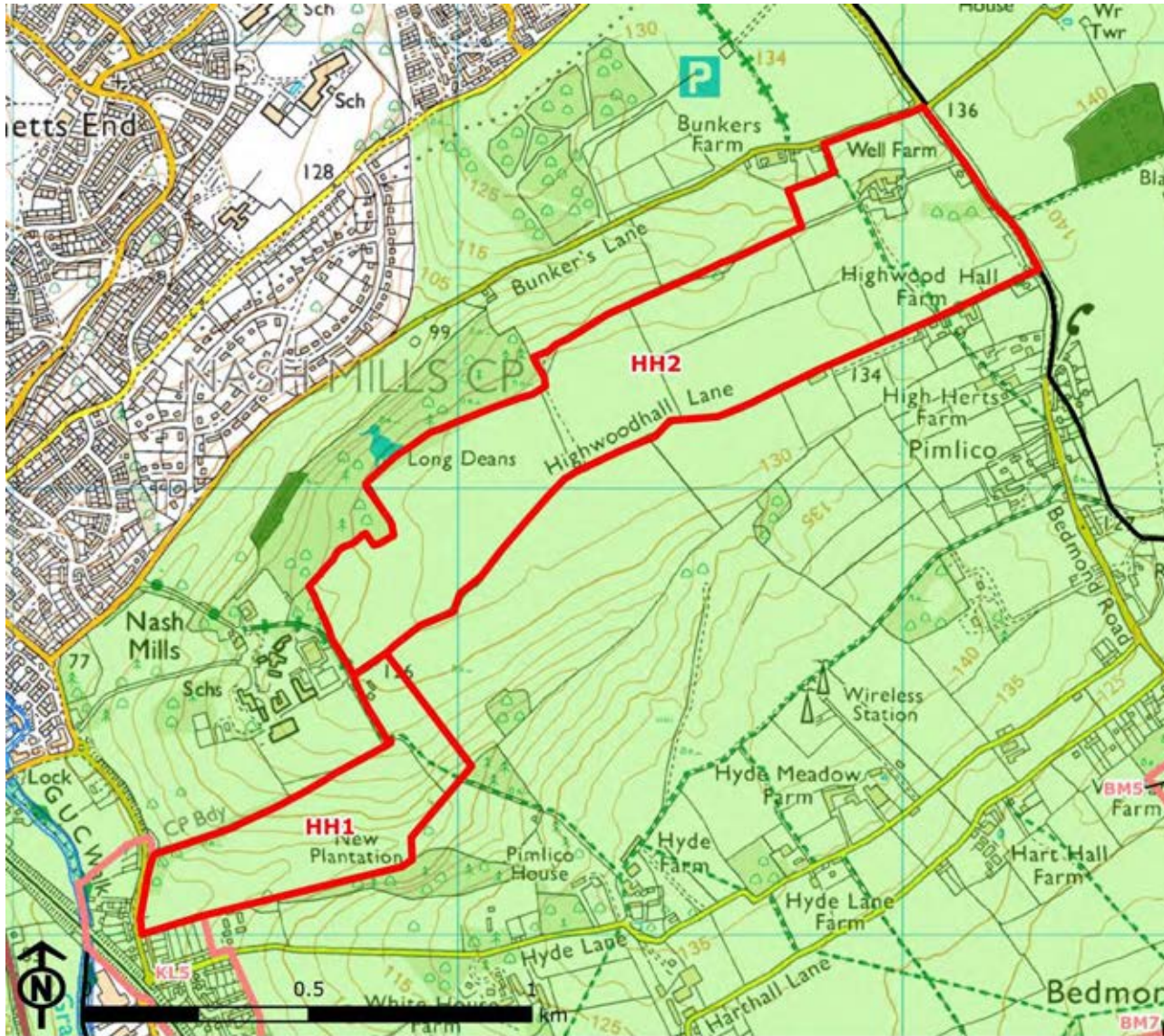
Release of the parcel would have a strong impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, and a relatively strong impact on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. The release would have only a minor impact on the integrity of the adjacent Green Belt. It is concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

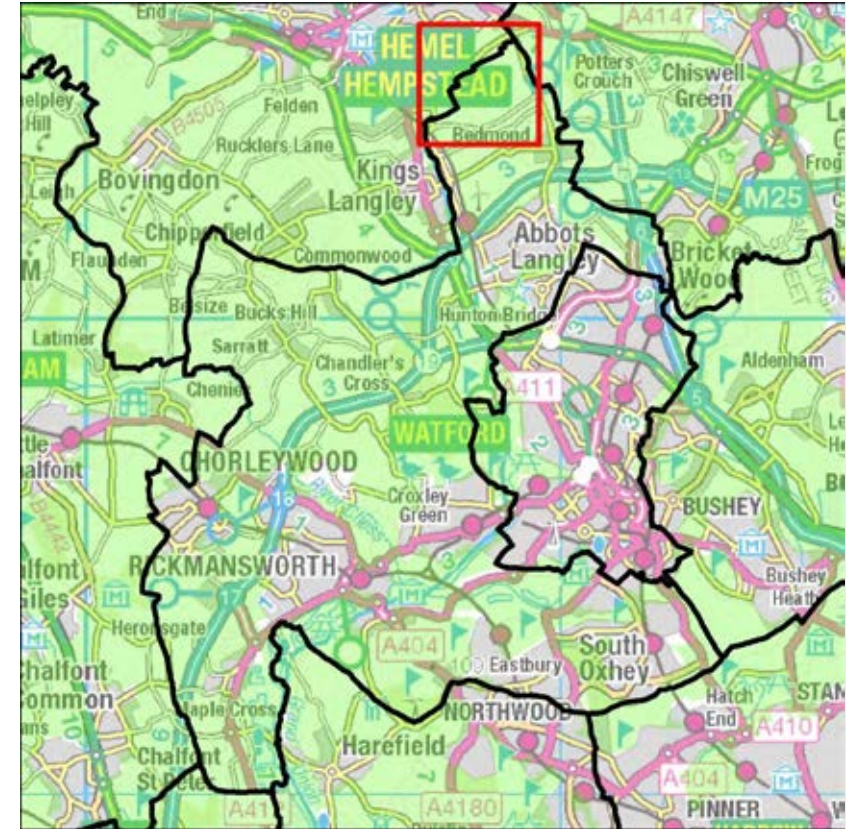
There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Hemel Hempstead

Hemel Hempstead

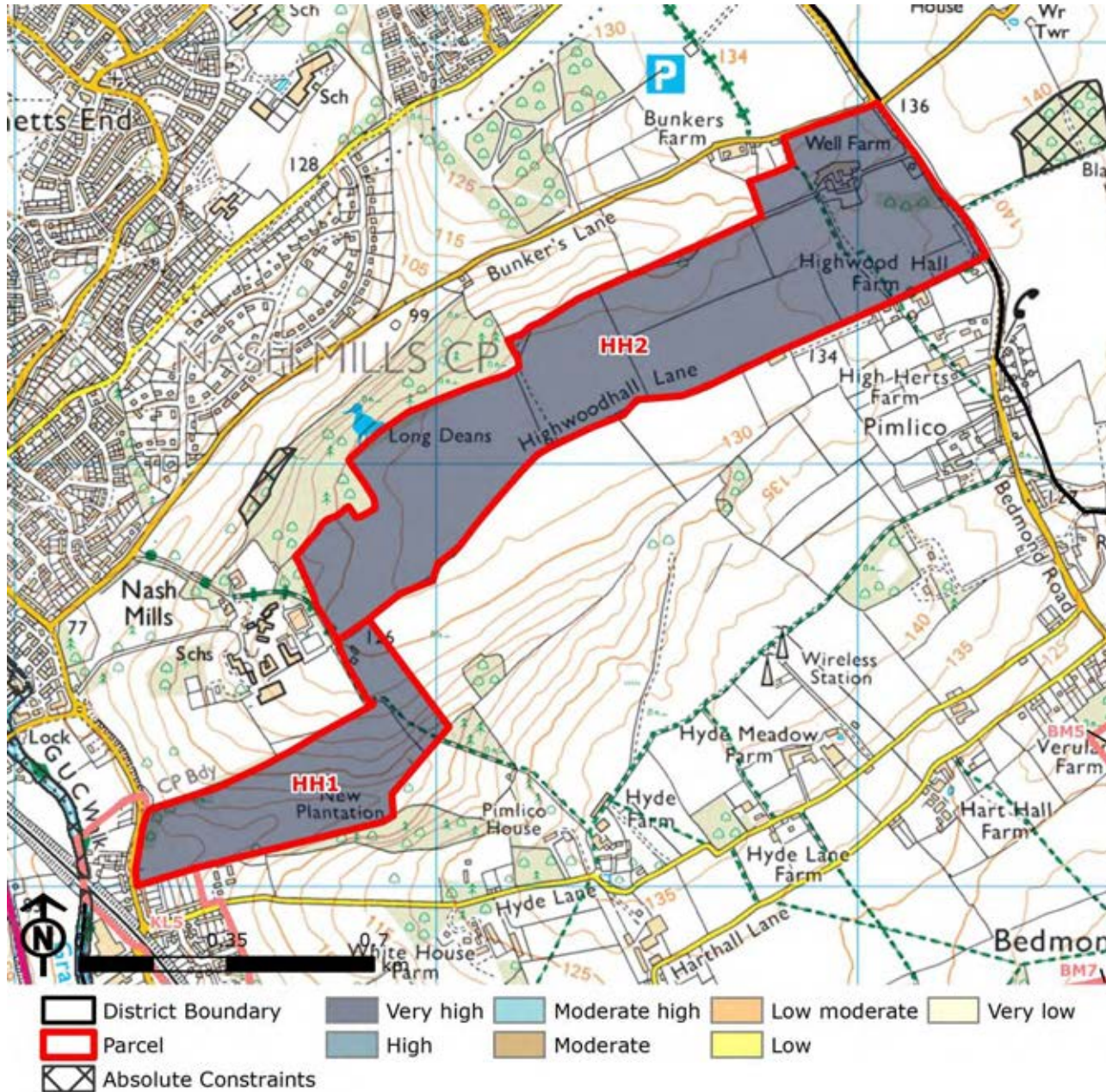


- | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Parcel | Flood Zone 3b | Scheduled Monument | SSSI |
| Green Belt | Local Nature Reserve | Ancient Woodland | Common Land |
| District Boundary | Registered Parks and Gardens | National Nature Reserve | |



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Hemel Hempstead



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Parcel

HH1

HH2

Harm Score

Very high

Very high

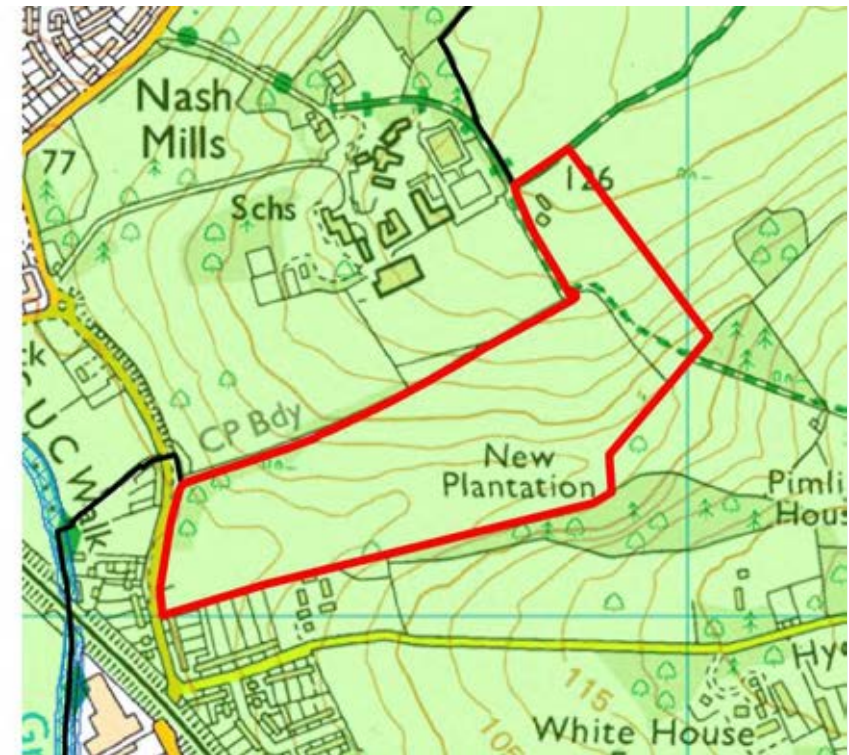
Hemel Hempstead Parcel HH1



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.25 0.5
km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Lower Road east along the northern boundary of the parcel

Right image

View from Lower Road east through the parcel



Hemel Hempstead

Parcel HH1

Description

Open farmland, with well-treed boundaries to the north and south sloping relatively steeply down towards the River Gade to the west. Land within Dacorum Borough forms the Green Belt between the parcel and the current inset edge of Hemel Hempstead and so this assessment considers the harm resulting from the release of land in HH1 in combination with the land within Dacorum, although only the land within HH1 is rated. The Green Belt within Dacorum provides significant landform distinction between parcel HH1 and the inset settlement edge, and tree cover provides further separation. Woodland to the south of the parcel provides a clear boundary with the wider Green Belt in this direction. Washed over development at Nash Mills also provides a boundary to the west while there is no significant boundary feature to the east.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel is subject to some containment from washed over development to the west at Nash Mills however, there is significant landform distinction from the inset settlement edge of Hemel Hempstead, which runs along the valley floor, to which the extent of tree cover adds further separation. Although Abbots Hill School (which lies between the parcel and the inset settlement edge) has development it lacks any relationship with the urban area and is not significantly urbanising in character. There is also a relatively strong belt of trees between the school and land in the parcel, therefore development in the parcel would constitute sprawl of the large built up area of Hemel Hempstead.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

The parcel lies in open land between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley which, in turn plays a role in maintaining the gap between Hemel Hempstead and Watford. Development in this parcel would contain any remaining open land on the valley floor between Kings Langley and Hemel Hempstead, in turn diminishing the separation from Watford. The parcel also has significant distinction from the inset settlement edge which strengthens its contribution.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel is subject to some containment from washed over development at Nash Mills however, the land form and tree cover provide significant distinction from the inset settlement edge of Hemel Hempstead. Although Abbots Hill School has development it lacks any relationship with the urban area. Its urbanising influence is limited and there is a relatively strong belt of woodland between it and parcel HH1. Furthermore, the valley landform creates a strong visual relationship with the open countryside on the western side of the valley.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Significant

Release of the parcel would result in the loss of the strong landform boundary with the inset edge of Hemel Hempstead. Furthermore, it would result in the loss of distinction between Hemel Hempstead and the washed over development at Nash Mills which would in turn weaken remaining separation from Kings Langley and areas of open land on the eastern side of the river valley that are already to an extent associated with the urbanising washed over liner development.

Hemel Hempstead

Parcel HH1

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Very high

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on preventing encroachment into the countryside and a relatively significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and the merging of towns furthermore, it would have a significant impact on adjacent Green Belt to the east.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations of harm within the parcel.

Hemel Hempstead

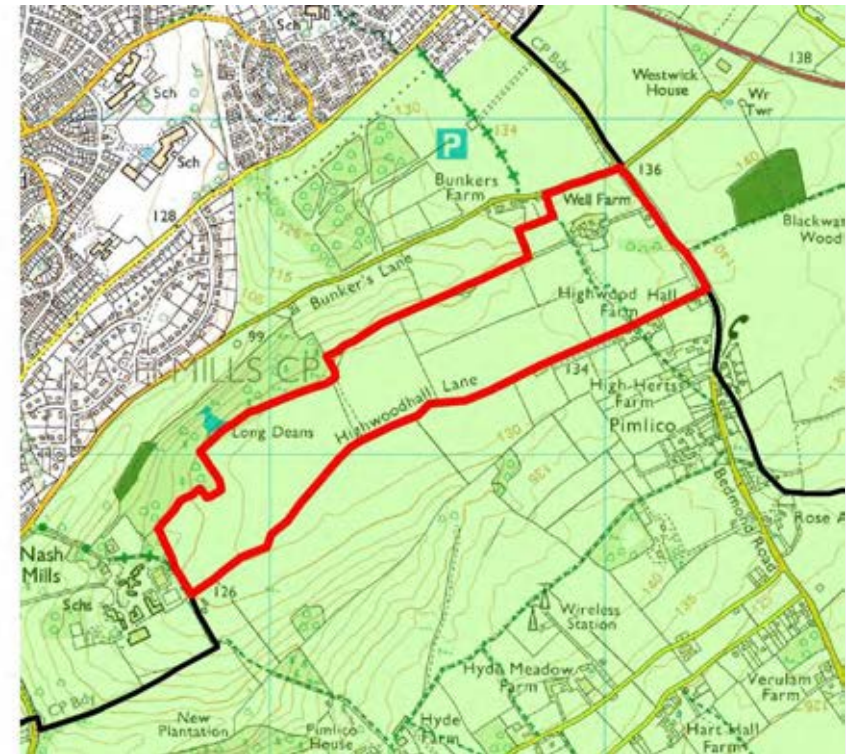
Parcel HH2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.55 1.1 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Bedmond Road north west through the parcel

Right image

View from Bedmond Road towards Bunkers Farm within the parcel



Hemel Hempstead

Parcel HH2

Description

Open farmland and a small cluster of agricultural buildings. Land within Dacorum Borough forms the Green Belt between the parcel and the current inset edge of Hemel Hempstead and so this assessment considers the harm resulting from the release of land in HH2 in combination with the land within Dacorum, although only the land within HH2 is rated. The Green Belt within Dacorum provides significant landform distinction between parcel HH2 and the inset settlement edge. Tree cover to the north west provides further separation. Treelined field edges form the boundary with the wider Green Belt to the south and north, Bedmond Road forms a boundary with Green Belt to the west while a woodland block forms clear distinction with Green Belt to the north west and west between the parcel and the inset settlement edge.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

The parcel is uncontained, open and undeveloped and has significant landform distinction from the inset settlement edge of Hemel Hempstead which runs along a valley floor. The extent of tree cover to the northwest adds further separation from the urban area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel lies between the towns of Hemel Hempstead and Watford. Although there is narrower separation along the valley floor to the west, the open high ground of the parcel is important in preserving separation between south east Hemel Hempstead and Watford.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

Due to the landform and tree cover the parcel retains significant distinction from the inset settlement edge of Hemel Hempstead, which runs along the valley floor. The parcel is uncontained, open and retains a strong relationship with the wider countryside to the south.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

Release of the parcel would result in the loss of the strong landform and woodland boundary to the current inset edge of Hemel Hempstead. There are no further strong boundary features on the farmland plateau. However, release of the parcel would not increase containment of any stronger performing Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Very high

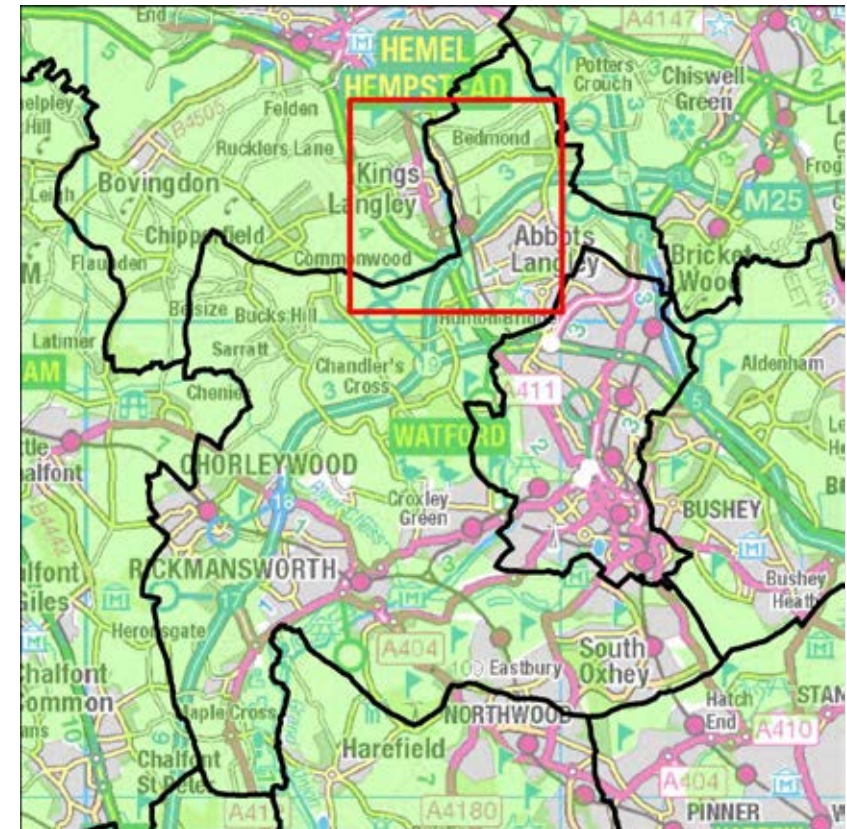
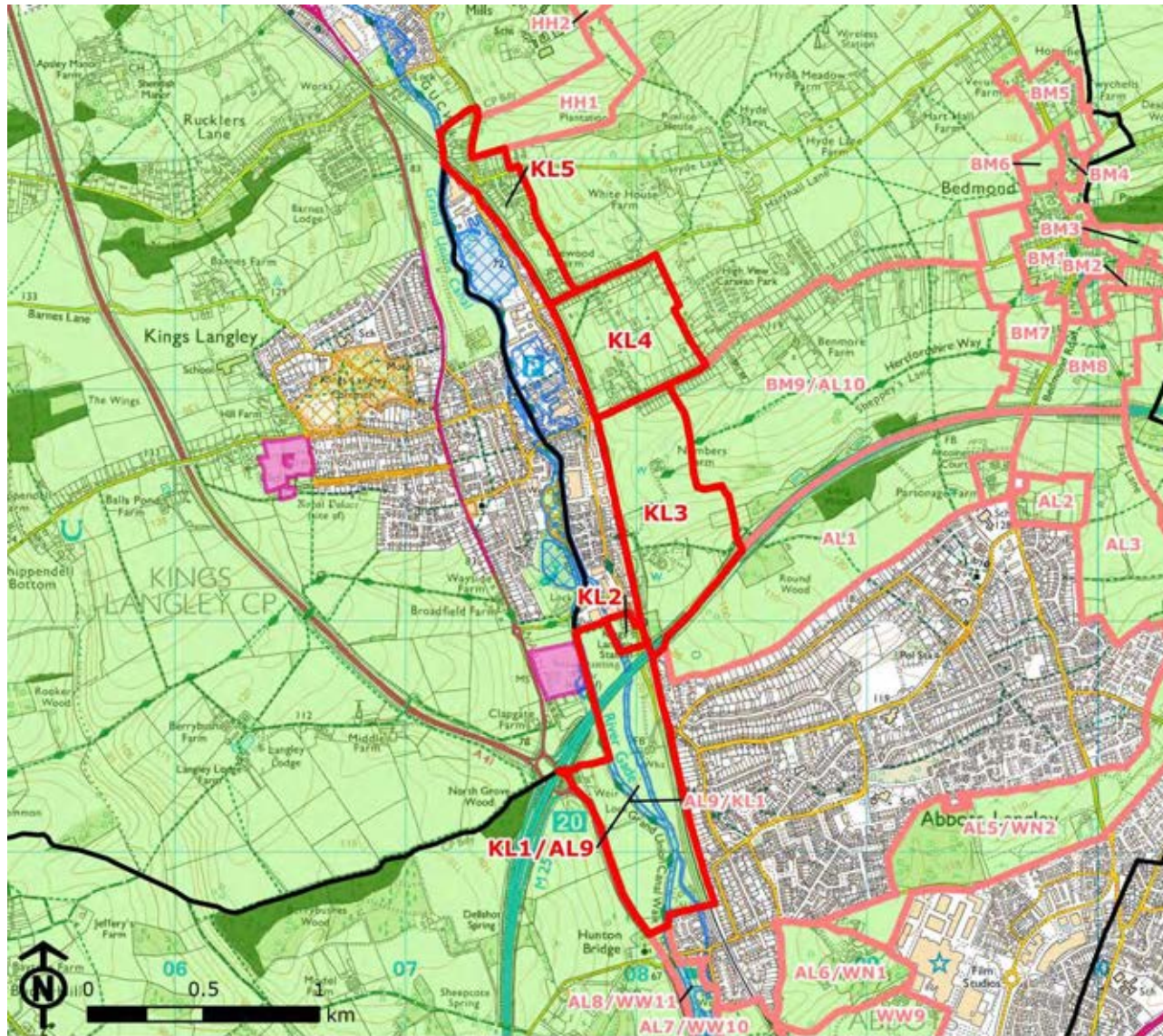
Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of settlements. It would have a moderate impact on adjacent Green Belt land therefore, it is concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be very-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations of harm within the parcel.

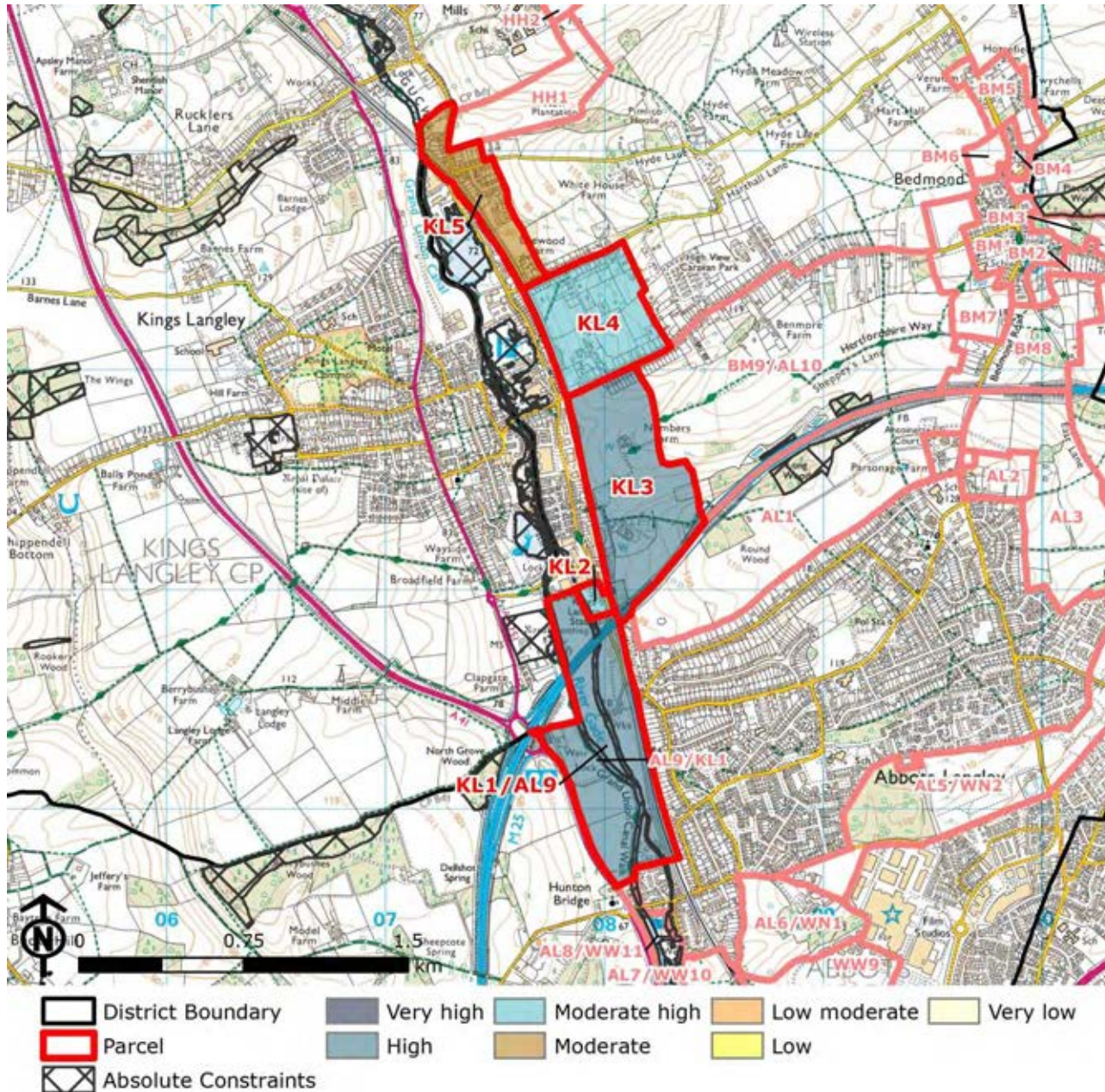
Kings Langley

Kings Langley



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Kings Langley



Parcel

KL1/AL9

KL2

KL3

KL4

KL5

Harm Score

High

Moderate high

High

Moderate high

Moderate

Kings Langley Parcel KL1/AL9

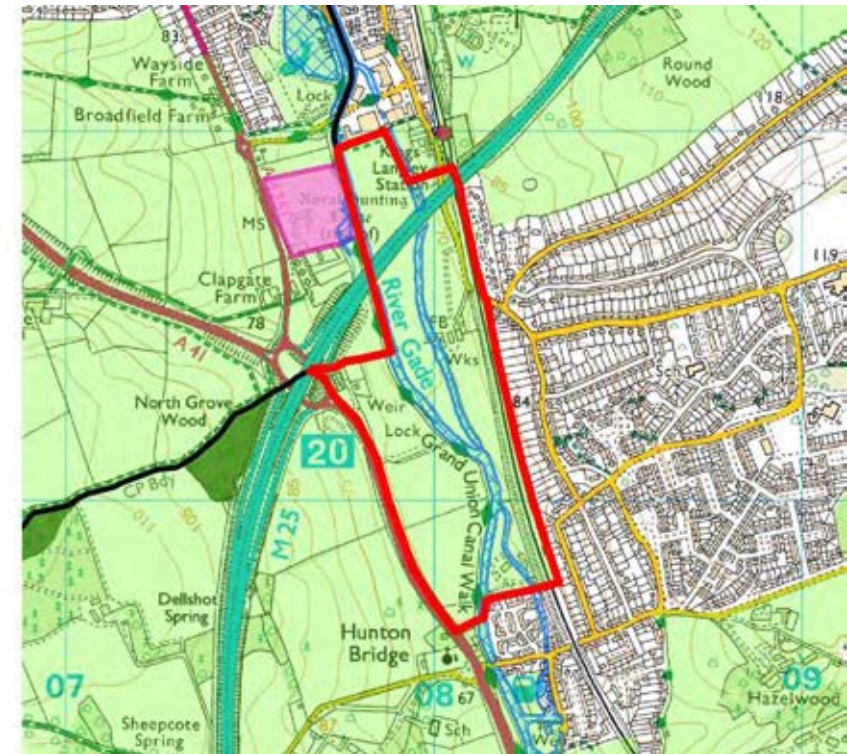


Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus

- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.5 1 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the footpath along the northern edge of the parcel, south towards the motorway and the canal

Kings Langley Parcel KL1/AL9

Description

Open fields, tree clusters, small-scale industrial uses and a single dwelling lying on either side of the River Gade, on the southern edge of Kings Langley and linking to the settlement of Abbots Langley. The parcel is strongly bound to the east and west, by the railway line and A41 respectively, and is traversed in the north by the M25 motorway.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel comprises of relatively open land with minimal urbanising influences, but has only limited distinction (provided by tree cover) from the inset edge to the north. The inset edge of Abbots Langley to the east has some containing influence, limiting the land's role in preventing sprawl, however this is limited by tree cover along the railway line.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively significant

The parcel lies in the gap between Abbots Langley and Kings Langley, which constitutes the largest gap existing between Watford and Hemel Hempstead, as perceived along valley floor routes and the M25. Releasing this parcel would also breach the separating feature of the M25 motorway lying between the two.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel has only limited urbanising influences and strong distinction from the urban edge of Abbots Langley to the east, leading to relatively strong openness. However the distinction with the urban edge in the north, and the presence of road infrastructure (the M25/A41), leads to a degree of containment that somewhat compromises openness.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would result in a stronger revised Green Belt boundary, which would now be defined by the waterway and a major road. However the release would lead to some containment of land to the west (adjacent to the A4251), which has a significant role in settlement separation.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a relatively strong impact on preventing urban sprawl, on preventing encroachment on the countryside, and on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would constitute only a minor weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Kings Langley Parcel KL2



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View into the parcel from the footpath along the northern edge

Kings Langley

Parcel KL2

Description

Partially developed land opposite Kings Langley railway station on the southern edge of Kings Langley, bound to the east by Station Road and the adjacent railway line. Existing development consists of a small group of dwellings and a small retail unit, with trees and open land to the rear. The parcel is bound to the south by a cluster of trees, to the west by a narrow river channel and to the north with a well-treed boundary with the Kings House office development.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

The parcel is adjacent to the urban edge of the Greater London large built up area. Existing development within the parcel has some urbanising influence but is only partial and thus has only a minor impact on openness. However due to the land's containment by the M25 to the south, railway line to the east and development to the north, the land has a stronger relationship with the inset settlement edge than the wider countryside, limiting its role in preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Relatively limited

The parcel does lie in the gap between Abbots Langley and Kings Langley, which constitutes the largest gap lying between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead (with Kings Langley as an intervening settlement). However existing development within the parcel weakens its role in preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively limited

Despite the urbanising influence of the partial development, the parcel retains some openness. However due to the land's containment by the M25 to the south, railway line to the east and development to the north, it has a stronger relationship with the inset settlement edge than the wider countryside, which compromises the sense of openness.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would result in a distinct revised Green Belt boundary defined by clear boundary features, including the railway/road infrastructure (to the east), and the river with associated vegetation (to the west). However the release would cause some limited containment of land to the east between the parcel and the main river.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively limited impact on preventing urban sprawl, encroachment on the countryside, and the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would constitute a minor weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel. Any more limited release of land within this area would weaken the justification for retaining the remainder of the parcel within the Green Belt.

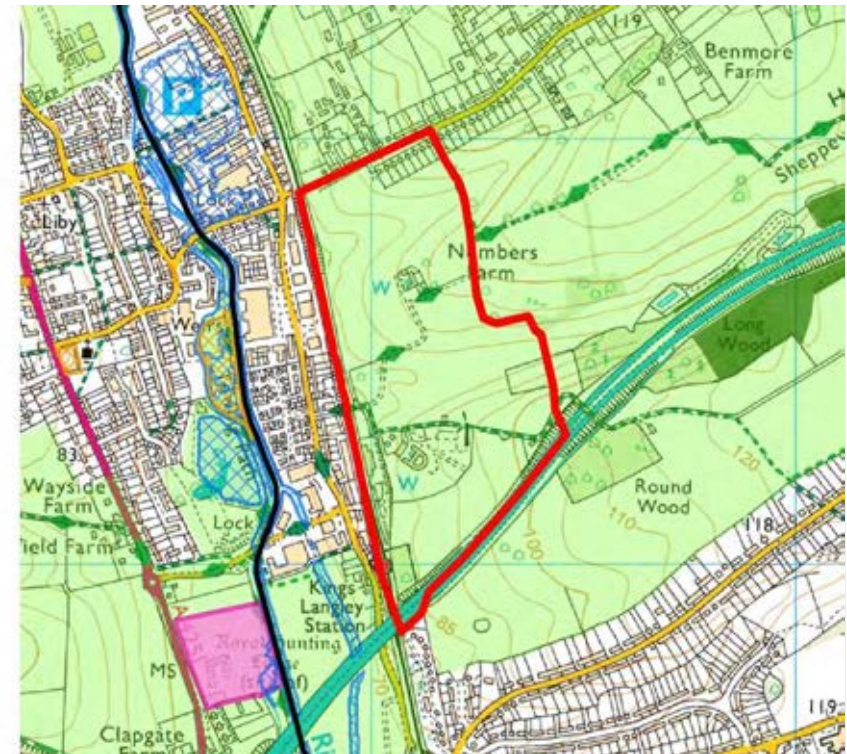
Kings Langley Parcel KL3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.45 0.9 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Egg Farm Lane north east across the parcel



Right image

View from Egg Farm Lane south east across the parcel

Kings Langley

Parcel KL3

Description

Largely arable fields on the eastern edge of Kings Langley with three isolated areas of development comprising office blocks, associated hardstanding, and small clusters of dwellings with gardens. On the western boundary the railway line separates the parcel from urbanising uses in Kings Langley; to the north the parcel is bound by the minor road of Tom's Lane; to the south the M25 provides a strong boundary feature; and to the east the parcel is separated from open countryside by a partially treed lane and field boundary.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge of the Greater London built-up area and contains minimal urbanising uses, leaving large areas of open land. The railway line to on the western boundary provides a strong and relatively consistent distinction from the urban edge, and has only been partially breached by small scale office and industrial development. While both the urbanising linear sprawl to the north and the motorway to the south have some containing effects, the sloping valley side and strong valley floor creates separation from urbanising uses and helps retain visual association with the wider countryside.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The parcel does lie in the gap between Abbots Langley and Kings Langley, which forms one of the larger gaps between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead. However the presence of Kings Langley to the west limits the role of this land in preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel contains minimal urbanising uses and retains strong openness and strong distinction from urbanising uses in Kings Langley. Due to the sloping valley side and strong valley floor, the land retains visual association with the wider countryside and has a stronger relationship with the latter than with urbanising uses.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Significant

Releasing this land would breach the distinct boundary provided to the west by the railway line, and would develop sloping land that creates is distinct from Kings Langley. Any newly created boundaries would be weaker, defined instead only by field boundaries. There would also be a degree of containment of adjacent Green Belt land on all sides.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside, and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of neighbouring towns. Its release would constitute a significant weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be high.

Potential to limit harm

By limiting the release to the strip of partially developed industrial land south of Egg Farm Lane, the subsequent harm could be limited to low-moderate. Although the release would still breach the strong boundary of the railway line, it would be more contained.

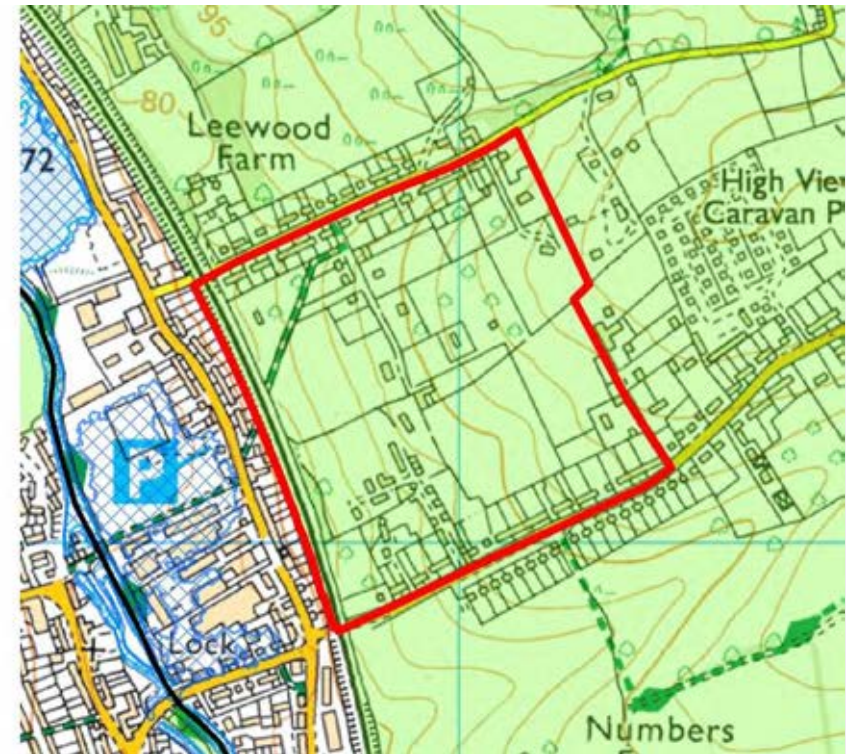
Kings Langley Parcel KL4



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.25 0.5
km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from the footpath in the north western corner of the parcel

Right image

View of the railway tracks which form the western boundary of the parcel



Kings Langley Parcel KL4

Description

Parcel of land on the eastern edge of Kings Langley that is already significantly developed with urbanising linear sprawl around the edges - along Harthall Lane and Tom's Lane. Central areas of the parcel comprise of open fields and clusters of trees. The railway line provides a strong and distinct boundary to the west, minor roads provide the boundaries to the south and north, and there is little distinction to the east with adjacent washed over development.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge of Kings Langley and the railway line provides strong distinction from the urban edge. However the existing extent of linear sprawl along Tom's Lane and Harthall Lane limits the parcel's role in preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies in the gap between Kings Langley and Hemel Hempstead, which in turn contributes to the gap between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead. However the extent of existing development within it weakens its role in preventing the merger of neighbouring towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

Despite the extent of existing linear housing development within the parcel, and the containment it creates, the parcel still retains significant openness. In addition, the valley landform and the role of tree cover both limit the perception of the extent of housing.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Moderate

Releasing this land would further breach the distinct boundary provided by the railway line and would result in a weaker boundary because of the continuation of linear development eastwards. However the existing development also provides some containment of the land, reducing the impact on adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively strong impact on preventing encroachment on the countryside and a moderate impact on preventing urban sprawl. Its release would constitute a moderate weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate-high.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

It is recognised that if land were to be released beyond the eastern outer boundary of the parcel, the release would constitute high harm. This is because, despite the existence of urbanising washed over development to the east, the open land on this plateau has stronger separation from the settlement of Kings Langley, is less contained by surrounding development and has a stronger association with countryside to the north. In addition, any revised Green Belt boundary following such a release would be weaker.

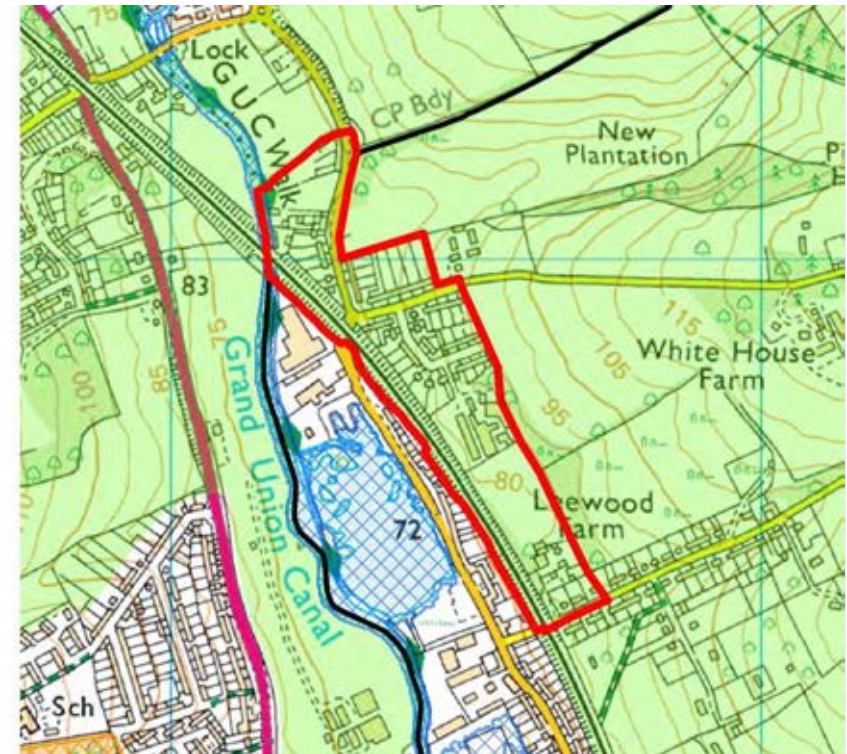
Kings Langley Parcel KL5



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.3 0.6 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View of the washed over development within the parcel along Lower Road

Kings Langley

Parcel KL5

Description

Linear strip of land to the west of Kings Langley to the west of the railway line. The parcel is significantly developed with housing in the north but has stronger openness to the south. The railway line provides a strong boundary to the west; the minor road of Harthall Lane bounds the parcel to the south; a woodland belt bounds much of the parcel to the east; while the northern boundary is more weakly defined by residential gardens.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge of Kings Langley and the railway line provides strong distinction from urbanising uses to the west, however the extent of existing urbanising development within the parcel limits its role in preventing sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel lies in the gap between Kings Langley and Hemel Hempstead, which in turn contributes to the gap between the towns of Watford and Hemel Hempstead. However the extent of existing development within weakens its role in preventing the merger of neighbouring towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel's openness is comprised by the level of existing development, particularly the Nash Mills housing development in the north of the parcel. However there is more openness to the south, and the separation from the urban edge provided by the railway line as a boundary feature limits any association with urbanising uses in Kings Langley, as does the degree of containment by surrounding development.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Releasing this land would breach the strong boundary feature currently provided by the railway line, however the tree cover on the parcel's eastern boundary would provide strong containment, resulting in minimal impact on adjacent Green Belt land.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a relatively moderate impact on preventing urban sprawl and encroachment on the countryside. Its release would constitute only a minor weakening of adjacent Green Belt land. It is therefore concluded that the harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be moderate.

Potential to limit harm

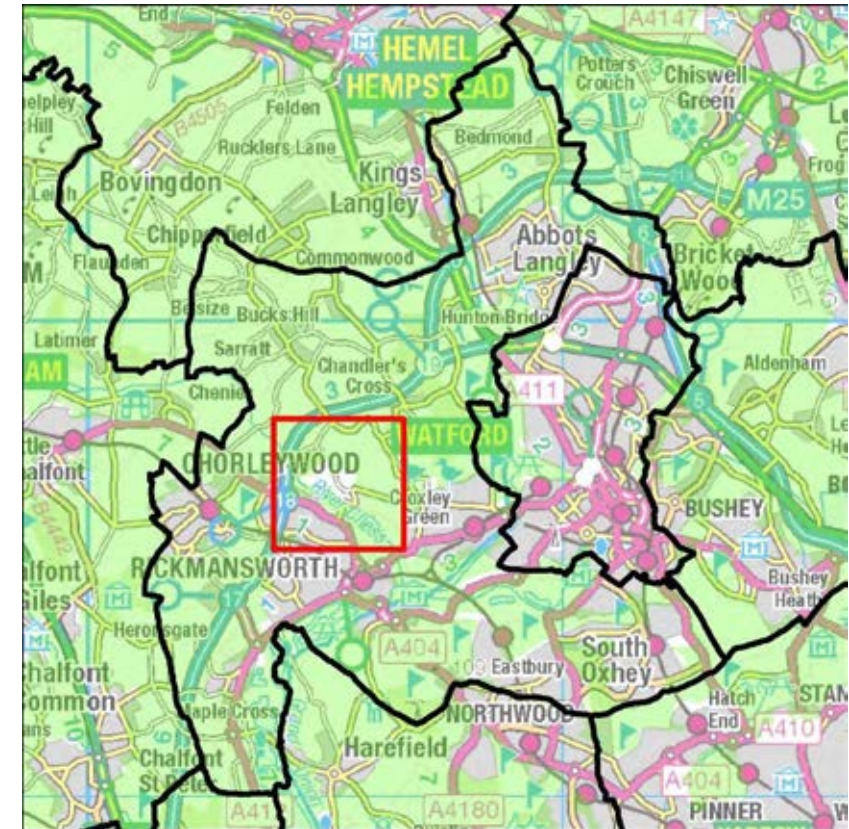
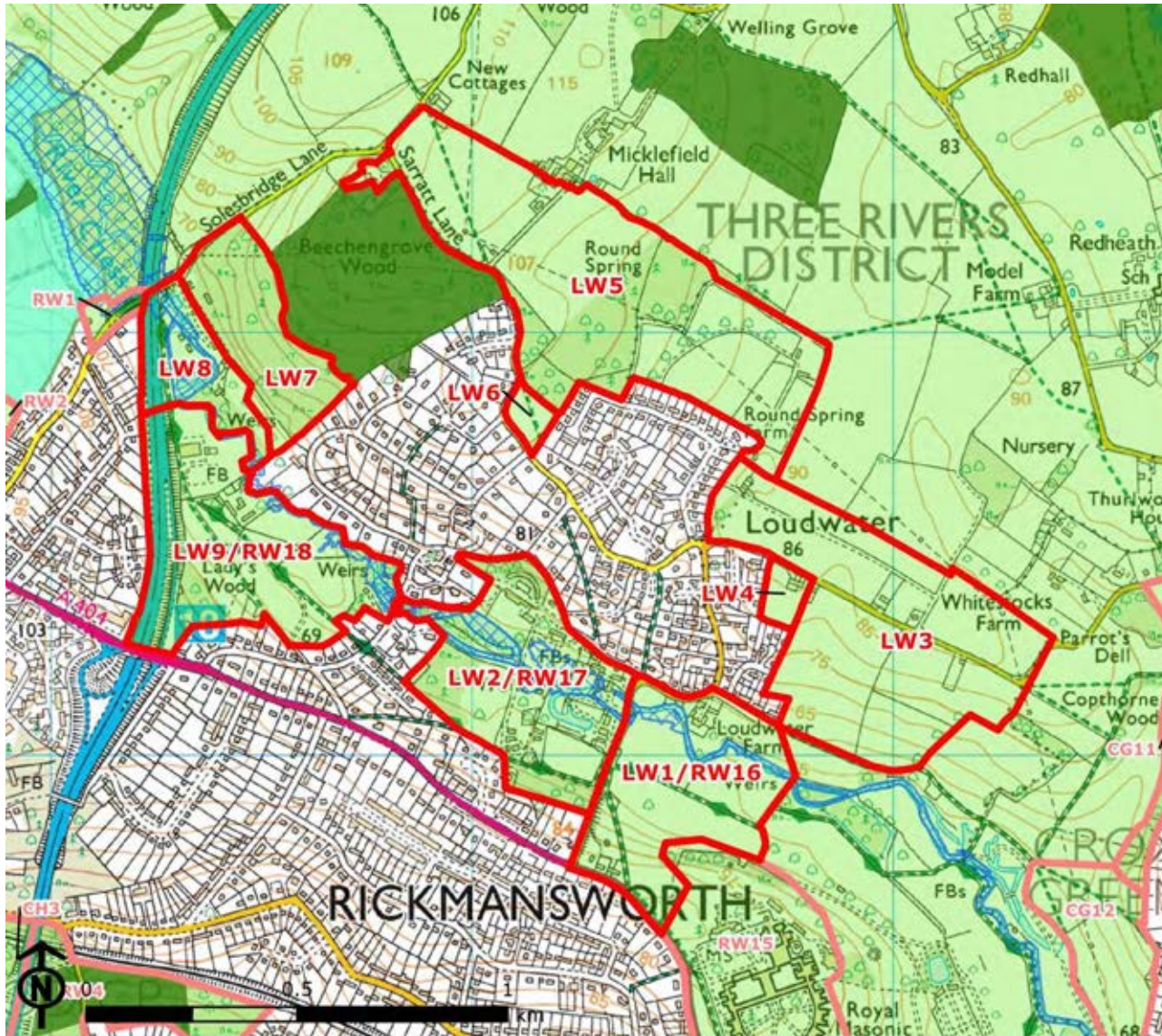
There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

If further land were to be released beyond the outer eastern boundary of the parcel, this would result in high harm to Green Belt purposes. This is because this adjacent land makes a stronger contribution to all Green Belt purposes and, following release, any revised boundary would be weaker than the tree cover which currently creates a clear distinction between the open valley side and urbanising valley floor development to the west and south.

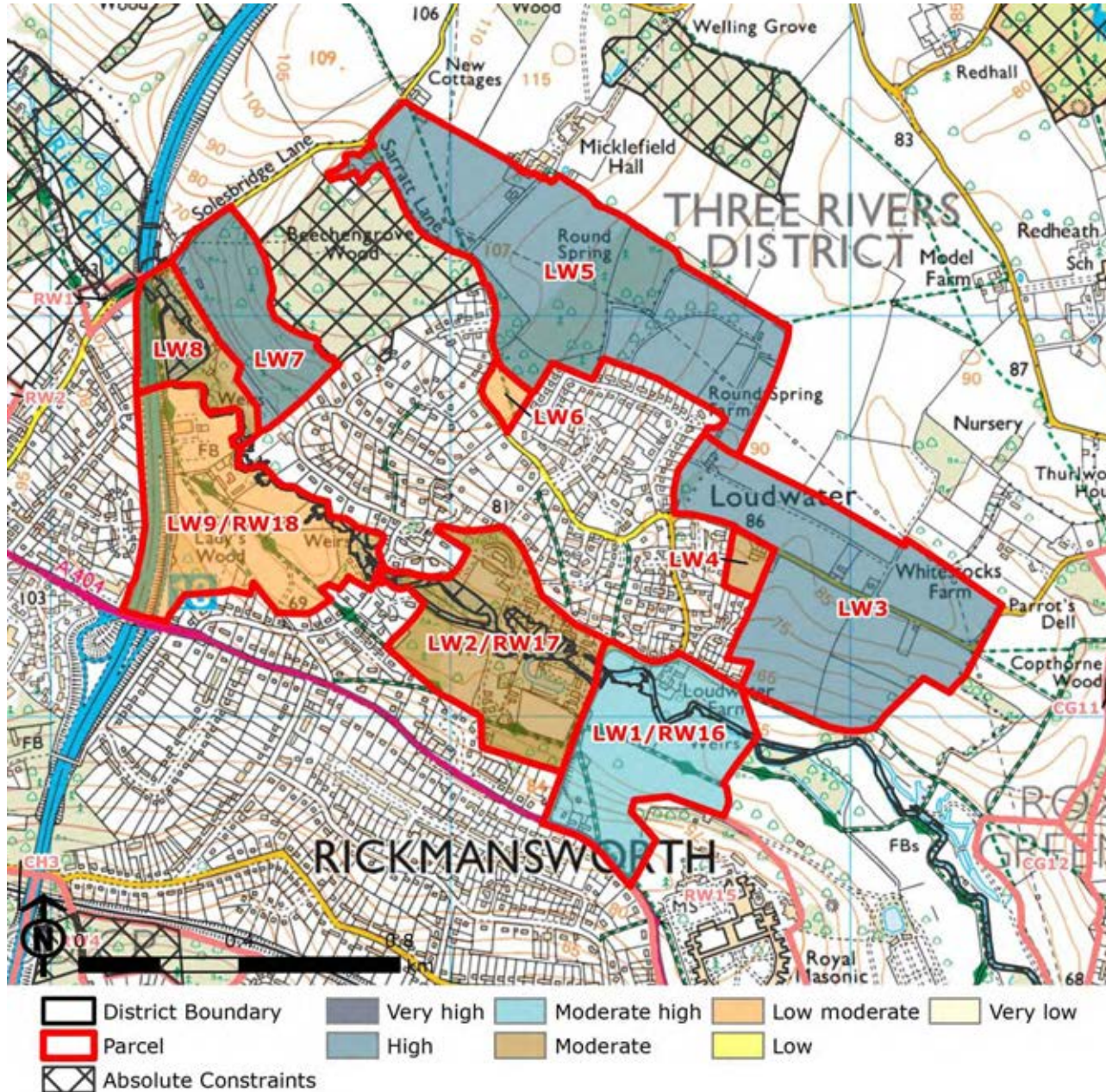
Loudwater

Loudwater



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Loudwater



Parcel

LW1/RW16

LW2/RW17

LW3

LW4

LW5

LW6

LW7

LW8

LW9/RW18

Harm Score

Moderate high

Moderate

High

Moderate

High

Low moderate

High

Moderate

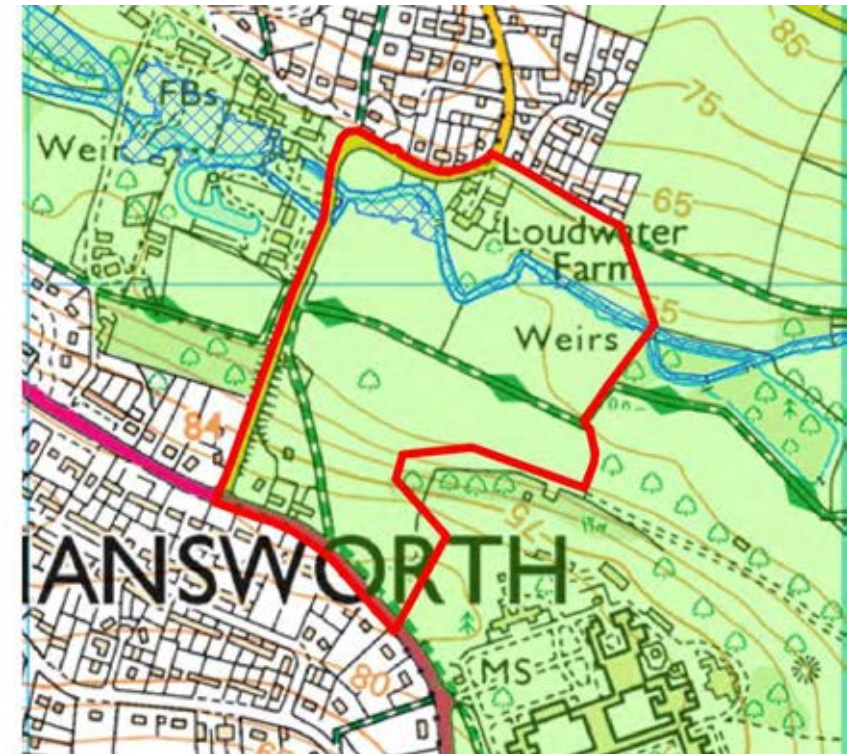
Low moderate

Loudwater

Parcel LW1/RW16



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View of the open fields in the southern half of the parcel



Loudwater

Parcel LW1/RW16

Description

A couple of open fields, some tree belts and a small number of washed over residential dwellings, located between the inset settlement of Loudwater and the inset urban edge of Rickmansworth. The parcel directly adjoins the inset settlement edge of Loudwater, with the boundary formed by Chess Lane, backing on to residential gardens. Reasonably thick tree belts and tree-lined field boundaries mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east and to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively significant

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open but is partially contained by development to the north (Loudwater) and to the south east by the Royal Masonic School for Girls.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

Release of land would result in the narrowing of the gap between Loudwater and Rickmansworth but Loudwater is not treated as a town with regard to Purpose 2. Development of the parcel would lead to potential perception of narrowing the gap between Rickmansworth/Loudwater and Croxley Green (part of Watford), although development between these settlements is much closer to the south.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Relatively significant

The parcel is open and undeveloped, with some sense of distinction from the urban edge. Release of the parcel would lead to encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to complete containment of the Green Belt land to the west but this is land that plays a weaker role in relation to the Green Belt purposes. It would lead to creation of a Green Belt boundary of similar strength to the existing boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate high

Release of the parcel would have a relatively significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Moderate-High.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Harm beyond outer boundary

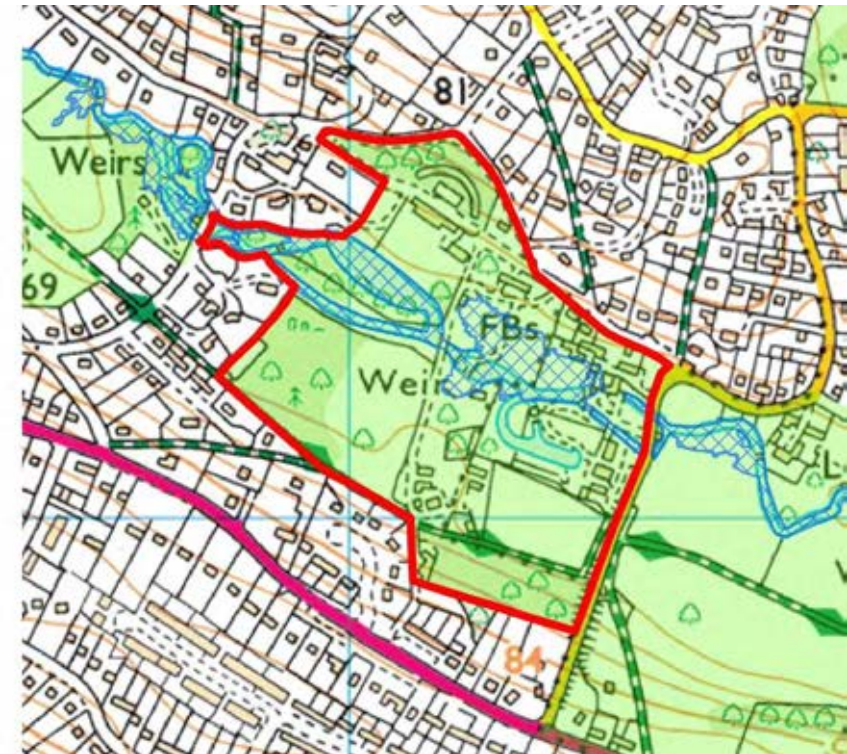
Development to the east would encroach further on open land, would reduce the gap between Loudwater and Croxley Green and would be further separated from the urban edge by tree belts, resulting in high harm.

Loudwater

Parcel LW2/RW17



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Troutstream Way across the bridge over the Chess within the parcel



Right image

View of the large gardens and open spaces within the parcel

Loudwater

Parcel LW2/RW17

Description

Very low density residential development, and some small woodland blocks located between the inset settlement of Loudwater and the inset urban edge of Rickmansworth. The parcel directly adjoins the inset settlement edge of Loudwater with the boundary formed by Loudwater Drive residential road and a treeline. Further tree belts and field edges mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the east. To the west only a very narrow strip of Green Belt links the parcel with the wider countryside in this direction, otherwise it is enclosed by the edges of Loudwater and Rickmansworth.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Whilst the parcel is contained by development on three edges, the land is predominately open with the exception of a few residential properties. Extensive tree cover retains a reasonably strong sense of distinction from the inset area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The land lies between Loudwater and Rickmansworth, but Loudwater is not considered to be a town. The extent of inset development to the north east and south east of the parcel means that there would be no impact on the gap between Rickmansworth/Loudwater and Croxley Green (part of Watford).

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The parcel contains some development in the form of a number of large, detached residential dwellings, and is contained on three sides by inset development. The tree lined edges and general openness within the parcel however gives it some distinction from the urban edge and its release would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to the increased containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the west which would be enclosed by urban development on three sides. However the field boundaries and tree belt which form the eastern boundary of the parcel with the wider Green Belt would not be clearer or stronger than the existing boundaries.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

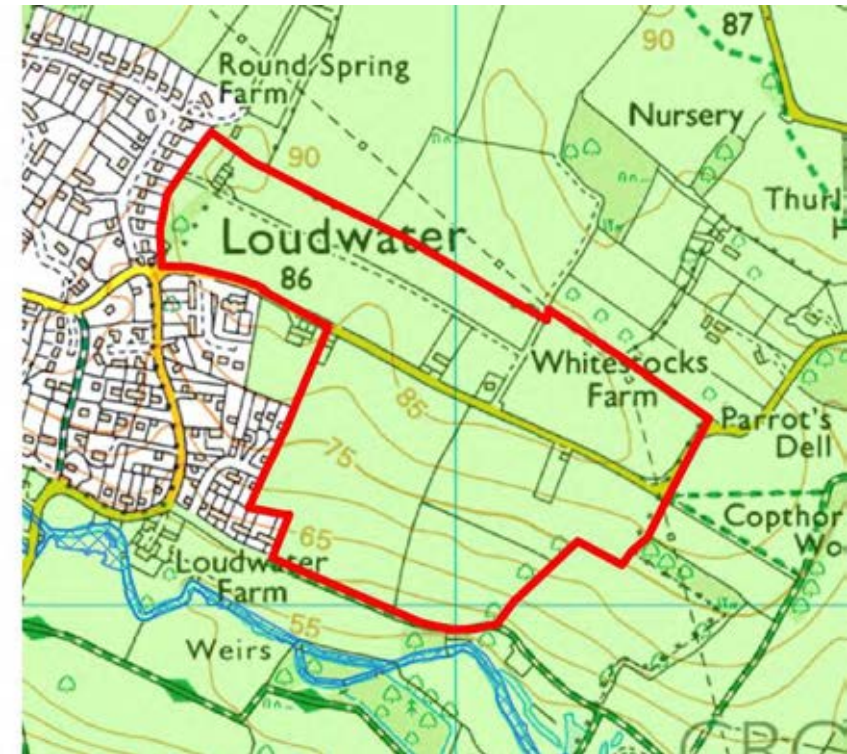
Loudwater Parcel LW3



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.25 0.5
km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Shepherds Lane south west across the western half of the parcel and towards the urban edge of Loudwater

Right image

View from Shepherds Lane south across the parcel towards the Chess Valley and The Royal Masonic School for Girls



Loudwater Parcel LW3

Description

Open fields, some tree lines and a small number of washed over residential dwellings, located on the eastern edge of the inset settlement of Loudwater. The parcel is divided from east to west by Loudwater Lane. The parcel directly adjoins residential development within the inset settlement of Loudwater to the southwest and a tree belt separates the parcel from residential development within the inset settlement of Loudwater to the northwest. A combination of tree belts, lanes and hedgerow field boundaries mark the edge of the parcel with the wider Green Belt to the north, south and east.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open, uncontained and largely undeveloped with limited distinction from the inset settlement edge of Loudwater. Therefore, development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Moderate

The land lies within a gap between Loudwater and Croxley Green, which in turn have little separation from the towns of Rickmansworth and Watford. Development of the parcel would lead to the potential perception of narrowing the gap between Rickmansworth/Loudwater and Croxley Green (part of Watford), although woodland blocks on the western edge of Croxley Green provide a separating element between the towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel is open and largely undeveloped and uncontained, with limited distinction from the inset settlement edge of Loudwater and a strong relationship with the wider Green Belt to the north, south and east. Therefore, development would constitute significant encroachment on countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to the containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the west within parcel LW4, but this is land that plays a weaker role in relation to the Green Belt purposes. Tree lines and hedges would form a new Green Belt boundary which would not be weaker than the existing settlement edge.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and a moderate impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be High.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

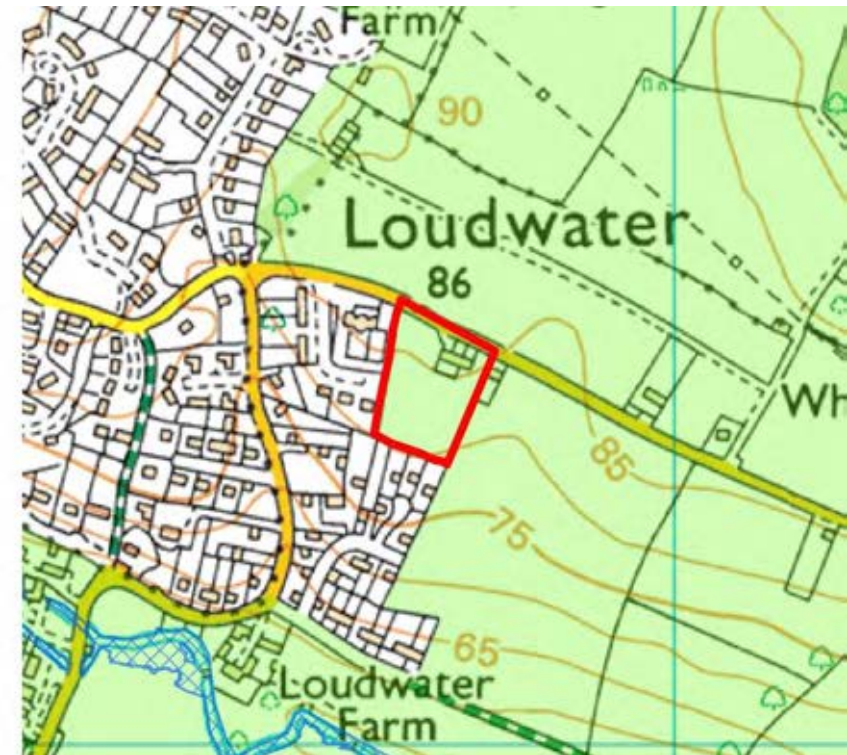
Loudwater Parcel LW4



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View across the parcel from Loudwater Lane



Right image

View across the parcel towards the washed over dwelling in the north eastern corner



Loudwater Parcel LW4

Description

Open field and a washed over residential dwelling located on the eastern edge of the inset settlement of Loudwater. The parcel directly adjoins residential development within the inset settlement of Loudwater to the south and west. A lane, residential dwelling and a hedgerow field boundary mark the edge of the parcel with the wider Green Belt to the north and east.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Whilst the parcel is largely open, it has a close association with the inset settlement edge, which contains the parcel to the south and west, and the land is contained by the existing residential dwellings to the north and northeast, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The land lies within a gap between Loudwater and Croxley Green, which in turn have little separation from the towns of Rickmansworth and Watford. As the parcel does not extend beyond the existing settlement edge of Loudwater, development of the parcel would not narrow the gap between Rickmansworth/Loudwater and Croxley Green (part of Watford).

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

Whilst the parcel is largely open, it has a close association with the inset settlement edge, which contains the parcel to the south and west, and the land is contained by the existing residential dwellings to the north and northeast, limiting the extent to which its release would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Release of the parcel would not increase containment of any other Green Belt land. The hedgerow bounding the parcel to the east and Loudwater Lane bounding the parcel to the north would form a new Green Belt boundary of similar strength to the existing boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment, and no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Loudwater Parcel LW5



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.4 0.8 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View across the north westerly corner of the parcel looking towards the motorway



Right image

View from the north western corner of the parcel south east towards the woodland along the southern edge

Loudwater Parcel LW5

Description

Open fields, 'Round Spring' woodland and a small number of washed over residential dwellings, located on the northern edge of the inset settlement of Loudwater. The parcel is crossed from north to south by Cherry Walk lane in the centre of the parcel and by a farm track in the east. The parcel directly adjoins residential development within the inset settlement of Loudwater to the south and west. Ancient woodland and Sarratt Lane mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the west, and lanes, farm tracks and treelines mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the north and east. Miclefield Hall events venue also marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the north.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is open, largely undeveloped and has a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge by woodland within the south of the parcel. With the exception of Miclefield Hall to the north, the parcel is predominantly uncontained. Therefore, development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

The parcel is open, largely undeveloped and has a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge by woodland within the south of the parcel. With the exception of Miclefield Hall to the north, the parcel is predominantly uncontained with a strong relationship with the wider countryside. Therefore, development would constitute encroachment on countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to the containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the south within parcel LW6, but this is land that plays a weaker role in relation to the Green Belt purposes, and would increase containment of the ancient woodland to the west. It would lead to creation of a weaker Green Belt boundary than the existing Green Belt boundary which has woodland along much of its edge, including ancient woodland to the west.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

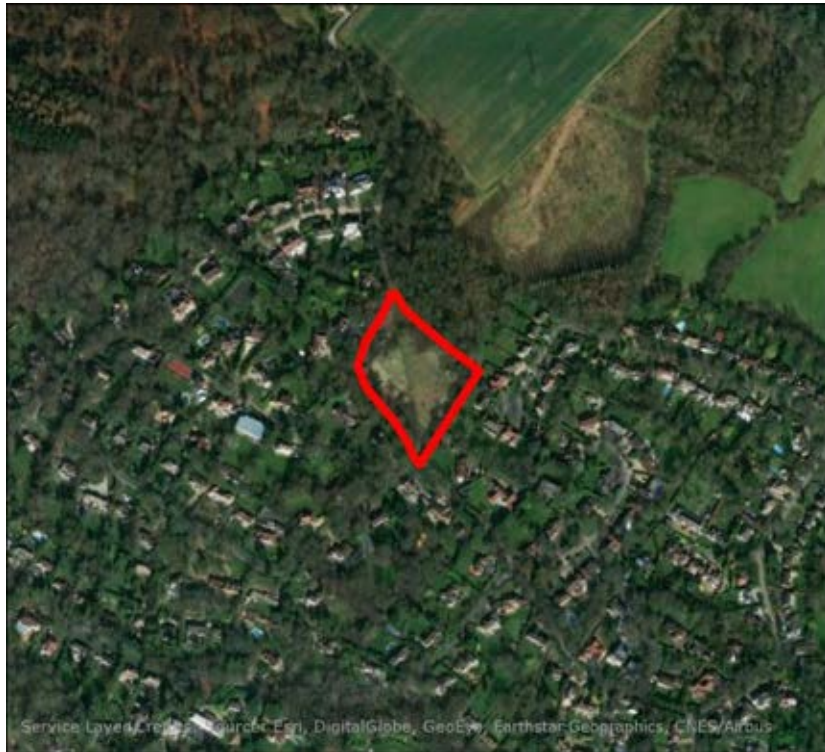
High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on checking sprawl and on countryside encroachment, and a no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be High.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Loudwater Parcel LW6



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View south east across the parcel, towards the urban edges of Loudwater



Right image

View south across the parcel towards the boundary with Loudwater



Loudwater Parcel LW6

Description

Open undeveloped grassland on the northern edge of the inset settlement of Loudwater. The tree-lined Sarratt Lane marks the inset settlement edge with Loudwater to the southwest and the parcel is contained to the east, west and south by residential development within the inset settlement of Loudwater. 'Round Spring' woodland marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the north.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Whilst the parcel is largely open and the tree-lined Sarratt Lane provides some sense of distinction from the urban edge, the parcel has a close association with the inset settlement edge, which contains the parcel to the south, east and west, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

Although the parcel is open and the tree-lined Sarratt Lane provides some sense of distinction from the urban edge, the parcel is contained by residential development within the inset settlement of Loudwater to the south, east and west, limiting the extent to which its release would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Release of the parcel would not increase containment of any other Green Belt land. 'Round Spring' woodland bounding the parcel to the north would form a new Green Belt boundary of similar strength to the existing boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and on countryside encroachment, and a no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Low-Moderate.

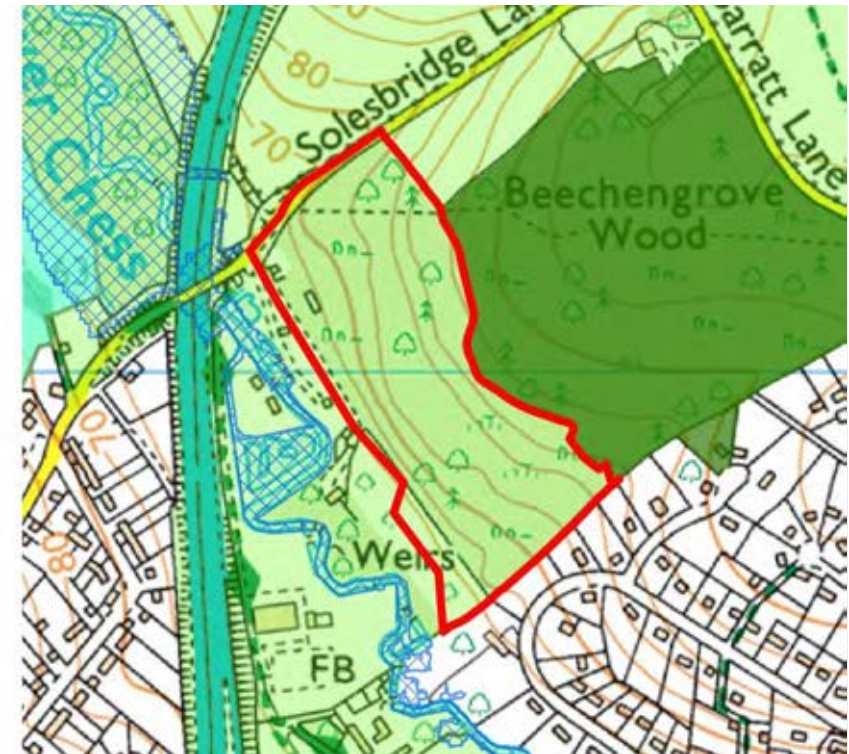
Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Loudwater Parcel LW7



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image
View of the woodland within the parcel

Loudwater Parcel LW7

Description

Open, largely undeveloped woodland and a single washed over residential dwelling, located on the north western edge of the inset settlement of Loudwater. The woodland directly adjoins residential development on the settlement edge of Loudwater to the southeast. Ancient woodland within Beechengrove Wood and Solesbridge Lane mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the northeast and northwest respectively. Washed over loosely dispersed residential dwellings mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the west, and the woodland directly adjoins the grassland within the Green Belt to the southwest.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Significant

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Although the residential development within Loudwater to the southeast, and washed over residential dwellings to the west provide some containment of the parcel, the parcel is open, largely undeveloped and the woodland has a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge. Therefore, development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significant

Although the residential development within Loudwater to the southeast, and washed over residential dwellings to the west provide some containment of the parcel, the parcel is open, largely undeveloped and the woodland has a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge. Therefore, development would constitute encroachment on countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

Minor

Release of the parcel would lead to the further containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the west within parcel LW8, but this is land that plays a weaker role in relation to the Green Belt purposes, but it would increase containment of the ancient woodland to the northeast and land to the north. Release of land would also lead to a minor weakening of the Green Belt boundary.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

High

Release of the parcel would have a significant impact on checking sprawl and on countryside encroachment, and a no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a minor impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be High.

Potential to limit harm

If a block of woodland is retained along Solesbridge Lane then there is potential to reduce harm to Moderate-High.

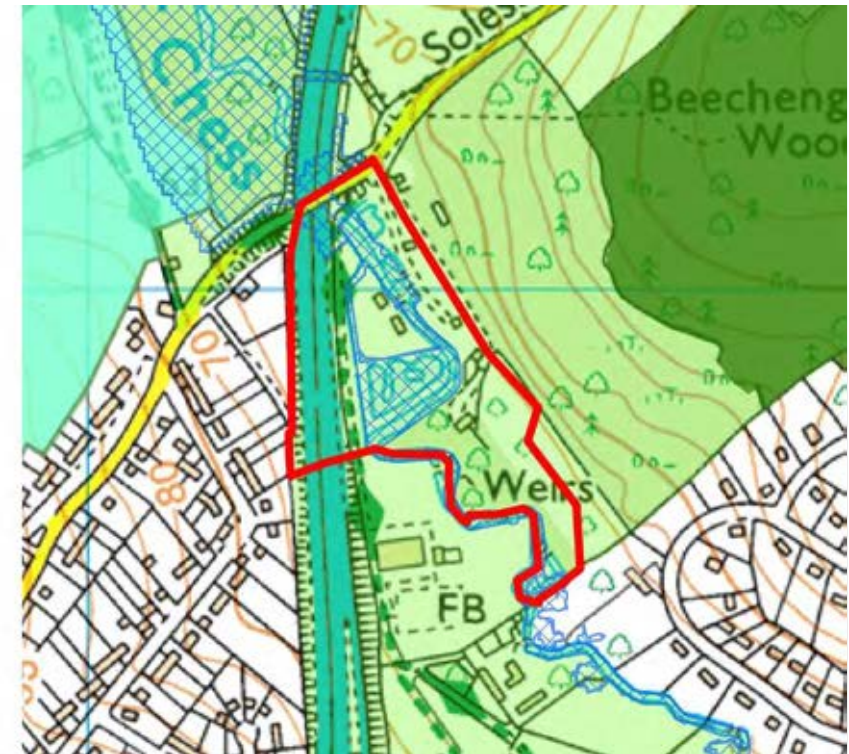
Loudwater Parcel LW8



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686



Left image

View from Solesbridge Lane south east towards the dwellings within the parcel

Loudwater Parcel LW8

Description

Open grassland, tree clusters, a pond, and loosely dispersed residential dwellings, located on the north western edge of the inset settlement of Loudwater. The southeast corner of the parcel directly adjoins residential development on the settlement edge of Loudwater and the M25 motorway to the west marks the inset settlement edge with Rickmansworth. Beechengrove Wood marks the edge with the settlement edge of Loudwater to the east and the wider Green Belt to the northeast, Solesbridge Lane marks the edge with the wider Green Belt to the north and the River Chess, an aquatics centre and tree cluster mark the edge with the wider Green Belt to the south.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Moderate

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. Although the parcel is largely open with a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge by woodland to the east, the M25 motorway to the west, aquatics centre to the south and residential properties within Loudwater to the southeast provide some containment of the parcel, limiting the extent to which development would be considered sprawl of the large built up area.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The parcel does not lie between neighbouring towns and therefore does not contribute to preventing the merging of towns.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

Although the parcel is largely open with a strong sense of distinction from the urban edge by woodland to the east, the M25 motorway to the west, aquatics centre to the south and residential properties within Loudwater to the southeast provide some containment of the parcel, limiting the extent to which its release would constitute encroachment on the countryside.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Release of the parcel would lead to the further containment of adjacent Green Belt land to the south within parcel LW9, but this is land that plays a weaker role in relation to the Green Belt purposes, and would form a new Green Belt boundary along the M25 motorway corridor to the west, along Solesbridge Lane to the north and along Beechengrove Wood to the northeast.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and on countryside encroachment, and a no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Loudwater

Parcel LW9/RW18



- Parcel
- Green Belt
- District Boundary
- Flood Zone 3b
- Local Nature Reserve
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- SSSI
- Common Land



0 0.2 0.4 km



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100018686

Left image

View from the footpath over the north east of the parcel towards the urban edge of Loudwater



Right image

View over the western half of the parcel towards the motorway



Loudwater

Parcel LW9/RW18

Description

Open agricultural fields and a small area of woodland adjacent to the inset edges of Loudwater and Rickmansworth. An aquatics centre is located in the northern area. The parcel is bordered by inset development to the north east, east, south and west which creates urban containment. Garden boundaries and trees within gardens form the inset settlement edges to the north east, east and south, while the motorway provides boundary to the west.

Impact on contribution

Purpose 1 Contribution - Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Relatively limited

Loudwater is close enough to more contiguous urban development to the south to be considered to constitute part of the large built-up area extending out from Greater London. The parcel is predominantly open and undeveloped. However, the extent to which the parcel is contained by residential development and the motorway limits the extent to which release would constitute urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 Contribution - Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Limited – No contribution

The land lies between Loudwater and Rickmansworth, but Loudwater is not considered to be a town. The extent of inset development to the east of the parcel means that there would be no impact on the gap between Rickmansworth and Watford.

Purpose 3 Contribution - Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Moderate

The land is predominantly open however, it is contained on three sides by inset urban development and includes an aquatics centre along the northern edge which limits its relationship with the wider countryside. It is noted that the area which contains the aquatics centre makes no contribution to this purpose.

Impact on adjacent Green Belt

No/Negligible

Release of the parcel would not increase containment of any other Green Belt land. The parcel is contained on three sides by the inset edge, and the aquatics centre and tree belt in the north limits its relationship with the wider Green Belt to the north.

Overall harm to Green Belt purposes from release of land

Low moderate

Release of the parcel would have a moderate impact on checking sprawl and countryside encroachment and no/ limited impact on preventing the merging of towns. It would have a negligible impact on adjacent Green Belt. The harm to the Green Belt of releasing this parcel would be Low-Moderate.

Potential to limit harm

There are no notable variations in harm within the parcel.

Maple Cross