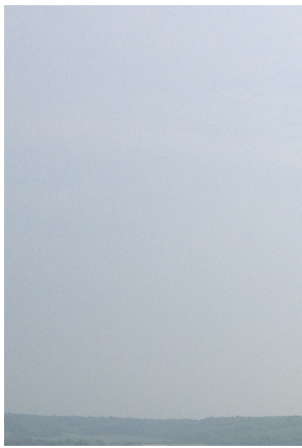


GREEN BELT REVIEW PURPOSES ASSESSMENT
(Prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council)

Annex 1 – Parcel Assessment Sheets for St Albans City and District Council

November 2013



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Introduction

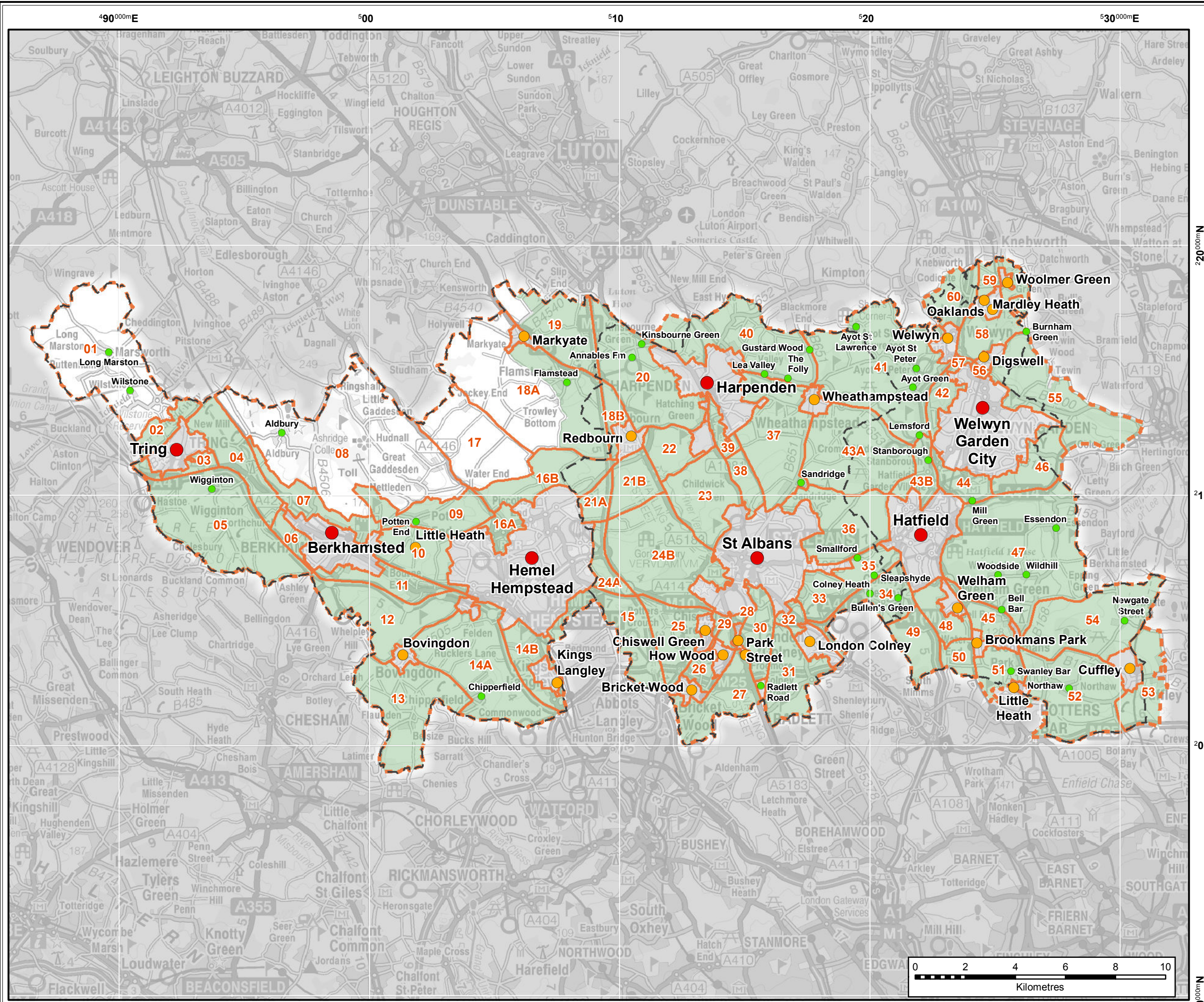
This document forms an Annex to the Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment undertaken on behalf of on behalf of Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

The parcel assessment sheets in this annex relate to St Albans City and District Council only.

The maps overleaf show the strategic parcel boundaries. Figure 8.1 (taken from the Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment Final Report) shows areas of land which contribute least towards Green Belt purposes. These have been identified under 'Next Steps' in the relevant Parcel Assessment Sheets, and classified as Strategic Sub Areas and Small Scale Sub Areas in the Final Report.

The Final Report also contains more detailed information on methodology and environmental and historic features mapping.

File Name: Strategic Parcel Plan_20131025



Key:

- District Borough Boundary
- Land Parcel Boundary
- Study Area Outer Boundary
- Green Belt

Settlement

- 1st Tier
- 2nd Tier
- 3rd Tier

Coordinate System: British National Grid
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: OSGB 1936
 Units: Meter

REVISION: G

Green Belt Review for St Albans, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield

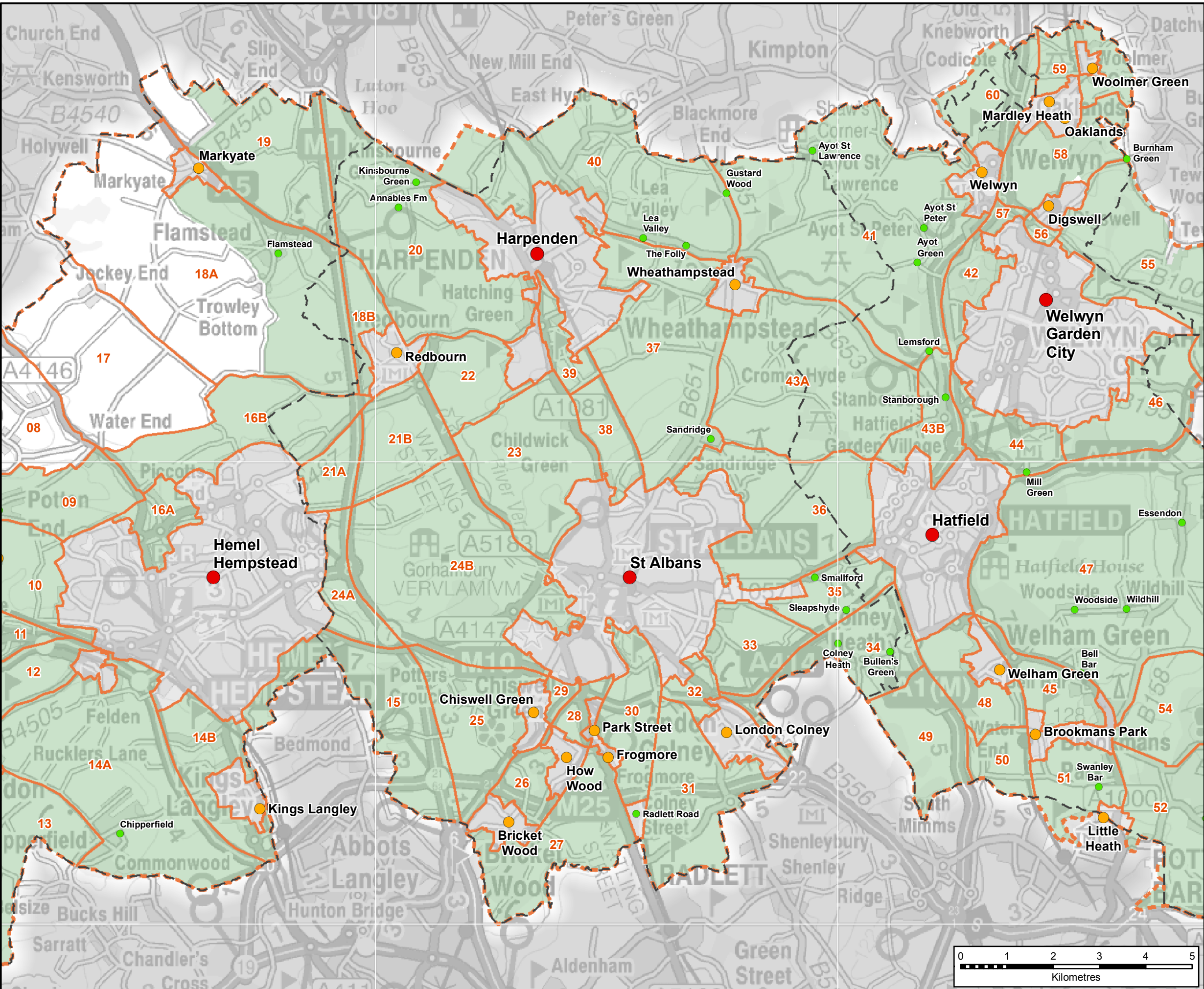
Strategic Parcel Plan

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CONTENT	DRAWN
London.Gov Ordnance Survey	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	30/11/2013



510000mE

520000mE



Key:

- District Borough Boundary
- Land Parcel Boundary
- Study Area Outer Boundary
- Green Belt

Settlement

- 1st Tier
- 2nd Tier
- 3rd Tier



Coordinate System: British National Grid
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: OSGB 1936
 Units: Meter

REVISION: G

**Green Belt Review for
 St Albans, Dacorum and
 Welwyn Hatfield**

**Strategic Parcel Plan
 St Albans**

SCALE
 1:80,000 @ A3

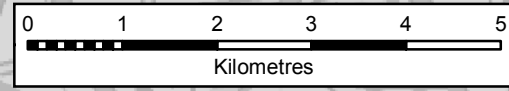
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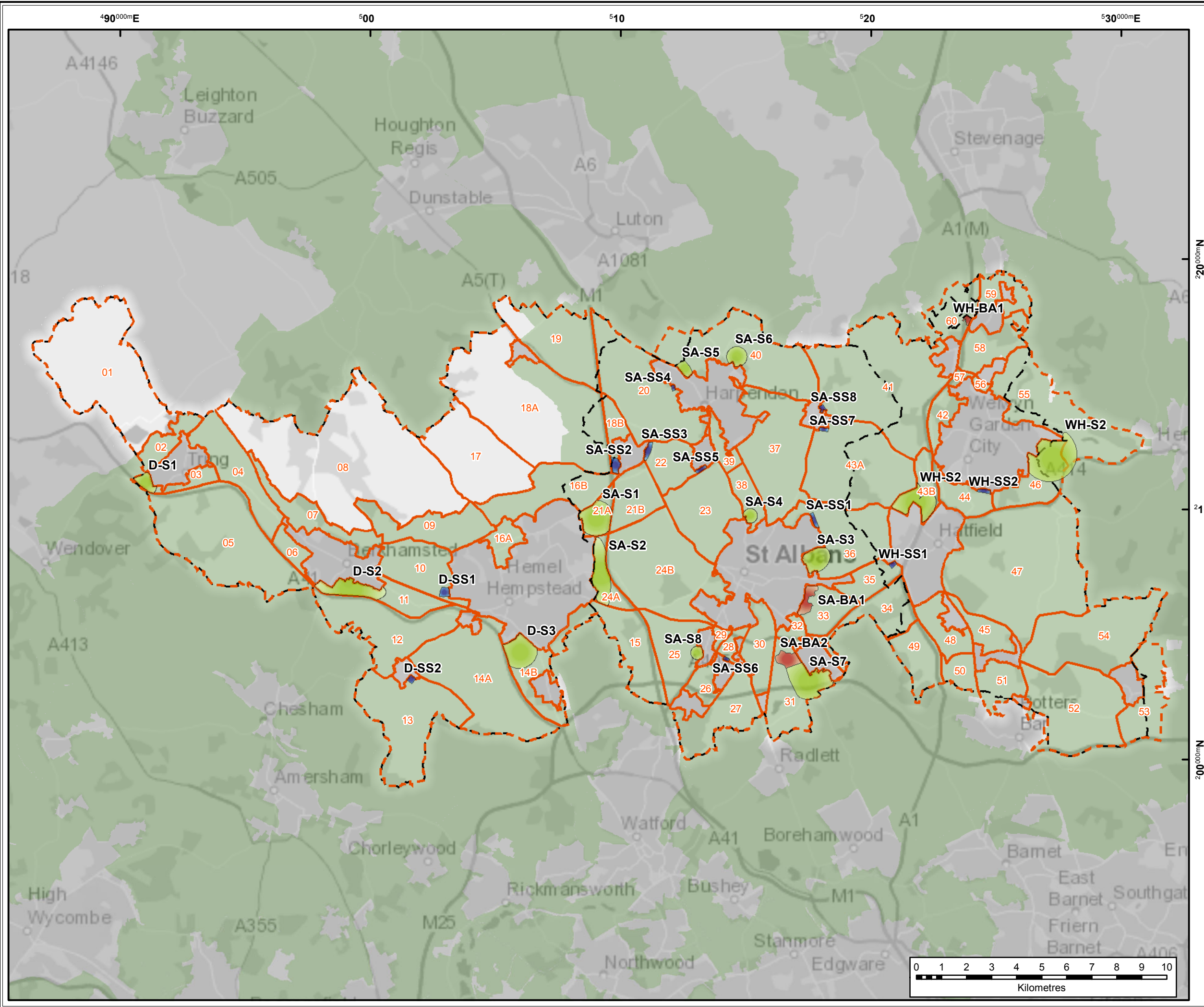
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DATE
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File Name: Strategic Parcel Plan - StAlbans - 20131025
 Copyright SKM Enviros

Copyright SKM Enviros
Name: Figure8.1_Least Contribution to GB



- Key:**
- Boundary Adjustment
 - Small Scale Sub-Area
 - Strategic Sub-Area
 - Study Area Outer Boundary
 - District Borough Boundary
 - Land Parcel Boundary
 - Green Belt



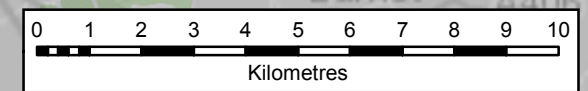
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Datum: OSGB 1936
Units: Meter

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Green Belt Review for St Albans, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield

FIGURE 8.1.
Land Contributing Least Towards Green Belt Purposes

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:145,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
London.Gov Ordnance Survey	KW
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RB	2/12/2013

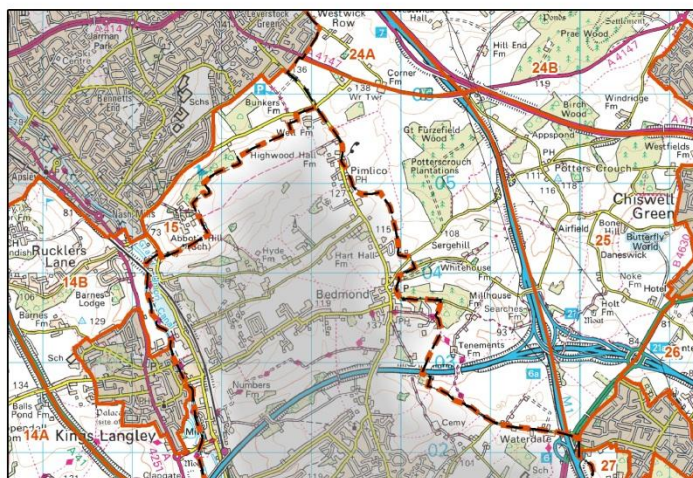


The Assessment Criteria for the Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment is set out below. The full methodology is set out in Chapter 5 of the Final Report.

NATIONAL PURPOSES	
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	
1)	Does the parcel act, in itself, as an effective barrier to prevent sprawl from large built-up areas outside of the study area specifically London, Luton & Dunstable and Stevenage?
2)	Does the parcel contribute, as part of a wider network of parcels, to a strategic barrier that prevents the sprawl of these areas?
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	
3)	Does the parcel provide, or form part of, a gap or space between existing 1 st tier settlements (neighbouring towns)?
4)	What is the distance of the gap between the settlements?
5)	Is there evidence of ribbon development on major route corridors?
6)	What is the visual perception of the gap between settlements from major route corridors?
7)	Would a reduction in the gap compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms?
8)	Would a reduction in the gap compromise the separation of settlements and the overall openness of the parcel in terms of visual perception?
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	
9)	What countryside / rural characteristics exist within the parcel including agricultural or forestry land uses and how is this recognised in established national and local landscape designations?
10)	Has there already been any significant encroachment by built development or other urbanising elements? (Specify the level (%) of built development in the parcel)
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	
11)	What settlements or places with historic features exist within the parcel?
12)	What is the relationship and connection (in the form of character, views and visual perception) between the parcel and historic feature?
13)	Does the parcel provide an open setting or a buffer against encroachment by development around settlements or places with historic features?
HERTFORDSHIRE PURPOSE	
Maintaining existing settlement pattern	
14)	Does the parcel provide, or form part of, a gap or space between existing 1 st tier settlements (neighbouring towns)?
15)	What is the distance of the gap between the settlements?
16)	Is there evidence of ribbon development on major route corridors?
17)	What is the visual perception of the gap between settlements from major route corridors?
18)	Would a reduction in the gap compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms?
19)	Would a reduction in the gap compromise the separation of settlements and the overall openness of the parcel in terms of visual perception?
Presentation of Contribution to Green Belt Purposes	
Significant contribution to GB purpose	
Partial contribution to GB purpose	
Limited or no contribution to GB purpose	

GB15 –Green Belt Land Southeast of Hemel Hempstead

Description The parcel is located to the southeast of Hemel Hempstead. The boundary to the south runs along Tom's Lane and the M1 marks the eastern boundary along the edge of the study area. It is 669 ha in size and forms a low flat plateau landscape which falls very gradually to the River Gade valley on the western boundary of the parcel, whereas the east is more undulating and includes a number of small ridges.



Land use Mix of arable and pasture farmland, plus industrial uses, educational and recreational uses.

View to northwest from M1 shows open and rural nature of the parcel



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of Hemel Hempstead and Watford – Abbots Langley), and safeguarding the countryside. Partial contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 out of 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB15 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel helps provide with GB14B the strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and Watford (Abbot Langley), located in Watford Borough Council to the south of the study area. This gap is 2km in total. There is some evidence of ribbon development along minor routes and there are strong views of the parcel from the M1. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in a mixture of arable and pasture fields with equine land. Fields are of medium sized and enclosed by high hedgerows interspersed with mature hedgerow trees. There are also several sizable mixed woodland blocks to the east including ancient woodland at Hanging and Piecorner Woods. To the west of the parcel there is scattered and ribbon development, mainly along Bedmond Road. The main urban influences are the M1 and M25 which are audibly intrusive. The southwest boundary of Hemel Hempstead acts as strong linear boundary to encroachment. Levels of visual openness are generally high.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		PARTIAL
The parcel contributes to the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead with Kings Langley (2 nd). It also contributes with GB25 to secondary local gaps from Hemel Hempstead / Kings Langley to Chiswell Green (3 rd) and Bricket Wood (3 rd) which are 5.2km and 1.1km wide respectively. These gaps are well maintained (relatively free of development) and contain the M1. Given the scale of gaps any small scale reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. There is ribbon development along several lanes including limited industrial activities. The wireless mast at Hyde Lane is an obtrusive and notable vertical feature within the landscape. The M25 and M1 are the major detracting features to the area.

Visual Openness To the north and west, the parcel is generally enclosed with the flat landscape with high hedgerows limiting longer distance views across the farmland. To the east, with the exception of the views from the motorways, views are frequently short distance due to the prevalence of woodland. The undulating terrain allows for more open views to the wooded edge from the arable land. The scale of fields and dense hedges means the landscape is generally well contained.

Countryside Character A visually contained simple agricultural landscape with a settled character arising from the number of traditional farms together with more modern 20th century housing. The major roads of the M1 and M25 interject two large scale transport corridors into this rural character with substantial associated noise.

GB16B –Green Belt Land to North of Hemel Hempstead

Description The parcel is located to the north of Hemel Hempstead and follows the Green Belt boundary to the north and to the M1 edge beside Redbourn to the east. It is 656 ha in size and forms an area of gently undulating upland chalk plateau.



Land use Predominately arable farmland.

View to northwest from Dodds Lane / edge of Potten End



View to south towards Hemel Hempstead



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn). Partial contribution towards preventing merging. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 out of 5 purposes.

GB16B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it contributes with GB18A & 19 to separate Hemel Hempstead and Luton and Dunstable (to the north of the study area in Bedfordshire). The gap is 10km in total, and mainly covered by the Chilterns AONB to the north and therefore contains limited built development. Any scale of reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of existing 1 st tier settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in arable farmland with large scale fields and scattered farmsteads interspersed with discrete woodland blocks and copses, including a single pocket of ancient woodland. There are a number of semi urban land uses including horse paddocks and recreational activities along the north edge of Hemel Hempstead but this does not comprise a strong boundary. There is very limited evidence of urban influences and no encroachment. Levels of visual openness are very high.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel adjoins Piccotts End and Water End Conservation Areas. It represents an open rural setting providing views into and from the open countryside to the north and west. The parcel also contains a SAM.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes with GB21A towards the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn (2 nd). This large gap is 2.1km and is relatively clear from development however it contains the M1. Any minor reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms and overall openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

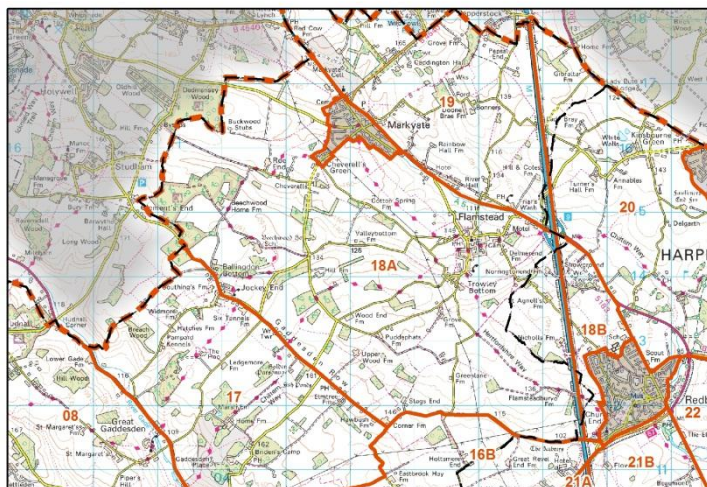
Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.3%. There is limited residential ribbon development spreading from villages and hamlets along narrow country lanes.

Visual Openness The open landscape provides opportunities for long to mid-distance views to the surrounding countryside and to Hemel Hempstead.

Countryside Character The parcel is predominantly agricultural with a distinct boundary to the urban edge.

GB18A – Partial Green Belt Land to West of Markyate

Description The parcel is partial-Green Belt land located to the west of Markyate. It extends from the northern edge of the Green Belt surrounding Hemel Hempstead to the edge of the study area to the north. The eastern boundary is marked by the A5 / M1. Green Belt land is designated in the eastern part of the parcel. It is 2,234 ha and is formed by a series of narrow, gently undulating chalk ridges, above the dry valleys of Markyate, in the upper Ver valley. Most of the parcel is within the Chilterns AONB.



Land use Predominated arable farmland, plus sewage works.

View to east from Clements Lane displays strong open and rural characteristics



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards checking sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Partial contribution towards preventing merging and preserving the setting of Flamstead and Markyate. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 out of 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB18A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel is located to the south of Luton and Dunstable. It forms a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to the north to restrict sprawl. It includes an area of the Luton and Dunstable Green Belt in the northern section of the parcel		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it contributes with GB16B & 19 to separate Hemel Hempstead and Luton and Dunstable (to the north of the study area in Bedfordshire). The gap is 10km in total, and mainly covered by the Chilterns AONB to the north and therefore contains limited built development. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of existing 1 st tier settlements in physical but would reduce overall visual openness as the parcel does not directly adjoin 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open arable farmland with large scale fields bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. There are isolated pockets of wooded pasture, and estate parkland and patches of pasture and horticulture closer to settlements, predominantly on the ridges. It is more wooded to the northwest with sizable areas of ancient woodland including Great Branwin's Wood, Gravelpit Wood and Dedmansey Wood. Most of the parcel also lies within the Chilterns AONB. There is very limited built development apart from the linear village of Flamstead. Patches of light industrial development also border the major route of the Roman Watling Street (A5). The M1 represents the main urban influence which is concealed but audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are very high in general.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel contains Flamstead Conservation Area and adjoins Markyate Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides secondary local gaps between Markyate (2 nd) to Flamstead (3 rd) and Redbourn (2 nd) which are 1.5km and 4.6km respectively. Gaps are large and well maintained (relatively free of development) and there is no ribbon development. The gap to Redbourn contains the M1 however it is well concealed. The parcel also contributes to the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead and 2 nd and 3 rd tier settlements. Given the scale and nature of gaps, any small reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements or overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.4%. Patches of light industrial development border the major arterial route of the Roman Watling Street (A5).

Visual Openness Due to the nature of the landform and the high hedges boundaries, the parcel is essentially concealed from views. This varies around Flamstead on the ridge although the area is no more than locally visible throughout.

Countryside Character The parcel has a rural character but the busy A5 and M1 corridors add strong urban influences.

GB18B –Green Belt Land to West of Redbourn

Description: The parcel is located to the west of Redbourn. It is bounded to the west by the M1 and by the settlement edge to the south east. The parcel is relatively small at 162 ha in size and covers an area of flat land to the north and gently undulating land to the west of the settlement.



Land use: Predominantly arable farmland, plus recreation ground and playing fields.

View to north from southwest corner of Redbourn displays lower levels of openness



View to south from M1 along west edge of Redbourn



Principal Function / Summary

Partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting for Redbourn. Overall the parcel does not significantly contribute towards any of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB18B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays a mix of urban fringe and rural and countryside characteristics. It contains open arable farmland with large fields bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees and isolated patches of pasture bordering the M1 corridor. Narrow woodland blocks screen the motorway which is the main urban influence and it is audibly intrusive. Other urban fringe development includes a nursery, recreation ground and school playing fields on the northern edge of Redbourn. Levels of visual openness are generally high but vary throughout the parcel especially along the narrow east and west edges of the settlement which are enclosed by physical features.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel adjoins Redbourn Conservation Area. It provides a link to the countryside to the west of the settlement however views to and from the parcel are limited.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel contributes with GB18A to the secondary local gap between Redbourn (2 nd) and Flamstead (3 rd). There is no ribbon development however the gap contains the M1, which is concealed. Due to the scale and nature of the gap, any small reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, but would reduce overall levels of visual openness across the parcel.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There are some scattered developments along the Dunstable Road and Harpenden Lane.

Visual Openness Long distance views are limited by the embankments of the M1 to the south of the parcel.

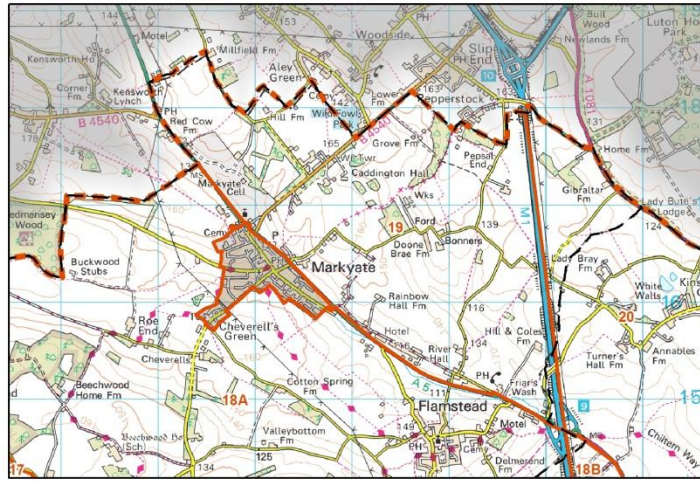
Countryside Character The landscape close to the M1 is notably disturbed and the constant presence of large lorries and the influence of the transport system in this area is strong. The north and west boundaries of Redbourn are well defined.

GB18B – Next Steps

Land at southwest edge of Redbourn is recommended for further assessment as a small scale sub-area (SA-SS2). The sub-area is enclosed by the M1 to the west in the vicinity of Gaddesden Lane. Assessed in isolation this land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

GB19 – Partial Green Belt Land to North of Markyate

Description The parcel is located to the north of Markyate. It is primarily Green Belt, although there is a small non-Green Belt area. This non-Green Belt area is within the Chilterns AONB and extends to the northern edge of the study area. It is 813 ha in size and comprises a series of narrow, gently undulating chalk ridges, including the dry valleys of Markyate, in the upper Ver valley.



Land use Predominately arable farmland, plus Markyatecell Park and shooting ground.

View to east towards M1 shows that motorway is visible.



View to northwest towards Markyate displays strong open and rural characteristics.



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards checking sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Markyatecell Park and Markyate. Partial contribution towards preventing merging and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB19 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel is located south of Luton and Dunstable and forms a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to the north to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it contributes with GB16B & 18 to separate Hemel Hempstead and Luton and Dunstable (to the north of the study area in Bedfordshire). The gap is 10km in total, and mainly covered by the Chilterns AONB to the north and therefore contains limited built development. Any reduction in the gap would not compromise the separation of existing 1 st tier settlements in physical terms but would be likely to reduce the overall visual openness of the parcel, which does not directly adjoin 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open arable farmland with large scale fields bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. It also contains the estate parkland of Markyate Park, and pasture and horticulture uses are located close to settlements, predominantly on the ridges. A small area of the parcel is within the Chilterns AONB, which restricts development. There are limited urban features and no significant encroachment apart from intermittent ribbon development along minor routes from Markyate. The major urban influence is the M1 which is well concealed by planting and is audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are high in general.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains Markyatecell Park HPG dating back to 1145 and adjoins Markyate Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		PARTIAL
The parcel contributes to separation of Markyate (2 nd) and Caddington and Slip End (in Central Bedfordshire to the north of the study area). These local gaps are 2.2km and 2.4km respectively and contain limited ribbon development on routes extending to the northeast and southeast from Markyate. Any small scale reduction in the gaps would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms or overall visual openness.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

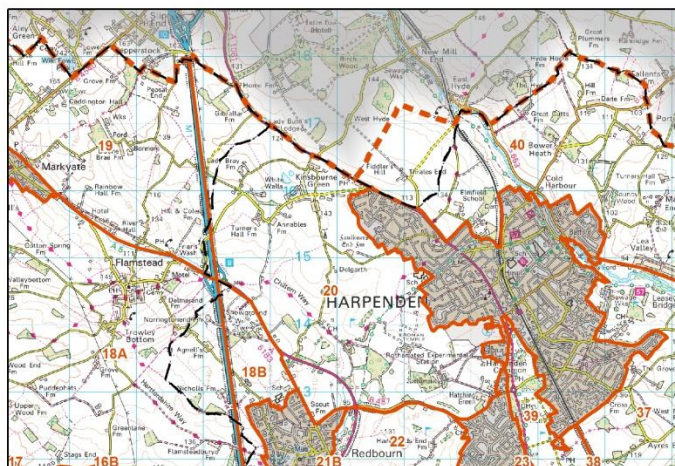
Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There is some ribbon development adjacent to the Roman Watling Street A5 / Ver valley.

Visual Openness Within the parcel views are framed and filtered by landform and overgrown hedgerows and woodland belts.

Countryside Character The parcel has a rural character but the busy A5 and M1 corridors add strong urban influences.

GB20 –Green Belt Land to West of Harpenden

Description The parcel is located to the west of Harpenden, extending to the north edge of the study area and partly to the M1 to the west. It is 1,150 ha in size and covers a long linear plateau which slopes gently away in two directions from Kinsbourne Green, forming the upper slopes of valleys to the northeast and to the southwest. The central area is mainly flat with slight undulations while the area to the south has more marked undulations.



Land use Predominantly arable agricultural, plus recreational activities and research facilities including Rothamsted estate and park, rugby club, tennis club and hotel.

Falconers Field displays greater sense of enclosure



View to southeast from Watery Lane along M1



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards checking sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, preserving the setting of Harpenden and Redbourn, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB20 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel is located south of Luton and Dunstable and forms a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to the north to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays a wide mix of urban fringe and rural and countryside characteristics. It predominantly contains large arable fields with hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees, and to the north there is mixed arable and pasture farmland around the rough grassland of the open Kinsbourne Green common. The central part of the parcel exhibits some urban influences including the Rothamsted Agricultural Experimental Station comprising a large manor house and parkland, surrounded by small, geometric, field plots (created for crop experiments). Notably, the west edge of Harpenden exhibits more localised levels of built enclosure as a result of surrounding residential development. There is also evidence of encroachment as recent housing development in the Green Belt is evident at Geescroft Walk and Meadow View, and encroachment at Hatching Green. The M1 also represents a key urban influence on the parcel and is less well concealed but audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are high in general but vary throughout the parcel.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel adjoins Harpenden and Redbourn Conservation Areas. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides the primary local gap to separate Harpenden (1 st) and Redbourn (2 nd). This large at 2.0k m and is largely open however it does contain the Experimental Station. Any reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall openness. The parcel also provides a very narrow secondary local gap between Harpenden and Annables Kinsbourne Green (3 rd) which represents ribbon development extending from the northwest of Harpenden along The Common. Any reduction in this gap would compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, and affect overall levels of visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.5%. Kinsbourne Green represents a wayside development of large single dwellings along the edge of a common with no real centre.

Visual Openness Views are generally framed and filtered by treed hedgerows. The central Rothamsted Park area is concealed by a combination of access restrictions and the presence of vegetation in the form of field hedgerows and parkland avenues. Lower and partial hedgerows to the north of this area, around Kinsbourne Green, allow longer views of the more open landscape.

Countryside Character The parcel has a rural character but there are recreational uses such as schools, a rugby club and golf courses adjacent to the urban fringe as well as the busy M1 corridor to the west.

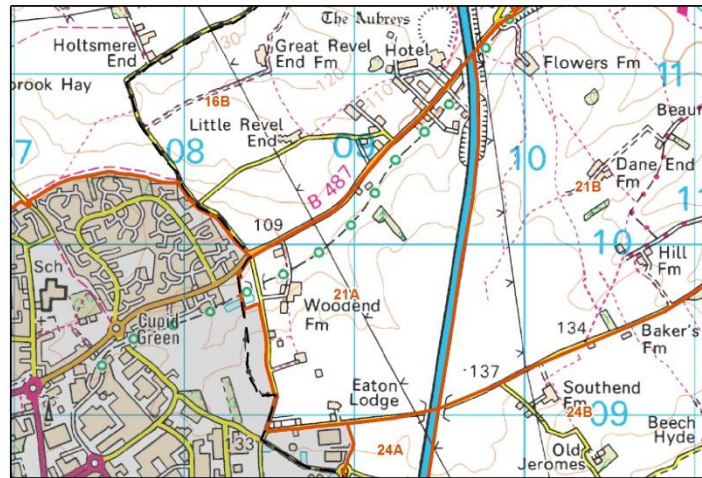
GB20 – Next Steps

Land at west of Harpenden is recommended for further assessment as a small-scale sub area (SA-SS4). The sub-area is located south of Falconers Field and north of Roundwood Park School. Assessed in isolation this land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

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GB21A –Green Belt Land to the Northeast of Hemel Hempstead

Description The parcel is Green Belt land located to the northeast of Hemel Hempstead. It extends from the northeast edge of Hemel Hempstead to the M1. It is 175ha and comprises undulating chalk slopes with a clay soil. The landform gradually flattens to the south of the parcel.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland.

View to East towards M1 from edge of Hemel Hempstead shows concealed nature of M1



View to northwest along M1



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden) and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn). Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 out of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB21A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas and does not form a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
Parcel does not fully separate 1 st tier settlements however it does form part of a network of parcels with GB21B & 22 to provide a strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden. There is no evidence of ribbon development. Any small scale reduction in the gap across the parcel would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, but would reduce levels of openness across the parcel.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open arable farmland and punctuated by a small quantity of deciduous tree belts. Fields are generally arable and medium sized, bound by high mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees. There are very limited urban influences / built development and no evidence of significant encroachment. The M1 represents the main urban influence and interrupts the parcel's integration with the wider countryside. This strong physical feature is relatively well concealed by planting but is audibly intrusive. The east urban edge of Hemel Hempstead is partly undeveloped. Cherry Tree Lane contains a caravan park and land allocated for housing development. Levels of visual openness are high mainly due to the absence of built development and countryside characteristics are dominant.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not contain any Conservation Areas but does contain a SAM at The Aubreys.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		PARTIAL
The parcel helps provide the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead (1 st) and Redbourn (2 nd) with GB21B. The gap between settlements is 2.2km. It is large and well maintained (relatively free of development), and contains the M1 which is well concealed by landscape planting and is visually, reasonably well integrated into the countryside. The parcel is highly visible from the M1 and the gap between settlements is clear from the Hemel Hempstead Road. There is no evidence of ribbon development. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements but would reduce visual openness of the parcel.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development Levels of built development are low at 0.4%. The parcel contains little built development, apart from the M1 motorway, despite its proximity to the edge of Hemel Hempstead.

Visual Openness The landform and open fields allow for long distance views from many locations, and these views give the parcel an open visual character. The prevalence of roadside trees results in views from the neighbouring residential area of Hemel Hempstead being mostly contained by vegetation.

Countryside Character The parcel is bound by the urban edge of Hemel Hempstead and the M1 motorway and their proximity increases the parcel's urban edge character. However, within the parcel there is little through traffic on the roads and the area has a remote and unvisited nature.

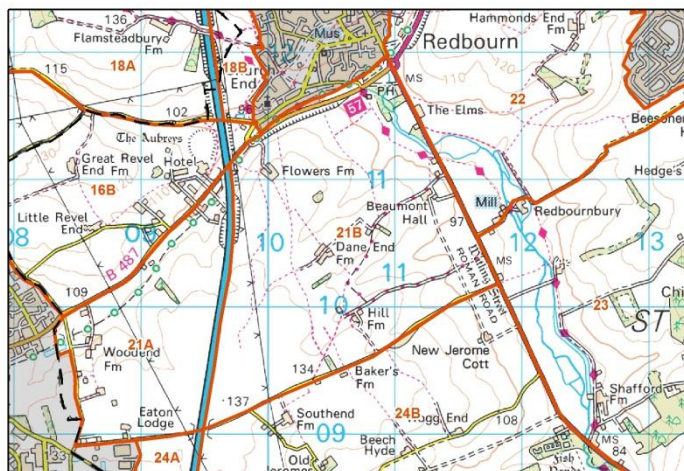
GB21A – Next Steps

Land enclosed by east Hemel Hempstead and M1 in GB21A & GB24A is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (SA-S1). In light of the functions of the strategic parcels the strategic sub-area identified are relatively free of built development and represent open landscapes, which are however interrupted by the M1. Urban influences are strong as the sub-areas are enclosed by clear and visually prominent physical settlement edges including commercial and industrial development at Hemel Hempstead, especially to the south, as well as the M1 which disrupts the character of the countryside. Therefore, a reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the primary functions of the Green Belt or the separation of existing settlements. This is particularly the case because the gap between Hemel Hempstead and St Albans is relatively wide at 3.8km and is generally not compromised by existing built development or other urbanising uses and features, apart from the M1. This land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl or preserving setting.

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GB21B –Green Belt Land to South of Redbourn

Description The parcel is Green Belt land located to the south of Redbourn. It is bounded to the west by the M1 and to the east by St Albans Road / Redbourn Road (A5183). It is 382ha in size and comprises undulating chalk slopes which fall to two dry valley tributaries to the River Ver, which runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the parcel, with its wooded valley touching the north western corner.



Land use Predominately arable farmland.

View to northwest into the parcel



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden) and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn). Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 out of the 5 purposes.

GB21B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment	Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas and does not form a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	PARTIAL
Parcel does not fully separate 1 st tier settlements, however it does form part of a network of parcels with GB21A and GB22 to provide a strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden. There is no evidence of ribbon development. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms or overall visual openness.	
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open undulating arable farmland. Fields are generally large to medium-scale and are bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees and occasional tree belts. There are very limited urban influences / built development. The M1 is the main urban influence which is visually and audibly intrusive. The southern edge of Redbourn is strong and linear. In general the parcel displays high levels of visual openness.	
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel adjoins Redbourn Conservation Area. However due to landscape features and planting there is limited visual connection to the Green Belt.	
To maintain existing settlement pattern	PARTIAL
The parcel helps to provide the primary local gap to separate Hemel Hempstead (1 st) and Redbourn (2 nd) with GB21A. This gap is 2.1km and is large and well-maintained. It is also aided by the M1 however due to the relatively concealed visual nature of the motorway landscape feature and planting contribute to providing the gap. The parcel is also highly visible from the M1 and the gap between settlements is clear from the Hemel Hempstead Road. Due to the scale and nature of the gap, any small scale reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements or overall visual openness.	

Level of openness and countryside character

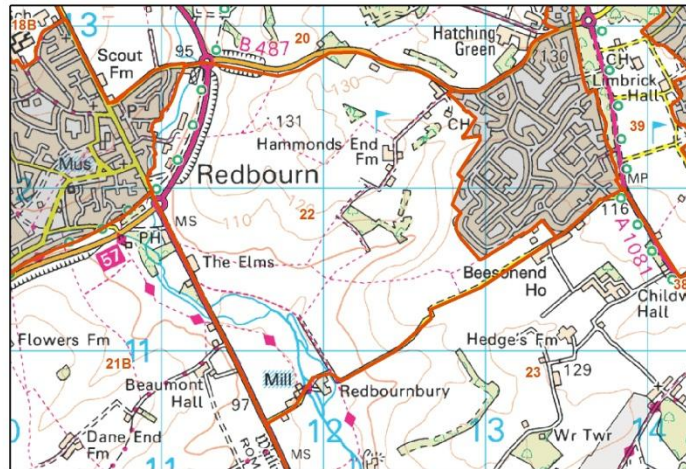
Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. The parcel contains little built development apart from the M1 motorway and a wireless mast at Punchbowl Lane.

Visual Openness The rolling landform and open fields allow for long distance views from many locations and these views give the parcel a very open visual character.

Countryside Character The parcel is bound by the M1 motorway and its proximity increases the parcel's urban influence. However within the parcel, settlement comprises only scattered farmsteads, with little through traffic on the roads and thus the area has a remote and unvisited nature.

GB22 –Green Belt Land to East of Redbourn

Description The parcel is Green Belt land located to the east of Redbourn and extends to the western edge of the south of Harpenden. It is bordered to the west by St Albans Road / Redbourn Road (A5183). It is 330ha in size and forms part of a larger block of countryside between first tier settlements (Hemel Hempstead, Harpenden and St Albans). It comprises undulating chalk slopes which fall to the River Ver which runs to the west of the parcel.



Land use Predominately arable farmland, plus Harpenden golf course.

View to southeast from southeast edge of Redbourn



View to northwest along Beesonend Lane towards Harpenden



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Harpenden and Redbourn). Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden) and preserving the setting of Redbourn. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 2 out of 5 purposes.

GB22 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas and is not connected to a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl. .		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
Parcel does not fully separate 1 st tier settlements. However, it does form part of a network of parcels with GB21A and GB21B to provide a strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden. There is no evidence of ribbon development and no limited visual perception from major route corridors. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms or overall visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open undulating arable farmland. Fields vary in scale and are bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees and occasional tree belts. Smaller fields along the valley floor are used for pasture and cattle graze the river banks to the south of Redbourn. There some limited urbanising influences, especially from the golf course, though this is a course that is well integrated into a countryside landscape. There is no urban encroachment. The Harpenden south western urban edge provides a strong settlement boundary. However some land at settlement edges is more enclosed due to localised landscape features / hedgerows and is bound by urban development land, such as at Beesonend Lane. Levels of visual openness are generally high throughout the parcel.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel adjoins Redbourn Conservation Area. However the visual connection is partial due to development along the eastern edge of the settlement. It also contributes to setting of Harpenden Conservation Area which is part of adjoining GB23.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
Significant contribution. The parcel provides a strategic gap between Harpenden (1 st) and Redbourn (2 nd). This gap is 2.0km and is well maintained (relatively free of development). Given the scale and nature of the gap, any small scale reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements or overall visual openness.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. The parcel contains very little built development.

Visual Openness The open slope character permits extensive views across the arable landscape resulting in a visual unity in the area. Hedgerows that border the lanes are located high on steep banks, preventing views to and from many lanes.

Countryside Character A rural landscape which is relatively remote despite its proximity to urban centres and the influence of golf. There are few urban influences.

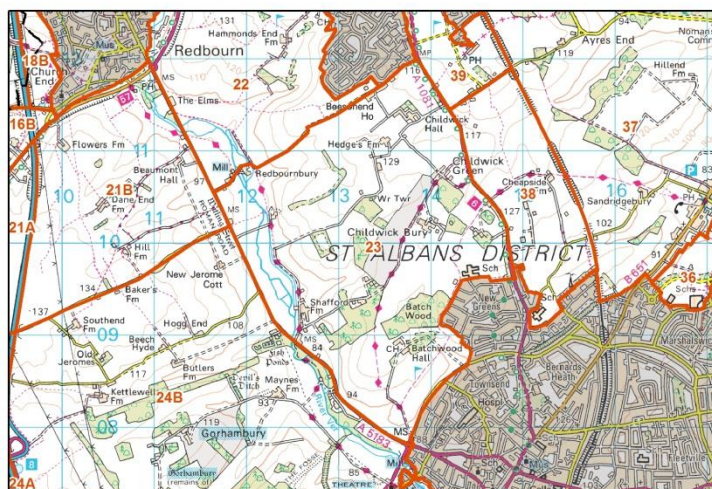
GB22 – Next Steps

Two small scale sub-areas are recommended for further assessment. Firstly, Land at southeast edge of Redbourn enclosed by A5183 (SA-SS3) when assessed in isolation this land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps. Secondly, Land south of Harpenden enclosed by Beesonend Lane to the south and settlement edge to the north and east (SA-SS5) when assessed in isolation the land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

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GB23 –Green Belt Land to Southwest of Harpenden

Description The parcel is Green Belt land located to the southwest of Harpenden and extends to the northern edge of St Albans. It is bordered to the west by the A5183 and the east by the A1081. It is 737 ha in size and lies on the elevated plateau east of the Ver Valley. The area is mainly flat with some minor local variations in landform



Land use Predominantly grassland but with some substantial woodland. Includes, estate parkland, Toulmin Drive Sports Club and Batchwood Golf and Tennis Centre.

View to southeast from Redbourn Road



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Harpenden), safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Childwickbury and Shafford Mill. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB23 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas and does not form a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides the strategic gap between St Albans and Harpenden. The gap is 2.4km. It is large, open and well maintained (relatively free of development) and contains Childwickbury and Shafford Mill Conservation Areas. The perception of the gap is strong along the A1081. .Given its scale and nature any reduction in gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or the overall openness of the parcel. There is no evidence of ribbon development.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in grassland / pasture on either estate parkland or within fields, interspersed by sizable areas of woodland including some ancient woodland. To the south the parkland landscape combines with deciduous woodland, ornamental grounds and recreational uses, including a golf course and school playing fields. To the north medium scale arable fields are bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. There are very limited urban features and no significant encroachment. The edge of St Albans provides a strong urban boundary. Levels of visual openness are high in general.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
Parcel contains Childwickbury and Shafford Mill Conservation Areas, and a SAM. Batchwood to the south of the parcel also provides an important viewpoint (zone of visibility) of the historic roofscape of St Albans. The parcel also contains a SAM. The Green Belt provides an immediate historic setting and direct views to and from the open countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not separate any 2 nd or 3 rd tier settlements.		

Level of openness and countryside character

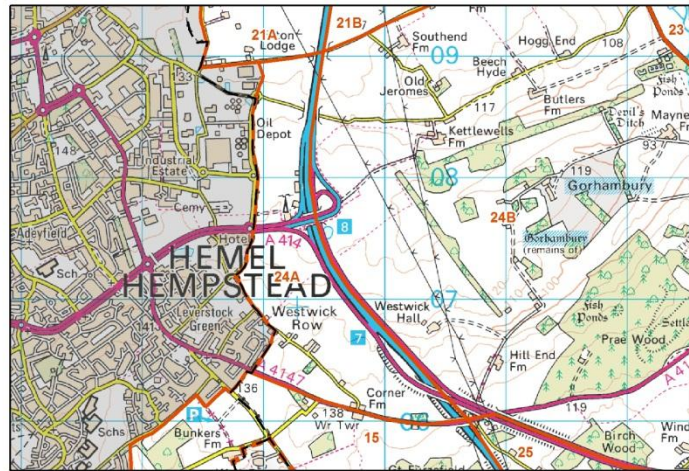
Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.5%. There is some development on the northern edge of St Albans including at Batchwood Hall / Townsend School.

Visual Openness To the south the interlocking character of the woodland, particularly on the fringes of the area, helps to create a strong sense of containment from the surrounding areas, including the northern edge of St. Albans. To the north where the enclosure is more limited there are open views to the Ver valley.

Countryside Character The area retains a generally rural and countryside character with a high quality well managed landscape. Limited semi-rural influences include a horse stud, sports grounds and waste treatment plant.

GB24A –Green Belt Land to East of Hemel Hempstead

Description The parcel is Green Belt land located to the east of Hemel Hempstead. The boundary to the west follows the M1 and to the south follows Hemel Hempstead Road (A4147). It is 217 ha in size and comprises undulating chalk slopes on the western side of the Ver Valley gradually flattening to the south. GB24 has been sub-divided along the M1 which represents a strong physical feature which interrupts the landscape.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland.

View to south along Hogg Lane towards east edge of Hemel Hempstead showing industrial edge



View to northeast from Westwick View along east edge of Hemel Hempstead showing concealed nature of M1 and impact of embankment on long-distance views



Principal Function / Summary

Partial contribution towards preventing merging of St Albans and Harpenden. It is important to note that this conclusion is drawn as a result of parcel sub-division along the M1 corridor. Overall the parcel does not significantly contribute towards any of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB24A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel contributes (with GB24B) to a strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and St Albans. The total gap is 3.8km, of which the majority is provided by GB24B. Overall the gap is large, and includes the M1 which is relatively well shielded by landscape features including planting and raised landform. There is no evidence of ribbon development. Any minor reduction in the gap, especially to the west of the M1, would not compromise the physical separation of settlements, or overall visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open arable farmland with medium sized fields bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees. There is very limited built development however urban influences are strong as the parcel is enclosed by the predominantly industrial and commercial eastern edge of Hemel Hempstead and the M1 corridor which physically interrupts the landscape and is audibly intrusive. Buffer planting along the edge of the M1 is recent and will mature, and the rising landform helps to conceal the M1 from the edge of Hemel Hempstead and restricts views to (and integration with) the wider countryside. The urban edge is strong and there is no encroachment. Levels of openness are varied and views beyond the parcel are limited due to the M1 embankment.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not separate any 2 nd or 3 rd tier settlements.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. The limited built development within the parcel includes agricultural buildings and a hotel.

Visual Openness The undulating landform gives long distance views from many locations although these are frequently filtered by intervening hedgerows and the raised M1.

Countryside Character The narrow parcel is bound by an industrial edge of Hemel Hempstead and the M1 motorway and their proximity and prominence increases the urban influence on the parcel.

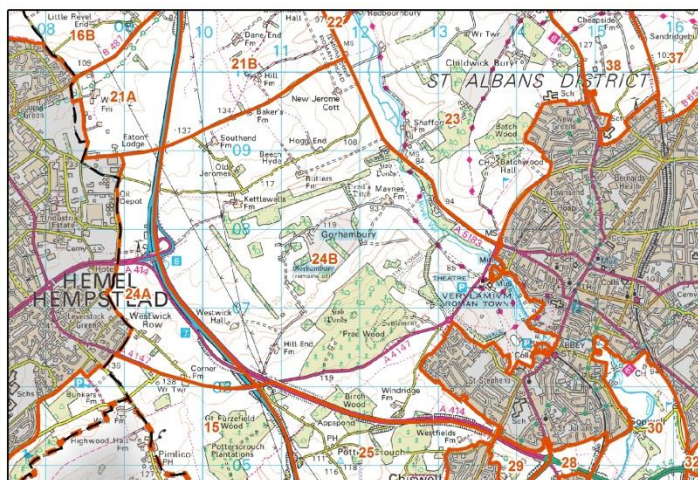
GB24A – Next Steps

Land enclosed by east Hemel Hempstead and M1 in GB24A & GB21A is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (SA-S2). In light of the functions of the strategic parcels the strategic sub-area identified are relatively free of built development and represent open landscapes, which are however interrupted by the M1. Urban influences are strong as the sub-areas are enclosed by clear and visually prominent physical settlement edges including commercial and industrial development at Hemel Hempstead, especially to the south, as well as the M1 which disrupts the character of the countryside. Therefore, a reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the primary functions of the Green Belt or the separation of existing settlements. This is particularly the case because the gap between Hemel Hempstead and St Albans is relatively wide at 3.8km and is generally not compromised by existing built development or other urbanising uses and features, apart from the M1. This land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl or preserving setting.

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GB24B –Green Belt Land to West of St Albans (Cathedral Setting)

Description The parcel is located to the west of St Albans. It is bounded to the east by M1 and to the south by the M10. It is 1372ha in size and comprises undulating ridges and dry valleys associated with the western slopes of the River Ver Valley. GB24 has been sub-divided along the M1 which represents a strong physical feature which interrupts the landscape.



Land use Mix of arable and pastoral farmland, plus Verulamium Park and Gorhambury Estate.

Green Belt setting of Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban from Verulamium Park



View to southeast showing strong open and rural characteristics



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Hemel Hempstead), safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting St Albans and St Michaels and Gorhambury estate, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 4 out of 5 purposes.

GB24B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides (with GB24A) a strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and St Albans. The total gap is 3.8km. Overall the gap is large and well maintained (relatively free of development). There is no evidence of ribbon development. Any minor reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or the overall level of visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in a mixture of arable and pasture fields bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees and interspersed with frequent woodland belts. This land encircles the large estate parkland of Gorhambury and Prae Wood ancient woodland to the south. There is very limited built development apart from farm buildings. The key urban influence is the M1 and M10 which are both audibly intrusive and the M1 in particular interrupts the landscape. Land adjoining St Albans displays some urban influence as Verulamium Park acts as a green wedge which penetrates the west of the settlement providing a link from the town centre to the open countryside. Levels of visual openness are generally very high mainly due to an absence of any form of built development.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains St Albans Conservation Area including St Michael's village and Gorhambury estate HPG. Most importantly, the Green Belt preserves an open and historic setting to the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban, providing views to and from the countryside. The parcel also contains Roman remains of Verulamium which is a SAM.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes (with GB25 & GB29) to the primary local gap between St Albans and Chiswell Green (2 nd). This narrow gap is 0.2km. It is free from significant development apart from the M10/ A414 which are intrusive at this point. There is relatively strong perception of the gap from the A414. Given the scale of the gap any minor reduction would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, and overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

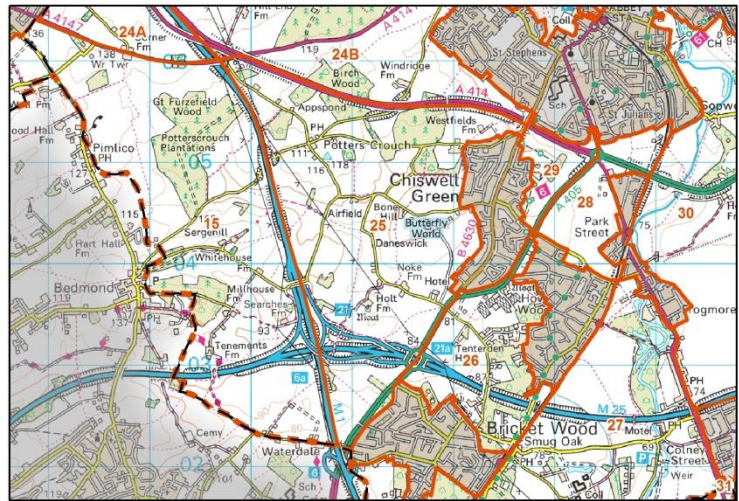
Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. There is very little development within the parcel but the M1/ M10/ represent visually and audibly intrusive features at the boundaries of the parcel.

Visual Openness The wooded nature of the parcel limits views to shorter distances creating a strong sense of containment. To the north and west of the parcel the land is more open.

Countryside Character The patchwork of agriculture, woodland and estate parkland gives a rural character to much of the landscape with electricity pylons and the M1 corridor.

GB25 –Green Belt Land to West of Chiswell Green

Description The parcel is located to the west of Chiswell Green and extends to the south to Bricket Wood. The boundary to the north follows the M10 and to the west follows the M1. It is 522ha in size and forms an undulating chalk plateau with a number of gently sloping dry valleys.



Land use Mix of arable and pastoral farmland.

View to south from A414 / B4630 towards Chiswell Green showing narrow local gap to settlement



Southwest edge of Chiswell Green displays greater sense of enclosure and proximity to urban edge



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between St Albans and Chiswell Green). Partial contribution towards preventing merging and preserving setting. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 2 out of 5 purposes.

GB25 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED / NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel contributes to the strategic gap between St Albans and Watford. It is well maintained (relatively free of development) but contains the M25 and M1. The parcel is visible from the M1. There is no ribbon development although Butterfly World represents built development in the Green Belt. However, given the relationship between the parcel and the gap between Bricket Wood and Watford / Abbots Langley any reduction in openness would compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in a mixture of arable and pasture medium sized fields bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Ancient woodland and the coniferous plantation at Park Wood are located in the north. The M25, M1 and M10 represent the key urban influences which are highly audible intrusive. Settlement boundaries are generally strong. However Butterfly World represents development in the Green Belt to the west of Chiswell Green which interrupts the connection of land at the urban edge to the surrounding countryside. Land between this development and Chiswell Green displays higher levels of localised landscape enclosure. Levels of openness are generally high but subject to variation.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel contains Potters Crouch Conservation Area. The Green Belt provides historic setting and views to and from the open countryside. However given the scale of the historic place contribution is partial.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes (with GB24B & GB29) to the primary local gap separating St Albans and Chiswell Green (2 nd). This gap is narrow at 0.2km. It is well maintained (relatively free of development) and contains the M10 / A414. However landscape features and planting conceal the main road from settlements. There is limited visibility of the gap from the A414 however is evident from the Watford Road (B4630). The parcel also helps contribute (with GB26) to the secondary local gap between Chiswell Green and Bricket Wood (2 nd). This gap is 1.1km. Given the scale of both gaps, any reduction would compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, as well as overall visual openness.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.4%. Butterfly World and the M1, and M25 represent the main built features in the parcel.

Visual Openness Wooded horizons are common to the north limiting views to the middle distance. Whilst to the east, the west built edge of Chiswell Green is prominent and outward views are interrupted.

Countryside Character The historic agricultural land use pattern and countryside character is intact in some parts of the parcel but in others has been interrupted by the network of roads and junctions and built development including Butterfly World.

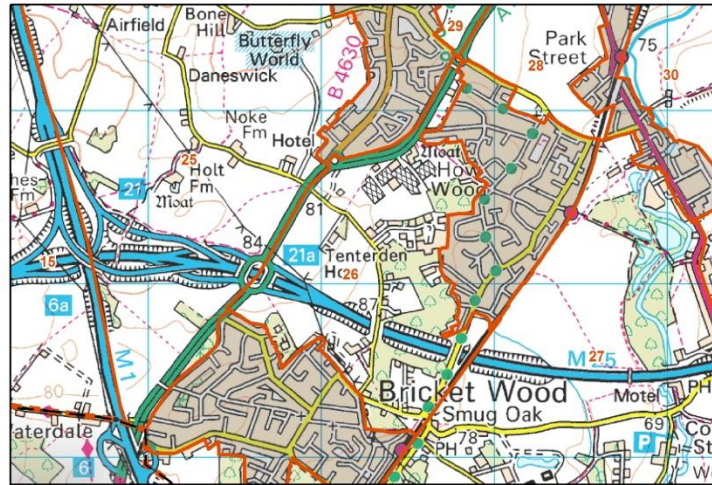
GB25 – Next Steps

Enclosed land at Chiswell Green Lane at Chiswell Green is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (SA-S8). In light of the function of the strategic parcel, the sub-area identified on pasture land at Chiswell Green Lane displays urban fringe characteristics due to its proximity to the settlement edge and Butterfly World along Miriam Road to the west. This development bounds the outer extent of the pasture land and creates a physical barrier to the open countryside. The pasture land also displays greater levels of landscape enclosure due to localised planting along field boundaries. This creates potential to integrate development into the landscape with lower impact on views from the wider countryside and surroundings. At the strategic level, a reduction in the size of the parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements. Assessed in isolation the land makes a limited or no contribution towards all Green Belt purposes.

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GB26 –Green Belt Land to North of Bricket Wood

Description The parcel is located to the north of Bricket Wood and the south of Chiswell Green / How Wood. The boundary to the west follows the North Orbital Road (A405) and to the east follows the railway line. The parcel is very small at 156 ha and comprises a gently undulating chalk plateau rising gently to the southeast.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland, plus inactive, unrestored, tipped areas, education, industrial, horticultural uses, Bricket Wood Sports and Country Club and Burston Garden Centre.

Land northeast of Bricket Wood showing enclosed and neglected characteristics



Narrow enclosed Green Belt gap between Chiswell Green and How Wood



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gaps between Chiswell Green, How Wood and Bricket Wood). Partial contribution towards preventing merging. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB26 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment	Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements however (with GB27, 28, 29 & 30) it provides the strategic gap between St Albans and Watford (Abbots Langley) to the south of the study area. This gap is 4.8km and contains the settlements of Chiswell Green, How Wood, Bricket Wood, Park Street / Frogmore and Radlett Road. Therefore any reduction in the gap would have a limited impact on the overall separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms but would have a greater impact on 2 nd tier settlements and local levels of visual openness.	
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	LIMITED OR NO
Partial contribution. The parcel displays a mix of urban and rural characteristics. It contains arable land often bound by tall poorly managed hedgerows and there are a few pasture fields in addition to woodland to the east including ancient woodland. Open scrubland is found on the tipped site to the north of the M25. There is scattered built development including the garden centre, and single large dwellings. The M25 is also a key urban influence which dissects the parcel and is predominantly well concealed by planting but is highly audibly intrusive. Therefore urban influences are evident and the mix of built activities results in variable levels of visual openness.	
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.	
To maintain existing settlement pattern	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides secondary local gaps between 2 nd tier settlements of Chiswell Green, How Wood and Bricket Wood. The gap between Chiswell Green and How Wood is extremely narrow at 0.1km, whereby at the north and south edges of the settlements it is the width of the North Orbital Road (A405). The central section of this gap acts as a green finger between settlements. The secondary local gap between Chiswell Green / How Wood to Bricket Wood ranges from 0.6km to 1km and contains the M25. There is limited perception of the gap or settlements from the M25 due to planting and tree cover which screens the motorway. The motorway corridor itself also contributes something to the general openness of the gap from other viewpoints within it. Any small scale reduction in the gaps would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, as well as overall visual openness.	

Level of openness and countryside character

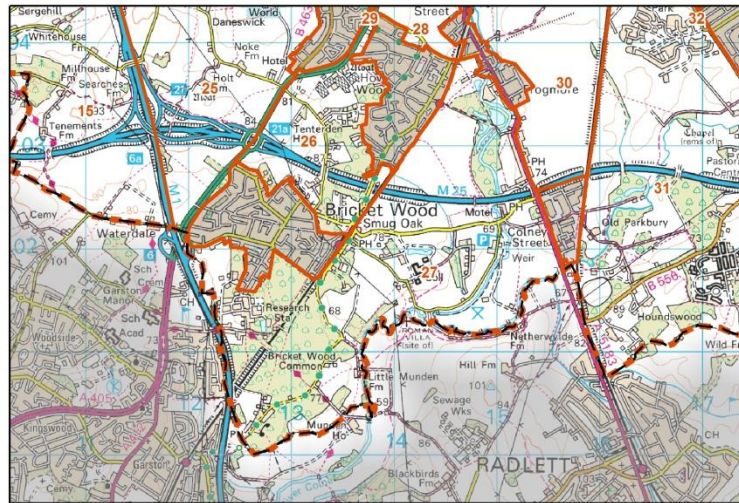
Existence of built development The level of built development is very high at 2.2%. The area has undergone significant change in the 20th century and contains built development especially in the north of the parcel at urban edges in addition to the M25.

Visual Openness Views are relatively contained both from outside and within the parcel with the widest vistas along the motorway corridor which is generally well screened by planting and woodland.

Countryside Character Contains a mix of land uses, displays urban fringe characteristics and woodland. The countryside has been eroded by built uses and exhibits some areas of poor management and dereliction.

GB27 –Green Belt Land to South of How Wood

Description The parcel is located to the south of How Wood / Bricket Wood. It is bounded to the west by the railway line along the edge of How Wood and Bricket Wood only whereas the east edge is contiguous with Frogmore and Radlett Road. To the south the boundary follows the M1 and edge of the study area. The parcel is 580 ha in size forming a gently undulating chalk plateau which falls to the meandering river Colne valley.



Land use Mix of arable and pasture farmland, plus Training College, Research Centre and recreational activities.

View to west of Colney Street



River Ver along Drop Lane



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing the gap between Bricket Wood and Watford – Abbots Langley). Partial contribution towards preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside and preserving setting. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB27 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		NO OR LIMITED
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it contributes (with GB26, 28, 29 & 30) to the strategic gap between St Albans and Watford (Abbots Langley) in the south of the study area. This gap is 4.8km and contains the settlements of Chiswell Green, How Wood, Bricket Wood, Park Street / Frogmore and Radlett Road. Any small scale reduction in the gap would have a limited impact on the overall separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms but would have a greater impact on 2 nd tier settlements and local levels of visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics to the north in a mixture of arable and pasture fields bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees and riparian corridor following the Colne Valley. To the south, Bricket Wood Common (SSSI) contains lowland heath and ancient woodland. The main urban influence is the M25 which interrupts the landscape and is audibly intrusive. Built development and encroachment is evident in the south which displays more built development in the Green Belt. Most significantly, the BRE Research Centre represents encroachment. Other development is scattered to the south of the M25 which is also bordered by Colney Street industrial area and ribbon development is evident along the Radlett Road south of Park Street / Frogmore. Levels of visual openness are varied due to the mix of strong countryside and urban fringe characteristics.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel contains Old Bricket Wood Conservation Area. The Green Belt provides an immediate historic setting and short views into the countryside especially to Bricket Wood Common.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
Most significantly, the parcel provides the primary local gap between Bricket Wood (2 nd) and Watford (Abbots Langley) in Watford Borough Council / Three Rivers District to the south of the study area. This gap is very narrow at 0.5km and contains the BRE Research Centre and M1, which is concealed by planting. Due to existing development in the gap, any further reduction in the gap would compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms as well as local levels of visual openness. The parcel also provides the secondary local gap to separate How Wood (2 nd) and Park Street / Frogmore (2 nd). This gap is also very narrow and ranges from 0.1km to 0.3km. The secondary local gap from Park Street / Frogmore (2 nd) to Radlett Road (3 rd) is subject to ribbon development along the Radlett Road. Due to the scale and nature of gaps any small scale reduction would compromise the separation of settlements and visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is high at 1.2%. The M25 divides the parcel and substantial built development is located at the BRE Research centre to the south of Bricket Wood in addition to Hanstead House former training complex

Visual Openness Views are relatively contained both from outside and within the parcel due to the scale of the

parcel and level of built development within the parcel

Countryside Character The parcel is impacted by settlement and also has been dissected by the M25, both of which add semi urban influences. The countryside and historic character is well preserved in Bricket Wood Common and in areas adjacent to the Colne valley.

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GB28 –Green Belt Land to North of How Wood

Description The Parcel is located to the north of How Wood and south of St Albans. The boundary to the west follows the A405 and the east aligns with the railway line to the north of Park Street. The parcel is small at 83 ha in size and comprises an undulating chalk plateau which is flat to the south and rises gently to the northeast.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland.

Narrow gap between Park Street / Frogmore and How Wood



Non-Green Belt land at Tippendell Lane represents an anomaly in the boundary



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gaps between St Albans and Park Street / Frogmore and How Wood). Partial contribution towards preventing merging and safeguarding the countryside. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 1 of the 5 purposes.

GB28 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements however it contributes (with GB26, 27, 29 &) to the strategic gap between St Albans and Watford (Abbots Langley) to the south of the study area. This gap is 4.8km and contains the settlements of Chiswell Green, How Wood, Bricket Wood, Park Street / Frogmore and Radlett Road. Therefore any reduction in the gap would have a limited impact on the overall separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms but would have a significant impact on the separation between 1 st and 2 nd tier settlements and local levels of visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays some typical rural and countryside characteristics to the north in a mixture of arable fields bound by hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees interspersed with some small blocks of woodland, whereas to the south pasture fields are enclosed with fencing. In spite of this, urban influences are strong through the proximity of settlement edges and A414 and A405 which run through the parcel. These are concealed by the general landscape and tree / hedgerow cover in some areas but are audibly intrusive. Settlement boundaries enclose the majority of the parcel reinforcing urban fringe characteristics. Levels of visual openness are variable and generally contained		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides primary local gaps between St Albans and Park Street / Frogmore (2 nd) and How Wood (2 nd). Gaps are 0.4km and 1.1km respectively. Both gaps are narrow, especially to Park Street / Frogmore. In spite of containing the A414/A405 these major roads are well integrated into the landscape and are concealed to provide a limited perception of the gap or settlements from the routes. The gaps are well-maintained and any reduction would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, and overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.1%. The A414 and A405 dissect the parcel and an electricity substation and travellers site are also present.

Visual Openness Views are relatively contained by hedgerows both from outside and within the parcel.

Countryside Character The parcel is bounded by settlement, divided by the A414 and A405 and has areas of horse paddocks and an electricity substation which all add semi urban influences.

GB28 – Next Steps

Land north of How Wood is recommended for further assessment as a small scale sub-area (SA-SS6). The sub-area is enclosed by Tippendell Lane to north and settlement edge to south, east and west. Assessed in isolation this very small area of makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

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GB29 –Green Belt Land to North of Chiswell Green (South of St Albans)

Description The parcel is located to the north of Chiswell Green, and south of St Albans. The boundary to the east follows A405 and the west aligns with the Watford Road (B4630). It is small at 42 ha in size and is part of a chalk plateau which is flat to the north of the parcel and gradually falls to the A414 in the north.



Land use Predominantly open land including Greenwood Park, and education and recreational space.

Greenwood Park recreation ground towards concealed A414



Narrow primary local gap between St Albans and Chiswell Green, showing the concealed A414



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing the gap between St Albans and Chiswell Green). Partial contribution towards preventing merging. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB29 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements, however it contributes (with GB26, 27, 28 & 30) to the strategic gap between St Albans and Watford (Abbots Langley) to the south of the study area. This gap is 4.8km and contains the settlements of Chiswell Green, How Wood, Bricket Wood, Park Street / Frogmore and Radlett Road. Therefore any small scale reduction in the gap would have a limited impact on the overall separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms but would have a significant impact on separation between 1 st and 2 nd tier settlements and local levels of visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in Greenwood Park which comprises open land and scattered ancient woodland to the north and playing fields and sports pitches to the south. The main urban influence is the A414 which is partly concealed but audibly intrusive. Settlement boundaries are strong and there is no significant built development into the Green Belt. Levels of openness are generally high.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes with GB 24B & GB29 to provide the primary local gap separating St Albans and Chiswell Green (2 nd). This narrow gap is 0.2km. It is well maintained (relatively free of development), and contains the A414 which is integrated and concealed within the landscape. Though narrow the gap has a significant impact on perceptions of urbanisation. The narrow gap is evident from the Watford Road (B4630). Any reduction would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, and overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

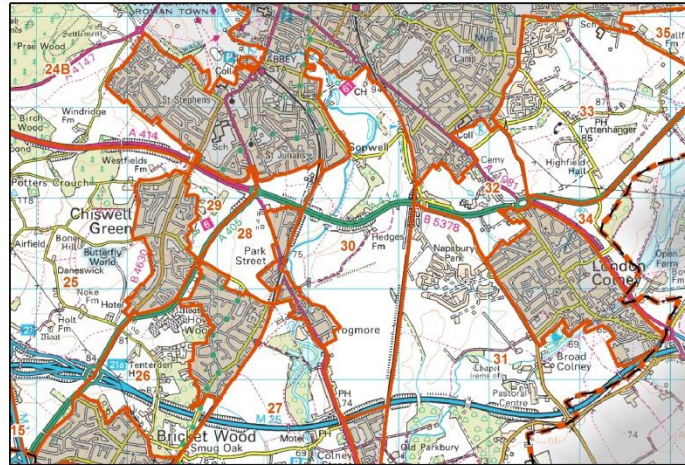
Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.8%. The A414 bounds the parcel to the north, with built development related to the sports facilities and community centre at Greenwood Park.

Visual Openness Open views are obtained from the sloping open land to the north of the parcel. The southern part of the park is relatively contained both from outside and within the area.

Countryside Character Non countryside influences include the busy major roads and recreational activities with Greenwood Park.

GB30 –Green Belt Land to East of Park Street / Frogmore

Description The parcel is located to the east of Park Street / Frogmore and south of St Albans. The boundary to the west follows Radlett Road and to the east aligns with the railway line. It is 347ha in size and follows the River Ver to its confluence with the River Colne forming a meandering floodplain with a broad shallow basin.



Land use Mix of arable farmland and Sopwell estate parkland, plus Watercress Wildlife Association and Verulam Golf Course.

View to Cathedral and Abbey Church of Saint Alban from green wedge north of Sopwell



Park Street / Frogmore ribbon development



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of Sopwell and St Albans, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gaps between St Albans and Park Street / Frogmore). Partial contribution towards preventing merging. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 3 of the 5 purposes.

GB30 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED / NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements however it contributes (with GB26, 27, 28 & 29) to the strategic gap between St Albans and Watford (Abbots Langley) to the south of the study area. This gap is 4.8km and contains the settlements of Chiswell Green, How Wood, Bricket Wood, Park Street / Frogmore and Radlett Road. Therefore any reduction in the gap would have a limited impact on the overall separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms but would have a greater impact on the separation of 2 nd tier settlements and local levels of visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays some typical rural and countryside characteristics but also accommodates significant recreational land uses including Sopwell parkland and Verulam golf course in the north. Beyond this arable fields are bound by hedgerows with pasture frequently close to the watercourses. The parcel is also contains the well restored mineral workings (Radlett Airfield). The main urban influences are the M25 and A414 which dissect the site. Both are well concealed in the landscape, but highly audibly intrusive. Land to the north of Sopwell acts as a green wedge into St Albans. There is limited built development and settlement boundaries are generally strong meaning the urban fringe is well connected to the wider countryside. However there is ribbon development along the Radlett Road south of Park Street / Frogmore to Colney Street industrial park. The countryside landscape is generally open in character with limited tree and hedgerow cover.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains Sopwell Conservation area. Most significantly it also provides open and historic setting to the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides the primary local gap between St Albans and Park Street / Frogmore (2 nd). The narrow gap is 0.4km and contains the A414 which is well integrated into the landscape. Landscape features and planting enhance the perception of the gap and lessen the urban influence arising from the proximity of settlements and the road. Any reduction would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, and overall visual openness. The gap from Park Street / Frogmore (2 nd) to Radlett Road (3 rd) Colney Street industrial area is very limited due to ribbon development along the Radlett Road.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.5%. The parcel is divided by the M25 and affected by the A414. There is some ribbon development along the radial routes out of St Albans.

Visual Openness Long views are obtained across the relatively flat and open landscape from many locations although views are limited in wooded areas particularly in the south of the parcel and in some locations along the river corridors.

Countryside Character A mosaic of settlements, parkland, farmland and a meandering floodplain grazed by livestock contribute to a settled countryside character.

GB31 –Green Belt Land South of London Colney

Description The parcel is located to the south and west of London Colney where the southern boundary extends to the edge of the study area. The parcel is 613 ha in size and comprises a gently undulating landform in the north whereas the broad shallow basin of the upper River Colne is located in the south.



Land use Mix of estate parkland and farmland, plus Napsbury Park and Radlett Golf Centre.

Napsbury Park, subject to redevelopment in the Green Belt



View to northeast from M25 to southwest corner of London Colney displays open and rural characteristics



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing the gaps between London Colney, Park Street / Frogmore and Radlett Road). Partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Napsbury Park and London Colney. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB31 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it contributes (with GB 30 and GB32) to the strategic gap between St Albans and Radlett / Borhamwood which are significant settlements outside the study area. This gap is 7 km but contains the 2 nd tier settlement of London Colney. Any small scale reduction in the gap would have a limited impact on the overall separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays a mix of urban fringe and rural and countryside characteristics. There are areas of estate parkland throughout the parcel, and arable fields bound by hedgerows to the south with pasture are located close to watercourses. It also contains rough grassland with gravel pit lakes at Broad Colney nature reserve, and deciduous woodland is dominant to the south of the M25. There is evidence of urban development and encroachment throughout the parcel, especially at Napsbury Park, former hospital redeveloped for housing. Land south of the M25, which dissects the site and is audibly intrusive, also exhibits urban fringe characteristics due in particular to the presence of the Harperbury Hospital site and associated uses / activities. Therefore there is encroachment into the Green Belt. Levels of visual openness are variable throughout the parcel mainly due to the presence of built development.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel contains Napsbury Park HPG and adjoins London Colney Conservation Area. The Green Belt provides a historic setting and views to and from the countryside Though much of Napsbury Park has been redeveloped the Parkland is still an important aspect of the historic setting.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes with GB30 to the secondary local gap between London Colney (2 nd) and Park Street / Frogmore (2 nd) and Radlett Road (3 rd). Gaps are 1.9km and 1.8km respectively. The redevelopment of Napsbury Park reduces the gap which is also contains the concealed railway line which provides limited views on to the Green Belt. Any reduction in these gaps would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall visual openness.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is high at 1.5%. Napsbury Hospital has been redeveloped as a major residential settlement because its enclosed setting is distinct and not particularly apparent from the rest of the parcel. Some ribbon development exists on the B556 to the south.

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

Countryside Character The level of built development, Estate parkland and the busy M25 corridor contribute significant semi urban influences to the parcel.

GB31 – Next Steps

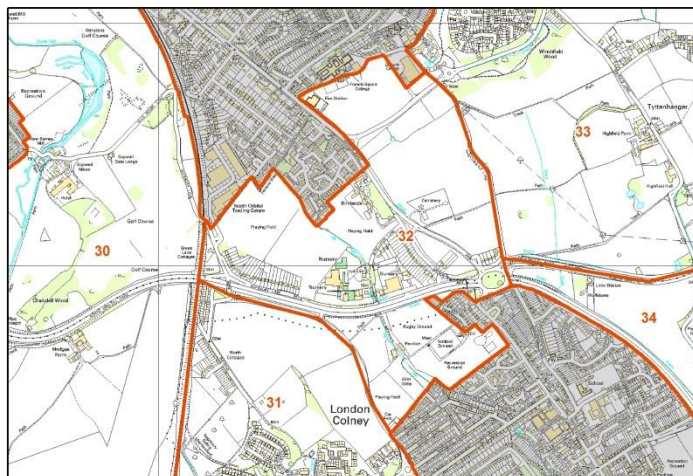
Land south and south west of London Colney is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (SA-S7). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel, the sub-area is subject to significant urbanising influence. Assessed in isolation, the sub-area to the south and south west of London Colney makes a limited or no contribution towards the primary role of the Green Belt to maintain the local gap between settlements. This is mainly because of the configuration of the urban edge in relation to adjoining Green Belt and the character of the landscape and relationship to the M25, which disrupts the countryside and acts as a major physical barrier. Given the scale and nature of the local gap, which contains the M25, a limited reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the physical separation of any settlements or primary role of the Green Belt.

Development at Napsbury Park to west of London Colney is recommended for further assessment as a potential boundary adjustment (SA-BA2). Green Belt land has been subject to substantial development and as a result this land no longer contributes towards the 5 Green Belt purposes.

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GB32 –Green Belt Land between St Albans and London Colney

Description The parcel is located to the south of St Albans and the north of London Colney. The boundary to the west follows the railway line and to the east follows Nightingale Lane. It is 101 ha in size and generally flat landform with some minor local variations.



Land use Mix of arable farmland, plus parkland, (Birklands Park), Nuffield Health Centre, garden centre retail development, numerous recreational opens spaces (Columbans Sports Ground, Verulamians Rugby Football Club, school playing fields, allotments and London Road Cemetery).

View to towards St Albans from Nightingale Lane



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards maintain the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between St Albans and London Colney). Partial contribution towards preserving the setting of Napsbury Park. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 1 of the 5 purposes.

GB32 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel displays a mix of strong urban fringe in addition to rural and countryside characteristics. Open arable fields are of medium scale bounded by hedges and hedgerow trees. There are also several recreational activities in sports fields, allotments and parkland. Evidence of built development, mainly in the form of large housing and other buildings is situated along London Road between settlements and along Napsbury Lane. The A414 also dissects the parcel and is audibly intrusive. The variety of land uses lead to an incoherent character and strong urban fringe characteristics. Levels of visual openness are therefore variable due to the presence of built development.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel adjoins Napsbury Park HPG. However this area has been subject to recent redevelopment it still represents an important historic feature..		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides the primary local gap between St Albans (1 st) and London Colney (2 nd). The gap is 0.6km. It is narrow and subject to ribbon development along and to the west of London Road. Therefore the gap is eroded which limits visual perception of the Green Belt. Any reduction would significantly compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, or overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is high at 1.7%. Built development has been undertaken at Napsbury and ribbon development has taken place on the A414 with nurseries, a garden centre and a business park.

Visual Openness Views both from outside and within the parcel are generally well screened by roadside vegetation. The extent of built development within and on the perimeter of the area is generally well concealed by vegetation.

Countryside Character There are semi urban influences throughout the parcel which is disrupted by the A414.

GB33 –Green Belt Land to Southeast of St Albans

Description The parcel adjoins the southeast edge of St Albans. It follows Nightingale Lane to the west and the North Orbital A414 and Colney Heath Lane to the east. The parcel is 317 ha in size and comprises a gently undulating landscape from the urban edge to the countryside.



Land use Mix of arable farmland, plus Highfield Park and sewage farm (disused).

Highfield Park, large scale housing development in the Green Belt



View to east from Nightingale Lane towards St Albans



Principal Function / Summary

Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Hatfield) and safeguarding the countryside. Overall the parcel does not significantly contribute to any of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB33 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it contributes with GB34, 35 and 36 towards the strategic gap between St Albans and Hatfield. As a whole, the gap contains some built development and ribbon development associated with 3 rd tier settlements in the Green Belt. Overall, any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely compromise the separation of 1 st tier settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays a mix of urban fringe uses in addition to rural and countryside characteristics. It contains medium sized arable fields with hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees and small woodland belts, plus a network of hedges, field trees and tree belts close to the settlement edge. There is large scale built development and encroachment at Highfield Park at the edge of St Albans where housing development has occurred within the Green Belt (in a parkland setting which also incorporates significant recreational areas This land displays strong urban fringe characteristics. Levels of visual openness are variable but generally high.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not separate any 2 nd or 3 rd tier settlements. However it does contribute towards providing the gap from St Albans to London Colney.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is high at 1.7%. Built development has been undertaken at Highfield Park and there is some ribbon residential development to the south of the parcel.

Visual Openness Views both from outside and within the parcel are generally well screened by landform and roadside vegetation along the narrow lanes and dual carriageways.

Countryside Character A semi-rural landscape contained by adjacent urban areas and transport routes. The A414 provides a source of noise and visual intrusion on the landscape.

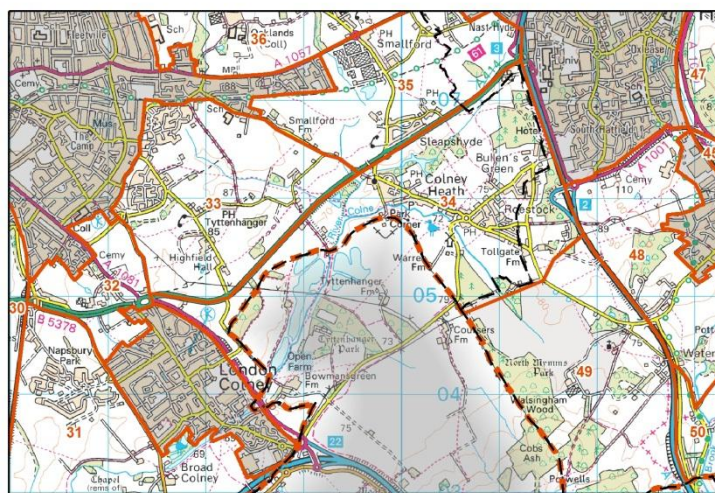
GB33 – Next Steps

Development at Highfield Park along southeast edge of St Albans is recommended for further assessment as a potential boundary adjustment (SA-BA1). Green Belt land has been subject to substantial development and as a result this land no longer contributes towards the 5 Green Belt purposes.

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GB34 –Green Belt Land between Hatfield and London Colney

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



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

Colney Heath and Bullens End narrow local gap



View to north shows strong rural and open characteristics



Principal Function / Summary

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

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

Level of openness and countryside character

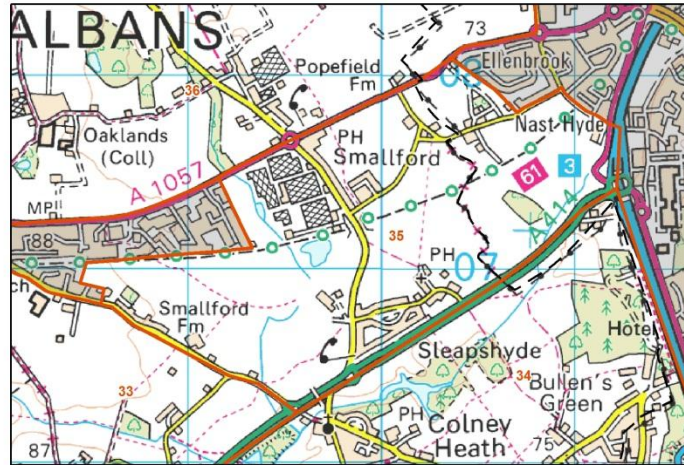
Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 1.0%. Some ribbon development has taken place especially around villages to the north and east of the parcel.

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

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

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

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



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

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



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



Principal Function / Summary

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

GB35 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides a strategic gap to separate St Albans and Hatfield. The gap is 1.2km and has been subject to ribbon development extending from St Albans along the Hatfield Road including the village of Smallford and associated development including industrial and commercial activities and housing in the Green Belt. There is also ribbon development in the form of large housing along Colney Heath Lane extending southeast from St Albans, and along Wilkins Green Lane close to Ellenbrook to the west of Hatfield. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to further compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms however it would negatively impact on overall visual openness. This is because there is already relatively significant ribbon development along the Hatfield Road and therefore the perception of the gap is limited.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel displays mix of strong urban and rural and countryside characteristics due to significant encroachment. It contains medium scale arable fields with hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees, as well as areas of heath, semi natural grassland and ponds at Smallford gravel pits. However there is significant built development at Smallford, Sleepshyde and the edge of St Albans and Hatfield resulting on encroachment into open countryside. Therefore settlement boundaries display strong urban fringe characteristics. In particular, Hatfield urban edge, especially along Ellenbrook Lane and close to Great Nast Hyde House, exhibits a greater sense of localised landscape enclosure as a result of the influence of existing residential edges and development and activities in the Green Belt. Therefore levels of visual openness are mixed throughout the site due to contrasting characteristics.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		PARTIAL
The parcel contains Sleepshyde Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside. Due to scale of the feature this is noted as a partial contribution.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides primary local gaps between St Albans and Hatfield with Smallford (3 rd) and Sleepshyde (3 rd). Both gaps are approximately 1.2km and 0.5km respectively. The gap to St Albans is especially narrow and there is limited perception of the gap and openness from the main routes due to scattered and ribbon development. Any reduction in gaps, especially to the west, would further compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, or overall visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is high at 1.1%. There is evidence of ribbon development along the A1057 Hatfield Road at Smallford, including nursery buildings as well as commercial and industrial development.

Visual Openness There is a network of hedges, field trees and tree belts to the urban areas that visually contain the largely arable character.

Countryside Character A medium scale landscape contained by adjacent urban areas and transport routes.

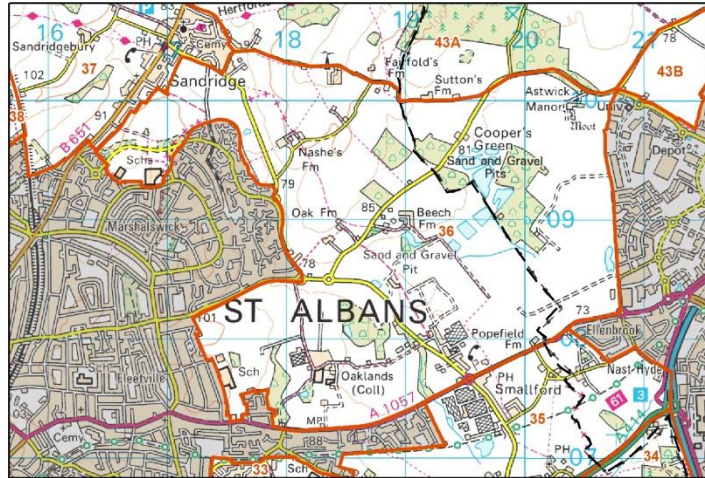
GB35 – Next Steps

Land west of Hatfield to south of Wilkins Green Lane urban edge and west of Ellenbrook Lane is recommended for further assessment as a small scale sub-area (WH-SS1). The southern extent of the sub-area runs to the cyclepath to the south of the existing play area at Ellenbrook Lane. Assessed in isolation this very small area of land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

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GB36 –Green Belt Land between St Albans and Hatfield (North)

Description The parcel is located to the east of St Albans and the west of Hatfield. The boundary to the south follows the Hatfield Road / St Albans Road West and to the north aligns with Woodcock Hill / Coopers Green Lane to Sandridge. It is 864 ha in size and forms an extensive flat clay plain, more undulating to the north.



Land use Predominately arable farmland, plus Watling Chase Community Forest, Ellenbrook Park, Hatfield Aerodrome, Oaklands College / educational campus, Home Office centre, sports centre and playing fields.

Land at House Lane displays urban influence and greater sense of enclosure



View to south from Woodcock Hill shows strong rural and open characteristics



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Hatfield), safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing the gap between St Albans and Sandridge). Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB36 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment	Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides the strategic gap to separate St Albans and Hatfield. The gap is 1.2km. It is large and generally well maintained (relatively free of development), in comparison to GB35. However it is subject to development at Oaklands College and ribbon development at Smallford. There is a strong visual perception of the Green Belt from the Hatfield Road. Any reduction in the gap, assuming it is located away from Smallford, would be unlikely to further compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall levels of visual openness.	
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large scale arable fields with hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees and is interspersed by woodland blocks with areas of ancient woodland to the north. There is a parkland landscape at Oaklands College with substantial areas of playing fields. There is evidence of urban features, especially at the former Hatfield aerodrome which is partially redeveloped with a new business park including visually dominant buildings. To the west there is a mix of urban fringe development as Oaklands College has recently been subject to expansion, representing further development in the Green Belt. The west part of the parcel, which contains development in the Green Belt, is enclosed by the St Albans settlement boundary on three edges. It therefore exhibits strongest levels of urban influence and represents a more enclosed area of land especially along Sandpit Lane and House Lane. Therefore levels of visual openness vary throughout the parcel but are high in general.	
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.	
To maintain existing settlement pattern	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes with GB37 to the primary local gap to separate St Albans and Sandridge (3 rd). This gap is narrow at 0.4km and ribbon development is evident between the settlements along St Albans Road, at Sandridge, and therefore there is limited perception of the Green Belt. Any reduction in the gap would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, or local levels of visual openness.	

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.7%. There is evidence of ribbon development on the A1057 Hatfield Road at Smallford with commercial buildings, nurseries and the large development at the Oaklands campus.

Visual Openness There is a network of hedges, field trees and tree belts that visually contain the largely arable character. Around the Oaklands and Hatfield aerodrome sites views are more open.

Countryside Character The parcel is unified by the level topography yet has a diverse mix and incoherent

pattern of uses with the semi urban campus developments dominating.

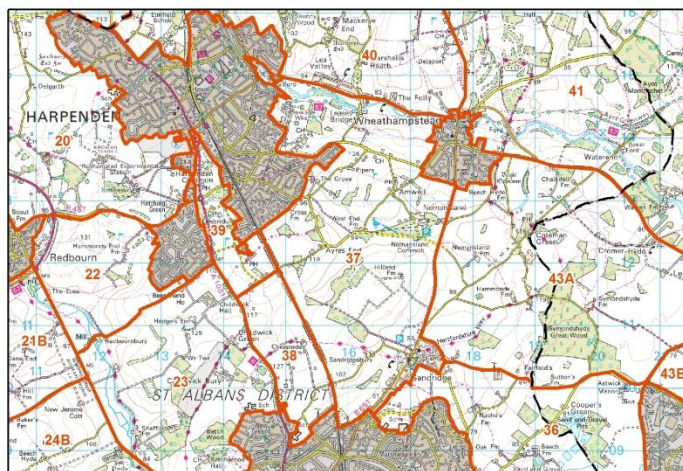
GB36 – Next Steps

Area enclosed by residential development at east St Albans along Sandpit Lane is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (SA-S3). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel, the sub-area includes a number of built uses and urbanising influences. It is a relatively open landscape. On land to the east of St Albans which penetrates into the settlement, urban influences are particularly strong and there is significant built development within the Green Belt at Oaklands College, which has recently expanded. The land along Sandpit Lane is enclosed by three urban edges and this limits the contribution of this local area to the wider Green Belt and its important role in separating settlements. A reduction in the size of the strategic parcel at the sub-area location would have a limited impact on the overall role of the Green Belt and the physical separation of settlements. It would not reduce the existing minimum distance of the gap between St Albans and Hatfield which is 1.4km. This land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preserving setting or maintaining the existing settlement pattern.

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GB37 –Green Belt Land between St Albans and Harpenden

Description The parcel is located to the north of St Albans and the southwest of Harpenden. The boundary to the west follows the railway line and the east aligns with the High Street (B651) to Wheathampstead. The boundary to the north follows the Lower Luton Road. The parcel is 1,098 ha in size and comprises an undulating landscape of plateau areas and dry valleys.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland, plus Nomansland Common, heathland and recreational activities including Aldwickbury Park golf course, Wheathampstead golf course and Wheathampstead Cricket Club.

View to northwest from north edge of Sandridge displays strong rural and open characteristics



View to south edge of Harpenden from Railway line shows how planting conceals the settlement



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Harpenden), safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of Sandridge and Amwell, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (to provide the gap between St Albans and Wheathampstead). Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 4 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB37 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes with GB38 & GB39 to the strategic gap to separate St Albans and Harpenden. The gap is large at 2.6km and is well maintained (relatively free of development). There is strong perception of the Green Belt between settlements from the railway line. Any minor reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or overall levels of visual openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large arable fields with hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees with some equestrian pasture. The Nomansland Common forms a small but distinctive area located in a dry valley and surrounded by farmland creating a sense of remoteness detached from urbanising influences. There is very limited evidence of built development except to the central west edge of Harpenden which is non-linear and adjoins sewage works, as well as ribbon development along St Albans Road to Sandridge to the south. Levels of openness are very high in general due to an absence of built development.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel includes Sandridge and Amwell Conservation Areas and is in close proximity to Old Harpenden Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate undulating open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides the primary local gap to separate St Albans and Wheathampstead (2 nd). The gap is large at 4.0km and well maintained (relatively free of development) and visible from the Wheathampstead Road / Harpenden Road. The parcel also contributes with GB36 to the primary local gap to separate St Albans and Sandridge (3 rd). This gap is narrow at 0.4km and contains ribbon development along St Albans Road and therefore there is limited perception of the gap from the road. The parcel also provides a large secondary local gap to separate Wheathampstead (2 nd) and Sandridge (3 rd). Apart from the gap between St Albans and Sandridge, any minor reduction in gaps would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, or overall visual openness.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

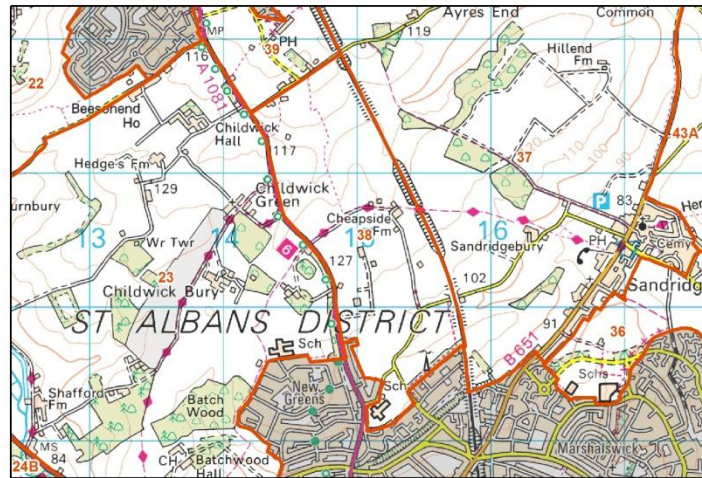
Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.6%.

Visual Openness The visual containment is aided by the prominent small and medium sized woods located on the upper reaches of the valley sides. The plateau areas are more open with large arable fields and intermittent clipped hedgerows.

Countryside Character The parcel has a rural nature with agricultural use and narrow lanes. On the fringes of the adjacent urban settlements there is a greater emphasis on semi urban recreational activities including playing fields, equestrian activity and golf.

GB38 –Green Belt Land North of St Albans

Description The parcel is located to the north of St Albans. The boundary to the north runs along Aryes End Lane. To the west the boundary follows the Harpenden Road (A1081) and to the east aligns with the railway line. It is 206 ha in size and comprises an undulating landscape of plateau areas and dry valleys.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland, plus Woollam playing fields.

View to southeast from of Woolham playing fields, displays open countryside characteristics



Land at Sandridgebury Lane exhibits a greater sense of enclosure and urban influence



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Harpenden), safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Childwickbury and Harpenden. Overall the parcel significantly contributes towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

GB38 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment	Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes (with GB37 & GB39) to the strategic separation of St Albans and Harpenden. The gap is large at 2.6km and is largely open and there is no ribbon development. There is strong perception of the Green Belt between settlements from the A1081 and railway line. Due to the scale and nature of the gap, any small scale reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or the overall openness of the parcel.	
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large regular arable fields with hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees with pasture closer to St Albans. Woollam playing fields is also located in the centre of the parcel. There is very limited evidence of development and no encroachment. The Green Belt penetrates the northern edge of St Albans and contains semi-urban uses such as the sports centre. It includes areas which exhibit a greater sense of localised landscape enclosure due to smaller field patterns and planting, which is also represents an important part of the landscape. Surrounding residential edges also increase containment in this area. Levels of visual openness are generally high but variable.	
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains Childwickbury Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.	
To maintain existing settlement pattern	LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not separate any 2 nd or 3 rd tier settlements.	

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There is limited scattered development across the parcel, comprising mainly outdoor recreational activities.

Visual Openness Despite the close proximity of a number of towns the distant and enclosing views are largely formed and framed by vegetation or landform. The parcel is visually well contained..

Countryside Character A rural character with semi urban recreational activities closer to urban areas including playing fields, equestrian activity, golf and community woodland.

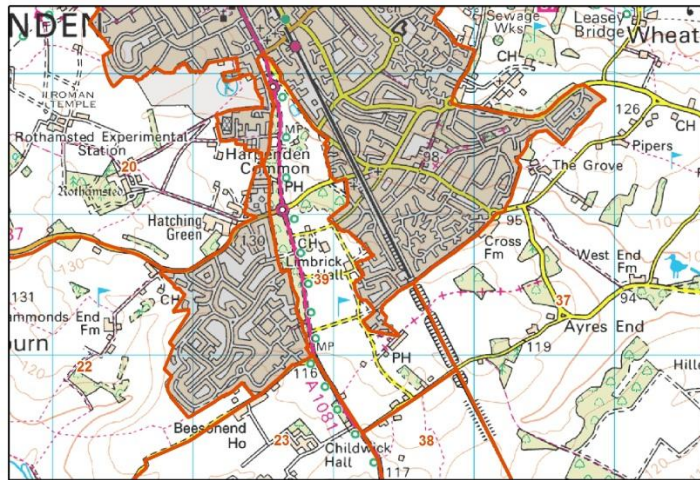
GB38 – Next Steps

Enclosed land at north St Albans along Sandbridgebury Lane is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (SA-S4). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel, the sub-area identified has relatively strong countryside characteristics as the landscape is a mix of open arable and some more enclosed areas in particular locations. However land along and around Sandbridgebury Lane penetrates into the north of St Albans to border existing development and settlement boundaries which contain it on at least two edges. This sub-area displays urban fringe characteristics and greater levels of localised landscape enclosure as a result of existing planting and field patterns and activities within the Green Belt including outdoor recreation. The small scale enclosed character of the sub-area makes it a valuable part of the countryside, but also provides screened from views from the wider strategic parcel. However, given the scale of the gap at 2.5km between St Albans and Harpenden, a reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the physical separation of settlements. This land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl or preserving setting.

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GB39 –Green Belt Land South of Harpenden

Description The parcel is located to the south of Harpenden. The boundary to the south aligns with Aryes End Lane. It is narrow and 137 ha in size and forms a shallow undulating dry valley sloping from the southeast.



Land use Predominantly grassland, plus farmland, Harpenden Common heathland and recreational activities including Harpenden Cricket Club and Golf Course.

View to north from Walkers Road of Harpenden Common, displays parkland characteristics



View to south from Harpenden, whereby the green wedge exhibits urban fringe characteristics



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of St Albans and Harpenden) and preserving the setting of Harpenden Conservation Area. Partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. Overall the parcel significantly contributes towards 2 of the 5 purposes.

GB39 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes (with GB37& GB38) to the strategic separation of St Albans and Harpenden. The gap is large at 2.6km and is well maintained (relatively free of development) by Harpenden Common which acts as a green wedge, and there is no ribbon development. There is a perception of the Green Belt between settlements from the A1081 and railway line. The parcel is relatively narrow to the north and therefore any reduction would be likely to compromise the separation of west and east Harpenden neighbourhoods in physical and visual terms, and lead to a reduction in the overall openness of the parcel. A reduction would have a limited impact on the overall strategic gap to the south.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		PARTIAL
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open rough grassland with clusters of oaks and patches of gorse. Patches of regenerated scrub woodland are interspersed besides the golf course. There is evidence of urban features due to the narrow shape of the parcel and sense of enclosure from settlement boundaries along Harpenden Common. Therefore the parcel represents a green wedge. Levels of visual openness are high mainly due to an absence of built development. However given the narrow shape of the wedge and the proximity of settlement edges, especially to the north, an urban fringe environment is created. The St Albans Road (A1081) which runs through the north part of the parcel also represents a strong urban influence. Although part of the Common is semi-wild, it is dominated by parkland characteristics which form a green wedge into central Harpenden.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains part of Harpenden Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not separate any 2 nd or 3 rd tier settlements.		

Level of openness and countryside character

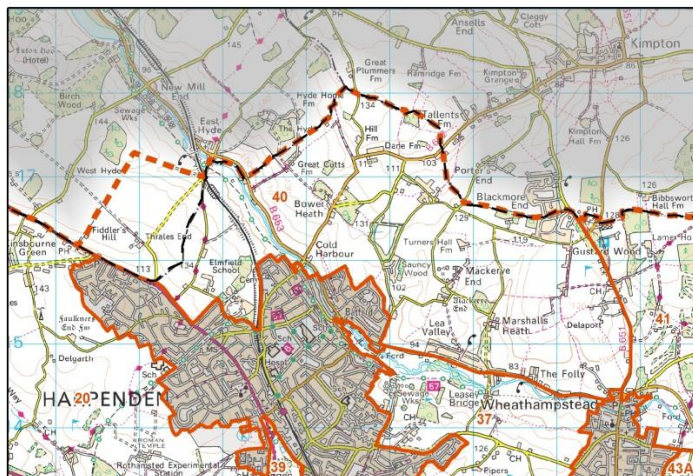
Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.3%. There has been very limited built development within the parcel.

Visual Openness To the north the parcel is more enclosed due to woodland coverage but to the south the land is very open with panoramic views to Harpenden providing a gateway and setting to the town.

Countryside Character The parcel has a semi-rural character with narrow lanes, open grassland and unmanaged copses adjacent to semi urban recreational activities, including sports fields, equestrian activity and golf courses.

GB40 –Green Belt Land North of Harpenden

Description The parcel is located to the north of Harpenden and extends to the SADC administrative boundary to the north and crosses into Central Bedfordshire to enable the assessment of the northwest edge of Harpenden. The east edge extends to Wheathampstead. It is 1,277 ha in size and forms an undulating chalk plateau which rises to either side of the enclosed narrow valley of the River Lea.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland, plus education and recreational activities including allotments, Greenacres Equestrian and Mid Herts Golf Course.

View to east from Cooters Green Lane



Land along Luton Road



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards checking sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of Harpenden, Gustard Wood and Mackerye End, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Partial contribution towards preventing merging. Overall the parcel significantly contributes towards 4 of the 5 purposes.

GB40 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel is located south of Luton and Dunstable and forms a strong connection with a wider network of parcels to the north to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements, however it contributes towards the strategic gap between Harpenden and Luton and Dunstable (in Bedfordshire to the north of the study area). The gap is 5km and largely open. Any small to medium-reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of 1 st tier settlement in physical and visual terms, and overall openness.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open arable farmland punctuated by some small blocks of mixed woodland. Large sized fields are bound by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees including small blocks of ancient woodland. The River Lea valley has a riparian habitat with water meadows; and closer to the Harpenden edge, pasture, recreational parks and estate parkland are found. There is evidence of development in the form of the villages of Lea Valley, The Folly (along Lower Luton Road) and Gustard Wood, as well as scattered built development. The north and northeast edge of Harpenden exhibits some areas with a greater sense of localised landscape enclosure and stronger urban influence due to landscape features and planting as well as proximity to the urban edge. Levels of visual openness are generally high but can be lower at settlement edges due to landscape buffering.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains Harpenden, Gustard Wood and Mackerye End Conservation Areas. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides a range of gaps between 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd tier settlements. Most significantly, it contributes with GB37 to provide the primary local gap to separate Harpenden and Wheathampstead (2 nd). The gap is 1.4km and contains punctuated ribbon development along the Lower Luton Road at Lea Valley(3 rd) and The Folly (3 rd). This reduces the perception of the Green Belt and creates a series of relatively narrow local gaps between all settlements. Therefore, any reduction in the gap would be likely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, and adversely affect local levels of openness. The parcel also provides primary local gaps of 1.7km and 3.5km from Harpenden and Wheathampstead (2 nd) to Gustard Wood (3 rd). These gaps are larger and remain mainly open. Any minor reduction would not compromise the separation of settlements or the openness of the parcel.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.7%. There is little evidence of built development within the parcel other than the small long standing settlements within the Green Belt.

Visual Openness The landform and open fields allow for long distance views from many locations and these views give the parcel an open visual character. A relative scarcity of roadside hedgerow trees, particularly to the west, results in panoramic views from more elevated locations. The Lea valley is more enclosed with narrow winding lanes and a higher percentage of tree cover.

Countryside Character The parcel comprises well established traditional open rolling farmland with the river Lea valley displaying a contrasting enclosed sylvan riverine character. There are no major transport routes in the parcel.

GB40 – Next Steps

Two strategic sub-areas have been identified for further assessment. The first is enclosed land at north Harpenden in the vicinity of Luton Road, Couters End Lane and Ambrose Lane (SA-S5). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel, the sub-area identified to the north of Harpenden penetrates into the urban area and it displays urban influence. There is strong urban influence as substantial development has taken place along the Luton Road, with adjacent development forming an extended urban edge to Harpenden in the northwest. Therefore, assessed in isolation, it makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging or maintaining local gaps. Existing field patterns and boundary planting produces sense of local landscape enclosure, which creates a valuable part of the countryside, but also provides partially screened from views from the wider countryside and surroundings. A reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements.

The second strategic sub-area is enclosed land at northeast Harpenden along Lower Luton Road, and extending to the vicinity of Whitings Close (SA-S6). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel, the relatively small (in comparison to the strategic parcel as a whole) sub-area identified to the northeast of Harpenden follows the angular urban edge which increases localised levels of enclosure and urban influence. In addition, existing field patterns and boundary planting create a greater sense of local landscape enclosure. This creates a valuable part of the countryside, but also provides partially screened views from the wider countryside and surroundings. At the strategic level, a reduction in the size of the parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements. Assessed in isolation the sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting and maintaining local gaps.

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GB41 –Green Belt Land West of Welwyn

Description The parcel is located to the west of Welwyn and extends to Wheathampstead and Gustard Wood to the west. The north boundary follows the edge of the study area and the south boundary aligns with Marford Road (B653). It is 1,905 ha in size and forms an undulating chalk plateau either side of the enclosed narrow river Lea valley and river Mimram.



Land use Mix of arable farmland and woodland, plus estate parkland, The Frythe (MDS) and Brocket Park Golf Course.

View to northeast from Whitehill towards Welwyn shows open setting and strong rural character



View from Brocket View at Wheathampstead displays urban fringe characteristics and enclosure



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of Wheathampstead, Gustard Wood, Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot Green and Waterend, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gaps between Welwyn Garden City to Welwyn, Ayot St Peter, Ayot Green and Lemsford. Partial contribution towards checking sprawl. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 purposes.

GB41 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		PARTIAL
The parcel is located south of Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage and forms a connection with a wider network of parcels to the northwest to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 st tier settlements. However it forms part of a network with GB37, GB40, GB42 & GB43 to provide strategic gap between Welwyn Garden City and Harpenden. The A1(M) is relatively well screened but allows some views to, and perception, of the gap. Any reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open arable farmland punctuated by some small blocks of mixed woodland. The large fields are generally bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees. There is a high percentage of woodland including ancient woodland. The river Lea valley has a riparian habitat and frequent water meadows follow the water course. There is limited evidence of built development apart for 3 rd tier settlements, and there is no significant encroachment. The main urban influence (on the east part of the parcel only) is the A1(M) which is relatively well concealed but audibly intrusive. Some land displays urban fringe characteristics such as along the east edge of Wheathampstead. Levels of visual openness are high in general mainly due to an absence of built development.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contains a range of conservation areas at Wheathampstead, Gustard Wood, Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot Green and Waterend. It also adjoins Welwyn Conservation Area and contains Brocket Park and Ayot House HPGs. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural and pastoral setting, providing views to and from the countryside, and especially along the River Lea in relation to Wheathampstead.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel provides a series of gaps between 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd tier settlements. Most significantly, it separates Welwyn Garden City (1 st) beyond the A1(M), to Welwyn (2 nd), Ayot St Peter (3 rd) Ayot Green (3 rd) and Lemsford (3 rd). These primary local gaps are narrow and therefore any small scale reduction would be likely to significantly compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms, and the overall level of visual openness. The parcel also provides the secondary local gap between Wheathampstead (2 nd) and Welwyn (2 nd). The large gap is 4.5km and relatively well maintained (relatively free of development) and therefore any reduction (in the east only) would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements and overall visual openness. In general there is limited evidence of ribbon development, and the perception of open countryside is strong from routes within the parcel.		

Level of Openness and Countryside Character

Existence of built development The level of built development is low at 0.3%. There is little evidence of built development within the parcel.

Visual Openness The rolling landform and open fields allow for long distance views from many locations, including the estate parkland of Brocket Park, giving the parcel an open visual character. The Lea Valley is more enclosed with a higher percentage of tree cover.

Countryside Character The parcel comprises well established traditional open rolling farmland with the River Lea Valley displaying a contrasting enclosed sylvan riverine character. The small winding country lanes and lack of large scale settlements gives the parcel a quiet rural character.

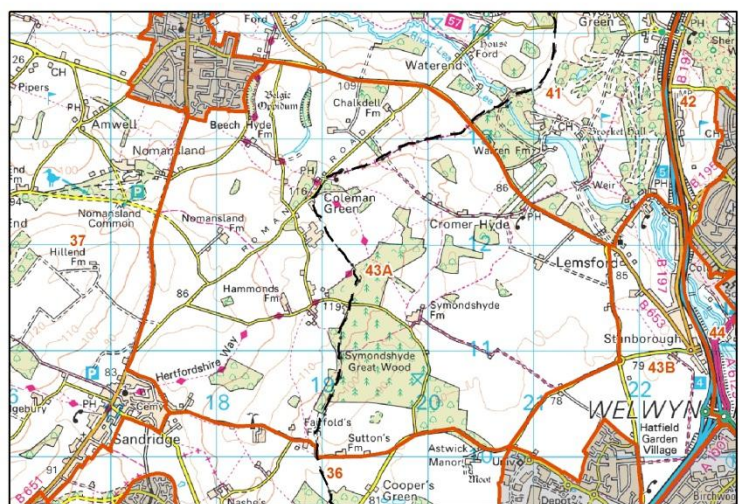
GB41 – Next Steps

Land east of Wheathampstead (GB41) to east of Brocket View is recommended for further assessment as a small scale sub-area (SA-SS8). Assessed in isolation this very small sub-area land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

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GB43A –Green Belt Land between Wheathampstead and Hatfield

Description The parcel is located to the southeast of Wheathampstead and extends to the northwest tip of Hatfield. It extends to Sandridge to the southwest and follows the Woodcock Hill to the south. It is 1,232ha in size and forms a large scale undulating chalk plateau.



Land use Predominantly arable farmland and woodland.

View to north from Coopers Green Lane, from northwest tip of Hatfield displays strong open and rural characteristics



View to south of Wheathampstead from Hill Dyke Road displays a greater sense of enclosure



Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing the gap between St Albans and Wheathampstead). Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield with Harpenden). Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 purposes.

GB43A – Purposes Assessment		Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging		PARTIAL
The parcel does not directly separate 1 st tier settlements. However, it forms a large section of a network of parcels (with GB37, GB40, GB41, GB42 & GB43B) which provide the strategic gap between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield with Harpenden. Any scale of reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of 1 st tier settlements.		
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large scale arable fields bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees. There is a high percentage of woodland with a large area of ancient woodland at Symondshyde Great Wood. There is very limited evidence of built development and no significant encroachment. However the south edge of Wheathampstead exhibits a greater sense of enclosure and urban influence. Levels of visual openness are very high in general mainly due to an absence of built development. It displays a very different character to GB43B which contains more urban fringe features.		
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns		LIMITED OR NO
The parcel adjoins Sandridge Conservation Area and Brocket Park HPG, whereby part of the park enters the parcel. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
To maintain existing settlement pattern		SIGNIFICANT
The parcel contributes with GB43B to the strategic gap between Welwyn Garden City (1 st) and Wheathampstead (3 rd). The gap is 4.5km and is large and well maintained (relatively free of development) with no evidence or ribbon development. Due to the scale and nature of the gap, any reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, or the overall level of visual openness.		

Level of openness and countryside character

Existence of built development The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. There is very limited evidence of built development within the parcel.

Visual Openness Rolling landform / open fields allow long distance views but wooded areas are more enclosed.

Countryside Character The parcel comprises a patchwork of traditional open rolling farmland with woodland. Small winding country lanes give the parcel a quiet rural character.

GB43A – Next Steps

Land south of Wheathampstead to south of Hill Dyke Road and enclosed by Dyke Lane to the east and settlement edge to the west, is recommended for further assessment as a small scale sub-area (SA-SS7). The southern extent runs level to Beech Crescent. Assessed in isolation this very small area of land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.



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