

## Appendix C: Village Analysis

### Purpose and Method of Appraisal

As part of the review of the Green Belt across the District, the NPPF requires that there is consideration of settlements set within the Green Belt and whether the designation can be removed to allow appropriate growth, specifically:

*“If it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt” (NPPF para 86).*

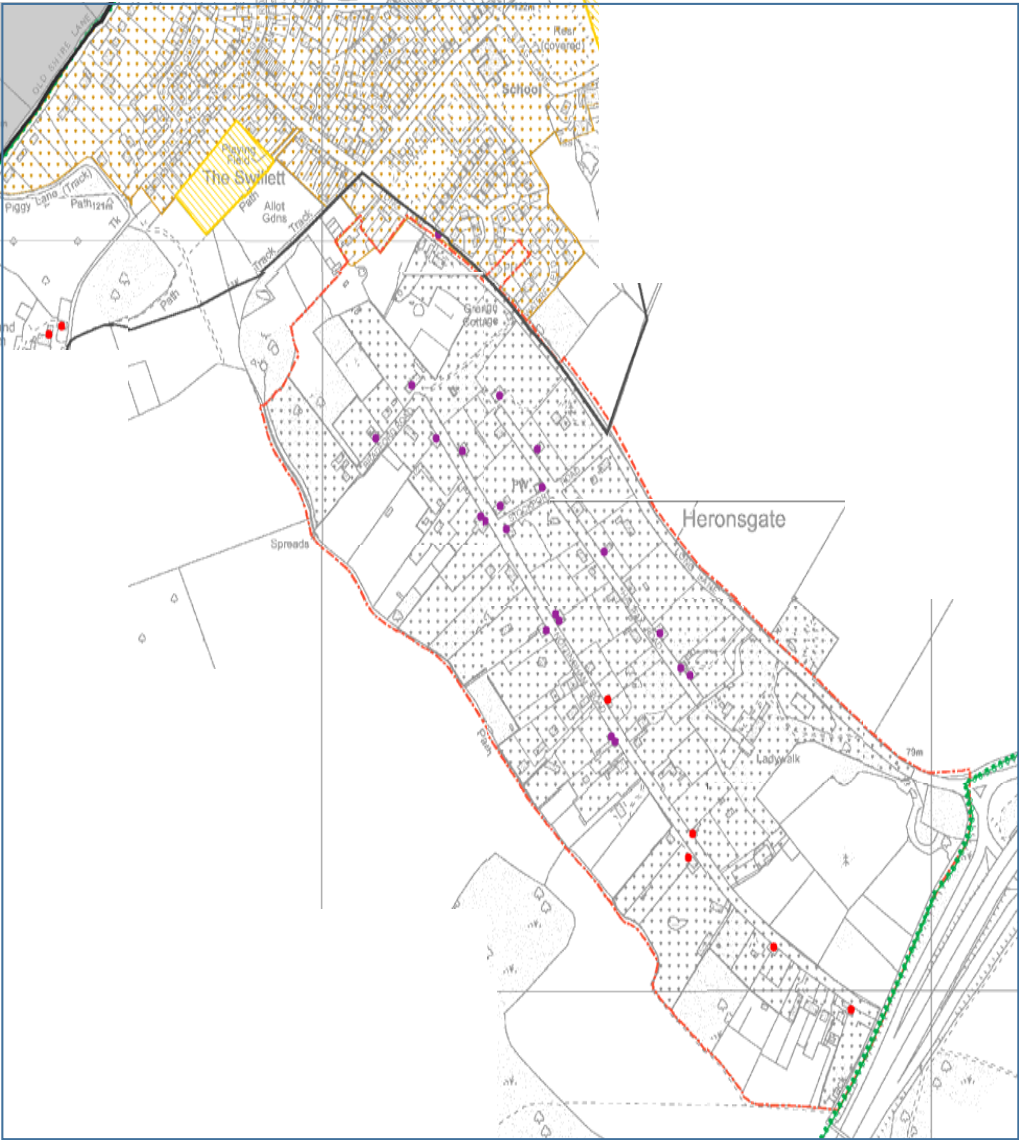
Policy in the NPPF does not preclude the definition of a village envelope, even if a village remains washed over by the Green Belt, which would allow for limited infilling, thereby complying with para 89(5) which allows for *“limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan.”*

### Analysis

The following analysis of character and relationship with the Green Belt takes a similar approach to the assessment of the parcels of the wider Green Belt. The criteria used for assessment are finer grained in their detail and with a specific focus on the relationship of built development with its context, as follows:

- **General character** – location and overall setting, topography, settlement form, building type/age, overall sensitivity, sense of identity/unity/cohesion, key focal points, Conservation Area(s).
- **Density and layout of buildings** – degree of spaciousness/enclosure, opportunities for infill, existing village boundary.
- **Presence and character of open space** – location and relationship with settlement.
- **Interface with the surrounding landscape** – settlement depth, rear garden character, glimpsed/panoramic views to the wider landscape, connectivity with landscape context.

Heronsgate



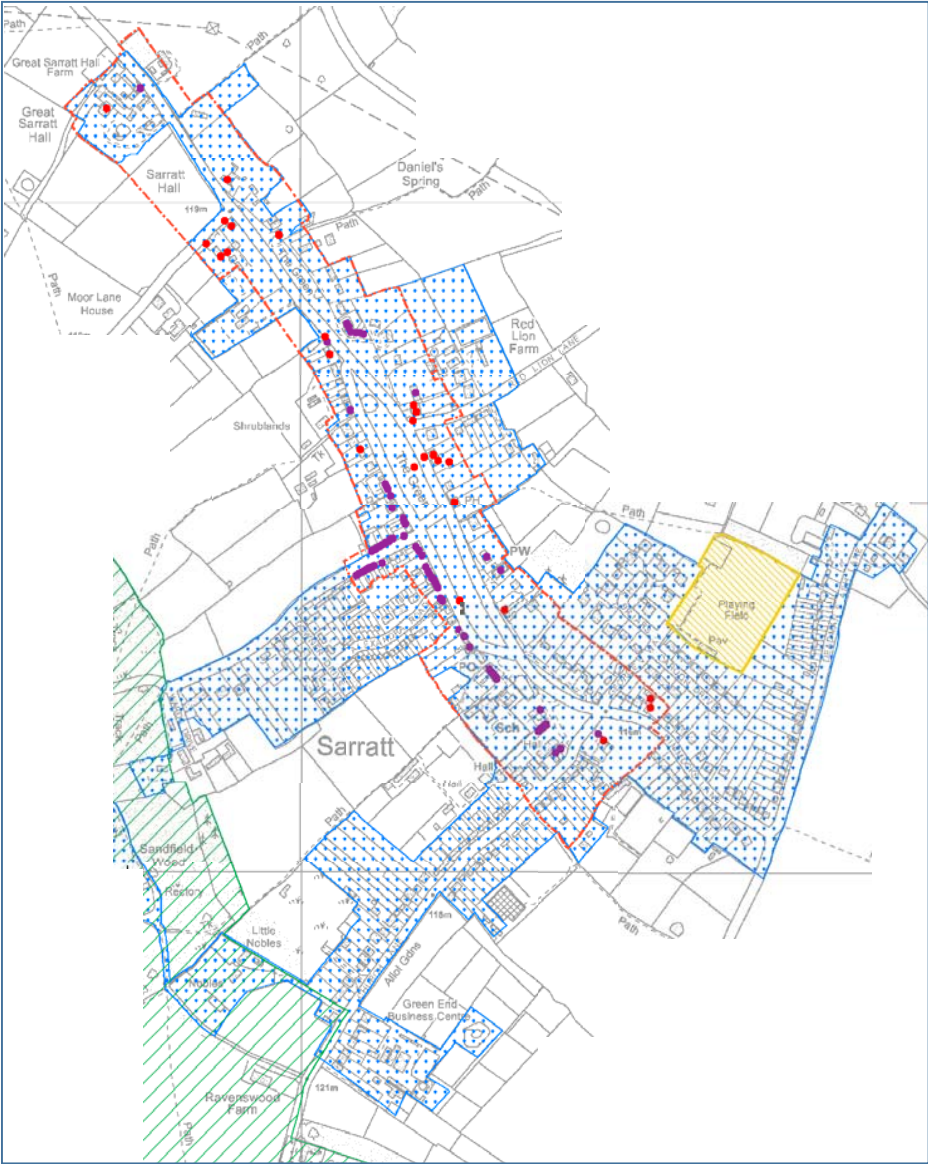
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| Criterion  | Observations  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>General character</b> – location and overall setting, topography, settlement form, building type/age, overall sensitivity, sense of identity/unity/cohesion, key focal points, Conservation Area(s).</p> | <p>A collection of dwellings set within large plots as an extension to Chorleywood to the north west. The settlement has historical significance as the first Charter Settlement in Great Britain. As such it has Conservation Area status to protect the character of the settlement, which includes the relationship between the dwellings and their landscape setting. Generally, there is a strong unity of character and high sensitivity to change.</p>   |
| <p><b>Density and layout of buildings</b> – degree of spaciousness/enclosure, opportunities for infill within existing village boundary.</p>   | <p>Low density reflecting the original settlement plot layout (albeit modified by subsequent development of substantial houses).</p>  |
| <p><b>Presence and character of open space</b> - location and relationship with settlement.</p>  | <p>No formal areas of open space.</p>   |
| <p><b>Interface with the surrounding landscape</b> - settlement depth, rear garden character, glimpsed/panoramic views to the wider landscape, connectivity with landscape context.</p>                        | <p>The connection between the settlement and the Green Belt which largely surrounds is variable, being strongest to the south west where the soft edges of the housing plots effectively merge into the wider open countryside, and more detached to the north east across Long Lane. The M25 severs the connection to the south east. The Chilterns AONB lies around 0.5 km to the south west beyond Old Shire Lane/Shire Lane.</p>  |
| <p><b>Analysis and Recommendation</b></p>  | <p>The settlement has a unique character (recognised by its Conservation Area status) and a generally strong relationship with the Green Belt within which it sits. The very low density character of the development means that whilst it represents built development, the openness of the Green Belt is largely maintained, with the settlement making a contribution to Green Belt character in this locality. Definition of a settlement boundary could prompt more dense development and hence erosion of the relationship between the settlement and its Green Belt setting and its broader landscape setting (the Chilterns AONB lying to the south west).</p> <p><b>DO NOT INSET</b></p> |

Sarratt



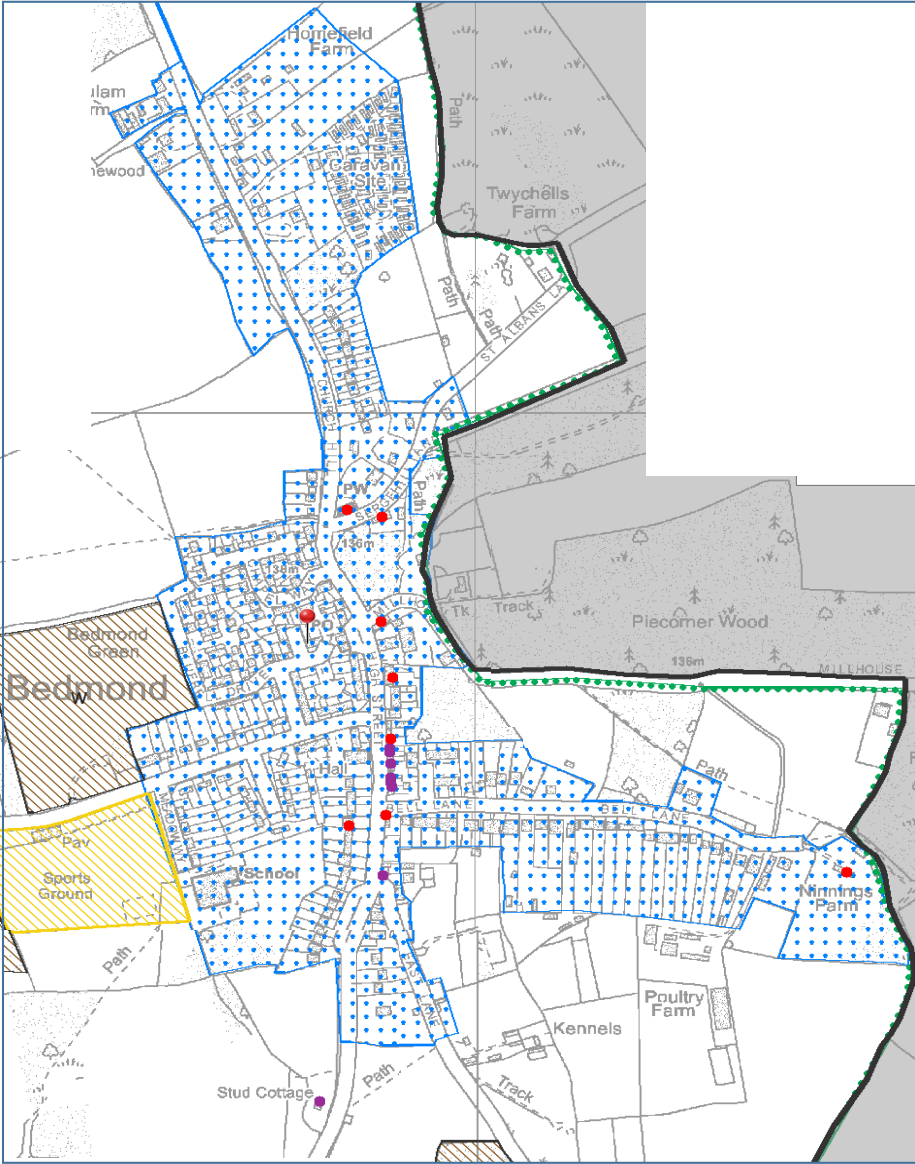
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| <p><b>General character</b> – location and overall setting, topography, settlement form, building type/age, overall sensitivity, sense of identity/unity/cohesion, key focal points, Conservation Area(s).</p> | <p>A street village built around an extended green which is the focus for a Conservation Area which protects its attractive spacious character and individual dwellings arranged around The Green.</p> <p>There are several modern extensions to the village, two of which are linear in character (extending south westwards) and one is more nucleated (to the north west). Together, these comprise a relatively large settlement, although there is a sense of spaciousness and hence connection with, and contribution to, the wider Green Belt.</p> |
| <p><b>Density and layout of buildings</b> – degree of spaciousness/enclosure, opportunities for infill within existing village boundary.</p>   | <p>Low density; possible opportunities for modest infill.</p>   |
| <p><b>Presence and character of open space</b> - location and relationship with settlement.</p>  | <p>The Green defines the character of the settlement as the central focus of built form (subsequently modified through extensions to north east and south west).</p>  |
| <p><b>Interface with the surrounding landscape</b> - settlement depth, rear garden character, glimpsed/panoramic views to the wider landscape, connectivity with landscape context.</p>                        | <p>Strongly connected to the landscape context through permeability and generally low density, and approaches to the village particularly from the south.</p>   |
| <p><b>Analysis and Recommendation</b></p>  | <p>The unique character of Sarratt along the village axis of The Green which has an open character and a high degree of permeability connecting to the wider Green Belt, means that inseting is inappropriate. Notwithstanding some somewhat incongruous additions to the built extent of the village any further increase in density would erode the sense of connection with, and contribution to, the wider Green Belt and its landscape setting (the Chilterns AONB lying to the south west).</p> <p><b>DO NOT INSET</b></p>                          |

Bedmond



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|--|---|
| <p><b>General character</b> – location and overall setting, topography, settlement form, building type/age, overall sensitivity, sense of identity/unity/cohesion, key focal points, Conservation Area(s).</p> | <p>A clustered village of highly varying character, centred on the junction of Toms Lane and High Street. Modern extensions have expanded the village to create a relatively dense form with often limited connection with the wider Green Belt in which it sits. Whilst the village is small, the sense of visual or physical connection with the Green Belt is only strongly apparent at its edges, some of which are affected by localised sprawl of permanent and semi-permanent development.</p>                                     |
| <p><b>Density and layout of buildings</b> – degree of spaciousness/enclosure, opportunities for infill within existing village boundary.</p>   | <p>Relatively high density – development would entail extensions to current footprint.</p>  |
| <p><b>Presence and character of open space</b> - location and relationship with settlement.</p>  | <p>No formal areas of open space.</p>   |
| <p><b>Interface with the surrounding landscape</b> - settlement depth, rear garden character, glimpsed/panoramic views to the wider landscape, connectivity with landscape context.</p>                        | <p>Limited connection to the landscape context, although this does increase to the north and south of the village where development becomes more fragmented.</p>  |
| <p><b>Analysis and Recommendation</b></p>  | <p>The relatively dense character of the village and its evolution through clusters of growth means that the relationship with and contribution to the surrounding Green Belt is relatively weak. Whilst the locality generally (sitting between Watford and Hemel Hempstead) is vulnerable to change through sporadic encroachment and localised sprawl along minor roads, the definition of a village envelope could help to better define the role and longer term character of the village.</p> <p><b>POTENTIAL FOR INSETTING</b></p> |