

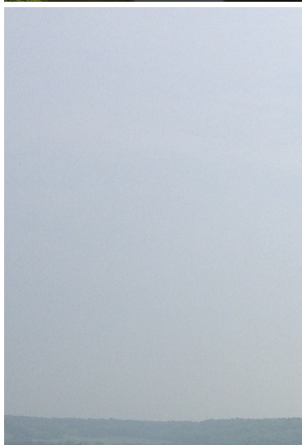


## GREEN BELT REVIEW PURPOSES ASSESSMENT

(Prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council)

### Annex 1 – Parcel Assessment Sheets for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

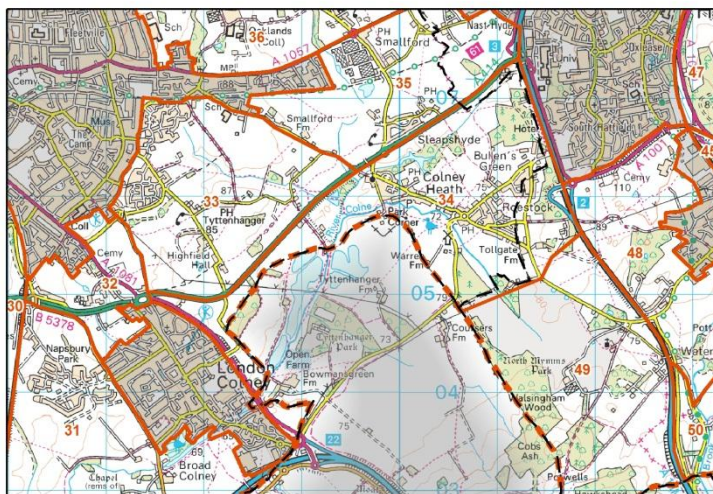
November 2013





## 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.