St Albans City and District Council
Settlement Hierarchy Study
Part 1 Baseline

June 2023

Contents

Contents 2
1 Background 3
2 Policy Context 4
3 The Emerging Evidence Base 10
4 Settlement Profiles 14
5 Comparative Studies 20
6 Methodology 23
7 Conclusions and Next Steps 38
Appendix 1 - Summary of Findings from the Stage 1 Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment Prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (November 2013) 39
Appendix 2 - Population Data using Address Gazeteer Data points within defined settlement areas within the District. 40
Appendix 3 - Population of Settlements and Weighting Scores per Settlement. 42
Appendix 4 - Accessibility Audit Scoring Table and Maps 43
Appendix 5 - Services and Facilities Audit Scoring 50
Appendix 6 - Employment Audit Scoring 57
Appendix 7 - Final Scoring Matrix for all Settlements and Audit Scores 60

1 Background

1.1 Whilst there is no direct national policy requirement to prepare a Settlement Hierarchy Study, national policy emphasises the importance of delivering housing across a range of settlement types. In particular, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that understanding the roles and relationships between settlements is important when planning for sustainable growth and ensuring the vitality of local services and communities.

1.2 It is not the role of the Settlement Hierarchy Study to identify the capacity of each settlement to grow or to advise on the likely quantum of growth which each settlement could accommodate. Furthermore, this study acknowledges that service provision is not necessarily a fixed given and can evolve over time according to market forces or changing travel and service patterns, shopping trends and advances in technology. The aim of this study is to provide robust and objective evidence to inform the development of the spatial strategy and strategic policies of the emerging Local Plan.

1.3 It is also acknowledged that since 1994, piecemeal and some larger development has taken place which has encroached into the Metropolitan Green Belt. These areas are described in more detail in the Background section below.

1.4 This study incorporates the following sections:

a. **Policy Context** – provides the national, local and neighbourhood plan policy context for the District, with a focus on sustainable patterns of development, economic viability and town centre viability and accessibility to services and sustainable modes of transport.

b. **Evidence –** introduces technical studies that are being undertaken to develop the Local Plan, which inform the settlement hierarchy and also may be influenced by the outcomes of the study.

c. **Settlement Boundaries and Profiles** – provides an overview of each settlement in the District, taking information from existing evidence sources such as Neighbourhood Plans.

d. **Comparative studies** – sets out, and assesses, comparative studies from other planning authorities.

e. **Methodology** – provides an explanation of the methodology used to assess the settlement hierarchy in the District in relation to size of settlement, accessibility, employment and services and facilities. A key part of this section is to explain the main assumptions made in undertaking the assessment of settlements.

f. **Results and Conclusions** – the outputs from the analysis of mapping and scoring of settlements to identify whether the settlement hierarchy remains noticeably similar or the same as that of the 1994 hierarchy, or whether any settlements should be re-categorised.

2 Policy Context

Procedural Requirements and National Policy Context

2.1 Although the NPPF does not include specific requirements or expectations as to how the settlement hierarchy of settlements should be identified or reviewed within a Local Plan authority area, it does acknowledge that a range of site sizes will be required to deliver housing (paragraphs 22 and 69), across a range of settlement types. The NPPF emphasises that understanding the roles and relationships between settlements is important when planning for sustainable growth and ensuring the vitality of local services and communities.

2.2 Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) suggests planning authorities may locate housing in rural areas where it will maintain the vitality of rural communities. It requires planning policies to identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. It notes that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

2.3 With regard to the role of town centres, paragraph 86 (NPPF, 2021) emphasises the importance of supporting the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. In particular, the NPPF requires that planning policies *define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability - by allowing them to grow in a way that can respond to changes in retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters.* It also recognises that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourages residential development on appropriate sites.

2.4 Under Promoting healthy and safe communities, paragraph 93 (NPPF, 2021) emphasises the importance of taking an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services. And in terms of offering a choice of transport modes, paragraph 104 (NPPF, 2021) requires that *significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.*

2.5 The District's Green Belt will be a factor in understanding and testing the settlement hierarchy of the area. In particular, paragraph 142 (NPPF, 2021) states that *when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the Green Belt boundary.*

2.6 The production of a settlement hierarchy and supporting study to achieve these objectives complies with paragraph 31 of the NPPF, in that the preparation of policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence that justifies and supports them.

2.7 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers little information regarding the settlement hierarchy evidence base, but paragraph 67-009-020190722 identifies the importance of understanding the settlement hierarchy, and in particular that *a wide range of settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas, so*

blanket policies restricting housing development in some types of settlement will need to be supported by robust evidence of their appropriateness.

St Albans Local Plan Review 1994

2.8 The current settlement hierarchy for St Albans is set out in the District Plan Objectives and saved policies of the Local Plan Review 1994. The District Plan Objectives seeks to protect and enhance the character of existing settlements and define the nature and intensity of development acceptable in the following settlement hierarchy:

- **Towns** – Generally settlements of over 5,000 population excluded from the Green Belt;
- **Specified Settlements** – Larger villages generally of 2,000-5,000 population. Excluded from the Green Belt;
- **Green Belt Settlements** – Smaller villages within the Green Belt.

2.9 Policy 2 of the Local Plan Review 1994, defines the type and intensity of development in relation to the settlement hierarchy, stating the following: *the nature and intensity of development acceptable in particular locations will reflect the following settlement hierarchy:*

- ***Towns** – St Albans, Harpenden*
- ***Specified Settlements** – Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, London Colney, Park Street / Frogmore, Redbourn, Wheathampstead*
- ***Green Belt Settlements** – Annables, Kinsbourne Green, Colney Heath, Holly Fields, Gustard Wood, Lea Valley Estate, Radlett Road, Frogmore, Sandridge, Sleapshyde, Smallford.*

2.10 Since 1994, the type and amount of growth in the District has been reflected by the hierarchy of settlements, and has been focused on St Albans and Harpenden followed by the specified settlements. Since that time, an update to the settlement hierarchy was proposed through the St Albans Strategic Local Plan 2011-2031 (withdrawn in 2016) and the Local Plan 2020-2036 Publication Draft 2018 (withdrawn in 2020).

St Albans Strategic Local Plan 2011-2031 (withdrawn)

2.11 The Strategic Local Plan sought to prioritise sustainable development by maximising the development opportunities in existing urban areas. This was to be achieved by containing the spread of urban development by the continued application of Green Belt policy with minimal changes to the boundaries.

2.12 Under this Strategy the urban areas of St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney were the main foci for new development as they were therefore considered to be the most 'sustainable' locations due to their access to services, transport and community facilities. The Spatial Strategy was to be supported by relatively constrained levels of development in the villages excluded from the Green Belt.

2.13 Policy SLP1 (Spatial Strategy and Development Strategy) established the Spatial Strategy in policy, and set out that *the majority of new development will be concentrated in existing settlements, in the following priority order:*

- *Cities, Towns – Main urban settlements excluded from the Green Belt – St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney*

- *Villages – Other settlements excluded from the Green Belt – Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, Park Street and Frogmore, Redbourn, Wheathampstead*
- *Green Belt Settlements – Annables and Kinsbourne Green, Colney Heath (three parts), Folly Fields, Gustard Wood, Lea Valley Estate, Radlett Road (Frogmore), Sandridge, Sleapshyde, Smallford*
- *Rest of Green Belt.*

St Albans City and District Council Local Plan 2020-2036 (withdrawn)

2.14 A similar approach to the spatial strategy was taken in the Local Plan 2020-2036 Publication Draft 2018 (withdrawn 2020). Policy S1 (Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy set out that development will be concentrated on the basis of settlement categories 1-4 included in Table 1 below. This gave priority to larger urban centres, which provide a greater range of services and facilities and to central places within the urban areas that offer greater accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling.

Table 1: St Albans Local Plan 2020-2036 (withdrawn) Proposed Settlement Hierarchy

Category	Settlements	Broad policy approach
1) City, Towns - Main urban settlements excluded from the Green Belt	*St Albans* *Harpenden* *London Colney* *Hemel Hempstead – NB: currently within Dacorum Borough, but expansion into District planned*	These are the most accessible locations for development, with the widest range of services and facilities. Larger scale, higher density developments will be encouraged, but will need to respect local character and heritage.
2) Large Villages – Settlements excluded from the Green Belt	*Bricket Wood* *Chiswell Green* *How Wood* *Park Street and Frogmore* *Park Street Garden Village* *Redbourn* *Wheathampstead*	The scale and density of development will generally be lower than in the Category 1 settlements. This is to reflect the lower level of services available and in order to retain their particular character.
3) Green Belt Settlements	*Annables and Kinsbourne Green* *Colney Heath (three parts)* *Folly Fields* *Gustard Wood* *Lea Valley Estate* *Radlett Road (Frogmore)* *Sandridge* *Sleapshyde* *Smallford*	These are the more sizable settlements in locations that make an important contribution to Green Belt functions. Development will be limited to small scale infilling and redevelopment of previously developed land that reflects the Green Belt context and open character of the area.
4) Rest of the Green Belt		Very limited scope for development under National and Local Green Belt policy.

2.15 Policy S2 (Development Strategy) required that All Category 1 settlements and one Category 2 settlement (Chiswell Green) will be expanded at 'Broad Locations' for development. A new settlement 'Park Street Garden Village' would be created and designated as Category 2 under Policy S1.

2.16 Although the plans proposed new settlement classifications, based on accessibility and the availability of services, it was perceived by the Inspector that there was a lack of up to date evidence to support the descriptions of the settlements as the *most accessible, with the widest range of services and facilities…* and the policies continued to relate the spatial strategy to the settlement categories.

2.17 It is important to note that the adopted settlement hierarchy from the Local Plan Review 1994 was based on the size of settlement, where a threshold of settlement size was used to determine which category the settlement was associated with. Although population size is an important factor in determining the hierarchy of settlements within an area, the most up to date national policy context suggests that additional factors should be taken into account when considering the function of settlements and their suitability for sustainable patterns of growth, such as accessibility and the availability of key services.

2.18 The emerging settlement hierarchy categorisation, within the 2018 Local Plan Publication Draft (withdrawn 2020) shows that additional factors were being considered in the identification of a new settlement hierarchy approach such as accessibility and access to services.

2.19 In order to better understand the settlement hierarchy of the District, since 1994, and to provide robust evidence base to inform the spatial strategy, this study uses a quantitative approach to test the accessibility of settlements and the availability of key services. The study also considers the findings of existing and emerging evidence to understand the role of the settlements in the District.

Neighbourhood Plans

Sandridge Neighbourhood Plan

2.20 Sandridge NP was made in July 2021. The Plan covers the entire Sandridge Parish. The parish is composed of three residential areas: Sandridge village, Marshalswick North and Jersey Farm. Policy D1 Settlement Boundary describes the Green Belt settlement boundary for Sandridge Village and makes provision for small scale infilling and redevelopment for residential use, related community facilities and services, or small start-up businesses in accordance with the Development Plan.

2.21 The Plan assumes that the two large development sites, identified within the withdrawn St Albans Local Plan (2020-2036) (East St Albans Broad Location, within the Parish, and North St Albans Broad Location, immediately adjacent to the Parish boundary) would proceed and therefore satisfy the housing requirements of the Parish. As a result, the plan does not allocate any sites for housing development.

2.22 The Plan seeks to ensure that new development, in particular the East St Albans Broad Location, is delivered alongside infrastructure and community facilities, as well as provide an attractive, sustainable and mixed community for residents.

Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan

2.23 The Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2019. The area is surrounded by Green Belt and designates a Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB) around the built form of Harpenden, which has been chosen to directly align with the Green Belt boundary around Harpenden (Policy SS1).

2.24 The Plan allocates a minimum of 106 dwellings over eight Sites, none of which are in the Green Belt. Five Designated Retail Locations are defined in the Plan under Policy ER2 which designates these sites as protected employment locations. Policy ER4 also identifies Designated Retail areas which promotes appropriate development and regeneration within the town centres.

St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan (2022)

2.25 The St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' at full Council on 20 July 2022. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the *boundary of the Civil Parish of St Stephen and*

incorporates the main settlements of Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, and Park Street, which are described as three *large-residential* villages serviced by retail, services and public houses. The Plan seeks to protect the separate identities of these three main settlements.

2.26 The Plan does not seek to allocate sites for housing due to the withdrawal of the St Albans Local Plan as no strategic need is established. Policy S1 of the Plan identifies Built Up Area Boundaries for Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street surrounded by Green Belt, and designates six Local Green Spaces.

Wheathampstead Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan

2.27 Wheathampstead NP is the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Wheathampstead Parish, which has undergone independent examination, with a referendum being held on 4th May 2023. Wheathampstead Parish borders Harpenden to east and features a significant area of green belt compared to built up form. The Plan does not allocate sites for additional housing. A village centre boundary area has been designated seeking additional retail floor space that compliments the existing provision.

Neighbouring Authority Planning Context

South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan

2.28 The Councils of St Albans City and District Council, Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Dacorum Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council are working to produce a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South West Hertfordshire to set out a vision for the area until 2050. The JSP aims to address issues such as Climate Change, the approach to Green Belt, strategic growth and infrastructure delivery, and housing needs. An 'Issues and Options' Consultation under the Regulation 18 stage commenced in September 2022.

Watford Borough Council

2.29 Watford Borough Council borders St Albans District to the southwest and the Abbey Line railway connects Watford Junction to St Albans Abbey station.

2.30 The Watford Local Plan 2021-2038 was adopted on 17 October 2022. The plan will deliver 793 units per annum over the plan period (capacity of 14,988). It identifies a Core Development Area which comprises Watford Gateway, Town Centre and Colne Valley.

Dacorum Borough Council

2.31 The current development plan comprises the Local Planning Framework Core Strategy (adopted 2013), the Dacorum Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2017) and saved policies from the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (all of which were saved in 2007 except for Gypsies and Travellers policy).

2.32 Dacorum Borough Council's new Local Plan is currently being progressed, with the completion of an Issues and Options consultation (November/December 2017) and more recently, a Preferred Options consultation on the Emerging Strategy for Growth (November 2020 – March 2021). The Plan is expected to be submitted for examination in June 2024, with adoption in late 2025.

Hertsmere Borough Council

2.33 Hertsmere borders St Albans District to the south in the Hertfordshire County. The current development plan for Hertsmere comprises of the Core Strategy (adopted January 2013), the Elstree Way Corridor Area Action Plan (adopted July 2015), the Site

Allocation and Development Management Plan (adopted November 2016) and the policies map.

2.34 Preparation of Hertsmere's new draft Local Plan was paused in 2022, and Hertsmere has undertaken a further round of Call for Sites. .

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

2.35 Welwyn Hatfield borders St Albans District to the east. The current plan, the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 (adopted in 2005), and a number of policies that did not duplicate national policy were saved in 2008.

2.36 The emerging new Local Plan for Welwyn Hatfield was submitted for examination in May 2017 and is still being examined.

Three Rivers District Council

2.37 Three Rivers District borders St Albans to the southwest. The new Local Plan for Three Rivers District is preparing a new Local Plan that will set out a vision and policy framework for the future levels of growth within the District up until 2038.

North Hertfordshire District Council

2.38 The current plan for North Herts, the District Local Plan, No.2 with Alterations, was adopted in 1996 and a number of these policies were saved in September 2007.

2.39 North Hertfordshire District Council received the Inspector's report on the new Local Plan 2011 – 2031 in September 2022. A council decision regarding the adoption of the Local Plan, including the main modifications is pending.

3 The Emerging Evidence Base

3.1 The Council has already progressed a number of key studies and workstreams to inform the development of the spatial strategy for the new Local plan. These include the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (incorporating Urban Capacity Study) and Green Belt Review Stage 1 and Stage 2. The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was subject to consultation in 2021. The Council undertook an updated Call for Sites between January and March 2021.

3.2 As mentioned above, this Settlement Hierarchy Study will be used, together with a range of supporting evidence, to inform the development of the spatial strategy and strategic policies of the emerging Local Plan. It is therefore important to consider the studies that have been completed, or under commission at this time, and note any findings which may impact or influence this study of settlements in the District.

Stage 1 Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment Prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (November 2013)

3.3 This study (Stage 1 GBR) interprets the settlement hierarchies from each local planning authority in the study area. For St Albans, this is defined as follows, and reflects the adopted hierarchy from the Local Plan Review 1994:

- 1st Tier – Primary settlements: St Albans, Harpenden
- 2nd Tier – Secondary settlements, large villages: Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, London Colney, Park Street / Frogmore, Redbourn, Wheathampstead
- 3rd Tier – Green Belt Settlements: Annables, Kinsbourne Green, Colney Heath, Folly Fields, Gustard Wood, Lea Valley Estate, Radlett Road, Frogmore, Sandridge, Sleapshyde, Smallford

3.4 The Stage 1 GBR recognises the importance of settlement patterns in the wider study area, and identifies the local purpose of the Green Belt; *to maintain the existing settlement pattern by protecting the gaps between settlements and the open land that is part of the character of those settlements.* It assesses the land in the District against the Green Belt purposes[1] as set out within the NPPF and undertakes an assessment of land against a local purpose (to maintain the existing settlement pattern). A summary of this review can be found in Appendix 1.

3.5 The most notable findings from the Stage 1 Green Belt Review, which will be taken into consideration in undertaking this Settlement Hierarchy Study are as follows:

- Harpenden, Redbourn and Wheathampstead are separated from St. Albans by a strategic gap of Green Belt, which serves an important purpose to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. This is also emphasised under purpose 2 *preventing neighbouring towns from merging*.
- There are a number of settlements in the District where development is encroaching into the countryside. This occurs in locations to the east, south east and south west of St Albans such as between Bricket Wood and Chiswell Green/How Wood; St Albans and London Colney and St Albans and Hatfield.

[1] for details regarding the fifth purpose, please see paragraphs 4.1.7- 4.1.9 of the Stage 1 Green Belt Review 2013

- There are a number of large-scale developments in the Green Belt, including Highfield Park and Napsbury Park. The Green Belt Review concludes that w*hen assessed in isolation they are considered to make a limited contribution towards Green Belt purposes* (Paragraph 7.4.15). Since that study was completed, a further two large developments in the Green Belt have been built at Harperbury Hospital and Hanstead House.
- Finally, the Review identifies that there are *Key networks of parcels which preserve setting and special character are identified as being…to the south, west and north of St Albans …especially to preserve views to the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban;*

Stage 2 Green Belt Review (GBR) - Emerging findings

3.6 The findings of this study provide important background and context to the Settlement Hierarchy Study. It is particularly important to note the following:

- *Only smaller defined 'sub-areas' have been assessed* [for potential Green Belt release] *(rather than the entirety of the Green Belt) as well as the washed over villages.*
- *The initial area of search was defined by applying a buffer around each settlement inset from the Green Belt, which would assist in encouraging a sustainable pattern of development accessible to existing settlements and maintain the integrity of the Green Belt. This approach ensured a proportionate and focussed study.*
- *Sites that were not adjacent to the existing urban areas (or the buffers) were thus excluded for the assessment on the basis that their release would (a) not contribute to a sustainable pattern of development; and (b) undermine the integrity of the Green Belt by creating hole(s) within its fabric.*
- *The main settlements are the historic Cathedral City of St Albans and the largely residential town of Harpenden, separated by a large swath of green belt. Located close to the main settlements, there are a number of smaller towns and villages with relatively small gaps between them, set in a predominantly agricultural landscape. Given the differing characters and scales of the settlements, two buffer scales were used to reflect the variations in the settlement hierarchy and to ensure that any future development would remain proportionate to the size of the existing built up area.*
- *As such, it was agreed that the character of the urban settlements and the approach for a finer grain assessment leant itself to a 400m buffer for the main settlements while a 250m buffer was considered reasonable buffer for lower order settlements... These buffers indicate the likely maximum extent of sustainable development and vary accordingly to the position of the built-up area in the settlement hierarchy* (page 26).

3.7 The findings of this Study indicate that certain approaches have been considered which may influence the consideration of the spatial strategy. In particular that sites, not within defined buffer areas of existing urban areas, are excluded because they would not contribute to sustainable development and would undermine the integrity of the Green Belt.

St Albans City and District Urban Capacity Study

3.8 The Urban Capacity Study Report Draft January 2022 has been prepared to inform the evidence base required for the identification of sites as part of the Local Plan making process. Although the study is in draft form, it is useful to note the methodology and

approach taken as part of the site identification process. The study focuses on sites which are located outside of the Green Belt and was conducted in two parts:

- Higher density sites in areas located close to town centres and transport links where density uplift can be considered in line with NPPF 2021 para. 125
- All other areas in non-Green Belt settlements

3.9 For the *Density Uplift* areas, the study identifies sites of high density development within specific catchment areas of mainline stations and town centres, namely Harpenden Town Centre, St Albans Town Centre and St Albans Station.

3.10 *Standard Density Areas* have also been used in the study because it identifies that there may be sites in any area outside of the Green Belt. As these sites may not necessarily be well served by public transport links, they would not be suitable for an uplift in density, but may be suitable for meeting the District's housing needs.

3.11 This Study provides useful context because it identifies that the main towns of St Albans and Harpenden are more suited to higher density development due to the relative sustainability of the areas around the town centres and mainline stations.

3.12 The Study uses the Green Belt Boundaries and settlement boundaries from the 1994 Local Plan to define the catchment areas. However, as a result it does not take into account those areas of new development that encroach into the Green Belt, or those new settlements washed over by Green Belt, as referenced in paragraph 4.5 above.

South West Herts Economic Study Update, Hatch Regeneris (September 2019)

3.13 The Study provides helpful context for the future economic needs of the sub-region, which have implications for the Local Plan Spatial Strategy.

3.14 The functional economic market area (FEMA) for South West Hertfordshire is made up of Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans, Three Rivers and Watford.

3.15 Although employment rates are strong in the sub-region, productivity is falling and GVA is now 2% lower than the national average, having been 8% higher in 2001. Proposed solutions to this are:

i. Continue to develop research and innovation industries as well as support established strengths in professional services and ICT.

ii. The FEMA has a highly skilled workforce, but this is not matched by growth in highly skilled and high value jobs.

iii. East-West infrastructure links require improving to improve connectivity to key growth locations, including Enterprise Zone sites.

iv. High rates of entrepreneurs – suggests a need for flexible and affordable workspace.

v. St Albans has a distinctive sector strength in science and R&D.

3.16 Existing office areas in St Albans are all in the city centre or close to the two rail stations. These central areas are highly attractive and command the highest rental value.

3.17 In terms of industrial development, the study identifies *a shortfall of over 211,000 sqm of industrial space which equates to 53 ha (although this is dependent on the proportion of warehouse/industrial development which is permitted at East Hemel Hempstead)*.

South West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study, Nexus Planning (September 2018)

3.18 The Study provides evidence relating to the future Retail and Leisure Needs of the sub-region, which have implications for the Local Plan Spatial Strategy. It finds that Watford is the region's highest ranked centre as a Major Regional Centre, with St Albans and Hemel Hempstead following on at the next tier as Regional Centres.

3.19 The mid-sized centres such as Borehamwood, Berkhamsted and Harpenden are particularly vulnerable to unsustainable out of centre development. Seeking to protect the vitality and viability of those centres, whilst meeting needs of a growing population, forms a thread running through the study conclusions.

3.20 Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans are the largest centres within the five local authorities. Berkhamsted, Borehamwood, Harpenden and Rickmansworth are all smaller than Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans, but function independently as main centres. Each centre provides a combination of convenience and comparison goods, as well as services.

3.21 The study proposes a Retail Hierarchy for larger centres in South West Hertfordshire, with Watford as the Regional Centre; Hemel Hempstead and St Albans as Sub-Regional Centres; Borehamwood as the Major Town Centre; and Harpenden is listed as a Town Centre. The study also provides a hierarchy of centres split into local authority area.

3.22 With regard to leisure provision, the study concludes that the majority of residents make leisure trips within the study area. Trips are focused around the higher order towns of St Albans and Hemel Hempstead.

4 Settlement Profiles

4.1 This section of the Study reviews each settlement in the adopted settlement hierarchy from the Local Plan Review 1994 in order to give each settlement a profile, as informed by the relevant Neighbourhood Plans and evidence base documents, GIS and web resources related to the settlements. The profiles are listed in the order that they are listed in the Local Plan Review 1994.

Towns

St Albans City

4.2 St Albans is the largest settlement in St Albans City Council and District and has a total population of approximately 74,990 residents[2]. St Albans lies approximately 22 miles from Central London, forming a spatial relationship with the city, and also forms part of a north London arc with Hemel Hempstead to the west and Welwyn Garden City to the east.

4.3 St Albans has a good historic and cultural offering as a market town, with a Roman and medieval heritage evident within the City core. Its offering in terms of retail is mainly centred around the prime St Peters Street and Market Place.

4.4 St Albans is served by two train stations, St Albans City and St Albans Abbey. St Albans City station is connected to London by the Thameslink Railway and St Albans Abbey station provides a link to Watford Junction, Watford and other smaller settlements to the south of the District. It also has immediate connections to the strategic road network including the M25, M1 and A1.[3]

Harpenden

4.5 Harpenden is described by its Neighbourhood Plan (NP) (paragraph 2.5) as a medium sized town with a population of approximately 29,602 residents. It is the second largest settlement in the District after St Albans. It is around 5 miles from St Albans via the Harpenden Road (A1081) and is described as complementary to St Albans City and *largely self-contained* with its own Town Council.

4.6 The made Harpenden NP covers Harpenden Town Parish and Harpenden Rural Parish. The town centre is described as a large retail centre with designated Primary and Secondary retail frontages in the NP.[4] Harpenden contains several primary and junior school as well as four secondary schools.

4.7 Despite its size, it is described as *characterised by its village feel*, with a *thriving town centre and a range of historic buildings and high quality open spaces*[5]. Harpenden Conservation Area is one of the largest in the country and consists of four main elements

[2] Population figures have been calculated using the defined settlement area taken from the Local Plan Review 1994 and identifying Address Gazeteer points within that area to identify the number of residential dwellings. This figure has been multiplied by 2.4 (a proxy for number of residents per dwelling in the district) to calculate the approximate population within the defined settlement area. Further details regarding population figures in relation to this study can be found in paragraphs 7.7-7.9.

[3] https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/SP_SARuralVision2009_tcm15-10940.pdf

[4] Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan by Harpenden Town Council - Issuu

[5] St Albans City and District Council Strategic Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft (2016)

- the Town Centre, the Common, Hatching Green, and the post-railway suburbs[6]. High standards of design are required in these areas.[7]

4.8 Harpenden train station provides frequent services to London and Luton Airport via Thameslink. St Albans is accessible via a 5-minute train journey. Luton Airport is around 7 miles from Harpenden.

Specified Settlements

Bricket Wood

4.9 Bricket Wood is described by St Stephen's Neighbourhood Plan (paragraph 2.27) as a *large residential village* with a population of approximately 3,962 residents. It lies around 4.2 miles south of St Albans. Two main centres are described within Bricket Wood: Old Watford Road and Oakwood Road each with a *small parade of retail outlets*.[8]

4.10 Bricket Wood Train Station to the east of the village is served by the Abbey Line local railway line, with connections to Watford Junction and St Albans Abbey. The M1 is easily accessible via the North Orbital Road that adjoins the village to the West.

Chiswell Green

4.11 Chiswell Green is described by St Stephen's Neighbourhood Plan (paragraph 2.4) as a main village within the St Stephen Parish with a population of approximately 3,202 residents. It was previously designated as a large village excluded from the green belt and lies around 2.5 miles to the south of St Albans City centre.

4.12 Chiswell Green is described as one of the newest villages in St Stephen Parish with mostly a suburban feel due to post-war growth.[8] Chiswell Green lies immediately west of the North Orbital Road which offers the village strategic connections to the M1 and M25.

Park Street / Frogmore

4.13 Park Street lies around two miles south of St Albans via the A5183 Road and has a population of approximately 2,014 residents. The Abbey Line local railway line, with connections to Watford Junction and St Albans, calls at the Park Street Station and the settlement is divided by this railway line.[9] The M25 lies further to the south and is fairly well connected in terms of transportation.

4.14 A Conservation Area for Park Street and Frogmore was designated in 1994. A Conservation Area Character Statement[10] outlines the key architectural qualities of the area. It is mostly a linear settlement and the Curo Park and Stroud Business Park is located on the eastern edge of the A5183. There is a small cluster of retail, takeaways and public houses at the Park Street Lane / Park Street junctions. Two primary schools are located near the settlement.

How Wood

4.15 Previously designated as a residential large village (excluded from the Green Belt) with a population of 3,595 residents, the settlement lies around 3.3 miles from St Albans City

[6] https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/conservation/Harpenden%20CACS.pdf
[7] https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/SP_SARuralVision2009_tcm15-10940.pdf
[8] https://ststephen-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/1.-St-Stephen-Parish-Neighbourhood-Plan-Referendum-Version.pdf
[9] https://abbeylinecommunityrail.org.uk/
[10] Microsoft Word - Park Street & Frogmore CACS final.doc (stalbans.gov.uk)

centre. It is described by the St Stephen's Neighbourhood Plan as being included as a *residential area of Park Street*. How Wood contains the main shopping area of Park Street village, containing a row of shops and a primary school.[7, 8]

4.16 How Wood enjoys strong transport connectivity and features a platform train station, opened in 1988, that serves the Abbey Line local railway line, with connections to Watford Junction and St Albans Abbey[11]. The M25 and M1 are easily accessible via the North Orbital Road to the west of the village.

London Colney

4.17 London Colney is the third largest settlement in the District and has previously been designated as a district centre and excluded from the Green Belt. It has an urban character and is located around 3.5 miles to the southeast of St Albans City centre. London Colney is described as a village (London Colney Area Analysis (paragraph 2.5)[12], with a population of approximately 8,000 residents.

4.18 The Colney Field Retail Park forms a *secondary centre* to the village and is accessible to much of the south of the village (Area Analysis, paragraph 6.2). There are three primary schools that serve the village also.

4.19 The M25 lies to the south of the London Colney Parish and is accessible by the A1081. These roads demarcate the built settlement of London Colney to the east and south. The town lies around 10km from the Northern Line via High Barnet Station. [13]

Redbourn

4.20 Redbourn is a village located five miles to the northwest of St Albans with a population of approximately 5,000 residents. Redbourn is described as retaining a unique and unspoiled village character, with a *village centre including a relatively limited range of shops and services*.[14]

4.21 Redbourn is located in close proximity to Junction 9 of the M1, and is only around a 15 minute drive to Luton Airport. Rail (Thameslink) services are available at the railway station in neighbouring Harpenden around three miles east. The Nickey Line (closed branch railway line) now features a public footpath and cycle path.[15]

Wheathampstead

4.22 Wheathampstead is described as a large village (St Albans Rural Vision 2009) with a population of approximately 4,500 residents, comprised of a high percentage of residents aged 65+ and a lower population of working age than the District average. It lies around 4.7 miles from St Albans, to the east of Harpenden.

4.23 The Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan's Vision aims to retain the character of Wheathampstead as a "village" and the village's high street is maintained as the commercial hub. The outlying communities of The Lea Valley Estate, The Folly and Gustard Wood also maintain their own identity within the parish but remain connected to the village hub. To improve community integration and health and wellbeing, a network

[11] https://abbeylinecommunityrail.org.uk/

[12] https://www.londoncolneyneighbourhoodplan.org/_files/ugd/5cd074_5575dcfbf5824add87f76b652ff11a4b.pdf

[13] St Albans City and District Council Strategic Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft (2016)

[14] https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/SP_SARuralVision2009_tcm15-10940.pdf

[15] https://www.redbourn-pc.gov.uk/uploads/20211111-redbourn-ndp-reg-14-v2-low-res.pdf

of cycleways and foot and bridle paths will be developed. Road traffic will be reduced where possible. Social housing will be improved or replaced with energy-efficient and accessible/lifetime accommodation.

4.24 Wheathampstead does not have its own railway station, but is described as fairly well served by bus links to major employment centres. It lies around halfway between the A1 and M1, and with movement between the road creating large volumes of traffic for the village. [16]

Green Belt Settlements

Annables / Kinsbourne Green

4.25 Annables / Kinsbourne Green features a population of approximately 80 residents and lies to the north of the Harpenden Parish within the built-up area boundary of Harpenden. It is roughly 6.8 miles away from St Albans via the A1081.

4.26 Annables / Kinsbourne Green is described as a Local Centre for retail in the Harpenden NP with a *small parade of shops* and a *Green Common* with a protected view – *a key parcel of land in the parish.* Described as having a number of listed buildings within the *centre* with a more historic development character[17]. Fluvial flooding on the Luton Road (A1081)[18].

Colney Heath

4.27 Colney Heath (three parts), for the purpose of this study, includes the settlements of Park Corner, Roestock and Bullen's Green. Together, the settlements have a population of approximately 1,200 residents. These settlements fall within Colney Heath Parish, which also includes Smallford and Sleapshyde[19], which are discussed in more detail.

4.28 Colney Heath is mostly a residential settlement, however it is serviced by some amenities such as a primary school, a football club and grounds, local nature reserve, free house, small post office and general store, and village hall. Residential properties continue southeast via High Street towards Roestock / Roestock Lane and it is not immediately clear that these are two separate settlements (Roestock and Colney Heath village). While there is a degree of a separation between the two areas in terms of development, there is a definite risk of coalescence on High Street through the roadside residential properties.

4.29 Colney Heath has access to the A1 via the A414 North Orbital Road.

Folly Fields

4.30 Folly Fields was previously designated as a green belt settlement and is around 5.8 miles from St Albans via the B651. It has a population of approximately 120 residents. Folly Fields (also known as The Folly) is a linear residential settlement on a short road off the Lower Luton Road and lies between the Lea Valley Estate and Wheathampstead. To the southeast of Folly Fields on the Lower Luton Road there are additional linear clusters of residential uses stretching eastbound towards Wheathampstead.

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[16] https://wheathampsteadpc.egnyte.com/fl/5tGxWqXELP#folder-link/?p=3c91fcfb-c815-4f05-8507-931f1c34e99c

[17] Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan by Harpenden Town Council - Issuu

[18] Kinsbourne Green | Kinsbourne Green | Harpenden History (harpenden-history.org.uk)

[19] https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/SP_SARuralVision2009_tcm15-10940.pdf

4.31 A three hectare open space grass area for recreation known as Folly Field features to the north of the residential area with car parking available. Bus services are available on the Lower Luton Road.[20]

Gustard Wood

4.32 Gustard Wood was designated as a green belt settlement around six miles northeast from St Albans and has a population of approximately 340 residents. It is a mainly residential cluster of detached houses built off the Kimpton Road. Gustard Wood Common lies a mile north of the village of Wheathampstead.

4.33 The Chilterns Cycleway passes by Gustard Wood which features the Cross Keys public house and bed and breakfast[21] and features the Mid Herts Golf Club in immediate proximity. Bus stops are available on the Kimpton Road.

Lea Valley Estate

4.34 Lea Valley Estate consists of around 12-13 hectares of mostly residential buildings north of the Lower Luton Road (B653), with a population of approximately 550 residents. Bus stops feature on this road to service the estate. An additional smaller cluster of residential properties feature to the east of Marshalls Heath Lane both north and south of the Lower Luton Road towards Folly Fields. The estate lies around 5 miles north-northeast of St Albans.

Radlett Road (Frogmore)

4.35 Radlett Road (Frogmore) is located around three miles south of St Albans via the A5183 road and has a population of approximately 360 residents. It is very close to the M25 physically, however there are no road connections available to this nearby – the nearest being at London Colney or Bricket Wood Junction.

4.36 Radlett Road lies south of Park Street and the main Park Street / Frogmore settlement, however the two are closely related to each other. Separation is more of a visual one with the two settlements essentially coalescing through residential sprawl around the meander of the River Ver. Character is of mostly roadside semi-detached and detached residential lining the A5183 and is complemented by a petrol filling station, car dealership and motor vehicle repairs.

Sandridge

4.37 Sandridge village was classified as a Green Belt settlement that lies around one mile to the northeast of St Albans via the Saint Albans Road (B651). It has a population of approximately 1,600 residents. A Village Boundary has been defined within the made Neighbourhood Plan for Sandridge Parish that ends after the residential Highfield Road to the southwest.

4.38 Most residents commute to work outside the Sandridge Parish area, but there is local employment at the mixed business areas at Ronsons Way and 158 St Albans Road. Bus services are available on the High Street.[22]

4.39 The Neighbourhood Plan provides an important overview of the parish, explaining that it is situated 32 miles from Heathrow Airport, 10 miles from Luton Airport and 18 minute

[20] http://wheathampstead-pc.gov.uk/folly-fields/

[21] cylce mockup2.cdr (chilternsaonb.org)

[22] http://www.sandridge-pc.gov.uk/_UserFiles/Files/Sandridge%20Parish%20Council%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20Referendum%20Final%2021.pdf

commuting time by train to London St Pancras. However, residential roads are often congested at peak periods and parking at schools and shops is overwhelmed at these times.

4.40 The parish is dependant for jobs in London, St Albans, Welwyn Garden City, Watford, Hatfield and Stevenage. Most residents commute, but some work within the parish in two mixed business areas. The parish also benefits from a range of good local facilities but lacks public transport and healthcare provision.

4.41 The vision for the parish is to retain the distinct nature of its neighbourhoods. It accepts that there will be changes into the future, including a mix of new homes being built. With these new homes, the plan expects new and improved infrastructure to retain and improve existing provision in the area.

Sleapshyde

4.42 Sleapshyde lies within the Colney Heath parish, located immediately north of the A414 dual carriageway around three miles from St Albans as the crow flies. It has a population of approximately 300 residents.

4.43 A Conservation Area is designated to the east of the residential form of Sleapshyde. A Conservation Area Character Statement was produced for the CA in 2021. Of note is the Plough pub, farmland and associated buildings and cottages.[23]

Smallford

4.44 Smallford was classified as a Green Belt settlement and lies around 3.5 miles east of St Albans via Smallford Lane and the A1057. Smallford is described as a linear settlement with most residences along Station Road, and has a population of approximately 278 residents. The west of Smallford features large agricultural nurseries.[24]

[23] https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/conservation/Sleapshyde%20CACS%202021.pdf

[24] https://smallford.org/about/

5 Comparative Studies

5.1 In order to propose a robust methodology for identifying and assessing sites for the Settlement Hierarchy Study, a review of comparative studies has been undertaken. Table 2 sets out the comparative studies and a summary of the methodologies.

Table 2: Comparative Methodologies for Settlement Hierarchy Studies

Authority and Document	Methodology
Dacorum Settlement Hierarchy Study 2017	This study explains from the outset that it forms part of the evidence base to inform the growth strategy. It is not the role of the settlement hierarchy study to determine the scale of development for each settlement. Five stages were used to assess settlements: i. **Define settlements and establish population size** (are settlement boundaries clearly mapped and up to date?) ii. **Audit of services and facilities** (undertaken for all settlements with a population of over 300). Higher order services included Secondary Schools, Supermarket, Employment Opportunities, Indoor Sports/Leisure Centre, Library, Dentist, Pharmacy and key services included primary school, post office, GP surgery, Children's centre, Community Centre, Food Shop, Pub/restaurant, play area. iii. **Audit of accessibility**: availability of public transport and travel distance between the settlement and the nearest higher-tier settlement. iv. **Scoring and allocation of a settlement category**, in line with the Core Strategy definitions. v. **Consider the impact of planned growth up to 2031 from the Core Strategy (2013) and Site Allocations (2017) DPD**. A table was produced in the study to assess the likely growth to take place for each of the settlements in the hierarchy, including any new services and facilities planned which may lead to any changes in the hierarchy. This exercise concluded that the pattern of growth mirrored the existing hierarchy approach. The study defined five categories of settlement.
Wycombe District Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy Study (2016)	*The objective of this is to provide a robust evidence base to inform the assessment of options for growth including, ultimately, site assessments and sustainability appraisals of these various options. To achieve this, a comprehensive Settlement Hierarchy Study is required as a starting point to ascertain the current role played by the various settlements in the District and an overview of their existing level of sustainability.* The approach: • Audited current provision of services and infrastructure in settlements across the District; o Establish the population size for each settlement o Establish a minimum threshold for the classification of settlement o Define and map all settlements above the threshold

Table 2: Comparative Methodologies for Settlement Hierarchy Studies	
Authority and Document	**Methodology**

	• Grouped settlements into a hierarchy reflecting their provision of services/infrastructure and their role in the District; and
	  ○ Audit of key service provision (using Y/N tick box)
	  ▪ Split into 'key service provision' (post office, food shop, primary school, GP Surgery, Pub, Village/community hall, recreation ground, access to broadband and 'higher order facilities' – secondary school, dentist, pharmacy, leisure centre, library).
	  ○ Audit of employment
	  ○ Audit of accessibility (scored on a scale, Good, Fair, Limited, None)
	  ○ Qualitative assessment/validation
	• Identified the settlement hierarchy.
	The Study defined the hierarchy after the assessment of settlements. Concludes there are 6 'tiers' of settlements

Swale Borough Council Settlement Hierarchy Study 2020 (draft report)	1. Identified the settlements to be reviewed (agree a threshold of settlement size to discount from study)
	2. Audited services and facilities (key services and higher order services and access to fibre broadband)
	3. Audited accessibility (travel distance between settlement and nearest town and availability of public transport)
	4. Resulting hierarchy:
	  a. Tier 1: Principal town
	  b. Tier 2: Secondary Towns
	  c. Tier 3: Urban service Centres
	  d. Tier 4: Village service centres
	  e. Tier 5: Small villages
	  f. Tier 6: Open countryside.
	Key findings and profiles/description of Tiers.

5.2 From the review, a number of common approaches have been identified and have been drawn into the methodology for this study. They include:

- Clearly define settlement boundaries.
- Identify a threshold for settlement size to include in the assessment.
- Identify clear and quantifiable factors by which to assess the sustainability of a settlement. In most cases, these relate to the provision of services and facilities; access to transport including sustainable modes of transport; secondary education and employment.
- A validation exercise to review the findings of the analysis against the existing settlement hierarchy.

6.3 These approaches have been incorporated into this study in order to take a robust and clear approach to the settlement hierarchy study. The method for undertaking the study is set out below, followed by the study results.

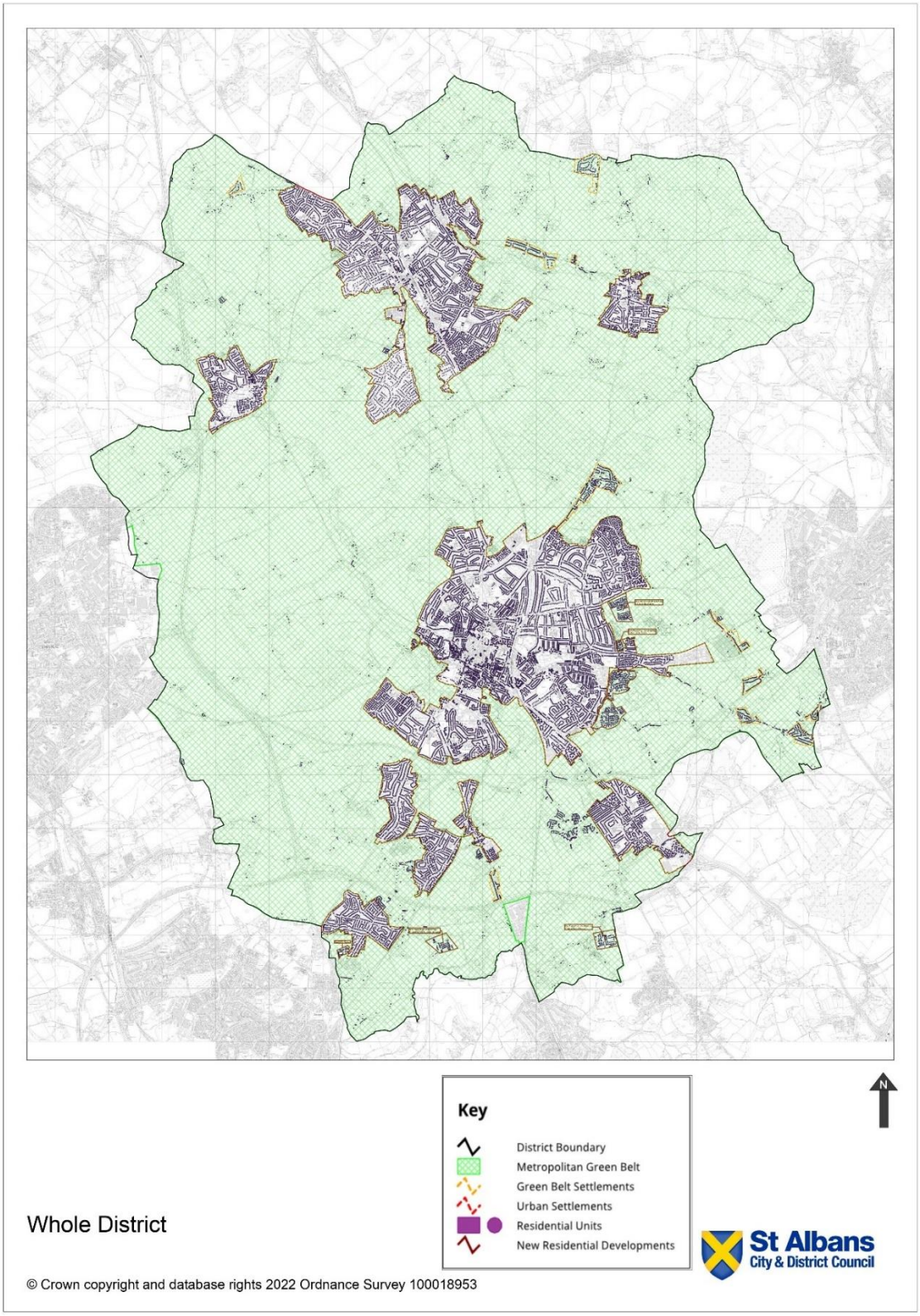
6 Methodology

6.1 The following sets out the six stage methodology used to assess each settlement in the District.

A. The Baseline – Settlement Areas, Minimum Settlement Size Threshold and Key Assumptions

6.2 Settlement areas were clearly defined within the Local Plan Review 1994. However, address data and the Green Belt Review Part 1 shows that development since 1994 has encroached beyond defined settlement areas into the Green Belt. Furthermore, new developments have been built within the Green Belt itself, including Highfield Park, Napsbury Park, Harperbury Hospital and Hanstead House.

6.3 Given that development of existing settlements has encroached into the Green Belt, the first stage of the study was to consider how to map and define the settlement areas in the District. GIS data layers were used to map the settlements, and included the Green Belt and Address Gazeteer Data. The results of this exercise are shown in Map 1 below.



Map 1 – Whole District Map with Green Belt Boundaries and Address Gazeteer Points.

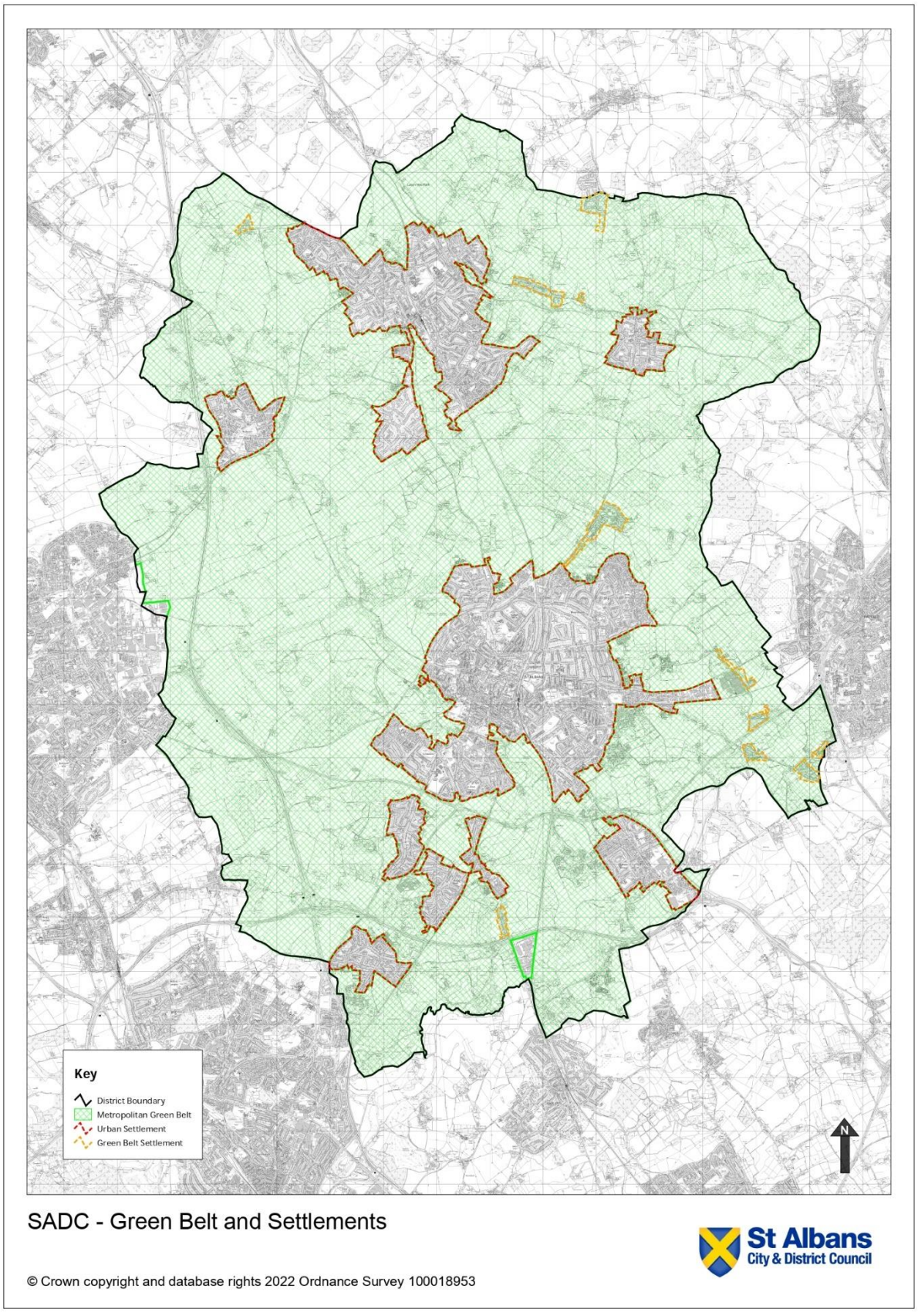
6.4 Map 1 is a useful illustration of the impact of growth on the Green Belt and shows that settlements have increased in size over time, such as St Albans; Bricket Wood and

London Colney, and also that new developments have been built within the Green Belt, as referenced above.

6.5 It is important to note that settlements have grown since 1994. In particular, development sites on the edge of settlements have encroached into the Green Belt. These areas remain washed over and are located in the Green Belt. The NPPF states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Therefore, the decision was made that (for the purposes of this study) the defined settlement areas should remain as shown for the Local Plan 1994. This is to ensure that any settlement area defined for this study is not confused with the future consideration of potential alterations to the Green Belt boundary which may emerge through the plan-making process.

6.6 It should be noted that the Local Plan 1994 did identify Green Belt settlements, as shown in paragraph 3.8 above. These are settlements washed over by Green Belt. These settlements will be included in this study because they are considered to be established and have historically been defined as settlements in the District.

6.7 A final map of the defined settlement areas, for the purposes of this study is provided in Map 2.



Map 2 – Whole District showing Green Belt and Defined Settlement Areas (Local Plan Review 1994)

6.8 Once the defined settlement areas were agreed and mapped, it was possible to collect population data from those defined areas. It was considered that the most robust method for collecting this data would be to use Address Gazeteer point data located within the boundary of the settlement area.

6.9 The Address Gazeteer was filtered on the basis of Primary Code R (Residential), Secondary Code D (Dwelling) and Tertiary Codes 01 – 09 (to include Caravan, Detached, Semi-Detached, Terraced, Bungalow, Self Contained Flat, House Boat, Sheltered Accommodation, HBO (includes bedsits), which resulted in a total dwelling figure for each defined area. This method was used instead of census data because census data is gathered in a way which covers areas outside defined settlement areas.

6.10 The outcome of this method for determining population size per settlement area results in some data which may not align with expected population sizes for individual settlements. The reason for this is firstly that some settlements include a significant 'hinterland' of dispersed dwellings located outside the defined settlement area and secondly that they may include new development sites, built out within the Green Belt which are not included within the areas defined in this study. Despite this, the approach to calculating population size of settlements is considered to be proportionate, consistent and sufficiently robust for the purposes of this baseline stage of the study.

6.11 Appendix 2 provides a table setting out the population figures for each defined settlement area. The table shows the estimated number of dwellings per settlement alongside the estimated number of residents per settlement. This figure was calculated by multiplying the estimated number of dwellings within the settlement area by 2.4 people per dwelling[25].

6.12 Comparative studies have identified a minimum settlement size for the purposes of Settlement Hierarchy Studies. This is to filter out areas with a small number of dwellings which should not be defined as 'settlements' for the purpose of this study. The Dacorum Settlement Hierarchy Study, 2017 uses a minimum threshold of settlements with a population of 300 residents or more. A similar approach has been taken in this study, although a slightly lower threshold has been used, to include settlements with a population of 250 residents or more. This approach better represents the characteristics of the District and its smaller settlements.

6.13 The population data in Appendix 2 highlights those residential areas in the District which do not fall within the threshold size for this study, and therefore will not be assessed further. Instead, these areas will fall under the category of Green Belt/Countryside.

6.14 The exception to this approach is new developments which have been built in the Green Belt since 1994, including Highfield Park, Napsbury Park, Harperbury Hospital and Hanstead House. Although these developments may have a population of greater than 250 residents, these sites have been automatically omitted from the Part 1 Study because they are considered to be individual developments washed over by Green Belt rather than defined settlement areas.

6.15 Once the definition of settlement areas and population size was complete, it was possible to prepare definitive settlement area maps for the District and commence data collection in order to assess the settlement areas against sustainability factors.

[25] Paragraph 2.48 of South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (GL Hearn, September 2020)

B. Data Collection

6.16 This study used a quantitative approach to assessing the settlements in the District with regard to four factors:

- Population
- Accessibility
- Services and Facilities
- Employment

6.17 This approach aligns with comparative methodologies, as summarised above, whilst being adapted to the specific local authority context. The following sections explain how the settlements were 'audited' under the key assessment factors listed above.

Population

6.18 The Local Plan Review 1994 settlement hierarchy used population size as a basis for categorising the settlements within the District. Population size is a useful factor to consider as part of the settlement hierarchy because larger populations often relate to the provision of services, vitality of centres and inward investment in community services and activities. Although, this is not always the case, population remains an important factor to consider alongside factors such as access to sustainable modes of transport and key services and facilities.

6.19 Therefore, this study used the population figures for the settlement areas (as discussed above) and divided the figure by a factor of 10,000 to identify a score which would be relative to the population size of the settlement. This approach allows a proportionate approach to be taken to the settlement's size, when considered against other factors. The results of the ranking and population scores can be found in Appendix 3.

Accessibility Audit

6.20 In accordance with the NPPF, and the St Albans City and District Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy (2020-2023), it is vital to encourage sustainable patterns of development in the District through means such as reduced car use and increased take-up of sustainable modes of transport and active travel.

6.21 Sustainable patterns of development will support a reduction in carbon emissions, but also support improved public health for the residents of the District. Therefore, an accessibility audit of the settlements was carried out to understand how they score against factors such as accessibility to public transport and cycle networks.

6.22 The following sets out the quantitative approach that was carried out to collect data and score the settlements.

i. **Strategic cycle routes** were mapped (See Map C) to show connections within the settlements in the District and between them. Data used to map these routes was provided by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and included the National Cycle Network, Cycle Facilities, Leisure Routes, Cycleable Rights of Way and the Green Ring Route.

ii. **Key strategic bus routes** were mapped (See Map D) to highlight which settlements had good accessibility to routes that provide connectivity to key settlements. It is important to acknowledge that not all bus routes run with regular frequency or reliability. However, there are many regular and important services which should be mapped. Routes mapped included those that run 'at least once

an hour' Monday - Saturday and routes that run 'at least once an hour' Monday to Sunday. GIS data for bus routes was provided by Hertfordshire County Council.

iii. The **mainline and branch-line railway stations** were also mapped (see Map E), including the following:

- Mainline train stations - First Capital Connect linking Harpenden, St Albans to St Pancras
- Branch Line stations – The Abbey Line, connecting St Albans to Watford Junction

6.23 Table 3 shows the scoring used to audit each settlement:

Travel Mode	**10 points for the presence of**	**8 points for the presence of**	**3 points for the presence of**	**2 points for the presence of**	**1 point for the presence of**
Cycling		Five strategic cycle routes within or between settlements.	Three to four strategic cycle routes within or between/connecting settlements.		One to two strategic cycle routes within or between/connecting settlements.
Bus					1 point per bus route
Railway Stations	Both branch line and main line stations	A main line station only			A branch line station only

6.24 The results of this audit, and maps used to undertake the analysis can be found in Appendix 4

Services and Facilities Audit

6.25 It is important to understand the levels of access to key services that exist within settlements, in order to determine the extent to which residents would need to travel to reach these facilities. It is acknowledged that travel is inevitable for residents to access high order services, but in most cases, key services should be available to residents without the need to travel long distances. Drawing on the comparative studies as examples, this services and facilities audit identifies:

- Higher Order Services: Secondary school, supermarket[26], leisure centre.
- Key Services: Primary school, playground, convenience food shop[27], GP surgery.

[26] Defined for the purposes of this study as a food retail shop with a net sales area of 1,500m² or more.
[27] Defined for the purposes of this study as a food retail shop with a net sales area of less than 1,500m².

7.22 The Services and Facilities Audit was carried out using Maps 6-11, and the scoring used the following rules:

10 points for the presence of…	**6 points for the presence of…**	**5 points for the presence of…**	**3 points for the presence of…**	**1 point for the presence of…**
All three Higher Order Services and all four Key Services	One to two Higher Order Service and all four Key Services	All four Key Services but no Higher Order Services	Between two and three Key Services but no Higher Order Services	One Key Service and no Higher Order Services

6.26 The scores for the Services and Facilities Audit are provided in Appendix 5

Employment

6.27 Good access to employment is vital for the economy of the District as well as for a sustainable pattern of development which allows for residents to travel with ease to local places of employment, as well as to commute to employment locations using sustainable modes of transport. To assess a settlement's accessibility to employment, this study maps the Employment allocations which have been built-out since the adoption of the Local Plan Review 1994. Employment allocation sites have been used as a proxy indicator for access to employment. However, it is important that the quantitative outputs from this study are compared with qualitative data and local knowledge with regard to access to employment either within a settlement or by commuting to nearby settlements.

5 points for the presence of…	**4 points for the presence of…**	**2 points for the presence of…**
three to five built out and functioning employment allocation within the defined settlement area.	two to four built out and functioning employment allocation within the defined settlement area.	one built out and functioning employment allocation within the defined settlement area.

6.28 Scores for the employment audit are set out in Appendix 6.

C. Final Scoring Matrix

6.29 As set out above, all settlements were scored against factors including population, access, services and facilities and employment. Mapping and scores for these audits are provided in Appendices 3-6. The final scoring matrix is provided in Appendix 7 and a simple scoring table, in order of highest score to lowest is provided in Table 6 below. The findings indicate an initial settlement hierarchy with St Albans at the top of the hierarchy, followed by Harpenden and London Colney.

Table 6: Settlement Hierarchy Scores	
Settlement	**Total Settlement Hierarchy Score**
St Albans	54.5
Harpenden	31.0
London Colney	17.8
Redbourn	13.5
Wheathampstead	10.4
Chiswell Green	9.3
Bricket Wood	8.4
Park Street / Frogmore	8.2
How Wood	7.4
Sandridge	5.2
Smallford	5.0
Colney Heath (3 parts)	4.1
Lea Valley Estate	4.1
Radlett Road, Frogmore	2.0
Sleapshyde	2.0
Gustard Wood	1.0

6.30 The scores are the first step in identifying a baseline settlement hierarchy for the District. Validation of the quantitative assessment is required to assess the scores against settlement profiles and known relationships between settlements within and outside of the District.

D. Settlement Hierarchy Scores and Validation

6.31 As set out in paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 above, the current settlement hierarchy for the District is provided within the Local Plan Review 1994, as follows:

- ***Towns*** *– St Albans, Harpenden*
- ***Specified Settlements*** *– Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, London Colney, Park Street / Frogmore, Redbourn, Wheathampstead*
- ***Green Belt Settlements*** *– Annables, Kinsbourne Green, Colney Heath, Holly Fields, Gustard Wood, Lea Valley Estate, Radlett Road, Frogmore, Sandridge, Sleapshyde, Smallford.*

6.32 The scoring in Table 6 above shows that, when taking into account accessibility, employment, services and facilities, it is possible to identify a wider range of settlement typologies than currently adopted. The following section provides a discussion of the results and undertakes an analysis of the scores to ensure that the quantitative results represent the settlement hierarchy when compared against the qualitative data for each settlement, such as the settlement profiles.

St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney

6.33 The scores for St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney show that although they do not score equally, St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney all score relatively highly against the factors used to measure settlement size, access to sustainable modes of transport, access to key services and facilities and employment.

6.34 St Albans is the largest settlement in the District. It is a regional centre for retail and leisure, second only to Watford. It is differentiated from Harpenden by size (population) and the presence of employment allocations. The West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study (2018) proposes a Retail Hierarchy for larger centres in South West Hertfordshire, with Watford as the Regional Centre; Hemel Hempstead and St Albans as Sub-Regional Centres; Borehamwood as the Major Town Centre; and Harpenden is listed as a Town Centre.

6.35 Map 1 shows the extent to which new development has taken place around St Albans. Development has encroached in the Green Belt and has also increased the settlement size. Although this growth has not been factored into this baseline study, it is important to acknowledge that St Albans has been a focus for new development since 1994 and therefore remains a strategic settlement within the District. Overall, St Albans should be located at the top of the settlement hierarchy as a City/Town.

6.36 Harpenden is the second largest settlement in the District and can be described as complementary to St Albans City and largely self-contained. St Albans and Harpenden are the only settlements in the District to make provision for secondary schools. Despite its size, it is described as *characterised by its village feel*, with a *thriving town centre and a range of historic buildings and high quality open spaces.*[28] Overall, the data collated from the assessment of settlements shows that although Harpenden is similar in many ways to St Albans, it is significantly smaller in population and provides fewer employment sites.

6.37 Overall, 'based on the evidence and scoring presented, it is possible to conclude that a differentiation should be draw between St Albans and Harpenden in the settlement hierarchy. It is recommended that a new tier of City/Large Town should be introduced to address this difference, as follows:

- **Tier 1: City/Large Town:** St Albans
- **Tier 2: Town:** Harpenden

6.38 London Colney follows Harpenden in the settlement hierarchy scoring. It is the third largest settlement in the District and scores relatively well regarding employment provision and services and facilities when considering the population size of the settlement. London Colney is described as having an ‘urban character’ and the Colney Field Retail Park forms a *secondary centre* to London Colney, which is accessible to much of the southern part of the settlement. As a result of the scores and verification, it is proposed to include a new tier into the settlement hierarchy as follows:

- **Tier 3: Small Town:** London Colney

Redbourn and Wheathampstead

6.39 Redbourn and Wheathampstead are the fourth and fifth largest settlements in the District respectively. Redbourn’s score follows London Colney in the quantitative assessment

[28] St Albans City and District Council Strategic Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft (2016)

against access, services and facilities and employment factors. However, Redbourn differs significantly from London Colney in terms of heritage and character, but also because of its relatively self- contained local centre. Furthermore, Redbourn does not contain higher order services such as a supermarket or leisure centre and it has fewer employment sites than London Colney. Redbourn is functionally related to Harpenden by road, bus and a cycle route (the Nickey Line), where higher order services may be accessed.

6.40 Wheathampstead is relatively similar in character to Redbourn, it has a local centre and contains all key services. Wheathampstead scores slightly less than Redbourn due to its smaller population size and fewer cycle routes linking the settlement to Harpenden. This was a key issue raised by residents and reported through the St Albans Rural Vision, 2009 report.

6.41 The similarities in character, function and relationship with Harpenden suggest that Redbourn and Wheathamptead may be categorised together within the settlement hierarchy, as follows:

- **Tier 4: Large Village:** Redbourn and Wheathampstead

6.42 This category best describes these villages and differentiates them from the larger settlement of London Colney and the smaller settlements of Bricket Wood, How Wood and Chiswell Green, as described below.

Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, Park Street/Frogmore

6.43 The settlements of Bricket Wood, How Wood, Chiswell Green, Park Street/Frogmore are the sixth to ninth largest settlements in the District respectively. Although most of these settlements lack direct access to employment allocations, they have good access to services and facilities and also to public transport routes including the branch railway line which runs between Watford and St Albans. Park Street/Frogmore does have good access to employment allocations, and accommodates EMP.20 Watling Street, and is well related to EMP. 21 Colney Street Industrial/Warehousing Estate. The settlements also differ in character from Redbourn and Wheathampstead. The following paragraphs provides further analysis of the scoring against the settlement profiles.

6.44 Bricket Wood and Chiswell Green are both large residential villages in St Stephen Parish. Both settlements score the same points in the settlement hierarchy assessment because of their provision of key services and their access to public transport which provides good connectivity to Higher Order Services (both settlements are served by the Green Line bus route 724 and Bricket Wood has a branch line train station).

6.45 How Wood and Park Street/Frogmore also score the same in the settlement hierarchy. Although the two settlements retain their own character and identity, there is a strong interrelationship between the two settlements. The St Stephens Neighbourhood Plan describes How Wood as the residential area of Park Street and it also contains the main shopping area. Park Street is a mainly linear settlement, divided by the railway line. It is also well served by two employment sites east of the A5183. Both settlements are well connected, due to being served by the branch line railway station between St Albans and Watford. Furthermore, the 601 bus route (Welwyn Garden City to Borehamwood) runs through Park Street.

6.46 Overall, these settlements, located to the south west of St Albans are well connected to key centres of St Albans and Watford. Their interconnectedness differentiates them from the villages of Redbourn and Wheathampstead. As a result, it is recommended that a

new tier is formed which represents these 'medium sized villages' in the District, as follows:

- **Tier 5: Medium Sized Village:** Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, Park Street/Frogmore

6.47 The remaining settlements, assessed within this study, are all villages located within the Green Belt. They are smaller in terms of population compared to those settlements higher in the hierarchy and, in most cases, they have fewer key services and less access to sustainable transport which means that travel out of the settlement is necessary on a regular basis.

Smallford, Sandridge, Colney Heath (3 parts), Lea Valley Estate, Radlett Road/Frogmore, Sleapshyde, Gustard Wood

6.48 These settlements all have a population of less than 1,600 people and are all washed over by Green Belt. However, their characteristics differ considerably. This is shown in the range of scores identified through the settlement hierarchy assessment process. The following provides an overview of each Green Belt settlement assessed in this study. It is presented with the highest scoring settlement to the lowest, in order to identify whether the grouping of these settlements together is robust for this baseline study.

6.49 Sandridge is the largest of the Green Belt settlements. It is well related to St Albans, with linear residential development running north from St Albans along the B651 to Sandridge. The settlement's access to St Albans is improved with bus route 357 providing a connection to the city to the south, and Wheathampstead and Harpenden to the north. Sandridge has a primary school but lacks small food shops, which may result in frequent short trips outside of the settlement for top-up shopping.

6.50 Smallford is one of the smallest settlements in population and lacks key services within the defined settlement area. However, despite the small size of the settlement, it is very well connected by bus to St Albans to the north and west and to Hatfield to the east. It is also located on the Alban Way cycle route which is a disused section of the Great Northern Railway running between St Albans and Hatfield. These features make Smallford more sustainable in terms of accessibility when compared to other settlements located in the Green Belt. However, travel out of the settlement for day to day services is essential due to the small size of the settlement and lack of key services.

6.51 Colney Heath, for the purposes of this study includes Park Corner, Roestock and Bullen's Green. The settlement area has a primary school, a small convenience shop with combined post office, a public house, hairdressers and hot food takeaway, although it lacks some ~~other~~ key services such as a GP surgery. While the area lacks an hourly bus service, it is served by four bus routes that provide multiple daily services, including services to St Albans and London Colney. The area also has two cycle routes which provide connections to St Albans.

6.52 Lea Valley Estate is in the parish of Wheathampstead and is located between Harpenden and Wheathampstead. The future vision for the parish, as set out in the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan states that *the outlying communities of The Lea Valley Estate, The Folly and Gustard Wood maintain their own identity within the parish but remain connected to the village hub. To improve community integration and health and welbeing, a network of cycleways and foot and bridle paths will be developed*…

6.53 The Lea Valley Estate is not well connected by active travel routes such as cycle or walking facilities to Wheathampstead. However, bus provision (routes 610 and 357)

may provide some residents with access to the key services that are lacking within the settlement itself.

6.54 Radlett Road (Frogmore) is a small Green Belt settlement closely related to the key services and employment site at Park Street/Frogmore. The two settlements are separated by the bend in the A5183, following the course of the River Ver, but there lacks a clear separation of the settlements due to their linear character. The settlement is connected by bus route 601 to Park Street (Frogmore), St Albans to the north, Radlett to the south and to the employment sites EMP.20 Watling Street and EMP.21 Colney Street Industrial/Warehousing Estate. Like Lea Valley Estate, public transport provision may provide some residents to access to key services and employment sites, which are lacking within the settlement itself.

6.55 Sleapshyde is a small settlement within the Green Belt. It lacks key services and is remote and rural in character. The settlement lacks access to public transport but there is a cycle route running along the western edge which provides connections to the Alban Way cycle route (as described in paragraph 7.49 above).

6.56 Finally, Gustard Wood scores the lowest in the settlement hierarchy because it is the smallest settlement and lacks public transport, services and facilities and access to employment. It is served by a leisure route for cyclists, which emphasises its rural nature. As set out above, in relation to Lea Valley Estate, the vision for the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan is that Gustard Wood will be better connected to the village hub at Wheathampstead through improved network of cycleways and footpaths.

6.57 To conclude, this assessment has identified that there are quite considerable differences between the Green Belt settlements in the District.

Tier 6: Green Belt Village: Sandridge, Colney Heath (three parts), Lee Valley Estate, Radlett Road (Frogmore), Smallford, Sleapshyde, Gustard Wood

6.58 Finally, the settlements which fell outside the threshold for settlements to be considered within this study include Folly Fields, Annables and Kinsbourne Green. These settlements are recommended to be categorised under Tier 7, as follows.

Tier 7: Green Belt Hamlet/Countryside: Folly Fields, Annables, Kinsbourne Green

E. Final Baseline Settlement Hierarchy

6.59 As discussed above, a revised baseline settlement hierarchy for St Albans has been proposed, based on the findings of the analysis of each settlement in the District, which fall into the study sample. The table below identifies the new settlement tiers identified, provides a simple definition of the tier and sets out which settlements fall into each tier:

Tier Name	Key Characteristics of Tier	Settlements within the Tier
City/Large Town	• Largest population size. • Sub-regional centre for employment and high-order services such as secondary education, retail and leisure.	St Albans

Tier Name	Key Characteristics of Tier	Settlements within the Tier
	• Offers choice and variety of sustainable transport provision and connectivity.	
Town	• Considerably lower population size compared to City/Large Town • Provision of employment and high order services such as secondary education, retail and leisure. • Offers public transport provision and connectivity.	Harpenden
Small Town	• Third largest population size • Some employment provision and high order services including retail and leisure, but no secondary school. • Bus routes and cycle provision but lacking connectivity via train.	London Colney
Large Village	• Smaller population size compared to Small Town • Self contained settlements with provision of key services and employment sites. • A functional relationship to Harpenden for higher order services. • Availability of bus routes to provide public transport offer.	Redbourn Wheathampstead
Medium Sized Village	• Smaller in size to the Large Villages • Provision of key services • Functional relationship with St Albans and Watford for high order services. • Availability of train and bus routes to provide public transport offer.	Bricket Wood Chiswell Green How Wood Park Street/Frogmore
Green Belt Village	• Washed over by the Green Belt • Smaller population size compared to the Medium Sized Villages • Some or few key services. • Generally functional relationship to settlements in higher tiers within the hierarchy which provide key services and higher order services.	Sandridge Colney Heath (three parts) Lee Valley Estate Radlett Road (Frogmore) Smallford

Tier Name	Key Characteristics of Tier	Settlements within the Tier
	• Generally some or limited availability of bus routes to provide a public transport offer.	Sleapshyde Gustard Wood
Green Belt Hamlet	• Washed over by Green Belt • Population less than 250 residents	Folly Fields Annables Kinsbourne Green

7 Conclusions and Next Steps

7.1 The aim of this Study is to better understand the roles of settlements in the District, and relationships between them, in order to plan for sustainable growth and ensure the vitality of local services and communities into the future.

7.2 This Study reviewed each settlement within the District based on defined factors relating to accessibility, provision of services and facilities and employment. Data was mapped to assess each settlement against a scoring matrix and the results were analysed against settlement profiles and verified using local knowledge of settlement characteristics.

7.3 The results of the Study have shown that there is a significant range of settlement types in the District, resulting in the identification additional settlement 'tiers' in the hierarchy, when compared to the current hierarchy from the Local Plan Review 1994.

7.4 In particular, differentiation has been identified between St Albans as a City/Large Town and Harpenden as a Town; London Colney as a Small Town; Large Villages to the north of the District and Medium Sized Villages to the south of St Albans; and washed over Green Belt villages. The Stage 2 Settlement Hierarchy Study further develops an understanding of the relationships between settlements in St Albans District, and those outside the District boundary.

7.5 This baseline Study provides a recommended updated settlement hierarchy as a baseline for the Draft Local Plan to inform decisions and work on the spatial strategy and site selection.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Findings from the Stage 1 Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment Prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (November 2013)

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

It can be seen that there are two distinct areas of land which contribute most towards this purpose. The first runs along the north edge of the study area from the east of Dacorum through the north of St Albans to the north of Welwyn Hatfield. This land, located in Dacorum, is also covered by The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The second is located in the southeast corner of the study area in Welwyn Hatfield, where the study area is closest to the northern extent of London.

- **Purpose 2: to prevent neighbouring towns from merging**

This band of Green Belt forms a series of strategic gaps which separate the 1st tier settlements of Tring, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, St Albans, Harpenden, Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City. Parcels which make a limited contribution, or no contribution, towards preventing merging of neighbouring town are not located between 1st tier settlements.

- **Purpose 3: to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment**

Parcels contributing least towards this purpose are generally clustered around the city of St Albans. They include [land] between Bricket Wood and Chiswell Green / How Wood), [land] between St Albans and London Colney and [land] between St Albans and Hatfield, containing Smallford). Other parcels which are part of this network to the south of St Albans displaying high levels of built development include GB26, 27, 31, 32 & GB33. (Paragraph 7.4.11)

A number of large scale and relatively recently-developed residential areas have also been identified in the Green Belt. These schemes represent encroachment into the Green Belt. The main examples are located at Highfield Park (in GB33) and Napsbury Park (in GB31). All of these areas are located in St Albans. When assessed in isolation they are considered to make a limited contribution towards Green Belt purposes. (Paragraph 7.4.15).

- **Purpose 4: to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns**

Key networks of parcels which preserve setting and special character are identified as being…to the south, west and north of St Albans (GB23, 24B, 30, 37, 38 & 39), especially to preserve views to the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban;

Appendix 2 - Population Data using Address Gazeteer Data points within defined settlement areas within the District.

Local Plan 1994 Settlement Hierarchy Category	Settlement	Estimated No. of Permanent Residential Dwellings (Address Gazeteer)	Proxy figure residents per dwelling	Estimated no. residents
Town	St Albans	31,246	2.4	74,990
Town	Harpenden	12,334	2.4	29,602
Specified Settlement	London Colney	3,308	2.4	7,939
Specified Settlement	Redbourn	2,124	2.4	5,098
Specified Settlement	Wheathampstead	1,844	2.4	4,426
Specified Settlement	Bricket Wood	1,651	2.4	3,962
Specified Settlement	How Wood	1,498	2.4	3,595
Specified Settlement	Chiswell Green	1,334	2.4	3,202
Specified Settlement	Park Street/Frogmore	839	2.4	2,014
Green Belt Settlement	Sandridge	664	2.4	1,594
Green Belt Settlement	Colney Heath (3 parts)	517	2.4	1,241
Green Belt Settlement	Lea Valley Estate	228	2.4	547
Green Belt Settlement	Radlett Road, Frogmore	150	2.4	360
Green Belt Settlement	Gustard Wood	140	2.4	336
Green Belt Settlement	Sleapshyde	128	2.4	307
Green Belt Settlement	Smallford	116	2.4	278
Settlements with less than approximately 250 residents population – no further assessment.				
Green Belt Settlement	Folly Fields	51	2.4	122

Green Belt Settlement	Annables, Kinsbourne Green	32	2.4	77

Appendix 3 - Population of Settlements and Weighting Scores per Settlement.

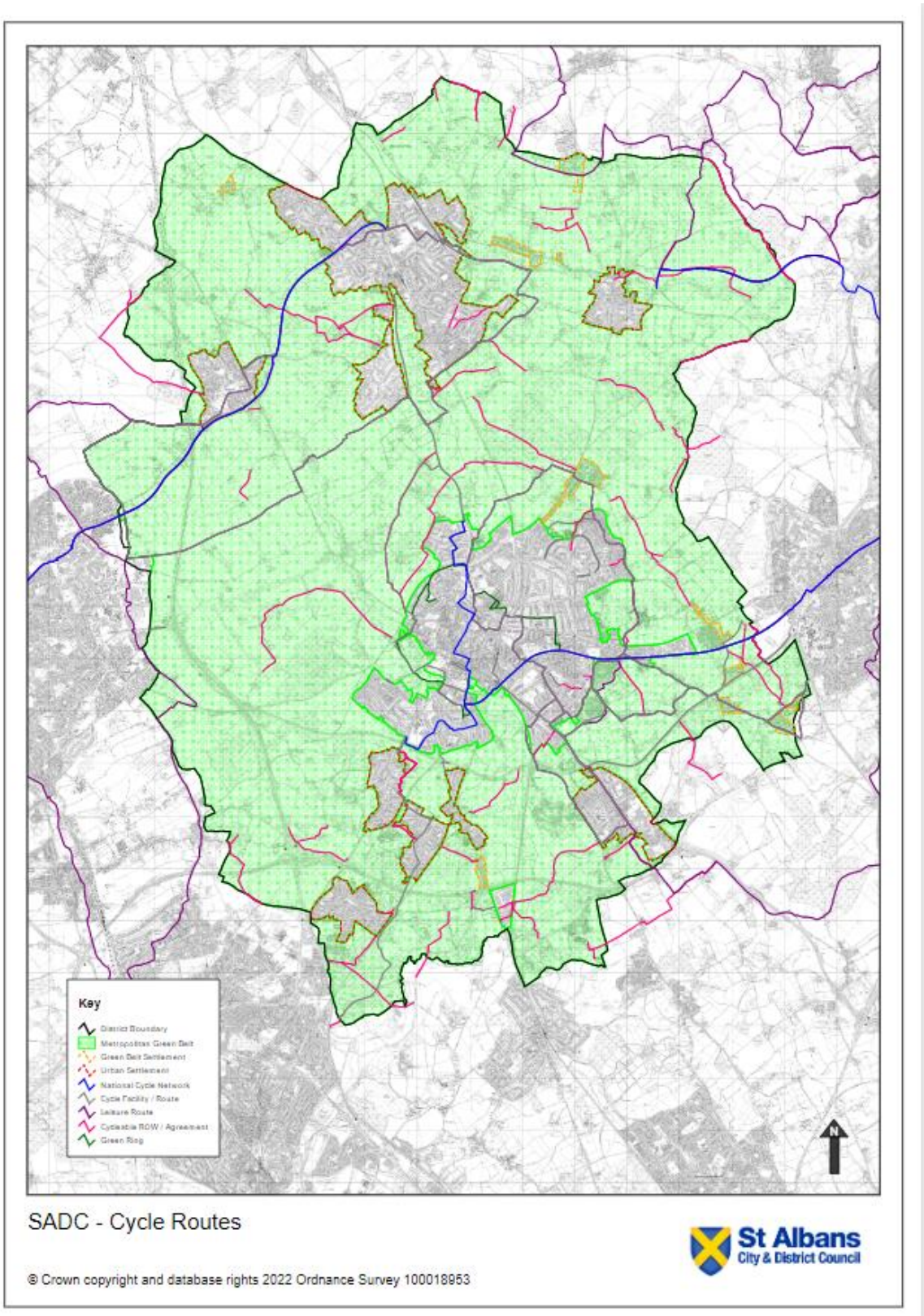
Settlement	Population (approximate number of residents)	weighting = population size / 10,000 and figures rounded to one decimal point.
St Albans	74,990	7.5
Harpenden	29,602	3.0
London Colney	7,939	0.8
Redbourn	5,098	0.5
Wheathampstead	4,426	0.4
Bricket Wood	3,962	0.4
How Wood	3,595	0.4
Chiswell Green	3,202	0.3
Park Street / Frogmore	2,014	0.2
Sandridge	1,594	0.2
Colney Heath (3 parts)	1,241	0.1
Lea Valley Estate	547	0.1
Radlett Road, Frogmore	360	0.0
Gustard Wood	336	0.0
Sleapshyde	307	0.0
Smallford	278	0.0
Folly Fields	122	
Annables, Kinsbourne Green	77	

Appendix 4 - Accessibility Audit Scoring Table and Maps

Scoring Table: Cycling

Settlement	Cycle Route Score	Cycle Route Notes
St Albans	5	St Albans is connected within the city with the National Cycle Network, Green Ring and cycle facility route which connects the city with neighbouring settlements such as London Colney to the south east, the Green Belt villages and Welwyn to the east and Harpenden to the north
Harpenden	3	Harpenden is well connected with the National Cycle Route travelling west to Redbourn and Hemel Hempstead and two key cycle facilities providing links south to St Albans and west to Hemel Hempstead. Smaller routes on cyclable ROW make inter-town connections and provide routes into the Green Belt.
Bricket Wood	1	A cycleable ROW runs along the eastern edge of the settlement up to the authority boundary with Watford. A Cycle Facility/Route also runs along the eastern edge of the settlement which connects the settlement to How Wood to the north and to Watford to the south.
Chiswell Green	3	A cycle facility connects Chiswell Green to the cycle network in St. Albans to the north. A Cycle Facility also connects the settlement to How Wood via a link on the eastern edge of the settlement. A cycleable ROW/Agreement also provides inter settlement connection around the eastern edge of the settlement and also connects the two cycle facilities.
How Wood	1	A cycle facility connects How Wood to Bricket Wood which travels south west towards Watford. The cycle facility also connects to Chiswell Green and on to St. Albans. A Cyclable ROW connects to Park Street/Frogmore.
London Colney	3	A cycle facility connects London Colney to St Albans to the north along two routes. One of these routes forks off to the east towards Welwyn and Hatfield. A cycleable ROW runs westwards from the settlement to the employment allocation south of Frogmore and the settlement is also connected to a leisure route to the south which runs into adjoining authorities at Hertsmere and Welwyn Hatfield.
Park Street / Frogmore	1	The map shows one cycle facility connecting the settlement to the north to St. Albans

Settlement	Cycle Route Score	Cycle Route Notes
Redbourn	3	A cycle facility runs through the settlement westwards towards Hemel Hempstead. The National Cycle Route runs along the eastern edge of the settlement connecting Harpenden and Hemel Hempstead. A cycleable ROW runs westwards into Dacorum.
Wheathampstead	1	One cycle facility within the settlement but only a very short section. A cycleable ROW also runs out of the settlement to the east and connects up to the National Cycle Network to the east and a leisure route to the north.
Colney Heath (3 parts)	1	Connected by a cycle facility which runs out of the settlement area and connects up to St. Albans and London Colney. A Cycleable ROW runs north out of the eastern extent of the settlement area and connects up to the Hatfield - St. Albans National Cycle Route
Gustard Wood	1	Leisure Route runs through the southern edge of the settlement and outwards into countryside.
Lea Valley Estate	1	A cycle facility runs just south of the defined settlement area into Harpenden
Radlett Road, Frogmore	1	A cycleable ROW runs from the western edge of the settlement westwards to How Wood.
Sandridge	1	A cycle facility connects the settlement to St Albans via routes running east and west out of the settlement. The settlement is also conneccted to a cycleable ROW which runs westwards. Although the route travels north west, it is not fully connected to cycle routes into Harpenden.
Sleapshyde	1	Well connected to a cycle facility which runs east-west towards St Albans and Hatfield and connects to the National Cycle Network. Also a Cycleable ROW runs along the eastern boundary and connects to Colney Heath.

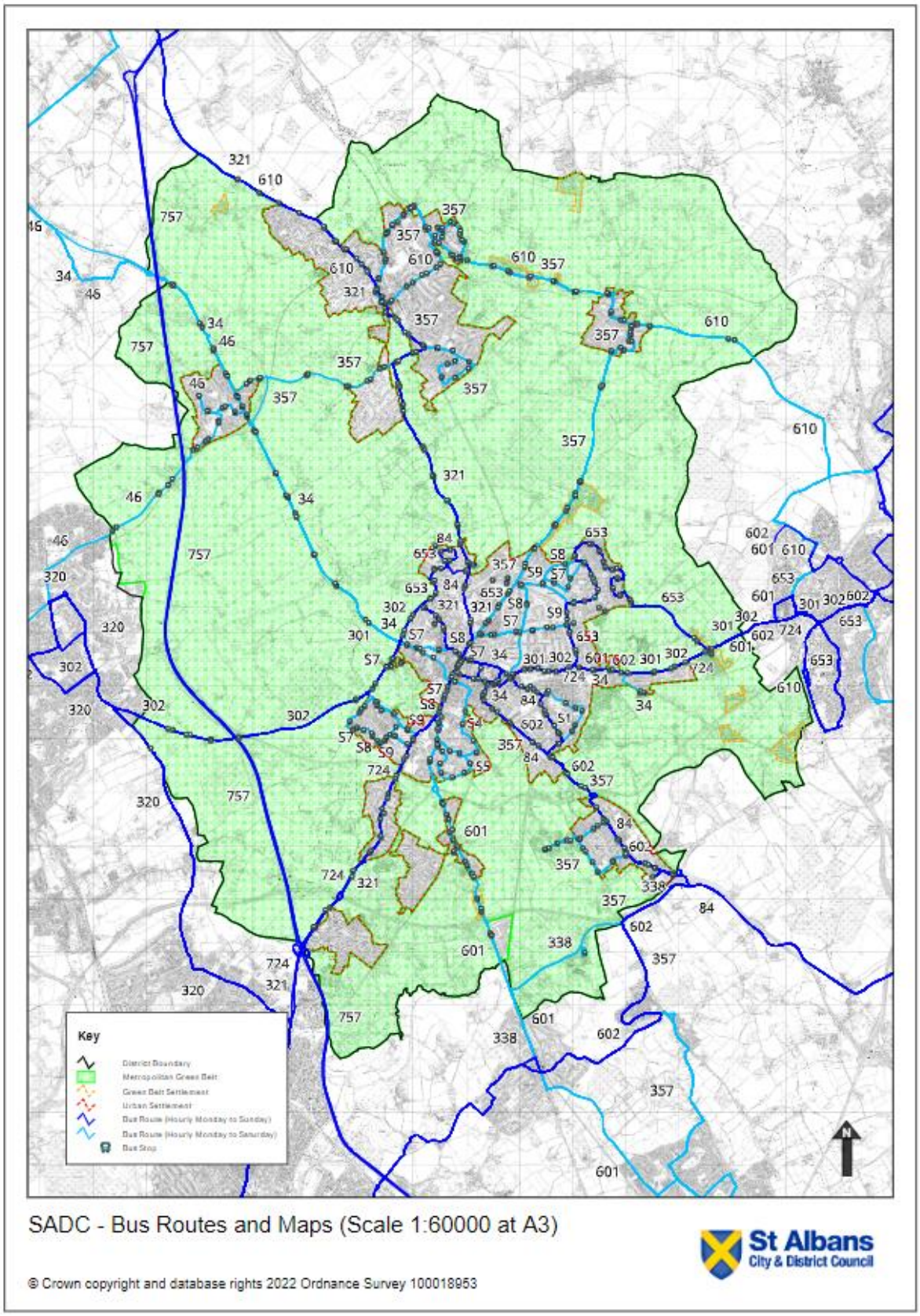


Map 3: Cycle Routes

Bus Routes

Scoring Table: Bus Routes

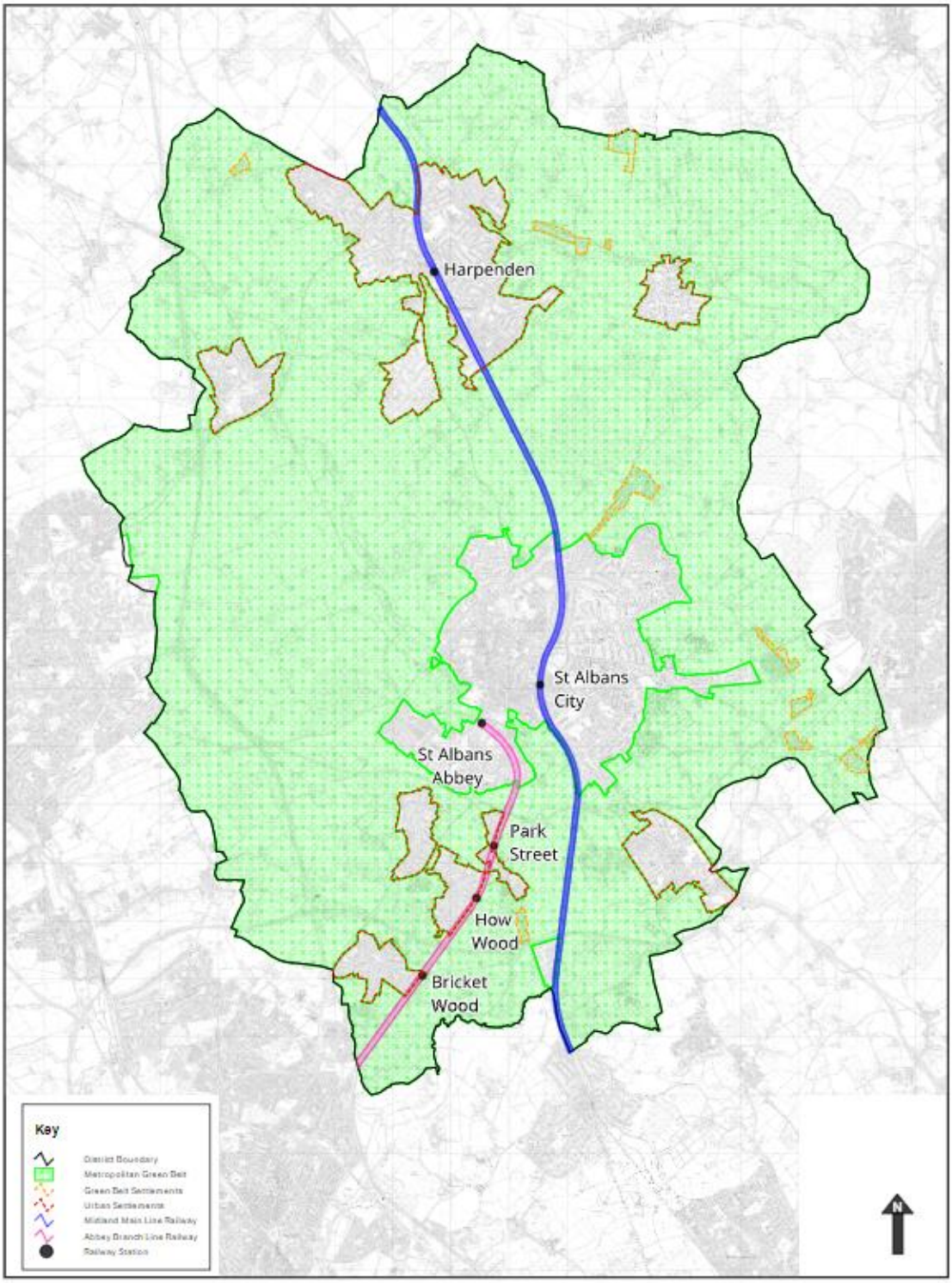
Settlement	Bus Route (Monday to Saturday)			Score	Bus Route (Monday to Sunday)			Score	Total Score
	Route no.				Route no.				
St Albans	34, 357, 601, S1, S4, S5, S7, S8, S9			9	84, 301, 302, 321, 602, 653, 724			7	16
Harpenden	357	610		2	321			1	3
Bricket Wood					724			1	1
Chiswell Green					724			1	1
How Wood									
London Colney	338	357		2	602	84		2	4
Park Street / Frogmore	601			1					1
Redbourn	357	46	34	3					3
Wheathampstead	357	610		2					2
Colney Heath (3 parts)									
Gustard Wood									
Lea Valley Estate	610	357		2					2
Radlett Road, Frogmore	601			1					1
Sandridge	357			1					1
Sleapshyde									
Smallford					302	653	301	3	3



Map 4: Bus Routes and Stops

Train Access Scores

Settlement	Train Station Score	Mainline train station	Branch line station
St Albans	10	x	x
Harpenden	8	x	
Bricket Wood	1		x
Chiswell Green	0		
How Wood	1		x
London Colney	0		
Park Street / Frogmore	1		x
Redbourn	0		
Wheathampstead	0		
Colney Heath (3 parts)	0		
Gustard Wood	0		
Lea Valley Estate	0		
Radlett Road, Frogmore	0		
Sandridge	0		
Sleapshyde	0		
Smallford	0		



SADC Railway Lines and Stations

St Albans City & District Council

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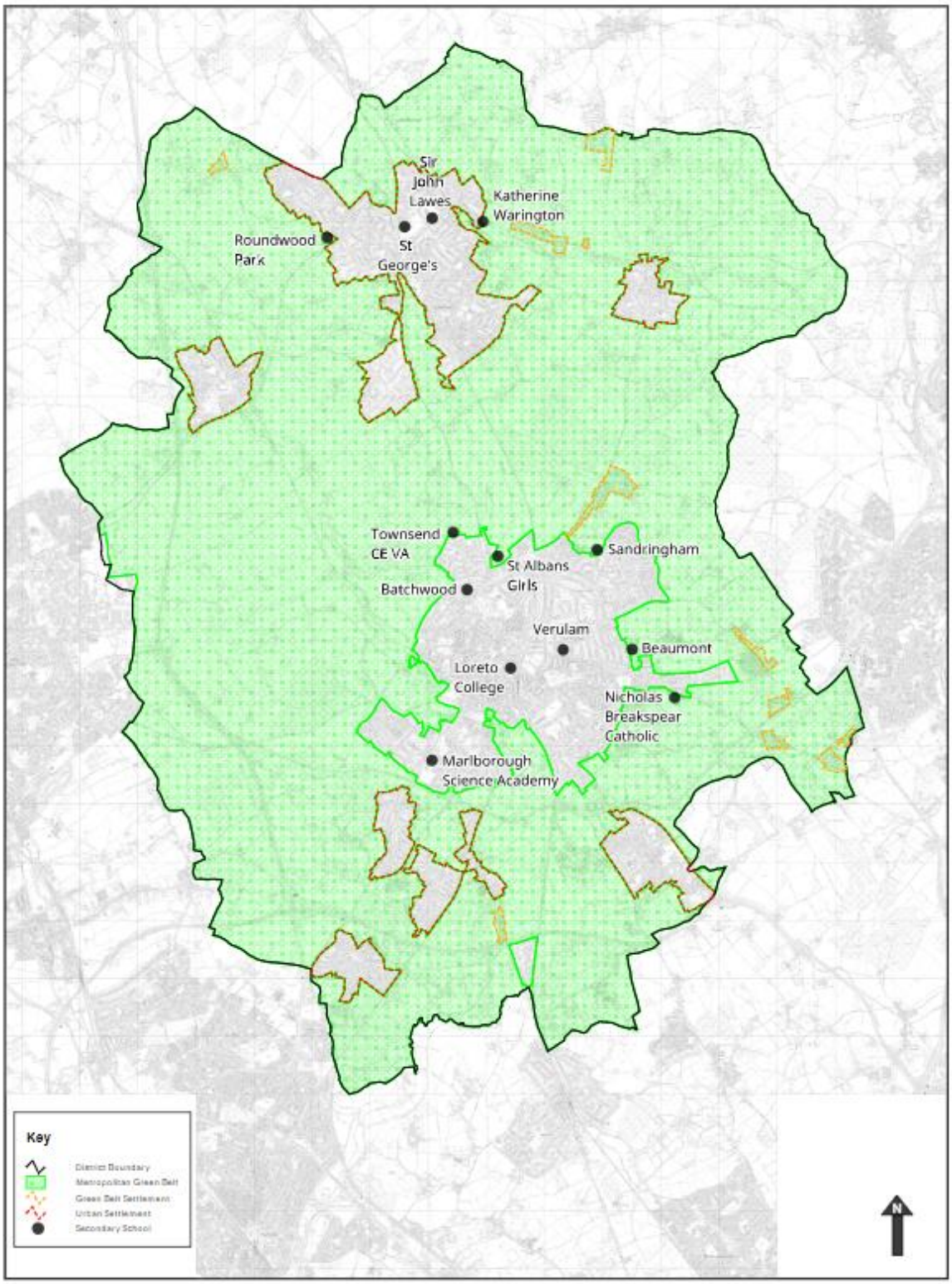
Map 5: Train lines and stations

Appendix 5 - Services and Facilities Audit Scoring

		Higher Order Services			Key Services			
Settlement	**Total Score**	**Secondary School**	**Supermarket**	**Leisure Centre**	**Primary School**	**Playground**	**GP surgery**	**Convenience Food shop**
St Albans	10	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Harpenden	10	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Bricket Wood	5				x	x	x	x
Chiswell Green	5				x	x	x	x
How Wood	5				x	x	x	x
London Colney	6		x	x	x	x	x	x
Park Street / Frogmore	3				x	x		
Redbourn	5				x	x	x	x
Wheathampstead	5				x	x	x	x
Colney Heath (3 parts)	3				x	x		
Gustard Wood	0							
Lea Valley Estate	1					x		
Radlett Road, Frogmore	0							
Sandridge	3				x	x	x	
Sleapshyde	1					x		
Smallford	1					x		



SADC - Secondary Schools

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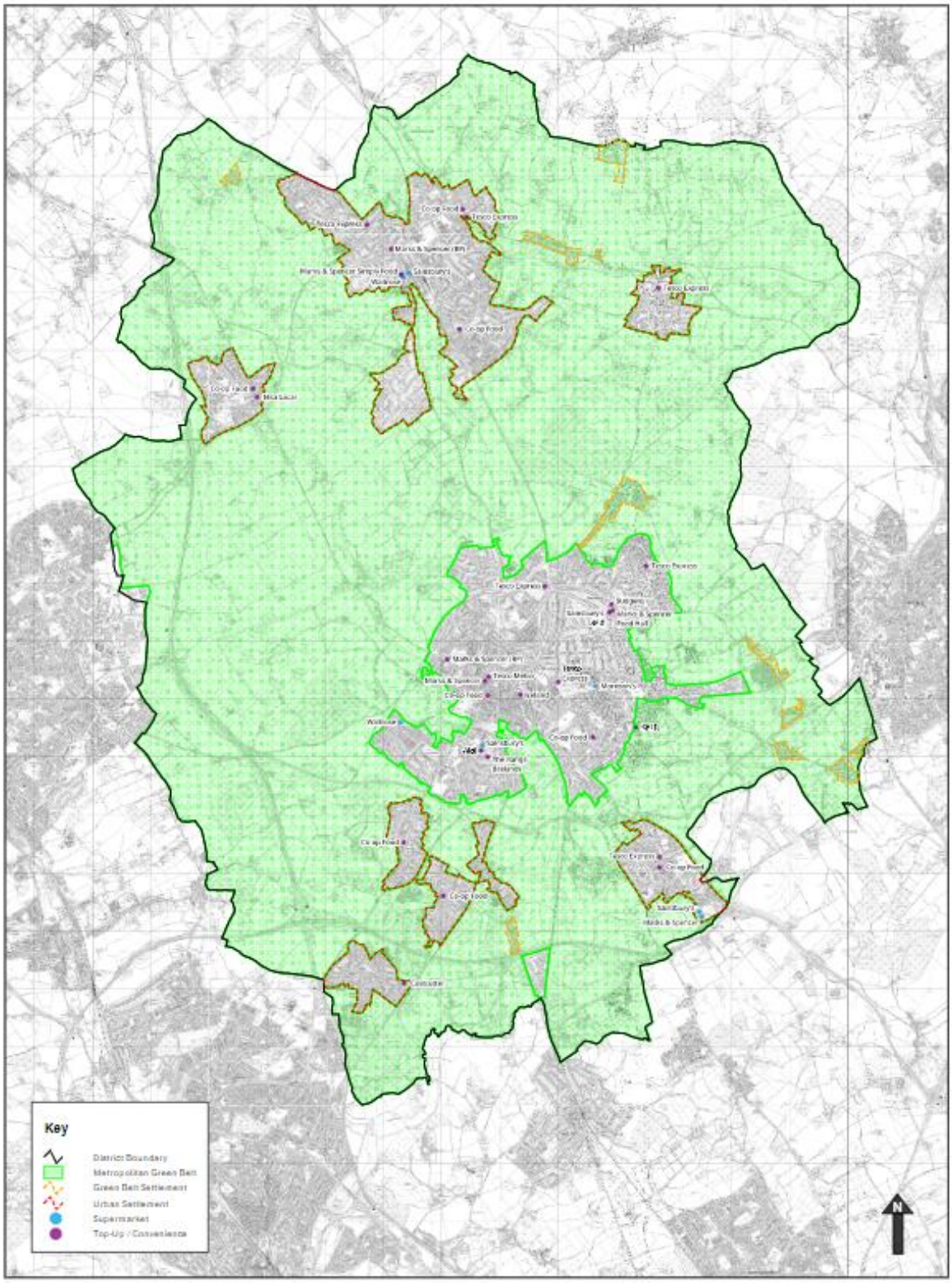
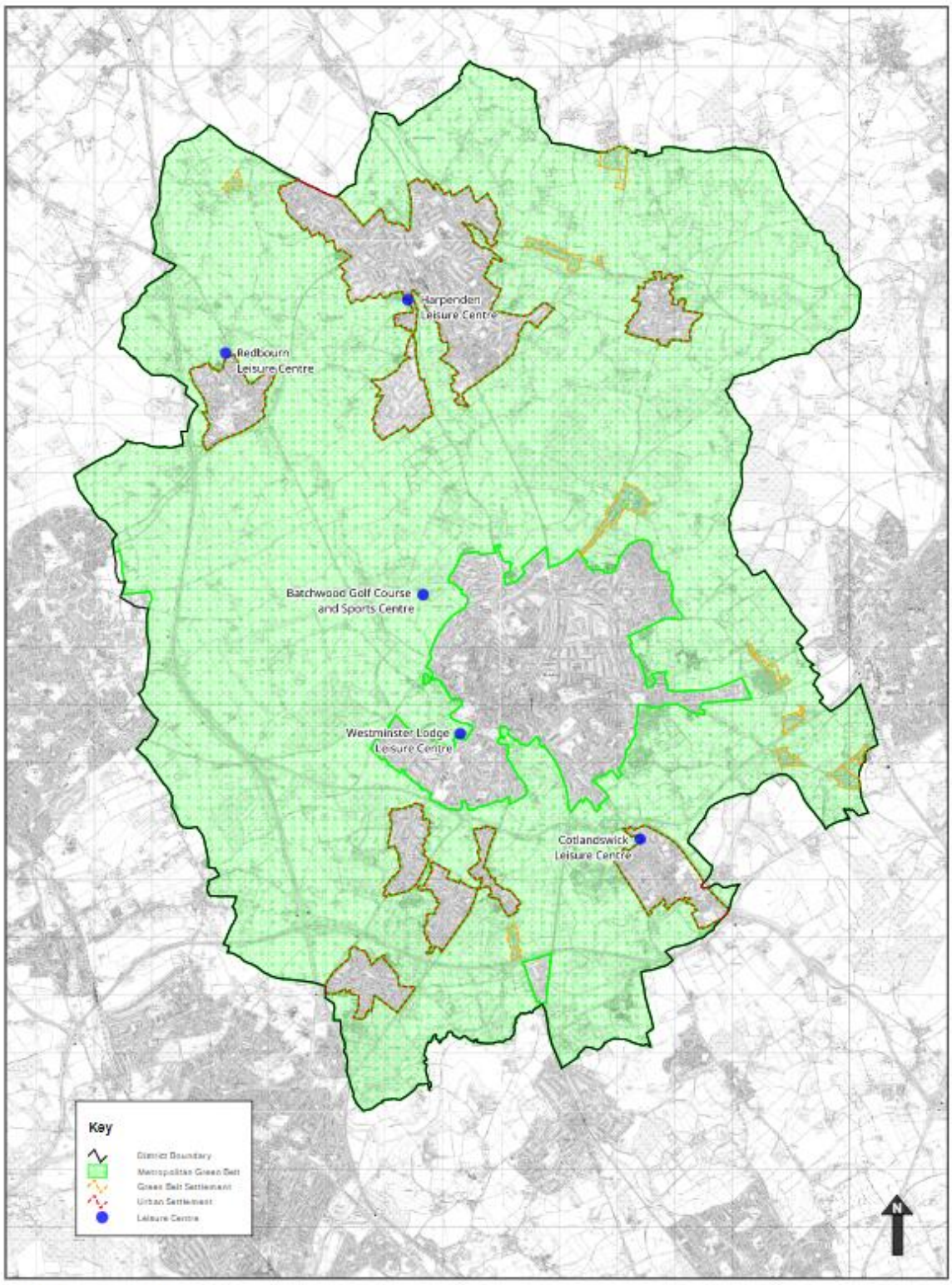
Map 6: Secondary Schools



Map 7: Supermarkets and Convenience Food Shops



SADC - Leisure Centres

St Albans City & District Council

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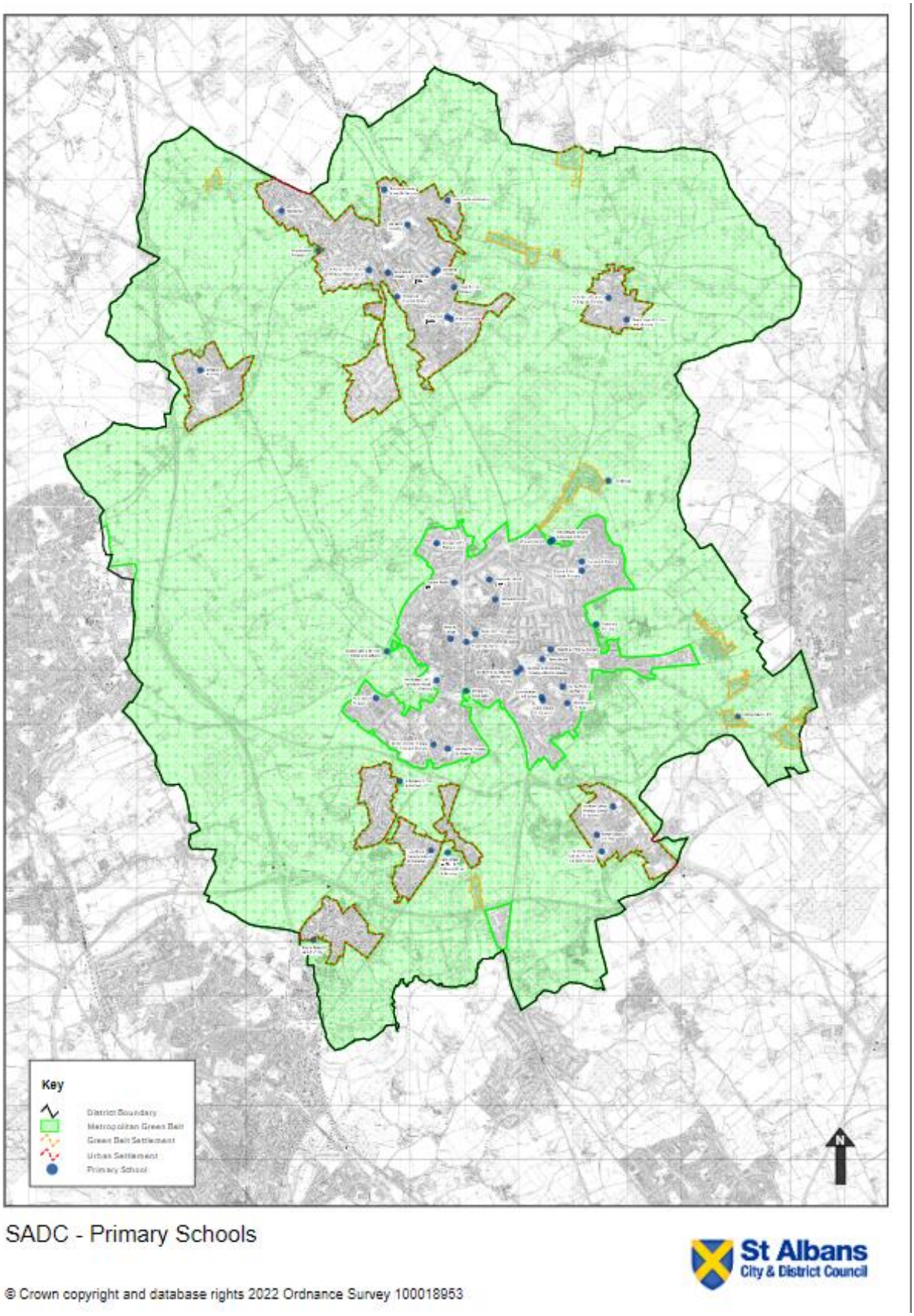
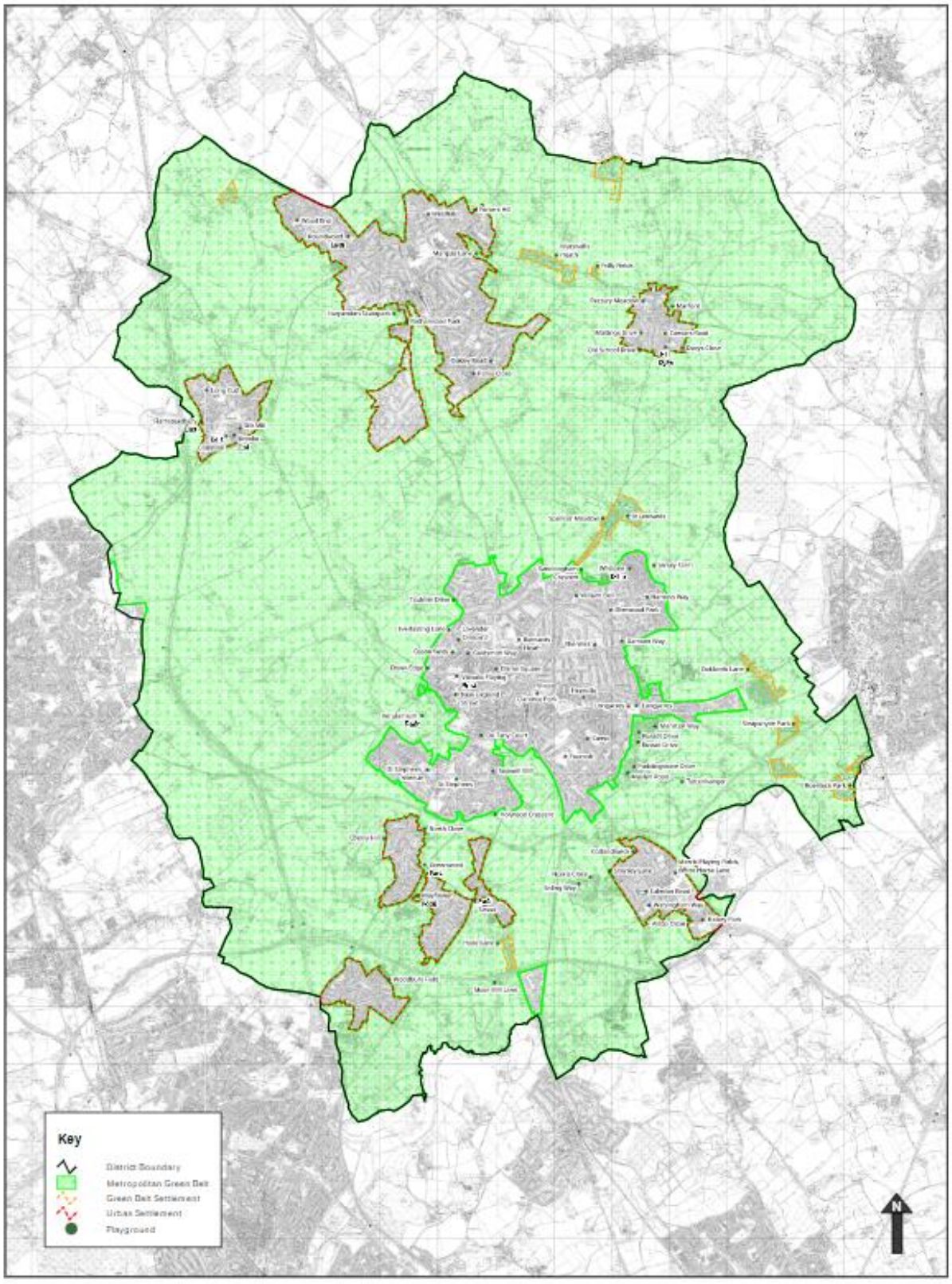
Map 8: Leisure Centres



Map 9: Primary Schools



SADC - Playgrounds

St Albans City & District Council

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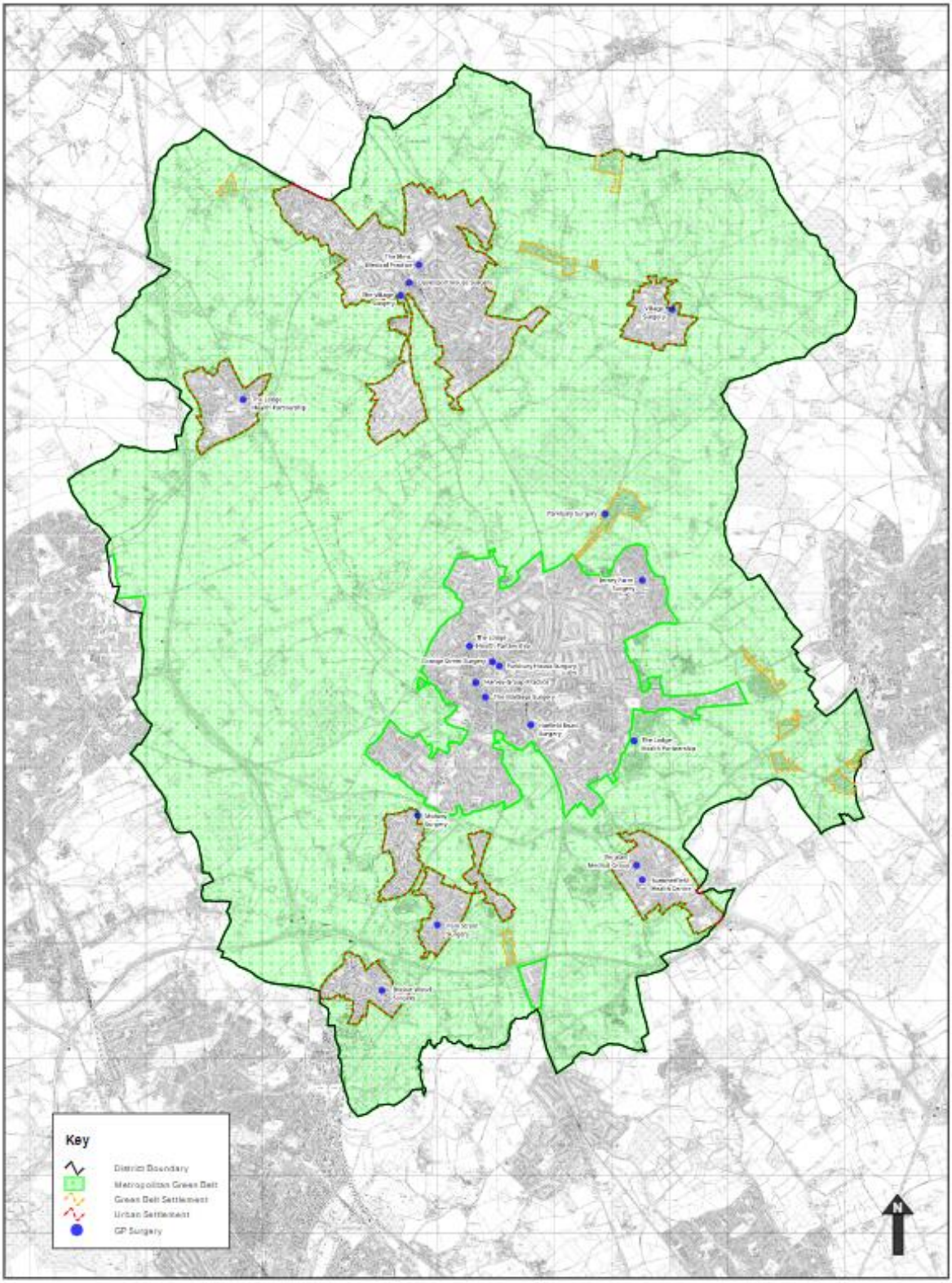
Map 10: Playgrounds



SADC - GP Surgeries

St Albans City & District Council

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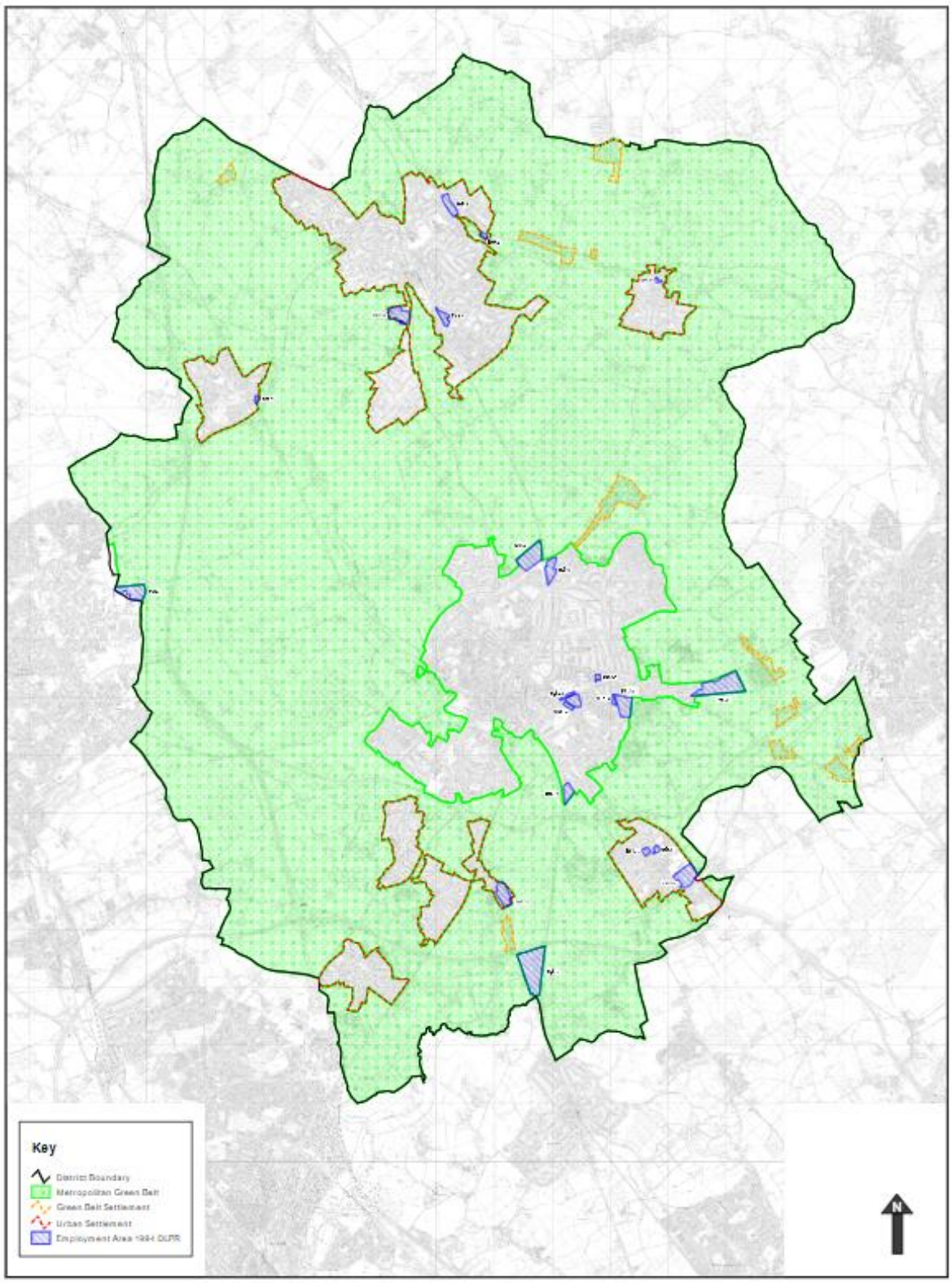
Map 11: GP Surgeries

Appendix 6 - Employment Audit Scoring

Settlement	Employment score	Allocations	Location
St Albans*	5	EMP.8 Porters Wood/Soothouse Spring	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.9 Council depot and adjoining land, St Albans Road, Sandridge	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.10 Alban Park/Acrewood Way/Lyon Way, Hatfield Road	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.12 Brick Knoll Park, Ashley Road	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.13 Executive Park and adjoining land, Hatfield Road	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.14 Camp Road/Campfield Road	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.15 North Orbital Trading Estate, Napsbury Lane	Within defined settlement area
Harpenden	4	EMP.1 Coldharbour Lane	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.2 Batford Mill Industrial Estate	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.3 Southdown Industrial Estate and former Gas Works (part), Southdown Road	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.3A Rothamsted Experimental Station	Within defined settlement area
Bricket Wood	0		
Chiswell Green	0		
How Wood	0		
London Colney	4	EMP.16 Wellington Road	Within defined settlement area

		EMP.17 The Hertfordshire Business Centre, Alexander Road	Within defined settlement area
		EMP.18 Riverside Estate	Within defined settlement area
Park Street / Frogmore	2	EMP.20 Watling Street and well related to EMP 21 Curo Park	Within defined settlement area
Redbourn	2	EMP.5 Redbourn Industrial Park	Within defined settlement area
Wheathampstead	2	EMP.6A Station Road	Within defined settlement area
Colney Heath	0		
Gustard Wood	0		
Lea Valley Estate	0		
Radlett Road, Frogmore	0		
Sandridge	0		
Sleapshyde	0		
Smallford	0		



SADC Employment Areas 1994 DLPR

St Albans City & District Council

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Map 12: Employment Allocation Areas 1994 DLPR

Appendix 7 - Final Scoring Matrix for all Settlements and Audit Scores

Scoring Matrix			Employment	Accessibility			Services and Facilities	Total
Settlement	Population (approximate number of residents)	population weighting	Employment	Cycle routes	Bus routes	Train station	Services and Facilities	Totals
St Albans	74,990	7.5	5	5	16	5	8	46.5
Harpenden	29,602	3.0	4	3	3	3	8	24.0
Bricket Wood	3,962	0.4	0	1	1	1	5	8.4
Chiswell Green	3,202	0.3	0	3	1	0	5	9.3
How Wood	3,595	0.4	0	1	0	1	5	7.4
London Colney	7,939	0.8	4	3	4	0	6	17.8
Park Street / Frogmore	2,014	0.2	2	1	1	1	3	8.2
Redbourn	5,098	0.5	2	3	3	0	5	13.5
Wheathampstead	4,426	0.4	2	1	2	0	5	10.4
Colney Heath (3 parts)	1,241	0.1	0	1	0	0	3	4.1
Gustard Wood	336	0.0	0	1	0	0	0	1.0
Lea Valley Estate	547	0.1	0	1	2	0	1	4.1
Radlett Road, Frogmore	360	0.0	0	1	1	0	0	2.0

Sandridge	1,594	0.2	0	1	1	0	3	5.2
Sleapshyde	307	0.0	0	1	0	0	1	2.0
Smallford	278	0.0	0	1	3	0	1	5.0