



Canton Ltd

**Land off Bullens Green Lane, Colney Heath**

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL**

19 August 2020

**FPCR Environment and Design Ltd**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the outline planning application for Residential development of up to 100 dwellings, including 45% affordable and 10% self-build, together with all ancillary works on land off Bullens Green Lane, Colney Heath. All matters are reserved except for access. The LVA has been completed by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVA study is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application including the Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 1.2 FPCR is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 60 years' experience of architecture, landscape, ecology, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

### **Site Location**

- 1.3 Figures 1 and 2 show the location and context of the site. The site is located between Roestock Lane, Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane, Colney Heath. The site is an area of arable farmland, bounded by the lanes, with some hedgerows and trees. Housing at Roestock Gardens backs on to part of the site, along with the Affinity Water reservoir, and Roestock Park recreation ground.
- 1.4 The site lies within two local authority areas with the eastern part of the site being in St Albans District, and the western part lying within Welwyn Hatfield Borough.

### **Proposed Development**

- 1.5 The proposed development is for up to 100 dwellings with associated ancillary works and green infrastructure, with vehicular access from Bullens Green Lane.



## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013.

2.2 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:

*“Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)

2.3 There are two components of LVIA:

- *“Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
- *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)

2.4 The GLVIA3 states:

*“LVIA can be carried out either as part of a broader EIA, or as a standalone ‘appraisal’ of the likely landscape and visual effects of a proposed development...”*

- *As a standalone ‘appraisal’ the process is informal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach – specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; describing the existing landscape and the views and visual amenity of the area that may be affected; predicting the effects, although not their likely significance; and considering how those effects might be mitigated – still applies”.* (GLVIA paragraph 3.2)

2.5 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; and identification and description of likely effects arising from the proposed development.

2.6 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline, this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

### Assessment of Landscape Effects

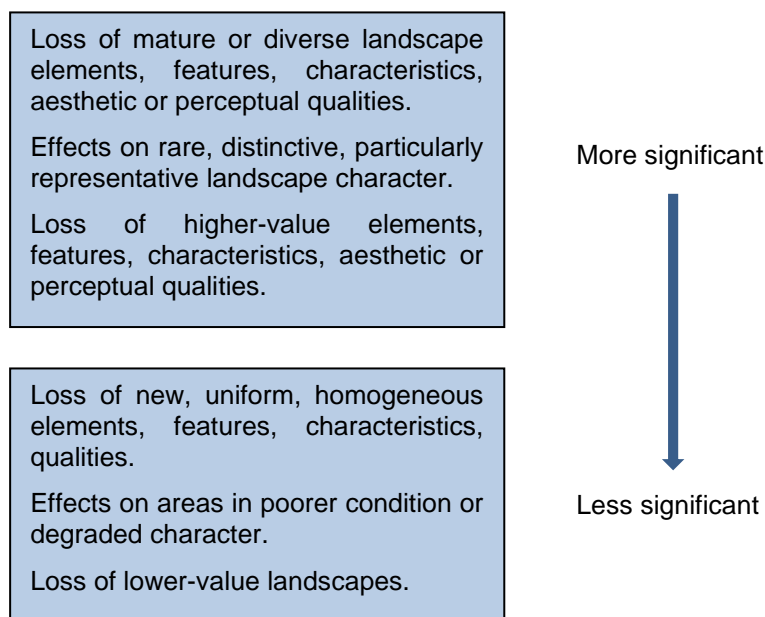
2.7 GLVIA3 states that *“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).

2.8 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the site and its context.

2.9 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;

- Combined effects of these changes.
- 2.10 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered.
- 2.11 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale of change, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements.
- 2.12 The level of effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components described. This appraisal describes the nature of the landscape effects, and whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1) and longer term (year 15).
- 2.13 GLVIA3 sets out some guidance on the underlying principles, which are used in this appraisal. This includes Figure 5.10, Scale of significance. Whilst this scheme is not EIA development, and judgements on significance are not therefore required, the Figure does provide useful guidance on reaching an overall judgement on the level of effects. This is repeated below (note this includes the correction of a typo, from the published document)



- 2.14 The criteria used in the appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

### Assessment of Visual Effects

- 2.15 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This appraisal describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 0 Winter) and longer term (year 15 Summer).

- 2.16 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)<sup>1</sup>, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the site's landscape and visual characteristics.
- 2.17 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.
- 2.18 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint, the assessment considers both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

*"The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:*

- *Residents at home;*
  - *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views;*
  - *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
  - *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of moderate susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high."* (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.33.)

*"Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:*

- *People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life (although there may on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life)." (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.34.)*

- 2.19 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.

- 2.20 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

- *"The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;*
- *The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture;*

<sup>1</sup> Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV): A map usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible. [GLVIA3]

- *The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.39).*
- 2.21 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:
- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
  - The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;
  - The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.
- 2.22 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply.
- 2.23 GLVIA3 states that there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal, but the following points should be noted;
- *Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant*
  - *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant*
  - *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view. (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.44)*
- 2.24 The criteria used in this appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

### **Overall Landscape and Visual Effects**

- 2.25 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 2.26 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following terms have been used for this appraisal:
- **Major**
  - **Moderate**
  - **Minor**
  - **Negligible**
- 2.27 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

## 4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

### Landscape Character

#### National Character

- 4.1 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCAs defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics. Figure 3 illustrates the NCAs and other defined character areas within the context of the site.
- 4.2 At this very broad landscape scale, the site lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 111 The North Thames basin. This NCA is a diverse area and extends from Hertfordshire in the west to the Essex coast in the east, and therefore, covers a very extensive landscape area. The profile notes the area is *"rich in geodiversity, archaeology and history and diverse landscapes ranging from the wooded Hertfordshire plateaux and river valleys, to the open landscape and predominantly arable area of the Essex heathlands, with areas of urbanisation mixed in throughout."* The profile also notes *"There are a wide variety of semi-natural habitats in the area and these support many important species. However, the habitats have become fragmented over time and a landscape-scale approach is needed to connect them so that they can be sustained and provide beneficial functions"*.
- 4.3 The profile includes four Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO). SEO4 notes;  
*"SEO 4: Manage and expand the significant areas of broadleaf woodland and wood pasture, and increase tree cover within urban areas, for the green infrastructure links and important habitats that they provide, for the sense of tranquillity they bring, their ability to screen urban influences and their role in reducing heat island effect and sequestering and storing carbon. "*

#### Hertfordshire Landscape Strategy – Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment April 2005.

- 4.4 This study includes work done at a County level and at a Borough level, drawing together some earlier work by the County. Whilst primarily covering Welwyn Hatfield Borough, the character areas identified do extend beyond the Borough Boundaries and at Colney Heath, cover the part of the site and land beyond within St Albans District. There is no equivalent study in St Albans District, so this document provides the most relevant landscape character study for the area. The character areas are shown on Figure 5. The detailed boundaries for the character areas are taken from the Hertfordshire website interactive map.
- 4.5 The site lies south of the area identified as *"Urban Colney Heath"* on the interactive map. All the land south of the urban area lies in the character 29 *"Mimmshall Valley"*. The land north of Colney Heath lies in the area described as area 30 *"Colney Heath Farmland"*. The urban area of Hatfield lies to the west.
- 4.6 The Mimmshall Valley is described in the assessment with the landscape character summarised;  
*"Mimmshall Brook valley slopes and floor have a wooded farmland character, with rectangular field compartments along the valley slopes. It is strongly influenced by the major transport routes and the surrounding settlement, which give it an urban-edge rather than a rural character. The Royal Veterinary College is located centrally and has a local impact. The roads down the slopes coincide*

*with a series of high points and the meandering streams that feed the brook also mark the shallow valleys between.”*

- 4.7 The key characteristics are also summarised;
- *organic field pattern of small woodland blocks and fenced pasture*
  - *mixed farming*
  - *major transport corridor*
  - *water related features*
  - *valley slopes and floor*
  - *urban influence*
- 4.8 The assessment covers a range of factors and notes under the heading “*Visual and Sensory Perception*” that “*In general, dense hedgerows and woodland restrict visibility. Longer views are generally associated with the larger fields on the high ground.*”
- 4.9 In terms of Visual Impact the assessment notes;  
*“The site and sound of the A1(M), railway line and the surrounding settlements of Potters Bar and Hatfield cause a significant impact on the character of the entire area, while the Vet College has a localised impact.”*
- 4.10 Under the heading “*Accessibility*” the report notes:  
*“Access is good and the landscape is well used by the local residents. Parking access is difficult for most of the footpaths in the area. Motorcycling, walking and riding recreational activities also occur.”*
- 4.11 The strategy identified for the landscape is to “*Improve and Conserve*”.
- 4.12 In detail a range of guidelines are set out for the character area. Some of these relate to agricultural management, but those relevant to this assessment are repeated below;
- *encourage the reversal of habitat fragmentation and the establishment and improvement of habitat links to create eco-corridors*
  - *promote the expansion of woodland, especially where this will enhance the distinctiveness of the area and help in creating habitat links*
  - *encourage the planting of new woodlands to screen features that detract from the historic landscape character of this area, such as urban edges and roads*
  - *ensure that only indigenous species of local provenance are used for new woodlands and hedges*
  - *encourage the retention and replanting of hedges as field boundaries, rather than fences*
  - *encourage the maintenance and retention of all ponds*
  - *encourage the provision of small, informal car parks at access points along public footpaths*
  - *promote woodland management to ensure age diversity and the retention of species-rich ground flora*
- 4.13 These guidelines have been used in the development of the scheme.

- 4.14 The Land north of Colney Heath lies in the area “*Colney Heath Farmland*”. The assessment describes this areas as:
- 4.15 “*A medium-scale landscape contained by adjacent urban areas and transport routes. There is a good network of hedges, field trees and tree belts to the urban areas that visually contain the largely arable character. Mineral extraction has created a number of disturbed and new landscapes that are still young. Areas of heath and seminatural grassland are locally important at Colney Heath and Smallford gravel pits.*”
- 4.16 It also has a strategy of “*Improve and Conserve*”.

### Designations

- 4.17 Figure 4 illustrates designations. The site and surrounding area lie with the Metropolitan Green Belt. The site is not covered by any other designation for character or quality. The western part of the site lies within St Albans District and the Adopted Local Plan from 1994, includes a policy area, “*Landscape Development Area*” under Policy 105. This identifies the area the council will promote and seek to secure landscape creation, improvement, and enhancement throughout the Green Belt Countryside. This policy suggests that the council consider the site to lie in one of the lower quality landscapes within the District. This contrasts with land towards the north of the District where a “*Landscape Conservation*” area is shown in the Local Plan.

### Topography

- 4.18 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 2. The site is part of a gently sloping area of land, with higher land to the east, reaching 80m AOD near the A1 and sloping gradually to the west at 70m AOD. The site itself is approximately at 75m AOD.

### Site and Immediate Context

- 4.19 An assessment of landscape character of the site and its immediate context has been carried out, providing a finer level of assessment than the published studies. The site itself is a single arable field, contained by a mix of residential boundaries, and some intermittent hedgerows along the local lanes. Part of the site bounds a public open space, Roestock Park, with play facilities, though separated from it by a mature hedge/ tree line. The wider landscape to the south of Colney Heath is a fairly well wooded landscape, with a large block of woodland to the west adjacent to the A1M.
- 4.20 There are some individual properties scattered along the local lanes including Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane. Within the site a right of way, public footpath 48/67 passes between Bullens Green Lane and Roestock Lane. Whilst the official route cuts diagonally across the northern part of the site, most people use an informal route that meets footpath 44 more directly. Footpath 44 passes through the edge of the site between Admiral Close to the south and Roestock Lane to the north.
- 4.21 South of the site Fellowes Lane becomes Dellsome Lane, which is closed to vehicles and appears to be used as footpath linking to Tollgate Wood. There are a range of informal routes in the wood which also appear to be used by the public.
- 4.22 Overall visibility of the site and the local landscape is quite restricted due to the high proportion of woodland and trees. The A1M is not visible due to the woodland but can be heard. Overall, the

local landscape does reflect some of the characteristics described in the Welwyn Landscape assessment.

### **Landscape Value**

- 4.23 In terms of "landscape value" it is appropriate to examine the role of the site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in the GLVIA3 (Box 5.1, page 84), and summarised in the methodology. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.

#### Landscape Designations:

- 4.24 The site and its wider landscape context are not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations. The current local plan identifies the site as part of a "Landscape Development Area" suggesting it is part of an area requiring improvement.

#### Landscape Quality (Condition):

- 4.25 The site is single arable field, in an area with other fields, woodland and settlement. Some of the field boundaries are in good condition, but many including those along Fellowes Lane and Bullen's Green lane are fragmented

#### Scenic Quality:

- 4.26 The landscape contains a mix of settlement, woodland, and agricultural land. It is pleasant but unexceptional.

#### Rarity and Representativeness:

- 4.27 The landscape is not rare, or representative of any particular type of landscape or feature.

#### Conservation Interest:

- 4.28 There is some conservation interest in the hedgerows and trees, but it is not a landscape with particular conservation interest.

#### Recreational Value:

- 4.29 There are a number of local footpaths across the farmland and connecting parts of the settlement with other parts of the settlement.

#### Perceptual Aspects

- 4.30 The landscape is not wild or tranquil, which are the perceptual aspects identified in GLVIA3.

#### Associations:

- 4.31 There are no known associations with artists or writers linked with the land.
- 4.32 In conclusion and having appraised the above factors it is judged that the site and the immediate landscape is of medium landscape value.



## Visual Baseline

- 4.33 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the site. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.
- 4.34 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs may demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short- and long-range views. The photographs were taken in June 2020 and seasonal differences have been considered when determining the visual effects on these receptors.
- 4.35 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19).

### Photo Viewpoints

- 4.36 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. Figure 5 details the location of the Photo Viewpoints and Figure 6-12 illustrates the photo viewpoints. They are briefly described below.

#### Viewpoint 1

- 4.37 Taken from footpath 67 this shows the view south across the site. Bullens Green Lane lies to the east with a small group of properties overlooking the site. The fragmented nature of the hedgerow along this boundary can be seen. Trees and woodland form the northern boundaries of the site to Colney Heath.

#### Viewpoint 2

- 4.38 Viewpoint 2 is taken from footpath 67/48 and shows a view north, to the northern part of the application site. Surrounded by the vegetated boundaries to properties on Roestock Lane and Roestock Gardens, this part of the site is visually well enclosed.

#### Viewpoint 3

- 4.39 The view north west from footpath 23 is shown on Viewpoint 3. This shows the well-worn, but unofficial footpath route between footpath 23 and footpath 67. The housing that encloses the site at Roestock Lane and Roestock Gardens is visible. Looking east in the view, it is possible to look across the site to the properties on Bullen's Green Lane.

#### Viewpoint 4

- 4.40 This shows the view looking east and south from footpath 23 across the site, with housing at Roestock Gardens forming a boundary. The woodland towards the A1M can be seen beyond Bullens Green Lane.

Viewpoint 5

- 4.41 Viewpoint 5 is located in the Roestock Park recreation space off Admiral Close. Footpath 44 crosses the space. The site lies beyond the surrounding hedge line/ tree belt.

Viewpoint 6

- 4.42 This shows the view from Fellowes Lane, close to the junction with Bullens Green Lane. From this location a more open view is possible due to the gap in the boundary hedgerow. Housing at Hall Gardens and Roestock Gardens can be seen on the site boundary.

Viewpoint 7

- 4.43 From Bullens Green Lane south of the site, most views are restricted by the roadside hedgerow. Housing in Colney Heath can be seen closer to the viewpoint. Part of the site, or its boundary hedge can just be seen in the distance.

Viewpoint 8

- 4.44 Dellsome Lane is a small lane now closed off to vehicular traffic but used by walkers accessing Tollgate Wood. From here there are some limited views towards the site. In part some of the existing houses beyond the site can be seen at Roestock Gardens. In other parts trees and hedges on the boundary restrict views.

Viewpoint 9

- 4.45 This viewpoint represents what can be seen by footpath users north of Colney Heath. The landscape here is more open with some more distant views possible. Existing development and trees however restrict any views towards the site.

**Summary of Visual Baseline**

- 4.46 The baseline analysis results in a number of reasoned conclusions. The visibility of the site is very limited. Views are mainly restricted to those from the rights of way across the site, the two lanes that border it to the east and south, and limited views from the houses that back onto the site. Whilst several viewpoints are included, the majority of these are from the site or very close to it, as overall there are very few public locations further away that any view is possible.

## 5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

### Introduction

- 5.1 The development proposals are described in the Design and Access Statement and other information accompanying the planning application. The existing landscape resource and the visual receptors and amenity of the site have been considered by the planning and design process and have informed the resultant scheme. This approach has entailed collaboration between landscape, urban design, ecological and other professionals. The landscape components of the scheme are an important integral part of the proposals.

### Landscape Design and GI Objectives

- 5.2 The key objectives of the landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are to:
- Protect and enhance the exiting trees and hedges on the site boundary, with additional planting.
  - Provide a variety of green spaces within the site for recreational use and to complement the facilities in the adjacent recreation and play space.
  - To provide an open area south of the listed building on Roestock Lane.
  - To provide attractive open spaces leading into the development from Bullens Green Lane and Fellowes Lane.
- 5.3 The strategy will build upon the recommendations in the landscape assessment by;
- Establishing and improving habitat links to create eco-corridors.
  - Providing small areas of woodland type planting.
  - Using indigenous species of local provenance for new copses and hedges
  - encourage the retention and replanting of hedges as field boundaries, rather than fences

### Landscape and Green Infrastructure (GI) Proposals

- 5.4 The landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. In summary these proposals include:
- An area of informal green space to the north of the site, including some sustainable drainage features. These will be designed with shallow banks and will allow for different levels to enable a range of habitats to develop. This could include areas of reed. Other parts of the space will include small areas of copse planting, and open grassland.
  - Within the residential area there would be a series of smaller green spaces, mainly simple in design, with regularly mown grass and individual trees. These would be overlooked by the adjacent housing and would form softer entrance spaces to the scheme from Bullens Green Lane.
  - Retained footpath routes. These routes would be in areas of new greenspace, with additional planting and overlooked by the new housing areas, providing attractive and safe routes.

- New pedestrian routes. A new traffic free link would be established through the green spaces within the site, from Roestock Lane, through to Fellowes Lane/Bullens Green Lane in the south east..

### **Landscape Management**

- 5.5 All of the landscape areas and public open space features will be managed and maintained. This would be achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Landscape Management Plan (LMP), to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the landscape proposals.

## 6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

- 6.1 The following section outlines the likely landscape and visual effects that would arise from proposed development on the site. Schedules detailing these likely landscape and visual effects for the receptors are included in Appendices B and C respectively. Please refer to these in conjunction with the following descriptions.

### Landscape Effects

#### Construction

- 6.2 During the construction phase there would inevitably be a range of adverse landscape effects, through disruption to the site, setting up compounds, the temporary storage of material, and loss of vegetation to establish the access. These effects would be temporary and could be mitigated through sensitive project management.

#### Operation (following Completion)

- 6.3 The completed scheme is likely to result in a range of landscape effects at different scales. The site lies within National Character Area 111 The North Thames Basin. This is a very extensive area and at this scale the modest addition of a new area of housing largely wrapped around by existing settlement would result in a negligible magnitude of change and a negligible overall landscape effect on this area as a whole.
- 6.4 The site lies within, and on the edge of the area described as Mimmshall Valley in the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character assessment. This is part of a larger tract of land that extends to the south. The site lies in the northern part of this character area bounded by the existing settlement to the north and west. Woodland at Tollgate Wood lies to the east, with the A1 running through or alongside it. The key characteristics for this area include; “*organic field pattern of small woodland blocks and fenced pasture*”. The site is arable land and the field pattern is not organic, so the site does not represent this element of character. Other characteristics identified for the area include, mixed farming, major transport corridor and urban influence, which are all apparent in the area. The addition of some additional built development in this context, is consistent with the wider mixed character. The nature of the immediate landscape, with a high degree of enclosure by existing built development and woodland, limits the effect on character and reduces the extent of change on the wider landscape character area. There would be a low level of change on the Mimmshall Valley character area as whole, and overall a minor landscape effect.
- 6.5 The effect on the site and its immediate context would inevitably be more marked. The single arable field would be developed as housing and green infrastructure, within the framework of the existing boundaries, hedges and tree lines. The northern part of the site would remain open in green space uses and would link through to the recreation ground off Admiral Close. The development would be set back from Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane and these boundaries would be reinforced with new tree and hedgerow planting. The existing rights of way on site would be maintained on their current alignment, and a new path alongside Bullen's Green Lane would be provided, establishing a green route through the site from Roestock Lane, down towards the south. This would allow pedestrians to have a largely traffic free route alongside Bullen's Green Lane. The impact on the character of the immediately surrounding area would be limited as the existing settlement and tree lines contain the site to a high degree and minimise the effect on the wider area. The site and its immediate context has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity to

change, and the scheme would result in a medium magnitude of landscape change on the area. Overall, this would lead to a Moderate landscape effect at the year of completion. Over time the green infrastructure would establish, including strengthening the tree belts along Bullens Green Lane and Fellowes Lane, and this would further reduce the landscape effects, leading to a Moderate/ Minor landscape effect on the site and its immediate context.

## **Visual Effects**

### **Visual Envelope (VE)**

- 6.6 The VE (Figure 5) of the proposed development identifies the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the proposed development are likely to be possible. The VE is not however, an indicator of the effect of the proposed development on the view but simply, its visible extent in the surrounding landscape.
- 6.7 The Visual envelope shown on Figure 5 is based on site survey and takes account of the visual 'screening' provided by buildings, trees and other features.
- 6.8 The VE of the proposed development is limited by the existing settlement to the north and west and by woodland to the east. The overlapping effects of hedgerows and the occasional building to the south also restrict views. Overall, the plan shows a very restricted area.
- 6.9 There could be some limited locations (beyond the extent of the VE shown) that could have a potential distant or very limited view to a part of the development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the VE that would not experience any views to the resultant development.

### **Construction**

- 6.10 Through the construction phase there would inevitably be some adverse visual effects through site clearance and the new homes being built. Measures through the construction phase such as hoardings and temporary footpath diversions can be used to mitigate the potential visual effects.

### **Operation (following Completion)**

- 6.11 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at Appendix C.

#### Residential Properties and Settlement

- 6.12 The site is bounded to the north and west by the existing settlement at Colney Heath. Properties at Roestock Gardens border the site to the north. These properties mostly have relatively long gardens and a tall boundary hedgerows to the south which restricts visibility. A large area of green space is being provided in the north west part of the site, including meadow planting, sustainable drainage features and tree planting. A smaller area of green space is being provided immediately south of Roestock Gardens along the route of the public footpath. These measures mean that the magnitude of visual change would be low, leading to a minor visual effect overall for residents.
- 6.13 A similar level of effect would be experienced by the residents of Roestock Lane, where again boundary vegetation restricts views and overall, there would be a minor visual effect.
- 6.14 At Fellowes Lane there are a small number of properties that back onto the site with relatively shorter gardens and less boundary planting. A more open view into the site is possible. Detailed

landscape treatment and the provision of green space near the properties, would mitigate changes to the views. Overall a moderate visual effect is predicted at completion.

- 6.15 At the southern end of Bullens Green Lane in Colney Heath, a small group of houses on the eastern side of the lane have frontage views across the lane and into the site. The Framework plan shows an area of green space at this location, at the end of the path, with the new houses set back beyond it. For residents of these properties there would be a medium magnitude of visual change, leading to a moderate visual effect at completion. As the green infrastructure establishes this would reduce to a minor overall visual effect.
- 6.16 Further south on Bullens Green Lane there is a small row of properties at the junction with Dellsome Lane. Most of these have a north south aspect with no windows directed towards the site, apart from the house nearest the junction, which does have some windows on the side of the property. From these side windows the site can be seen but filtered by the boundary hedgerow. Overall visual effects for most of the residents of these houses would be minor at completion, but minor / moderate from the property on the junction.
- 6.17 There are few other views from residential properties towards the site and any visual effects are likely to be minor or negligible.

#### Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Other Footpaths

- 6.18 Public Footpaths cross the site, including FP67 which becomes FP48 and passes between Bullen's Green Lane and Roestock Lane. With development inevitably the context of this path will change. It seems a more direct route across the site is used most often, rather than the official diagonal alignment. The framework plan shows this route extending through green space and being overlooked by the proposed housing. A different but pleasant route could be established. There would be a medium/ high magnitude of visual change initially, reducing to medium as the green infrastructure establishes. This would lead to a major / moderate initial effect, reducing to moderate over time as the green spaces establish.
- 6.19 Footpath 44 extends between Roestock Lane and the recreation ground off Admirals Close. Views are currently possible across part of the site. With development, most of the land adjacent to the path would become green space, though views south would become more restricted. There would be an initial Moderate visual effect
- 6.20 Views from rights of way beyond the site are limited. Dellsome Lane extends east from Bullens Green Lane. This is not identified as a public footpath but is used by people to access the paths in Tollgate Wood. From some locations along this route there are views to the site, where it is not screened by roadside hedges and trees. Glimpses of the new houses would be possible in the short term, leading to a minor overall visual effect. As the boundary planting establishes and fills any gaps, the visual effects would reduce.
- 6.21 There are a range of public footpaths north of Roestock Lane. Views from these are represented by viewpoint 9. The existing development and trees mean that no views to the proposed development are possible.

#### Roads & Transport Users

- 6.22 Bullen's Green Lane and Fellowes Lane border the site and views to the development would be possible from these routes. Visibility varies depending on the boundary vegetation, with hedges

and trees in part providing a high level of screening, but with some other sections more open allowing views in. In part some existing housing can be seen across the site. Views are mainly possible over relatively short sections. Overall road users have a lower sensitivity to visual change than residents or footpath users. The magnitude of visual change at completion is likely to be medium, leading to a moderate visual effect. As the new planting along the boundary establishes this is likely to reduce to a moderate/ minor effect. There are no other views from roads that would have a material effect.

#### Other Visual Receptors

- 6.23 The recreation ground off Admiral Close contains an open grass area, a range of play equipment and a ball court. The boundary with the site is a tall and well-established hedge. Whilst it would be possible, especially in winter to have some glimpses to the new homes, there would be a very low level of change. Overall, there would be a minor/ negligible visual effect.

## **7.0 GREEN BELT**

- 7.1 The NPPF sets out National policy for Green Belts. Section 13 of the NPPF covers Protecting Green Belt land. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Paragraph 133 notes that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The NPPF notes 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.*"
- 7.2 Paragraph 134 sets out the 5 purposes of the Green Belt;
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 7.3 Paragraph 141 states that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, 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.
- 7.4 Paragraph 143 notes that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 7.5 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first published on 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.
- 7.6 The guidance includes a section on the factors to be taken in account, when considering the impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt. This notes that openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects - in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume, and that the duration of the development and its reversibility are factors to consider along with the degree of activity, such as traffic generation. (Paragraph 001 Reference ID; 64-001-20190722) from 22 July 2019.



- 7.7 Green Belt studies have been undertaken for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and St Albans and St Albans City and District. These are explored below

Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment – St Albans City and District Council

- 7.8 This study completed for the Council as part of the technical evidence to inform its Draft Local Plan includes an assessment of parcels of land against the purposes of Green Belt. Whilst the methodology adopted in the study has been criticised by the Inspectors examining the Local Plan in their post-hearing letter of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020, with the Council accepting that a new Green Belt Review will be required if wider concerns raised by the Inspectors on the Draft Plan can be overcome, for completeness it has been reviewed as part of this assessment.
- 7.9 The site lies within a parcel described as GB34 Land between Hatfield and London Colney. The parcel of land is bounded to the north by the north Orbital A414 and to the south follows Coursers Road. The parcel is 419ha in size, so considerably larger than the application site itself.
- 7.10 The assessment considers the parcel of land against the Green Belt purposes. In terms of purpose 1 *“To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas”*, the assessment considers it makes a *“limited”* or *“no”* contribution to this purpose, as it is away from the large built up areas, and it does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl. This is a fair conclusion.
- 7.11 In terms of Purpose 2 *“To prevent neighbouring towns from merging”*. The assessment concludes a *“partial”* contribution. The study concludes it does not fully separate 1<sup>st</sup> tier settlements but notes as a whole the gap contains some ribbon development and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier settlements in the Green Belt. The study concludes *“Overall, any minor reduction in the gap would be unlikely compromise the separation of 1st tier settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall visual openness.”* This conclusion seems fair.
- 7.12 Purpose 3 is *“To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment”*. The study concludes a *“Significant”* contribution to this purpose, and notes *“typical rural and countryside characteristics, especially to the south, in medium sized arable fields with hedgerow boundaries, sheep pasture and substantial riverine wetland habitats along the Colne, and areas of heath and semi natural grassland which are locally important at Colney Heath.”* It goes on to note the A1 and *“evidence of linear built development in the north part of the parcel which contains Colney Heath and Bullens Green.”* This may be true of the wider land parcel, but the application site is a small parcel of land contained already around most of the boundaries by built development. The application site alone makes a limited contribution to this purpose. Planting along the roadside adds to the sense of containment of the site itself.
- 7.13 Purpose 4 is *“To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns”*. As a whole the parcel is assessed as making a *“partial”* contribution to this purpose. The application site alone would make no contribution as Colney Heath is not an historic town.
- 7.14 Finally purpose 5 is *“To maintain existing settlement pattern”* and the study concludes a *“significant”* contribution overall for the parcel. The text references gaps between Hatfield and London Colney and between third tier settlements including Colney Heath. The study notes *“Therefore any reduction in the gaps would compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms to the north, and local levels of visual openness. A minor reduction to the south would lead to a less significant impact.”* The application site is towards the south of the parcel, where the land is much more visually enclosed, than for example land north of Colney Heath. The application site is

to a large extent already wrapped around by built form and development of the site would have a limited effect on settlement pattern and therefore makes a limited contribution to this Green Belt purpose.

- 7.15 The study also notes visual openness, stating "*The parcel is generally open to the north and more enclosed to the south where it is more wooded although there are some extensive panoramas over arable fields towards the Shenley ridge to the south.*" The application site is visually well enclosed and plays a minimal role in openness beyond the site itself.

#### Welwyn Hatfield Green Belt study 2018

- 7.16 The eastern part of the site lies within Welwyn Hatfield council area as was considered as part of the Green Belt Study, which was prepared as part of the evidence base for the Draft Local Plan. The part of the site, forms part of Land Parcel P54. This includes additional land to the east and south to Tollgate Wood.
- 7.17 For purposes 1 and 2 "*Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas*" and "*Preventing the merging of neighbouring towns*", the study concludes "*Limited or no Contribution*", which seems fair.
- 7.18 In terms of Purpose 3 "*Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*", the study concludes a "significant" contribution, noting the characteristics of open countryside, but also recognising that "*Residential development within the adjacent settlement is visible across much of the parcel.*". The adjacent settlement is evident from the application site, and whilst development would inevitably lead to countryside being changed to settlement, the effect on the wider area would be very limited.
- 7.19 Under Purpose 4 "*Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*", the study concludes "*Limited or no contribution*" which is fair and under purpose 5 assisting in urban regeneration, all parcels are considered to support urban regeneration equally, so are not distinguished in the study.

#### Summary

- 7.20 In terms of the effects of the scheme on Green Belt Purposes, the site is located on the edge of a settlement and is bounded by existing lanes. The existing settlement wraps around much of the site. Development of the scheme would not result in unrestricted sprawl.
- 7.21 The site comprises a parcel of land between one part of Colney Heath and another. It would not extend beyond the existing outer settlement boundaries to the north, east, south or west. As a relatively enclosed parcel of land, with enclosure in the wider landscape formed by woodland, it would not significantly encroach on the wider countryside. The scheme would not affect the setting of any historic towns. Overall the site contributes little to the Green Belt purposes.
- 7.22 Overall, the site does not rate highly against the purposes of Green Belt.
- 7.23 "*Visual Openness*" is the Green Belt factor of greatest relevance to the landscape and visual appraisal. The visibility of the site and the proposed scheme has been explored in the appraisal. This has shown that from most of the wider area, there would be little visual effect from development of the site. The nature of the landscape with the surrounding built development and overlapping effects of trees and hedges, means that there are few public locations where the site can be seen, beyond the site itself. Development of the scheme would have minimal effect on openness beyond the site.

## 8.0 PLANNING POLICY

### National Planning Policy

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018 February 2019)

- 8.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 8.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 8.3 Paragraph 170 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise "*the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*".
- 8.4 Paragraph 171 advises that:
- 8.5 "*Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries*".
- 8.6 Paragraph 172 goes on to add:
- 8.7 "*Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues*".
- 8.8 The site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected landscape status. The character of the site and its immediate context is assessed within this report to help inform decisions regarding "*the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*". The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.
- 8.9 Section 13 of the NPPF covers Protecting Green Belt land. The effects on Green Belt are covered in section 7 of this appraisal.

### Local Planning Policy

#### St Albans District Council

- 8.10 District Local Plan Review 1994. The following 'saved' policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:
- 8.11 Policy 1 Covers the Metropolitan Green Belt. This policy and its conformity with the current NPPF is dealt with in the planning statement.

- 8.12 Policy 105 covers Landscape development and improvement. This policy seeks to promote and secure landscape creation, improvement and enhancement throughout the Green Belt countryside. It notes that priority will be given generally to the urban fringe and particularly in the Landscape Development Area shown on the Proposals Map. The site lies within in this area, where the council must consider the landscape to need improvement.

#### **St Albans City & District Local Plan 2020-2036 Publication Draft 2018**

- 8.13 The following policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:
- 8.14 Policy S3 Metropolitan Green Belt is the proposed policy covering Green Belt, and covers the same issues as set out in the NPPF.
- 8.15 Policy L29 covers Green and Blue Infrastructure, Countryside, Landscape and Trees. This is a very lengthy policy covering different aspects. In terms of Green and Blue Infrastructure, specific proposals are identified, but the policy also encourages new linkages and green infrastructure at local levels. The scheme could provide this, including a traffic free link through the site to the south.
- 8.16 The policy also covers Countryside and landscape character and refers to national and local Landscape Character Assessments. This appraisal has considered these assessments and how the scheme can fit with the established character and any guidance contained within.
- 8.17 Countryside access is another part of the policy and it notes how opportunities for new definitive links between existing rights of way and greater access to the countryside for all users will be encouraged. The scheme does this by providing a traffic free alternative to Bullens Green Lane.

#### **Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council**

#### **Welwyn Hatfield District Plan adopted 2005, the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan adopted 2012-2014 and the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan adopted 2007**

- 8.18 The following 'saved' policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:
- 8.19 Policy RA10 covers Landscape Regions and Character Areas. This policy expects proposals for development in the rural areas to contribute, as appropriate, to the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of the local landscape character of the area in which they are located, as defined in the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment. This landscape assessment is covered in the appraisal and has been used to guide the proposals.
- 8.20 Policy RA11 covers the Watling Chase Community Forest. The site lies in the area covered by this policy. In this area the council will seek to achieve the objectives of the Forest Plan in terms of planting, leisure and landscape improvement, where this accords with Green Belt policies. Proposals for the provision of improved access to the forest and appropriate outdoor leisure and small-scale recreational facilities will be permitted and will be required to be accompanied by substantial landscaping, including, where appropriate, woodland planting. The scheme includes for enhanced access and woodland type tree planting.
- 8.21 Policy GBSP1 covers the policy for the Green Belt.

**Borough/District Emerging Local Plan Submission Version May 2017**

- 8.22 The site is also shown as within the Green Belt and the Watling Chase community Forest boundaries. In addition, the following policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters;
- 8.23 Policy SADM 16 Ecology and Landscape. This policy expects development to help conserve and enhance the borough's natural and historic landscape and sit comfortably within the wider landscape setting. It notes that proposals will be assessed for their impact on landscape features to ensure that they conserve or improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition and that proposals should take full account of the relevant Landscape Character Assessment and adopt the strategy and guidelines for managing change set out therein. The scheme does this.

**Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents**Watling Chase Community Forest - A guide to Landowners Developers and users

- 8.24 Although this document is now of some age it sets out the main objectives of the Community Forest. These include creating a visually exciting and functionally diverse environment and increasing opportunities for recreation and improving access to the countryside. The scheme includes green infrastructure and can provide new planting and access improvements.

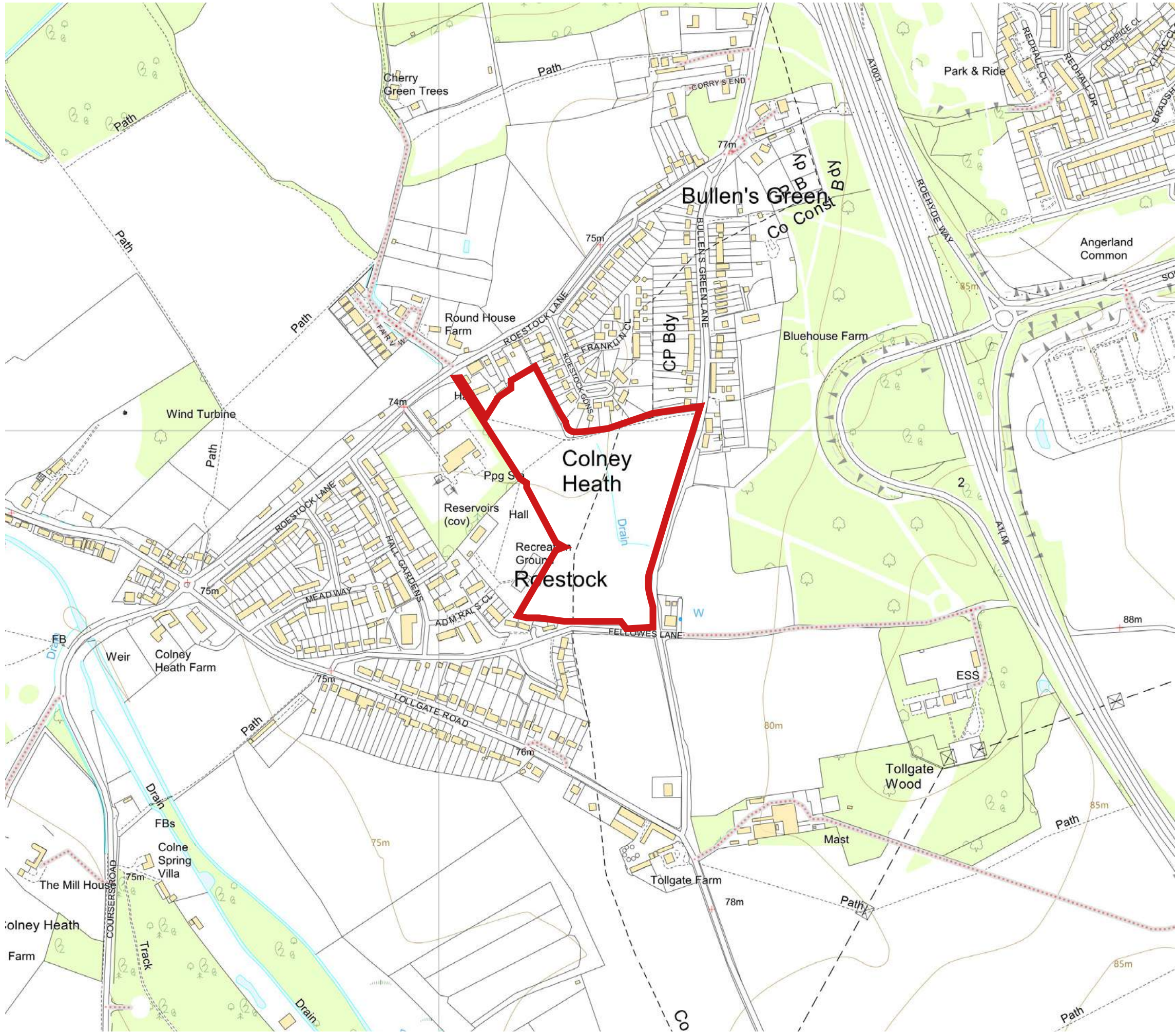
## 9.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the outline planning application for residential development of up to 100 dwellings and all ancillary works on Land off Bullens Green Lane.
- 9.2 The site is located between Roestock Lane, Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane, Colney Heath. The site itself is a single arable field, contained by a mix of residential boundaries, and some intermittent hedgerows along the local lanes. Part of the site bounds a public open space with play facilities, though separated from it by a mature hedge/ tree line. The wider landscape to the south of Colney Heath is a fairly well wooded landscape, with a large block of woodland to the west adjacent to the A1M.
- 9.3 There are some individual properties scattered along the local lanes including Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane. Within the site a right of way, public footpath 48/67 passes between Bullens Green Lane and Roestock Lane. Whilst the official route cuts diagonally across the northern part of the site, most people use an informal route that meets footpath 44 more directly. Footpath 44 passes through the edge of the site between Admiral Close to the south and Roestock Lane to the north.
- 9.4 South of the site Fellowes Lane becomes Dellsome Lane, which is closed to vehicles and appears to be used as footpath linking to Tollgate Wood. There are a range of informal routes in the wood which also appear to be used by the public.
- 9.5 Overall visibility of the site and the local landscape is quite restricted due to the high proportion of woodland and trees. The A1 M cannot be seen but can be heard.
- 9.6 The development proposals are described in the Design and Access Statement and other information accompanying the planning application. The existing landscape has been considered by the planning and design process and has informed the resultant scheme.
- 9.7 The landscape proposals include;
- An area of informal green space to the north of the site, including some sustainable drainage features. These will be designed with shallow banks and will allow for different levels to enable a range of habitats to develop. This could include areas of reed. Other parts of the space will include small areas of copse planting, and open grassland.
  - Within the residential area there would be a series of smaller green spaces, mainly simple in design, with regularly mown grass and individual trees. These would be overlooked by the adjacent housing and would form softer entrance spaces to the scheme from Bullens Green Lane.
  - Retained footpath routes. These routes would be in areas of new greenspace, with additional planting and overlooked by the new housing areas, providing attractive and safe routes.
  - New pedestrian routes. A new traffic free route would be established through the green spaces within the site, from Roestock Lane, through to the south..
- 9.8 The completed scheme is likely to result in a range of landscape effects at different scales. The site lies within National Character Area 111 The North Thames Basin. This is a very extensive area and at this scale the modest addition of a new area of housing largely wrapped around by existing settlement would result in a negligible overall landscape effect on this area as a whole.

- 9.9 The site lies within, and on the edge of the area described as Mimmshall Valley in the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character assessment. This is part of a larger tract of land that extends to the south. The site lies in the northern part of this character area bounded by the existing settlement to the north and west. Woodland at Tollgate Wood lies to the east, with the A1 running through or alongside it. The key characteristics for this area include; "*organic field pattern of small woodland blocks and fenced pasture*". The site is arable land and the field pattern is not organic, so the site does not represent this element of character. Other characteristics identified for the area include, mixed farming, major transport corridor and urban influence, which are all apparent in the area. The addition of some additional built development in this context, is consistent with the wider mixed character. The nature of the immediate landscape, with a high degree of enclosure by existing built development and woodland, limits the effect on character and reduces the extent of change on the wider landscape character area. There would be overall a minor landscape effect.
- 9.10 The effect on the site and its immediate context would inevitably be more marked. The single arable field would be developed as housing and green infrastructure, within the framework of the existing boundaries, hedges and tree lines. The northern part of the site would remain open in green space uses and would link through to the recreation ground off Admiral Close. The development would be set back from Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane and these boundaries would be reinforced with new tree and hedgerow planting. The existing rights of way on site would be maintained on their current alignment, and a new link alongside Bullen's Green Lane would be provided, establishing a green route through the site from Roestock Lane, down towards Dellsome Lane. This would allow pedestrians to have a largely traffic free route to access the wider countryside and woodland. The impact on the character of the immediately surrounding area would be limited as the existing settlement and tree lines contain the site to a high degree and minimise the effect on the wider area. The site and its immediate context has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change, and the scheme would result in a medium magnitude of landscape change on the area. Overall, this would lead to a Moderate landscape effect at the year of completion. Over time the green infrastructure would establish, including strengthening the tree belts along Bullens Green Lane and Fellowes Lane, and this would further reduce the landscape effects, leading to a Moderate/ Minor landscape effect on the site and its immediate context.
- 9.11 Visual effects would be very restricted, largely limited to users of the paths that cross the site, the lanes that run past it, and the small numbers of properties that border it. There are some very restricted views from paths and lanes a short distance from the site, but any visual effects on users of these routes would be no greater than minor.
- 9.12 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The NPPF sets out National policy for Green Belts and notes 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.*" The NPPF sets out the 5 purposes of the Green Belt.
- 9.13 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) includes a section on the factors to be taken in account, when considering the impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt. This notes that openness can have both spatial and visual aspects - in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume.
- 9.14 In terms of the effects of the scheme on Green Belt Purposes, the site is located on the edge of a settlement and is bounded by existing lanes. The existing settlement wraps around much of the site. Development of the scheme would not result in unrestricted sprawl.

- 9.15 The site comprises a parcel of land between one part of Colney Heath and another. It would not extend beyond the existing outer settlement boundaries to the north, east, south or west. As a relatively enclosed parcel of land, with enclosure in the wider landscape formed by woodland, it would not significantly encroach on the wider countryside. The scheme would not affect the setting of any historic towns. Overall, the site does not rate highly against the purposes of Green Belt.
- 9.16 "*Visual Openness*" is the Green Belt factor of greatest relevance to the landscape and visual appraisal. The visibility of the site and the proposed scheme has been explored in the appraisal. This has shown that from most of the wider area, there would be little visual effect from development of the site. The nature of the landscape with the surrounding built development and overlapping effects of trees and hedges, means that there are few public locations where the site can be seen, beyond the site itself. Development of the scheme would have a minimal effect on visual openness beyond the site.
- 9.17 Overall development of the site would have very limited landscape or visual effects. Most effects would only be experienced within or adjacent to the site, with very little change to the wider landscape. The site itself makes a minor contribution to the purposes of Green Belt, and development of it would have very little effect on Visual Openness, beyond the site itself.





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client  
Canton Ltd

project  
Land off Bullen's Green Lane,  
Coney Heath

drawing title  
**SITE LOCATION**

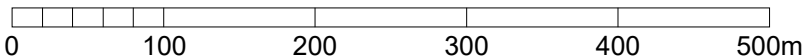
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HGK

issue date  
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rev

**Figure 1**

**A**

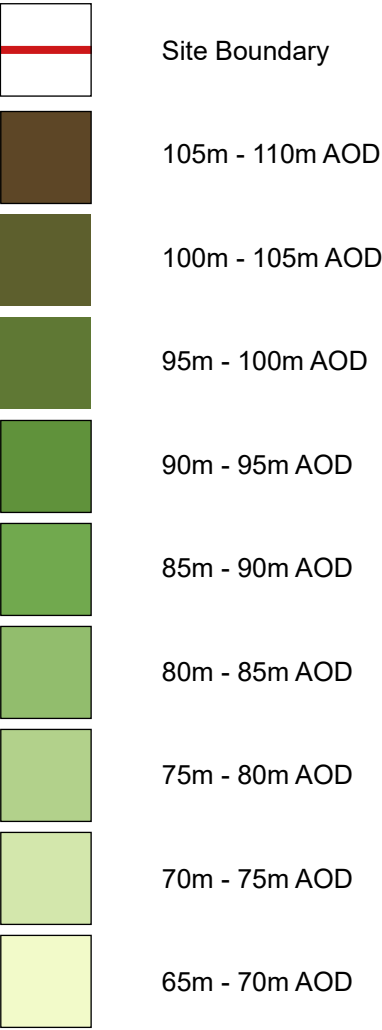




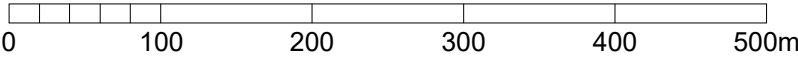



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Scale: 1:5000 @ A3





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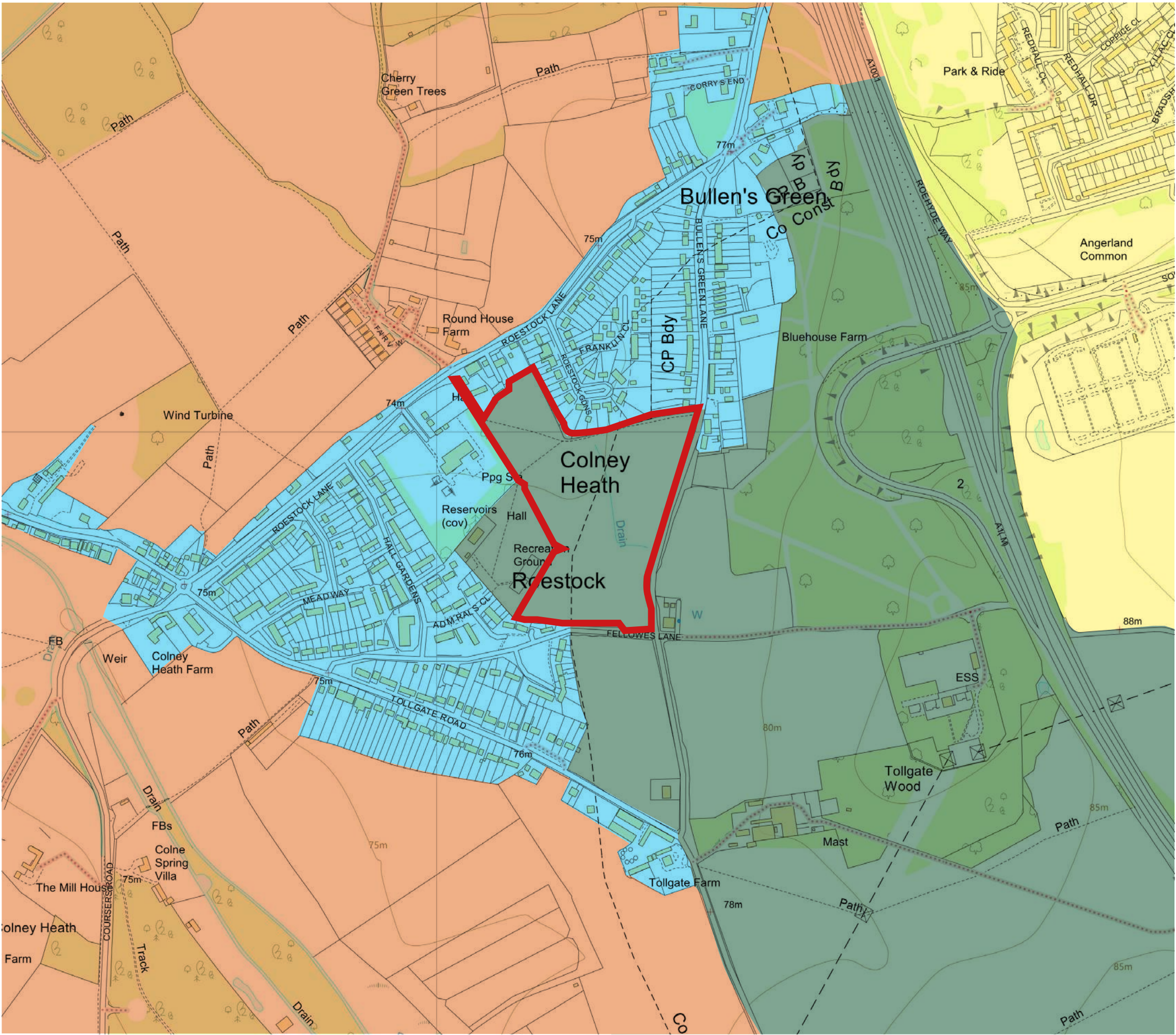
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# Figure 2

# A









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 Site Boundary

Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment (April 2005)

-  29 - Mimmshall Valley
-  30 - Colney Heath Farmland
-  Urban - Colney Heath
-  Urban - Hatfield

National Character Area (NCA) 111: Northern Thames Basin covers all extents of mapping shown.

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Coney Heath

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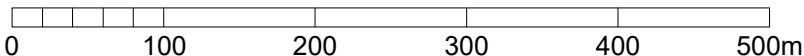
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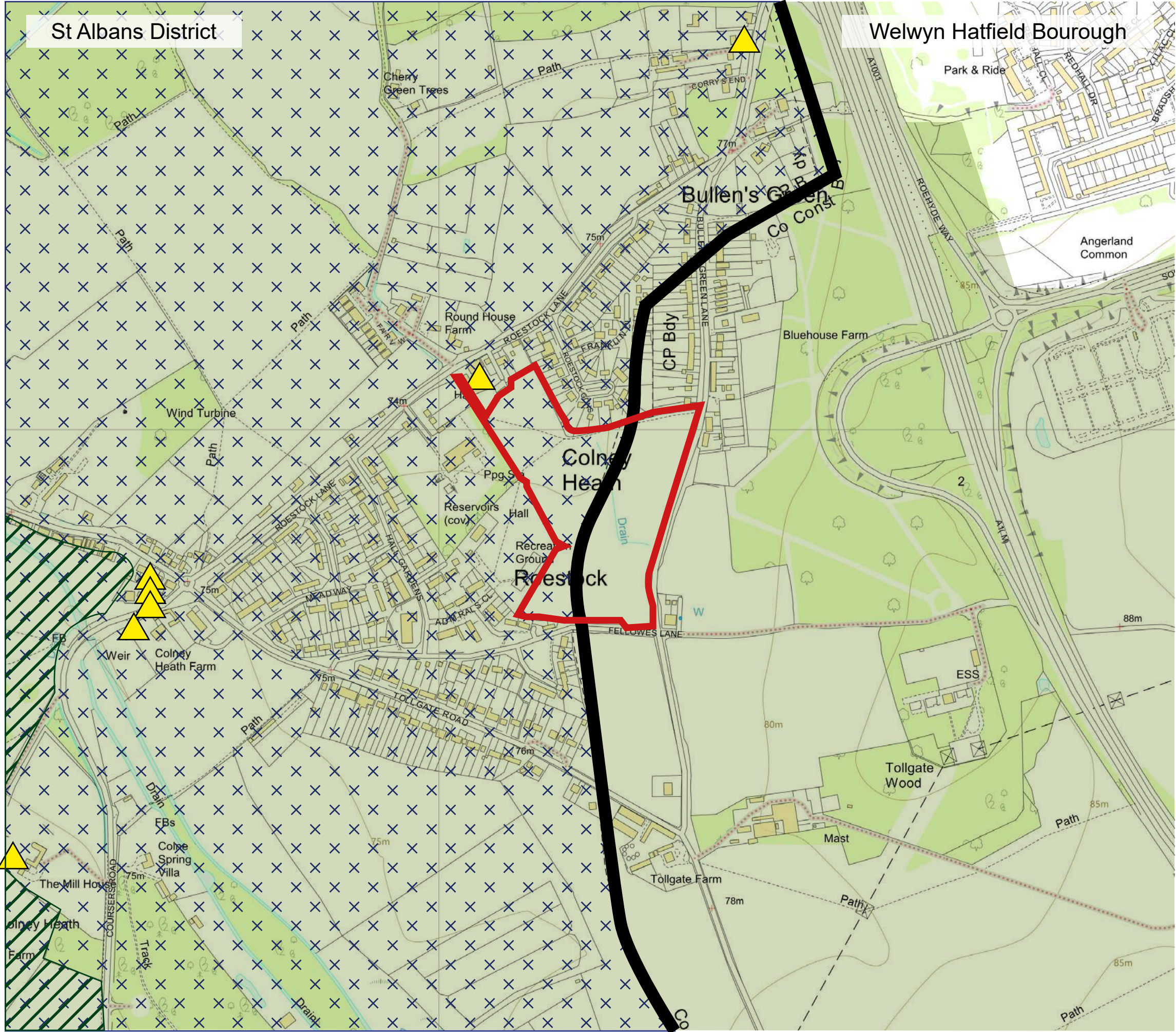
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**Figure 3**

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











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-  Site Boundary
-  Green Belt
-  District Boundary
-  Local Nature Reserve
-  Listed Building
-  Landscape Development Area

**The City and District of St Albans**  
District Local Plan Review (Adopted November 1994)



client  
**Canton Ltd**

project  
**Land off Bullens Green Lane,  
Coney Heath**

drawing title  
**DESIGNATIONS**

scale  
1:25,000 @ A3  
drawing / figure number

drawn  
HGK

issue date  
13 August 2020  
rev

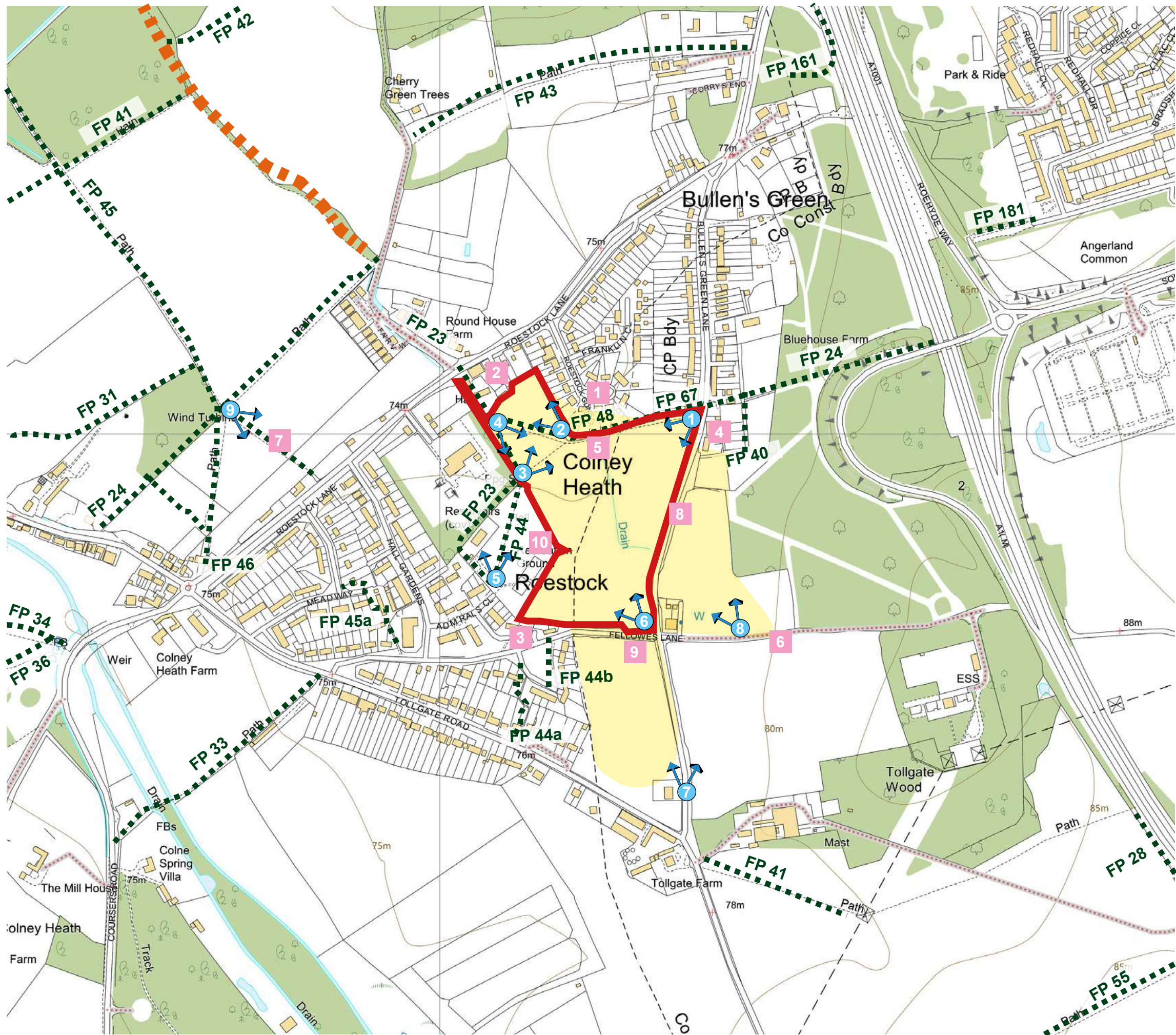
**Figure 4**

**A**

Scale: 1:5000 @ A3

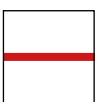
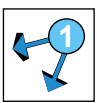
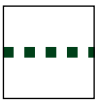









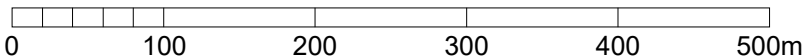
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-  Site Boundary
-  Photo Viewpoint Locations
-  Public Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Visual Envelope
-  Receptors

- 1 - Residents of Roestock Gardens
- 2 - Residents of Roestock Lane
- 3 - Residents Fellows Lane
- 4 - Residents Bullens Green Lane
- 5 - Users of the footpaths across the site
- 6 - Users of Dellsome Lane
- 7 - Users of footpaths north of Roestock Lane
- 8 - Users of Bullens Green Lane
- 9 - Users of Fellows Lane
- 10 - Users of the Recreation Ground

Scale: 1:5000 @ A3





client  
Canton Ltd

project  
Land off Bullens Green Lane,  
Coney Heath

drawing title  
**VIEWPOINT LOCATION & VISUAL  
RECEPTORS PLAN**

scale  
1:25,000 @ A3  
drawing / figure number

drawn  
HGK

issue date  
13 August 2020  
rev

**Figure 5**

**A**

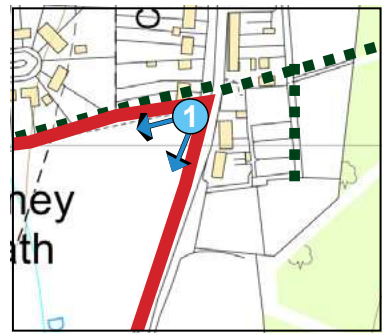




Photo Viewpoint 1: View south from Footpath 67  
Fellowes Lane



Photo Viewpoint 1 Continued: View south from Footpath 67



**Photo Viewpoint 1**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020, 11:08  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance  
the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1.  
To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

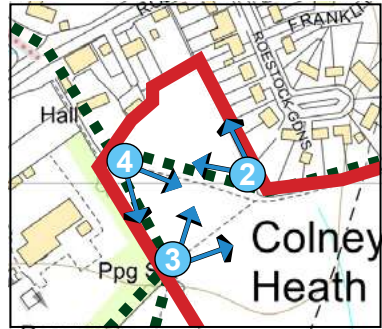
Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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Photo Viewpoint 2: View north from Footpath 67/48



**Photo Viewpoint 2**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020,10:48  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance  
the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1.  
To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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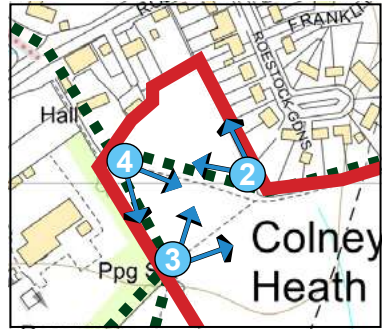




Photo Viewpoint 3: View north west from Footpath 23



Photo Viewpoint 3 Continued: View north west from Footpath 23



**Photo Viewpoint 3**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020, 11:04  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance  
the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1.  
To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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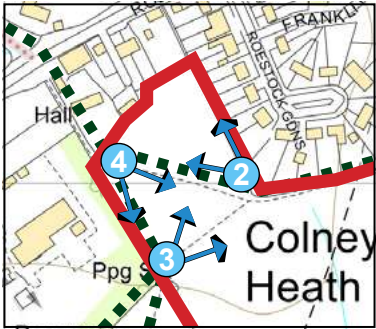




Photo Viewpoint 4: View south east from Footpath 48 and 23



Photo Viewpoint 4 Continued: View south east from Footpath 48 and 23



**Photo Viewpoint 4**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020, 10:52  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance  
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To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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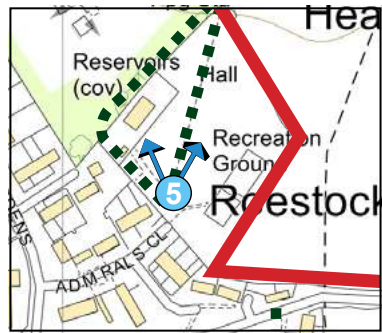




Photo Viewpoint 5: View north from Footpath 44 across play area



Photo Viewpoint 5 Continued: View north from Footpath 44 across play area



**Photo Viewpoint 5**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020, 11:01  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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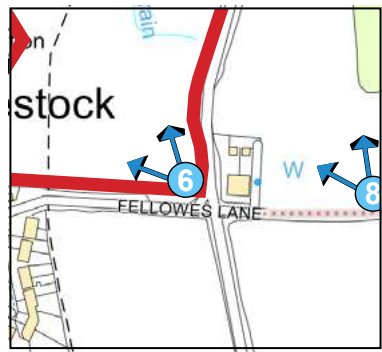




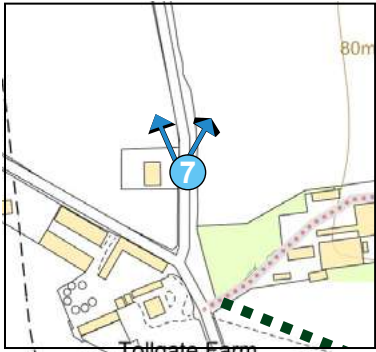
Photo Viewpoint 6: View north from Fellowes Lane



Photo Viewpoint 7: View north along Bullens Green Lane



**Photo Viewpoint 6**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020,11:13  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°



**Photo Viewpoint 7**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020,11:29  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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Houses at junction of Bullens Green Lane and Dellsome Lane



Site

Housing at Roestock Gardens

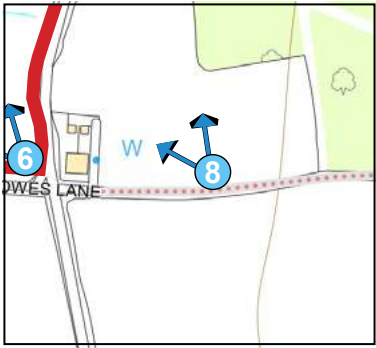
Photo Viewpoint 8: View North from Dellsome Lane  
Housing at Fair View



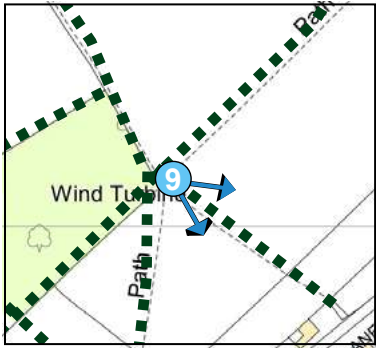
Site beyond the trees

Footpath 45

Photo Viewpoint 9: View south from junction of Footpaths 24 and 45



**Photo Viewpoint 8**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020,11:44  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°



**Photo Viewpoint 9**  
Date & time of photo: 17 June 2020,11:59  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 75°

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Cylindrical  
Enlargement factor: 100%

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## Appendix A: LVA Methodology and Appraisal Criteria

## **Appendix A**

### **Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Methodology and Assessment Criteria**

#### **Introduction**

- 1.0 The methodology for the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) undertaken for the proposed development is detailed in the LVA report. The following information should be read in conjunction with this methodology.
- 1.1 As advised in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) (GLVIA3), the judgements made in respect of both landscape and visual effects are a combination of an assessment of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the landscape or visual effect. The following details the definitions and criteria used in assessing sensitivity and magnitude for landscape and visual receptors.
- 1.2 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as High/ Medium or Moderate/ Minor etc. This indicates that the assessment lies between the respective definitions or encompasses aspects of both.

#### **Landscape**

##### **Landscape Sensitivity**

- 1.3 Landscape receptors are assessed in terms of their 'Landscape Sensitivity'. This combines judgements on the value to be attached to the landscape and the susceptibility to change of the landscape from the type of change or development proposed. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.
- 1.4 There can be complex relationships between the value attached to landscape receptors and their susceptibility to change which can be especially important when considering change within or close to designated landscapes. For example, an internationally, nationally or locally valued landscape does not automatically or by definition have a high susceptibility to all types of change. The type of change or development proposed may not compromise the specific basis for the value attached to the landscape.

##### Landscape Value

- 1.5 Value can apply to a landscape area as a whole, or to the individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape. The following criteria have been used to categorise landscape value. Where there is no clear existing evidence on landscape value, an assessment is made based on the criteria/ factors identified below (based on the guidance in GLVIA3 paragraph 5.28, Box 5.1).
- |                                 |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Landscape quality (condition) | • Conservation interest |
| • Scenic quality                | • Recreation value      |
| • Rarity                        | • Perceptual aspects    |
| • Representativeness            | • Associations          |

<b>Landscape Value</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	Landscape receptors of high importance based upon factors of quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities and associations.
Medium	Landscape receptors of medium importance based upon factors of quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities and associations.
Low	Landscape receptors of low importance based upon factors of quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities and associations.

#### Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 1.6 This means the ability of the landscape receptor (overall character type/ area or individual element/ feature) to accommodate the change (i.e. the proposed development) without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline position and/ or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies. The definition and criteria for the assessment of Landscape Susceptibility to Change is as follows:

<b>Landscape Susceptibility to Change</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	A highly distinctive and cohesive landscape receptor, with positive characteristics and features with no or very few detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features intact and in very good condition and/ or rare. Limited capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.
Medium	Distinctive and more commonplace landscape receptor, with some positive characteristics/ features and some detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features in moderate condition. Capacity to accept well planned and designed change/ development of the type proposed.
Low	Landscape receptor of mixed character with a lack of coherence and including detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features that may be in poor or improving condition and few that could not be replaced. Greater capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.

#### **Magnitude of Landscape Effects**

- 1.7 The magnitude of landscape effects is the degree of change to the landscape receptor in terms of its size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the separate considerations of Scale or Size of the Degree of Change and Reversibility. The geographical extent and duration of change are described where relevant in the appraisal.

#### Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change

<b>Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	Total loss of or substantial alteration to key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be fundamentally changed.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements that would be evident but not necessarily uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be obviously changed.
Low	Limited loss of, or alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements evident and/ or characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be perceptibly changed.
Negligible	Very minor alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be minimally changed.
None	No loss or alteration to the key characteristics/ features, representing 'no change'.

#### Reversibility

<b>Reversibility</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Irreversible	The development would be permanent and the assessment site could not be returned to its current/ former use.
Reversible	The development could be deconstructed/ demolished and the assessment site could be returned to broadly its current/ historic use (although that may be subject to qualification depending on the nature of the development).

## **Visual**

### **Sensitivity of Visual Receptors**

- 1.8 Visual sensitivity assesses each visual receptor in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.

#### Visual Susceptibility to Change

- 1.9 The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of; firstly, the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and secondly, the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and visual amenity they experience.



<b>Visual Susceptibility to Change</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	Residents at home with primary views from ground floor/garden and upper floors. Public rights of way/ footways where attention is primarily focussed on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and/ or on particular views. Communities where views make an important contribution to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents. Travellers on recognised scenic routes.
Medium	Residents at home with secondary views (primarily from first floor level). Public rights of way/ footways where attention is not primarily focussed on the landscape and/ or particular views. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes.
Low	Users of outdoor recreational facilities where the view is less important to the activities (e.g. sports pitches). Travellers on road, rail or other transport where views are primarily focussed on the transport route. People at their place of work where views of the landscape are not important to the quality of the working life.

#### Value of Views

- 1.10 The value attached to a view takes account of any recognition attached to a particular view and/ or any indicators of the value attached to views, for example through guidebooks or defined viewpoints or references in literature or art.

<b>Value of Views</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	A unique or identified view (e.g. shown as such on Ordnance Survey map, guidebook or tourist map) or one noted in literature or art. A view where a heritage asset makes an important contribution to the view.
Medium	A typical and/ or representative view from a particular receptor.
Low	An undistinguished or unremarkable view from a particular receptor.

#### **Magnitude of Visual Effects**

- 1.11 Magnitude of Visual Effects evaluates each of the visual effects in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the Scale or Size (including the degree of contrast) of Visual Change. The distance and nature of the view and whether the receptor's view will be stationary or moving are also detailed in the Visual Effects Table.

<b>Scale or Size of the Degree of Visual Change</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	The proposal will result in a large and immediately apparent change in the view, being a dominant and new and/ or incongruous feature in the landscape.
Medium	The proposal will result in an obvious and recognisable change in the view and will be readily noticed by the viewer.
Low	The proposal will constitute a minor component of the wider view or a more recognisable component that reflects those apparent in the existing view. Awareness of the proposals will not have a marked effect on the overall nature of the view.
Negligible/ None	Only a very small part of the proposal will be discernible and it will have very little or no effect on the nature of the view.

### **Level of Effect**

- 1.12 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 1.13 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following descriptive thresholds have been used for this appraisal:
- **Major**
  - **Moderate**
  - **Minor**
  - **Negligible**
- 1.14 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

## Appendix B: Landscape Effects Table

Appendix B: Landscape Effects Table (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
National Landscape Character									
Natural England, National Character Area Profile (NCA) 111: Northern Thames Basin	Medium  (Variators occur)	Medium  (Variators occur)	Medium  (Variators occur)	Construction: Negligible  Completion: Negligible  Year 15: Negligible	No	This NCA stretches from Hertfordshire in the west to the Essex coast in the east whilst also encompassing suburbs of North London and therefore covers a very extensive landscape area.  The proposed development will form an extension to the existing residential settlement of Colney Heath and would not appear out of context, resulting in an overall negligible effect upon this expansive NCA.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA): County/District									
Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment   29 – Mimmshall Valley (LCA)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 15: Low / Negligible	No	The LCA covers a relatively large area within the landscape and the site itself is located on the very edge of the LCA boundary close to the settlement of Colney Heath, encompassing a relatively small parcel of land within the LCA.  There is limited development within the LCA however the influence of the neighbouring villages has an impact on the character.  The proposed development lies on the edge of the LCA adjacent to the urban area and will appear in context to this existing settlement. Arable farmland will be replaced by new development, but where possible the existing landscape features of value will be retained and enhanced with additional planting.  Effects will initially be minor adverse, however long-term effects will be reduced when additional mitigation landscaping matures providing some beneficial landscape effects.	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor/Negligible
Landscape Character: Site and Immediate Context									

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Site and Immediate Context	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Low	No	<p>The site itself is a single arable field, contained by a mix of residential boundaries, and some intermittent hedgerows along the local lanes. Part of the site bounds a public open space with play facilities, though separated from it by a mature hedge/ tree line. The wider landscape to the south of Colney Heath is a fairly well wooded landscape, with a large block of woodland to the west adjacent to the A1M.</p> <p>There are some individual properties scattered along the local lanes including Fellowes Lane and Bullens Green Lane. Within the site a right of way, public footpath 48/67 passes between Bullens Green Lane and Roestock Lane. Whilst the official route cuts diagonally across the northern part of the site, most people use an informal route that meets footpath 44 more directly. Footpath 44 passes through the edge of the site between Admiral Close to the south and Roestock Lane to the north.</p> <p>South of the site Fellowes Lane becomes Dellsome Lane, which is closed to vehicles and appears to be used as footpath linking to Tollgate Wood. There are a range of informal routes in the wood which also appears to be used by the public.</p> <p>Overall visibility of the site and the local landscape is quite restricted due to the high proportion of woodland and trees. The A1M is not visible due to the woodland but can be heard. Overall, the local landscape does reflect some of the characteristics described in the Welwyn Landscape assessment.</p>	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Moderate/Minor adverse

## Appendix C: Visual Effects Table

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None  Adverse or Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None  Adverse or Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None  Adverse or Beneficial
1	Residents of Roestock Gardens	High	Medium	High/Medium	7m	Partial / Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Medium / Low Completion: Low Year 15: Low	Some residents on Roestock Gardens to the north of the site will have partial or glimpse views of the proposed development during construction and completion. Partial views will predominantly be through first floor windows with existing back garden vegetation reducing some of these to glimpse views.  New landscaping and public open space within the development will assist in filtering the views once trees have established reducing long term effects to minor adverse.	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
2	Residents of Roestock Lane	High	Medium	High/Medium	5m	Partial / Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Medium / Low Completion: Medium / Low Year 15: Low	Residents on Roestock Lane have back gardens adjoining the most northern boundary of the site and could experience Moderate / Minor adverse effects during construction and completion of the proposed development. Views are filtered by current garden vegetation and additional buffer planting would further reduce long term effects to minor adverse.	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
3	Residents of Fellowes Lane	High	Medium	High/Medium	5m	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Low	A number of residents of properties on Fellowes Lane, including properties on Admiral Close to the south west of the site will experience a change in views as a result of the proposed development. These would be partial views of the site through the windows and potential glimpse views from back gardens abutting the site boundary. This would result in moderate adverse effects for those houses during the construction and completion phases.  As the proposed vegetation grew these effects would be reduced to Minor adverse / Negligible.	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Minor Adverse
4	Residents of Bullens Green Lane	High	Medium	High/Medium	4m	Full	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium / Low	Most of these have a north south aspect with no windows directed towards the site, apart from the house nearest the junction, which does have some windows on the side of the property. From these side	Minor/Moderate adverse	Minor/Moderate adverse	Minor Adverse

									windows the site can be seen but filtered by the boundary hedgerow.			
5	Users of the footpaths across the site	High	Medium	High / Medium	0m (footpath within the site boundary)	Full	Temporary	Construction: High Completion: High / Medium Year 15: Medium	<p>Users of the Public Rights of Way and informal footpath that cross through the site will have a change in views due to the proposed development. The footpaths currently pass through arable farmland and will have open views replaced by areas of residential development, roads and new green infrastructure.</p> <p>As the footpaths pass directly through the site and are in close proximity to the proposed development effects during construction are likely to be moderate/major adverse. In the long-term effects will become reduced as mitigation landscaping, including tree planting, within the public open space will mature, softening views.</p>	Moderate / Major Adverse	Moderate / Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse
6	Users of Dellsome Lane	High	Medium	High/ Medium	50 – 300m	Glimpse / None	Temporary	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	<p>Dellsome Lane is a small lane now closed off to vehicular traffic but used by walkers accessing Tollgate Wood. From here there are some limited views towards the site. In part some of the existing houses beyond the site can be seen at Roestock Gardens. In other parts trees and hedges on the boundary restrict views.</p> <p>Users of Dellsome Lane are likely to experience Glimpse views at most of the construction and proposed development during operation from certain locations along the lane. Existing vegetation along Bullens Green Lane will filter and mostly obscure views towards the site although the lane will have views of the proposed development to the east of the view in front of houses on Roestock Gardens.</p> <p>There are fields, boundary hedgerows and trees between the lane and the site which will filter views as will existing retained vegetation along the eastern site boundary which will be enhanced with additional landscaping providing further long-term softening. Effects, therefore, are likely to be Minor Adverse with long term effects reducing further to Negligible.</p>	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
7	Users of footpaths north of Roestock Lane	High	Medium	High/ Medium	200 – 300m	Glimpse	Temporary	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	This footpath is located to the west of the site and to the west of Roestock. Intervening buildings and current vegetation mean views of the site are glimpse at most. The effects would be negligible through construction and completion whilst the 15-year effect is noted as none as the development would be seen in context with Roestock village.	None	None	None
8	Users of Bullens Green Lane	Medium	Medium	Medium	0m (Lane adjacent to site boundary at its closest point)	Full / Partial	Temporary	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium/Low	<p>Users of Bullens Green Lane to the east of the site will have partial to full views of the proposed development, and of the site access. As the user travels along the road. Views will be filtered in places by intervening roadside vegetation and existing hedgerows within the landscape and to the east of the site. Users of this road have existing glimpse views of the existing settlement of Roestock Gardens and properties further north on Bullens Green Lane.</p> <p>New mitigation planting within the Green Infrastructure of the proposed development will assist with filtering of views in the long term once new tree planting becomes established.</p>	Moderate Adverse	Moderate adverse	Moderate/Minor Adverse



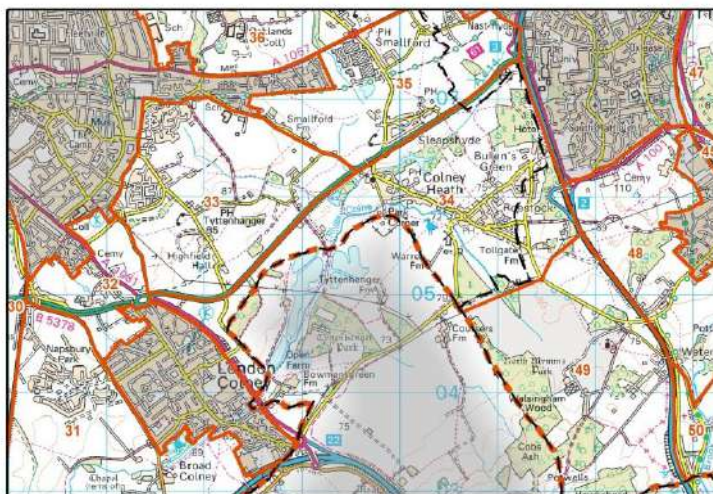
9	Users of Fellowes Green Lane	Medium	Medium	Medium	0m (adjoins the site boundary at its closest point)	Full / Partial	Temporary	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium/Low	Road users of Fellowes Green Lane will experience full / partial views of the new development on the approach to the site from the east due to a gap in the vegetation. As the user continues these reduce to glimpse or no views because of the existing vegetation.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate/Minor Adverse
10	Users of the Recreation Ground	Medium	Medium	Medium	5m	Glimpse	Temporary	Construction: Low / Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	The recreation ground to the west of the site adjoins the site boundary. Vegetation between the site and the park mean the effects would be minor adverse.	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse / Negligible	Negligible

## Appendix D: Extracts from the Green Belt studies

Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment:  
*Parcel Assessment Sheets for St Albans City and District Council*

## GB34 –Green Belt Land between Hatfield and London Colney

**Description** The parcel is located to the southwest of Hatfield and the northeast of London Colney. The boundary to the north follows the North Orbital A414 to the south follows Coursers Road. It is 419 ha in size and comprises the broad and shallow basin of the meandering upper River Colne.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland and heathland. It includes significant areas of water in lakes created by sand and gravel working and some blocks of woodland.

Colney Heath and Bullens End narrow local gap



View to north shows strong rural and open characteristics



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Hatfield and London Colney). Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Hatfield) and preserving the setting of London Colney, Sleepshyde and Tyttenhanger Park. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB34 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED / NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements. However it contributes with GB33, 35 and 36 towards the strategic gap between St Albans and Hatfield. As a whole, the gap contains some built development and ribbon development associated to 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements in the Green Belt. Overall, any minor reduction in the gap would be unlikely compromise the separation of 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall visual openness.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics, especially to the south, in medium sized arable fields with hedgerow boundaries, sheep pasture and substantial riverine wetland habitats along the Colne, and areas of heath and semi natural grassland which are locally important at Colney Heath. Tyttenhanger Park and Hall is located to the south. There is evidence of linear built development in the north part of the parcel which contains Colney Heath and Bullens Green. The A1(M) is also a major urban influence which is audibly intrusive. Levels of openness are generally high especially to the south due to an absence of built development.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel adjoins London Colney and Sleafshyde conservation areas however visual connection or views are limited by local routes and wooded areas. Tyttenhanger Park the setting of the Hall is encircled by sand and gravel working and mounds of overburden and spoil, with associated conveyor belts and plant at present but future restoration should remedy this impact in countryside character..		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
<p>The parcel provides a range of gaps. It provides the primary local gap between Hatfield (1<sup>st</sup>) and London Colney (2<sup>nd</sup>) and contributes with parcels GB33 to GB36 and GB43B to the overall gap with St Albans. The gap is large at 4.3km but contains ribbon development at Colney Heath (3<sup>rd</sup>) and Bullens End (3<sup>rd</sup>). The gap to the south to Colney Heath is 2.6km and well maintained (relatively free of development) however the gap to the north is more built up and narrower at 1.7km.</p> <p>Therefore any reduction in the gaps would compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms to the north, and local levels of visual openness. A minor reduction to the south would lead to a less significant impact.</p>		

### Level of openness and countryside character

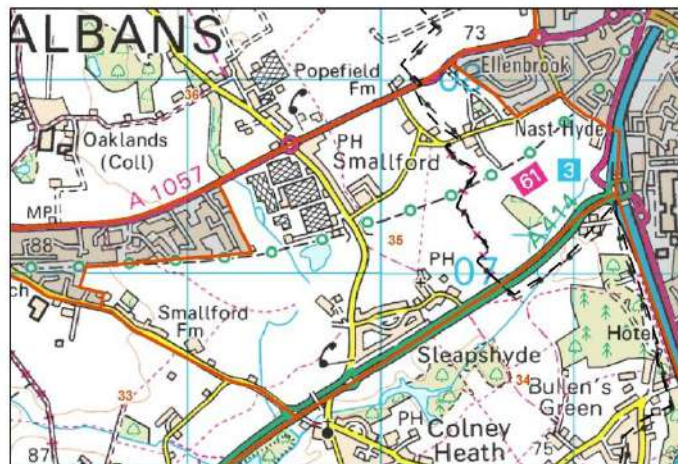
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 1.0%. Some ribbon development has taken place especially around villages to the north and east of the parcel.

**Visual Openness** The parcel is generally open to the north and more enclosed to the south where it is more wooded although there are some extensive panoramas over arable fields towards the Shenley ridge to the south.

**Countryside Character** Riverine character with many sites subject to past gravel working now restored to pasture, lakes or water meadow along the Colne. Well wooded to the south.

## GB35 –Green Belt Land between St Albans and Hatfield (Smallford)

**Description** The parcel is located to the east of St Albans and the west of Hatfield. The boundary to the south follows the North Orbital A414 to the north follows the Hatfield Road. It is 250 ha in size and forms a virtually flat clay plain.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland and grass land, plus industrial, commercial and recreational activities.

Smallford, ribbon development in the Green Belt extending from St Albans



Land along Ellenbrook Lane displaying greater sense of enclosure and urban influence



## Principal Function / Summary

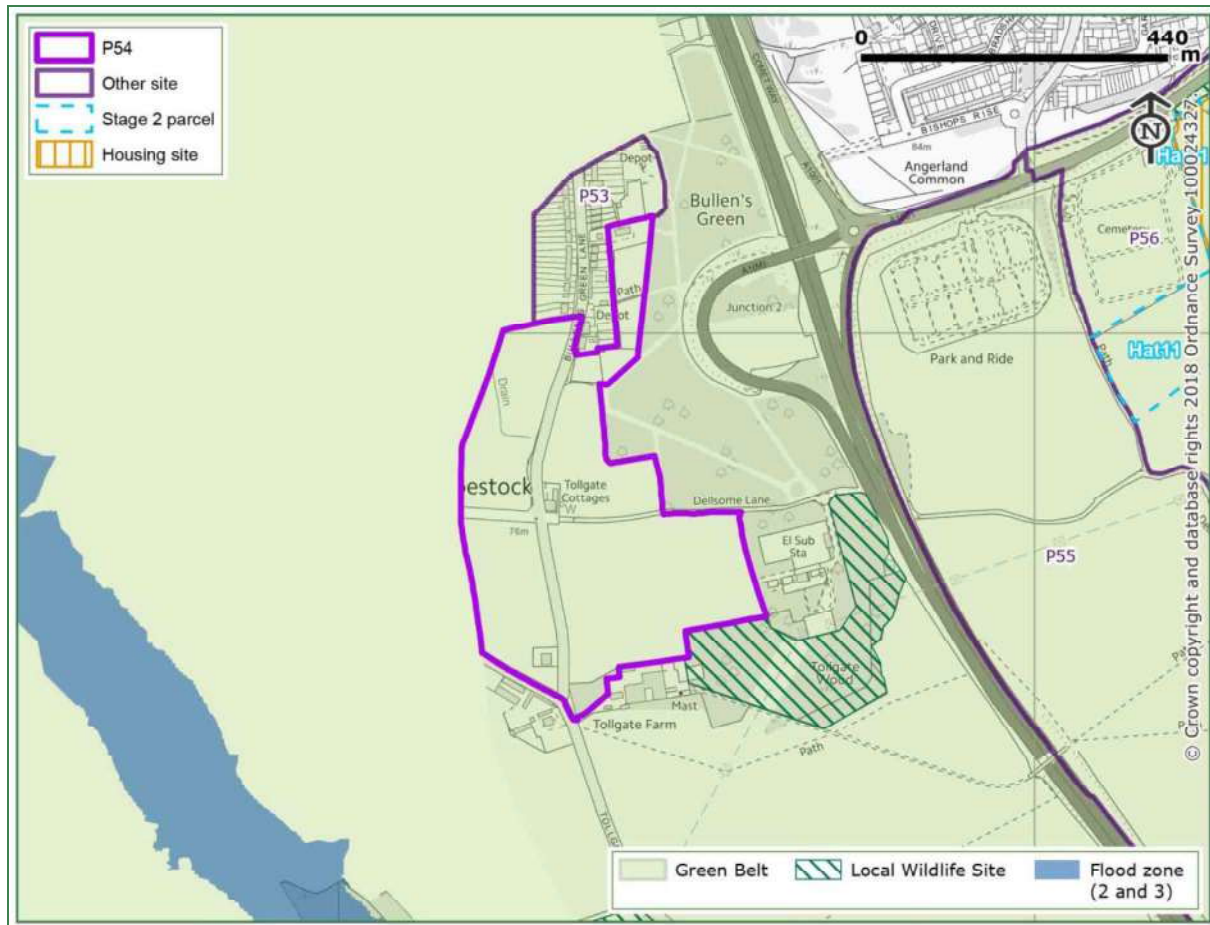
Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Hatfield) and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gaps between St Albans and Hatfield with Smallford and Sleepshyde). Partial contribution towards preserving the setting of Sleepshyde. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

## Welwyn Hatfield Green Belt Study



P54

15.4ha







View looking west from the crossroads in the centre of the parcel

## Parcel Description

The parcel is located within the wider countryside to the southeast of the settlement of Bullens Green and east of Roestock (in St Albans District), both of which are washed-over by the Green Belt. Land within the parcel is broadly flat, gently sloping up to the east. The parcel predominantly comprises arable and grassland fields with two minor roads crossing the centre of the parcel from north to south and east to west. A dwelling is located in the south of the parcel, another dwelling is located in the northeast corner of the parcel and three terraced houses are located in the centre of the parcel. These have large gardens with open views to the countryside within the parcel. A block of woodland is also present in the southern corner of the parcel.

Tollgate Wood Local Wildlife Site is located adjacent to the southeast of the parcel. The parcel adjoins the settlement edge of Bullens Green in the north, the settlement edge of Roestock to the southwest, and a thick block of woodland to the east and southeast, providing containment of the northeast, east and southwest of the parcel from the wider countryside – although open views of the wider countryside across the parcel are still visible across most of the parcel, with the exception of the very contained northeast corner. An electricity transmission station is located within the woodland adjacent to the east of the site and the A1M is present beyond. The south of the parcel adjoins the wider countryside with a farm and vehicle repair shop adjacent to the edge of the parcel. The west of the parcel adjoins arable fields, with the settlements of Bullens Green and Roestock present beyond.

## Assessment of Contribution to Green Belt Purposes

Purpose/Rating	Assessment
<b>P1: Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	The parcel is sufficiently separated or distant from a large built-up area for there not to be any potential for urban sprawl from the large built up area.
<b>Limited or no contribution</b>	
<b>P2: Preventing the merging of neighbouring towns</b>	The parcel does not lie directly between two first tier settlements.
<b>Limited or no contribution</b>	
<b>P3: Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	The land contains the characteristics of open countryside, comprising arable and grassland fields. It contains some very limited urbanising development, including a couple of isolated dwellings. Residential development within the adjacent settlement is visible across much of the parcel.
<b>Significant contribution</b>	
<b>P4: Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	The land forms little or no part of the setting of Welwyn Garden City and does not contribute to its special character.
<b>Limited or no contribution</b>	
<b>P5: Assist the urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	All Green Belt land can be considered to support urban regeneration within Welwyn Hatfield and it is not possible to distinguish which parcels perform this to a stronger or weaker degree.
<b>Significant contribution</b>	
<b>Local purpose: Maintain the existing settlement pattern</b>	The parcel does not lie directly between any smaller settlements which are inset into the Green Belt and which are being considered in relation to the local purpose.
<b>Limited or no contribution</b>	

## Assessment of Harm to the Green Belt

Scenario	Rating
<b>P54</b> <b>Release of the parcel as a whole, in association with the insetting of Bullens Green (P53)</b>	<b>Moderate - High</b>
<b>Comments</b>	
The parcel is largely open and rural, therefore the release of it would lead to encroachment on the countryside. However, the parcel is contained to the east and southeast by thick woodland, some of which is protected and by the existing settlement of Bullens Green to the west (which lies partly within the neighbouring authority of St Albans). The impact upon the integrity of the wider Green Belt would therefore be limited. In isolation, the parcel would be weak as an inset area, and any revised Green Belt boundary would need to include the insetting of Bullens Green P53.	

Scenario	Rating
<b>P54a</b> <b>Release of the northeast of the parcel , in association with the inseting of Bullens Green (P53)</b>	<b>Moderate - Low</b>
Comments	
<p>This part of the parcel is open and rural, however as it is narrow and well contained by thick woodland to the east and the settlement of Bullens Green to the north and west, development of this site would not have a significant effect on the integrity of the wider Green Belt. In isolation, this part of the parcel would be weak as an inset area, and any revised Green Belt boundary would need to include the inseting of Bullens Green P53.</p>	

## PARCEL P54

- Green Belt
- Green Belt parcel
- Council boundary

- Harm rating**
- Very High
  - High
  - Moderate - High

- Moderate
- Moderate - Low
- Low

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